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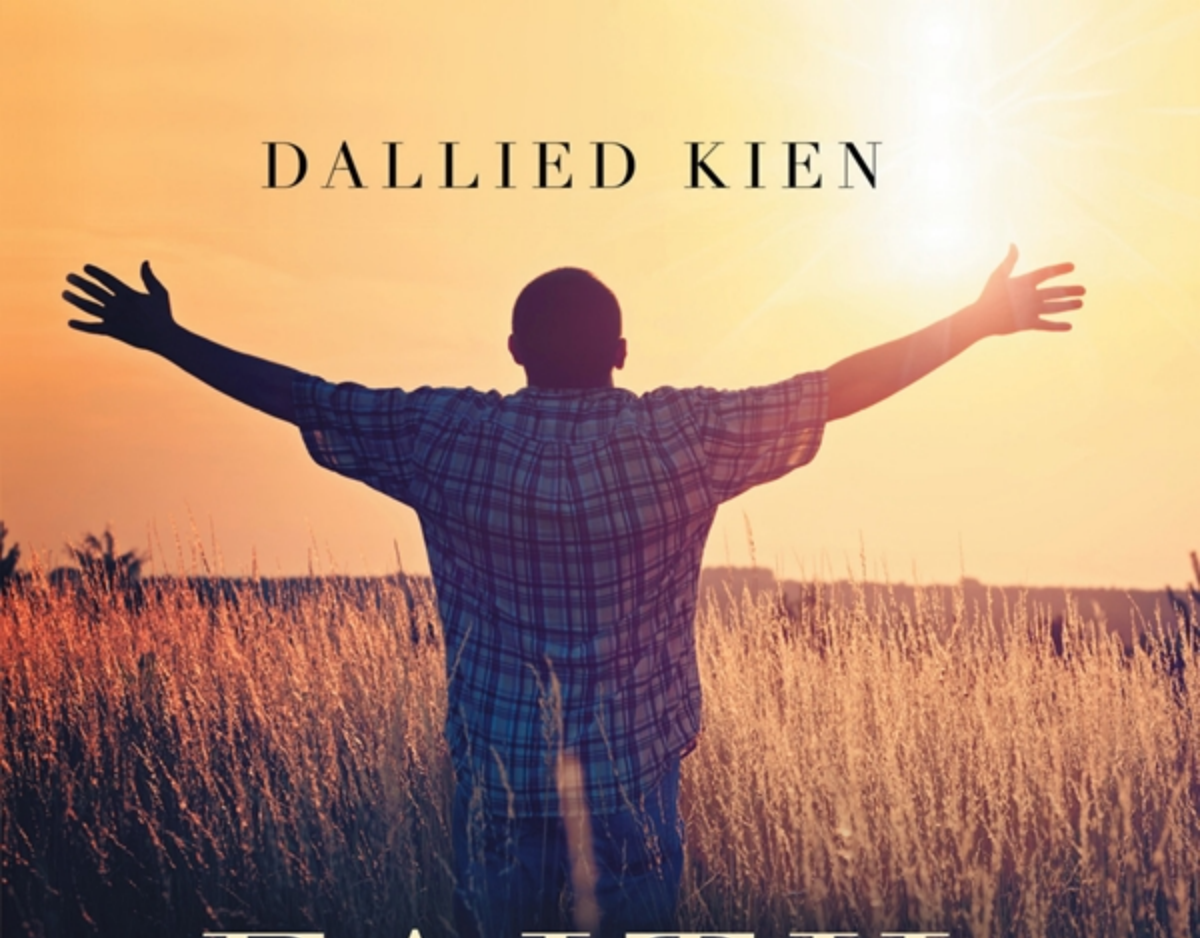

FAITH *according to* JESUS CHRIST

How to Grow in the True Knowledge of Our Lord and Savior

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September 16, 2015

Title

Title of Work: Faith According to Jesus Christ: How to Grow in the True Knowledge of Our Lord and Savior

Completion/Publication

Year of Completion: 2015

Author

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  Author Created: text, photograph(s), artwork
  Citizen of: Cote D'ivoire
  Domiciled in: Cote D'ivoire
  Year Born: 1957

Copyright Claimant

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JESUS
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How to Grow in the True Knowledge of Our Lord and Savior

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Two Harbors Press
322 First Avenue N, 5th floor
Minneapolis, MN 55401
612.455.2293
www.TwoHarborsPress.com

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ISBN-13: 978-1-63413-784-3
LCCN: 2015914402

Distributed by Itasca Books

Cover Design by Sophie Chi
Typeset by James Arneson

Printed in the United States of America

Faith According to Jesus Christ:
How to Grow in the True Knowledge
of Our Lord and Savior

Throughout the book, all scripture quotations are taken from the New King James Version of the Holy Bible unless otherwise indicated.

Contents

A Note to Readers • xiii

Introduction • 1

About this Book • 63

Acknowledgments • 65

1. Definition of Heart, Soul, and Might According to Jesus Christ • 69
2. The Spirit of Faith • 129
3. God-Kind of Faith or Perfected Faith • 239
4. Our Tongue Determines our Destiny • 299
5. Ask in the Name of Jesus • 319
6. Is there any Difference between the Function of God's Word and the Holy Spirit? • 361
7. Our Love for Jesus, the Principle Revealed by Jesus Christ that Causes Human Beings to Keep God's Word • 407
8. The Urge to Repent, or an Urgent Demand for Repentance • 467
9. The Two Ways of Believing or Getting Faith • 483
10. The Two Temples of God: How to Bring an Atmosphere of Miracles into These Temples • 491

11. The Image of God Versus Natural Man's Image • 499

12. What is the Purpose of Our Obedience to God's Law and Judgments? • 515

13. We Live under Grace, the Time of Merciful God • 537

14. The Second Definition of Grace (The Working Power of Christ in Us) • 551

15. The Right Function of the Parts of Man's Body • 563

16. The Foundation of God's Judgment • 567

17. The Lamp or Light of the Body: Its Definition and How it Works • 569

18. The Book of Life • 575

19. Righteousness • 581

20. Pattern of Testimony • 605

21. Meditation • 611

22. Definition of Meekness According to King David, as Displayed by Jesus • 627

23. Requirements the Believer Must Satisfy to Be Heard by God when He Prays to God • 631

24. How to Deal with Fear, Unbelief, and Doubt • 633

25. How Can We Activate, Energize, and Exercise Our Faith? • 637

26. Sixteen Key Points to Consider as You Read the Bible • 647

27. How Does the Kingdom of God Function? • 677

28. The Tree of Life and the Four Key Factors of Sin According to Jesus Christ • 693

29. Living by Faith or by Keeping God's Statutes and Judgments • 703

30. The Definition of Faith Given by Jesus Christ • 715

31. Solutions for Powerless Faith and the Four Dimensions of Faith • 763

32. The Four Stages of Faith and the Characteristics of Faith • 795

1) A Solution for a Lack of Understanding • 795

2) A Solution for a Lack of Foundation or a Lack of a Deep Rooting of God's Word in Our Heart • 804

3) A Solution for the Cares or Worries of this Life • 806

4) A Solution for a Lack of Love • 807

33. Medication for a Lack of Faith Given by Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ • 811

1) A Cure for People's Lack of Understanding of God's Word • 820

2) A Cure for People's Lack of Foundation on the Rock or Lack of Deep Roots in Faith • 997

3) *A Cure to Stop People from Worrying about the Riches of this World, so that They Always Give Priority to the Kingdom of God and God's Word* • *1111*

4) *A Cure for People's Lack of Love, to Give Them the Love of God and One Another* • *1167*

Conclusion • 1239

About the Author • 1257

A Note to Readers

My message is directed to those people who are already connected to the four dimensions or levels of faith and also to those who have no faith. It may happen that, as you read portions of the book, you will find that some sections are not addressed particularly to you because you are at a higher level. If this occurs, please read the passage, but don't be annoyed because the message does not fit your expectations. Instead, accept the message with joy and love for those who are in need of this type of good news. Also accept with humility and joy the messages and divine revelations that you have already mastered, and continue to read because whatever your level of faith is you will find your story in this book.

The sections of this book which truly deal with the title are those beginning with Chapter Thirty, while the rest is a study of various points of theology and biblical study about Jesus, such as "Who is He?" "Why did He come to earth?" to help those who have no faith to become acquainted with Jesus Christ before they tackle the object of this book. Why? Because without the knowledge of Jesus, nobody can experience new life in Jesus. If we carefully look at the topics of the

first twenty-nine chapters, we will observe that they talk about life, love, repentance, the spirit of faith, the Holy Spirit, the Word of God, the atmosphere of miracles, images of God, the light of the body, righteousness, the way, trust, meekness, and so on. All of these are other names for Jesus. Indeed, He declared in John 14:6: "I am the way, the truth, and the life;" and in John 8:12: ". . . 'I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life." And Proverbs 12:28 says: "In the way of righteousness is life. And in its pathway there is no death." John 3:36 tells us: "He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides in him." Romans 10:9 10 also says: ". . . that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead you will be saved. For with the heart one believes to righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Finally, Jesus Himself declares, in John 17:3: "And this is eternal life that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent." Therefore, knowing Jesus is the only one condition to live with true faith in Him. In fact, we cannot have genuine faith in Jesus Christ without true knowledge of Jesus Christ, and the first twenty-nine chapters aim to help people to know our Lord and Savior. Even 90% of Christians do not know Him. This is why they fail to walk in absolute victory in every area of their lives. Chapters One through Thirty deal with the foundations

of faith, with the aims of permitting you to receive the basics of faith deep inside yourself. Why? Because the Bible is the Book of Faith. In other words, every believer must know the reason why Jesus came to this world, what his relationship with Christ should be, and who he is in Christ. Those first thirty chapters are aimed at casting doubt out of your mind so that you can be granted faith and become grounded in it. The purpose of those thirty chapters is to reveal the wisdom of God and real faith in God and how to get true faith and put it to work. You cannot acquire the true knowledge of God and Jesus, which is true faith in God, unless you succeed in defeating doubt in your thoughts and heart. And yet, eternal life consists of knowing the only true God, the Father, and Jesus Christ His Son, whom He has sent for you (as we learn in John 17:3).

How can you know Jesus if you doubt the Word of God or God's wisdom? The first thirty chapters of this book are aimed at leading you on the path of real knowledge that will enable your spirit not to doubt anymore but, rather, to acquire a perfect knowledge of God the Father and His Son, as well as His principles. So what do we do in this book? We teach you to understand the faith God has given you. And, when you understand that, you will become comfortable using your faith. When you face a challenge, you will not look for who will help you, you will know you can handle it. When you are done with the challenge you are facing now, you will be able to use the same faith to

live a victorious life. When you understand faith, you are going to be able to use it to do anything.

Introduction

If you are weak in any area of your life and intend to master it, then this book is your tool to fulfill your destiny in that area of life. This book will teach you the different tools God the Father has put at your disposal to always be successful in anything you are involved in. The first thing you must know is that you are born again when you proclaim that Jesus Christ rules over your life. At the very moment you proclaim that, you will receive the person of the Holy Spirit in your heart together with the power of God to perform whatever you say in the name of Jesus. This is the principle of God's Word, as described by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in John 6:63: "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life." Jesus is saying that when we speak God's Word we see both the manifestation of the life of God and also the spirit of God in action.

To understand the main characteristic of the spirit of God, let us be reminded of the Word of Jesus in Acts 1:8: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you . . . ." In other words, the spirit of God has inherent power power to affect

changes. Therefore, if God's Word is spirit, it means God's Word possesses transforming power and has the ability to activate the power of God that dwells in us. No wonder the Bible says, in Hebrews 4:12: "For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the hearts." Do you understand what that means? Hebrews 4:12 says the Word of God is life and the power of God, and John 6:63 declares that God's Word is life and spirit. This means that "spirit" must be a synonym for the power of God, since the Holy Spirit comes upon us with the "power of God" (Acts 1:8).

Jesus is saying that God's Word has the ability to cause the Holy Spirit to come and dwell in the heart of the believer and also to give him His everlasting life and that, if the Holy Spirit is already in his heart, God's Word activates the power of God in him and, therefore, the power of God is ready to give life to everything he says.

In Greek, the life of God is called "Zoe" eternal life. But what is eternal life? The Bible says, in John 17:1 3: "Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: 'Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.'"

Eternal life is not simply life after death, but also refers to our current life (our own existence on earth), and spiritual and supernatural birth our entire existence in the knowledge of God and Jesus. Do you understand why that is true? The knowledge of God the Father and Jesus are eternal life. Moreover, your knowledge or consciousness of who God the Father and Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior are gives eternal life to everything you think, believe, say, and do. Your consciousness of the Lordship of Jesus Christ over your life gives you power and authority over anything that can hurt or bind you. This means that you must be aware of the Lordship of Christ over your spirit your mind, will, and heart. Take your stand on the consciousness of the Lordship of Jesus Christ over your mind, will, and heart and you will never be defeated by anything such as sickness, poverty, or addiction.

You can therefore bring upon your life the provisions of blessings that God has in store for you and cast away any curse of the law you do not like. This makes it sound like I am telling people to ignore the law. Is that my intent? No, it is not my will to tell people to ignore the law. John 14:21 says: "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him." So you must know Jesus to have His commandments. And when this knowledge of Christ becomes part of your inner being, the love of Jesus causes you to do His

commandments. So the true knowledge of God encapsulates the law.

Our faith encapsulates our consciousness of who God the Father and Jesus Christ are, our beliefs concerning God's Word, our professions of faith (in other words, what we say in consent with God's Word), and what we do in agreement with God's Word. It is no wonder, then, that in the Scriptures every time Jesus healed someone, he said, "Your faith has made you whole." It is because you are the one who can make changes happen.

Through your meditation or profession of God's Word, your knowledge concerning God the Father and Jesus Christ increases and then you get abundant eternal life as Jesus declared in John 10:10: "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." Profession is part of meditation, which can either be speaking aloud or whispering reading, or simply deep thought. The way for meditation to give you the mind of God is to read aloud God's Word. That is why this book intends to give you an abundance of knowledge about the person of Jesus, what He came to do on earth, and what He is doing now, so that you can become victorious in any area of your life through your faith and have abundant eternal life. This is the reason for putting the first twenty-nine chapters into this book.

Let us go back to John 6:63, which says: "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life." We understand that God's Word is the principle of eternal life. Therefore you are under obligation to meditate upon and speak God's Word to produce eternal life, and not death, as it is written in Proverbs 18:21: "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit." Another way to talk about this same truth is that Jesus Himself teaches us in John 6:63 that God's Word produces life: "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life." As believers in Jesus Christ, we are compelled to speak only God's Word to give life to everything we utter, otherwise our words will produce death. Eternal life produces everything you need to live and enjoy a fruitful and productive life. When you are born again, you are a spiritual child who needs to grow in the things of God in order to become a spiritual giant.

A "spiritual giant" is a man whose mind has been renewed and brought to perfection, having the same thoughts as God. His will has been strengthened and made mature like the will of our Lord Jesus Christ. And, finally, his heart has been purified and is full of God's Word. Human beings can be defeated only in these three areas of his spirit: heart, mind, and will. There is no way to defeat a man who has been perfected in those three areas of his spirit being. You have

seven means to build your spiritual being and activate the power of God in you.

All Chapter Three defines in detail what a God-kind of faith is, and Chapter Two deals with the spirit of faith.

These are the seven ways of expressing your spirit of faith and God-kind of faith:

1. By meditating on God's Word
2. By professing God's Word about yourself
3. By giving thanks to God the Father for what He has already done or will do for you either in the physical realm or in the spiritual realm
4. By calling, asking, or demanding in the name of Jesus Christ; or by living by the name of Jesus. In fact, Jesus gives us the legal authority to use His name in John 14:13 14: "And whatever you ask in My name that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it;" and in John 16:23: "And in that you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you." We have the authority to ask the Father in the name of Jesus ("in His name" means "in His place"). When we ask the Father it is as though Jesus Himself is asking. To ask in the name of Jesus means to take the place of Jesus. To turn down this request is to turn down Jesus. We have to understand the power behind the Word He gave us. When you ask the Father in the name of Jesus, He does not consider whether

or not you have faith. This point is very important. God deals us a measure of faith. There is no delay when you ask the Father in the name of Jesus. 1 John 5:13–15 says: "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God. Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we asked of Him." Colossians 3:17 tells us: "And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." The name of Jesus is an instrument. You can do the impossible in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. (To understand what calling, asking, and demanding in the name of Jesus Christ are, I recommend you read Acts 3:1–10.) Peter healed the lame man by using the name of Jesus. (This issue is also dealt with in Chapter Four and Chapter Five.)

5. By speaking in tongues
6. By knowing Jesus Christ and God the Father, because this knowledge is eternal life
7. By loving Jesus or doing what Jesus tells you to say and do; this is a perfected knowledge and a way to live life to the fullest — in other words, perfected faith, complete love, or excellent eternal life. I seem to say that living life to the fullest is

> the same as an excellent eternal life. Is that what I mean? Yes, excellent eternal life is perfect love and perfect love is living life to the fullest, as it is written in John 10:10: "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly."

It is only by faith that we relate to God, since He cannot be seen. This book will teach you how to grow your spiritual being and bring it to perfection in every area of your life. Each of these different ways of growing in spirit causes God to grant you the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness. In other words, it gives you the peace of God. Once achieved, the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension or understanding, will guard your heart and your mind in Christ Jesus. In fact, Philippians 4:4–7 tells us: "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your request be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." So Philippians 4:7 simply means that God's peace, which is far beyond human understanding, will keep your hearts and minds safe in union with Christ Jesus.

While you are growing and making your spiritual being strong and powerful, you can also bring into existence the promises of God for your life by using

your spirit of faith. So, as you are reading this book and confessing God's Word, notice the effects of God's Word on your mind, on your will, on your spirit (heart), and on your body.

As you work your way through this book, pay careful attention to the things you can do that you could not do before you started reading and confessing God's Word, and give thanks to God for these divine changes in your life, conditions, spirit, and body. Keep on thanking God the Father for the effective working of His Word. Declare now, as you begin, that your mind is ready to pay attention to His Word, and that your heart is ready to accept that. Declare that your will will be strengthened by the Word of God and nothing is going to make you miss the revelatory knowledge it will bring to you. God is the master communicator; pay attention to His Word and you will receive it in your heart and picture it with your mind.

As your faith in or love for Jesus grows, or your spirit becomes strong, you will become more and more fully persuaded by God's Word and the power of God will bring whatever you say to completion. This love we are talking about is a love based on the measurement of Jesus's Love, not a love based on the measurement of the Old Testament. Indeed, Jesus declares in John 13:34: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another." But God said in the Old Testament, in Leviticus 19:18: "You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people,

but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the LORD." Do you see the difference? Jesus tells us to love one another not by *our* measurement of love but by *His* measurement of love. This is how you express a God-kind of faith. When your faith reaches the level of love based on Jesus's measurement of love, then as soon as you speak you bring into the physical realm what your words talk about.

You activate the power of God through the Word of God. That is Faith.

I refuse to fear. It does not matter what I see. I simply refuse to fear because fear will activate the power of the devil. Fear will activate the negative forces in your life. But faith activates the power of God. That's why the Bible says in 2 Timothy 1:6 7: "Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of sound mind;" and in Hebrews 11:6: "without faith it is impossible to please God" because, without faith, you cannot activate the power of God. How can we stir up the power of God that dwells in us? We activate or stir up the power of God in us by speaking in tongues or by expressing our spirit of faith by speaking the same things as God, in other words, faith's proclamation or faith's profession. For instance, if God declares that by the stripes of Jesus, I am healed, then my faith proclamation becomes: "I am healed in the name of Jesus," no matter what symptoms I possess or what my medical report says. And what I say will become true

if it falls under the satisfaction of two conditions (no doubt, and forgiveness of others), as revealed by Jesus in Mark 11:22–26. The Bible also says, in 1 John 5:4: "For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith." So our faith is our victory; our faith is also the key for our victory so that we can become free to live a life of victory. Romans 5:1 declares: "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." You cannot have righteousness before your faith works. In the same way, you cannot have peace—or any other gifts—of God before your faith works.

Righteousness is the product of faith. Do not try to be righteous on your own, which is a common mistake people make. Instead, let your faith make you righteous before God. This is the real and true wisdom. Scripture also says, in Hebrews 11:32–35: "And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets; who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, become valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again." Can you see what that means? Our faith is our victory and our supernatural weapon to overcome any challenge, danger, or difficulty of life—including our victory over

death. Our faith is also our tool to change our world, situation, and the circumstances of our lives. Our faith changes our world, as it is written in 1 John 5:4: "For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world our faith." Our faith overcomes the world. It overcomes sickness, disease, poverty, and failure; our faith overcomes Satan; our faith overcomes every situation and circumstance we do not like.

If the power of God is not activated by our faith or our spirit of faith, then darkness comes. Darkness represents all of the negativities of life, eventually including destruction and death. But all of these can be avoided if you speak God's Word to activate the power of God in you.

Here is a reminder of the seven ways to activate the power of God in you:

1. By meditating on God's Word
2. By confessing God's Word about yourself
3. By giving thanks to God the Father for what He has already done or will do for you
4. By calling, asking, or demanding in the name of Jesus Christ; or by living by the name of Jesus
5. By speaking in tongues
6. By knowing Jesus Christ and God the Father
7. By loving Jesus or doing what Jesus tells you to say and do

This book is not a theoretical book. It teaches you about the realities and truths about your life

because, first of all, these truths derive from God's Word. Secondly, I have experienced in my life, and in my body, everything I am teaching you about. Lastly, anybody who has the will to change his mind towards God or Jesus and put into practice everything which is written in this book will go through the same experiences reported in this book and obtain the same results. You may tell me: "Because of the concrete nature of comments like this, I would recommend you include a disclaimer on the copyright page which makes it plain that you cannot guarantee any results." However, two other books of mine, *Wisdom Principles* and *Jesus Has Revealed the Secrets of the Spiritual World* which are free resources on my website (https://twitter.com/dalliedkien) explain the two main reasons that cause people to fail: doubt and unforgiveness, based on Mark 11:22 26. So if you have genuine faith, or the God-kind of faith, there is no way for failure. It is only a matter of time be patient and your desire will come to pass according to Proverbs 10:24, that says: "The fear of the wicked will come upon him, And the desire of the righteous will be granted." Jesus declares in John 17:17: "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth." So if Proverbs 10:24 tells us that the desire of the righteous will come to pass, and I doubt this truth, that means I have no faith in Jesus, therefore my doubt will come true and my desire will remained unsatisfied. There is no failure in God's way of doing things.

If you want to be successful in any area of your life, pay attention to the Word of God, fix your gaze upon it as it helps you to change your mind, continue to be fully persuaded by the truth God's Word carries so that these truths become strong and powerful beliefs in your heart. Once you can do that, then your mouth will automatically speak these truths. This process is what is called the spirit of faith, the profession of your faith, or a faith proclamation. You may think that although two of the items listed could be processes, the third one (the spirit of faith) cannot. It is simply a thing not an activity. However, spirit of faith, the confession of faith, and faith proclamation refer to the same reality. Indeed, 2 Corinthians 4:13 tells us: "But since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, 'I believed and therefore I spoke,' we also believe and therefore speak." So spirit of faith or confession of faith or faith proclamation or faith profession stands for expressing our beliefs in God or Christ Jesus. So expressing your beliefs in God is our favorite activity to activate the power of God in us. Chapter Two deals with this issue, and it is what Caleb did that pleased God in Numbers 13:27 14:38.

Confession or professing is saying the same thing with God. This means that the words you say or speak concerning your life, body, mind, and will or your health or life line up with the Word of God. Here are the definitions of confession from Merriam-Webster's online dictionary:

1 a: an act of confessing; especially : a disclosure of one's sins in the sacrament of reconciliation
b: a session for the confessing of sins <go to confession>
2: a statement of what is confessed: as
a : a written or oral acknowledgment of guilt by a party accused of an offense
b : a formal statement of religious beliefs
3: an organized religious body having a common creed

In Greek and in the New Testament, Confession means saying the same thing as God. Paul, the Apostle who wrote half of the New Testament, refers to this definition whenever he uses the word "confession": "a statement of what is confessed: as a formal statement of religious beliefs." For instance, Paul wrote in Romans 10:9 10: ". . . that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead you will be saved. For with the heart one believes to righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made to salvation." So saying aloud your beliefs is confession, is profession, and is spirit of faith.

Your spirit of faith or faith's proclamation concerning the Word of God about you will progressively change your mind and cast away worries about this life, or any other fear and doubt in your mind and give you the thoughts of God which refer to you. When your mind has no more doubt and worries, you will get the peace of God and the absolute conviction that

God's Word is the truth. Then this truth will come out of your mouth and frame your life's course. Deuteronomy 28:15 68 lists the thirty challenges every human being will have to face during life on earth, namely: poverty; generational curses; curse wherever you go; weakness when you face bad circumstances or difficult situations; spoliation or plundering; being a laughingstock for others; unproductiveness; experiencing a decrease in glory; being the tail and not the head; having to be a borrower and not a lender; sickness; defeat or failure; fear; doubt; spiritual blindness; poor vision; weakness; being in need of all things; confusion or a lack of wisdom; disaster, tragedy, or misfortune; oppression; anxiety; hopelessness; despair; improperly trusting in the riches and protections of this world; incurable diseases; madness; slavery or bondage; focusing only on what you see; unknown disease which is not written in the book of the law; and, finally, destruction or death.

Some of those curses may be hard to understand for a modern reader. Exodus 20:5 defines what generational curses are: "You shall not bow down to them nor serve. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me." Deuteronomy 28:19 says: "Cursed shall you be when you come in, and cursed you be when you go out," which is curse is the curse I named "curse wherever you go." This curse simply means that wherever you go and whatever you do you will be cursed. But

Jesus came to redeem us from the curse of the law as it is written in Galatians 3:13: "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree'), . . ."

But our faith is the victory that overcomes the world, and overcomes these thirty curses of the law (or thirty challenges of life) that try to put human beings under the power of the devil. In reality, as soon as you become a child of God and put to work what this book teaches you, the thirty challenges of life will be turned into thirty mirages because the devil will have been deprived of his power by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Satan will have no more power over us. Instead, as a born-again Christian you will have power over him. With faith we will be catapulted into God's Kingdom of life and light full of prosperity; generational blessing; blessings wherever we go in the name of Jesus; dominion over the circumstances of our lives; the ability to hold real estate; being the favorite of others; productivity; an increase in glory; being the head and not the tail; being a lender and not a borrower; health; success; light; happiness; strength; faith in Jesus; trust in Jesus and a focus on God's Word; satisfaction of all of our needs; wisdom and understanding; freedom; peace of mind; hope; divine healing; a sound mind; better eyesight; and eternal life.

So what do you need to do to get these blessings? You must know this striking and wonderful truth: Unless you confess or speak God's Word over your

life, you will never get this specific blessing. It is your declaration your spirit of faith, or your God-kind of faith that causes God to rise in your life and bring into being whatever you talk about. Everything you need to have a wonderful life is inside you. It will not come from heaven. You carry in you all that you will ever need. Everything you will ever need in this world for a good life including money, if you feel that is important is in you. The Word of God created the world, therefore if you treasure God's Word in your heart you can also create anything you want to bring into physical being, or change any of the circumstances in your life that you do not like.

You can use the name of Jesus to change any circumstances you do not like and cause them to favor you, as it is written in Philippians 2:10: "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth." Do you see what this means? Everything in this world recognizes the power in the name of Jesus, so what you have to do is to have faith without doubt in the name of Jesus. When you call the name of Jesus in faith, God releases His power, the anointing of the Holy Spirit that dwells in you according to John 14:13 14: "And whatever you ask in my name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son, if you ask anything in my name, I will do it." Colossians 3:17 also states: "And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." The

Bible is saying that, whatever you do whether by your speech or actions you are to do it in the name of Jesus. This means that you are to do all things in love, because Jesus is love. Love is the power of God.

The name of Jesus is an instrument. You can do the impossible in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Jesus gave us His name to live by. This is the best way to live by faith, as it is written in Romans 1:17: "The just shall live by faith." So every day, as soon as you wake up, say, as I do: "Father, I thank you because everything I put my hands on today will be successful because I do it in the name of Jesus. I go out and come in in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth." By doing this, you activate the power of God that dwells in you and, through this, can go out and be successful and victorious at everything and anything any day and every day all through life. In the Scriptures, the Word of God is likened to a seed (Luke 8:11). The seed of the Word is designed to produce in you a harvest of what it talks about: health, prosperity, peace, joy, abundance, and victory.

In the natural realm, a seed of any plant possesses the life of the plant in it, the power to give life to the plant. In the same way, God's Word is a seed that has the power of God that gives life to the reality it contains. But if the heart is not made ready for the entrance of the Word it will not produce the desired results. Your mind is the fallow ground of your heart. Your mind must turn towards God so that once God's Word is sown in your heart it can take deep roots in it.

You will learn, in this book, how to take hold of your inheritance as a son or daughter of God in the spiritual realm and how to bring your inheritance forth in the physical realm. God's Word can create your healing, God's Word can create a job for you, and God's Word can create money for you. God's Word is the principal component of everything that exists in this world; therefore, be wise and understand what matters in this world: the Word of God, the creator of everything.

You will also learn in this book that the key to all the life on the earth is the Holy Spirit (or the Holy Ghost). The Word of God does not work without the Holy Ghost. When God speaks, the Holy Ghost brings it to pass. Likewise, when we speak in agreement with with God's Word, the Holy Ghost in us brings it to pass. (Exodus 14:15 16, 21 states: "And the LORD said to Moses, 'Why do you cry to me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward. But lift up your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it. And the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea. . . . Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided.") The Holy Spirit makes the Word work, otherwise it is empty. The Bible says, in Hebrews 11:6, that without faith it is impossible to please God. So express your spirit of faith to cause God to rise up in your life and bring into being whatever you desire or dream about. Moreover,

never say anything negative about your life for ". . . by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned" (Matthew 12:37).

All you have to do is to refuse to be taken in by the thirty challenges mentioned in Deuteronomy 28:15 68, and instead thank God the Father in heaven for the power in the name of Jesus and the authority his Son Jesus Christ has given you to let you enjoy a fruitful and productive life on earth. This book will teach you how to master all these things. Your main goal, as you have already learned is to get to have the thoughts of God, and then allow yourself to be fully persuaded about God's Word so that you will become a source of living water. But what does it mean to become "living water"?

John 7:38 39 says: "'He who believes in Me as the Scriptures has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.' But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was net yet given, because was not yet glorified." So the term "living water" refers to God's Word. By accepting God's Word in our heart, we will become a fountain of living water to bring life to others. In the same vein, by receiving the Holy Spirit, we are turned into a fountain of living water. Proverbs 16:22 23 explains: "Understanding is a well-spring of life to him who has it. . . . The heart of the wise teaches his mouth, and adds learning to his lips." In the Amplified Bible, Proverbs 20:5 says: "Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water. But a man of understanding

will draw it out"). We can also look at Proverbs 18:4, which states: "The words of man's mouth are deep waters; The wellspring of wisdom is a flowing brook"; Proverbs 4:23 ("Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life"); John 6:63 ("It is the Spirit who gives life, the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit and they are life."); Proverbs 3:18: ("She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her, . . ."); Proverbs 10:11: ("The mouth of the righteous is a well of life, . . ."); Proverbs 15:4 ("A wholesome tongue is a tree of life, But perverseness in it breaks the spirit."); Proverbs 18:21 ("Death and life are in the power of the tongue, . . ."); and Isaiah 58:11, which declares: "The LORD will guide you continually, And satisfy your soul in drought, And strengthen your bones; You shall be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail." Finally, the Bible says in John 4:13 14: "Jesus answered and said to her, 'Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.'"

Only good words will flow out of your mouth and you will never say anything that is contrary to the Word of God, instead only speaking God's Word. If you succeed in attaining this goal, you will live a life of increasing glory and victory where there is no more failure or defeat but only love, joy, peace, prosperity, success, divine health, divinity, and a life in which you exercise

dominion over Satan and the power of darkness.

Our thoughts or our consciousness are vital to being able to receive our inheritance in Christ Jesus. How can we, once and for all, remove our own thoughts and replace them with God's thoughts?

The answer is found in Joshua 1:8: "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success." Doing this on a daily basis will change your own thoughts step by step and replace them with God's thoughts, as it is written in James 1:23–25: "For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does." In other words, when you look at yourself in the mirror you see and forget the picture of your true identity; God says you are like that man who walks away from the mirror forgetting what he has seen. The mirror of God — or the perfect law of liberty or God's Word that makes men free — gives you your own true image.

The Bible says that the one who continues looking at God's Word and takes his attention away from what his own mind tells him concerning himself is the doer of the Word. The mirror shows you your true identity,

but you must remember what you see. God sees you as perfected in Christ. A mirror has the ability to show our reflection, but our Father is telling us to look at His Word as our mirror and see who we really are. Since we are born of God's Word, we should reflect the nature of our Father in our behavior. In the same way, as a natural man cannot feed his body by looking at food and not eating it, it is impossible to feed our spirit by listening to (or looking at) God's Word if we do not act upon it. Let us look at again James 1:25: "But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does."

This wonderful scripture reveals the best way to become a genuine believer in Christ Jesus. This scripture gives us the principle that causes us to effortlessly do God's Word. Have you caught the secret? The Word of God is saying that the one who sees himself and Jesus in the Word of God and does not forget the pictures of himself and of Jesus Christ brought to him by God's Word is doing the Word of God. This means that if you hear God's Word and keep the picture of what you hear in your mind, this picture will help you to do God's Word. In fact, when we picture God's Word with our mind and meditate upon it, we store this picture in our heart once we are convinced of the truthfulness of God's Word, and truly understand it. This means that anything we think about becomes a belief, and is stored in our heart once we determine that our thought (or the picture in our mind) is true.

God the Father is saying, "If you hear My Word and remember, you will always and automatically do My Word."

Therefore, memorizing the pictures of God's Word is the key — the secret to doing the Word of God — as it is written in James 1:25. This same truth is also revealed in Romans 8:1–2: "There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death." There is no condemnation for those who live according to God's Word. When your thoughts have been turned into God's thoughts, when the pictures of yourself and the pictures of your Lord and Savior Christ Jesus remain forever in your mind, you will always do God's Word and God will never condemn you. Your real righteousness will remain in you as long as you keep in your mind the pictures of yourself, the pictures of your life, and the pictures concerning your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ that God's Word has brought to your mind.

This reality is also what our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ Himself talks about in John 17:3, saying that our knowledge of the true God and Jesus gives us eternal life: "And this is eternal life that they may know You, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom You have sent." Remember that Romans 8:2 also states: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death," which specifies that the law of life has made us free from the law of

sin and death. In other words, our mind is the center of our real union with Jesus, our Lord and Savior. If we succeed in keeping the pictures of ourselves about our lives, our real identities, and the pictures of Jesus Christ as they are brought to us by God's Word we will automatically treasure them in our hearts and then automatically speak them (in a spirit of faith) and do what God's Word says.

Let us look at another scripture. 2 Corinthians 3:18 states: "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord." God calls the one you see in the mirror "the Glory of the Lord." We see in a mirror the Glory of the Lord, so we are the Glory of the Lord. That's the name God calls us, so we must answer to that name: the Glory of the Lord. So, if the doctor said to me, "You are HIV positive," I would respond: "No! No! No! The Glory of the Lord cannot be HIV positive. HIV cannot be there. I am the Glory of the Lord."

You may ask: "It is entirely possible that a doctor could say that you are HIV positive, even if you are faithful, isn't it?" But what do you see about your life, what picture do you have about your life? Proverbs 4:20–22 says: "My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your eyes; Keep them in the midst of your heart; For they are life to those who find them, . . ." What you see gives you a picture. God shows you the true picture of yourself in His Word. Medical reports give you

a different picture of yourself. You might see in your medical report a man close to death, who has no hope. What are you seeing? You must choose to see either the pictures from your medical report or the picture given you by God's Word. What gives you the picture you have? What you see is what you get, as it is written in Proverbs 23:7: "For as he thinks in his heart, so is he . . ." What you think is what you see with your spiritual eyes. When God says in Proverbs 4:21: "Do not let them depart from your eyes . . ." what He means is that your eyes must only focus on God's Word so that the pictures they send to your mind are only God's report about you, not the reports of your doctor concerning yourself. 2 Corinthians 4:16 18 states: "Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outer man is perishing, yet the inner man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal." Do you see? God wants you to change the way you see and what you see. He is saying though your body is affected by cancer, HIV, or diabetes, your real you is not diabetic and your spirit (your real you) is renewed and becomes stronger day by day. God also qualifies any physical affliction as light and temporal subject to change. Finally, 2 Corinthians 4:18 shows us how to look: "while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the

things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal." You should not focus on the things you see. Don't recognize, taste, hear, see, and smell that condition, and don't allow it to control the circumstances of your life. You shouldn't consider the cancer, HIV, and so on. You shouldn't allow them to affect the circumstances of your life. Don't pay attention to the medical report, because, if you do, you will get a new picture of yourself and you will begin to talk, laugh, and worry, etc., according to what the doctor has said. This will affect your life. Stop considering your condition. No doctor is God; God has the final say. Don't consider the medical report, it's a fact, but it is not the important reality. Don't see your grave. Dream! Cancer, HIV, and medical reports are all subject to change. God's reality is absolute. (My book *Wisdom Principles* gives detailed information about this issue.) As you stay looking at the Glory of the Lord, you are transformed. Keep reflecting on what God says about you, and the transformation will take place. This is the mirror's principle: Keep looking at what God says about you and, as you do, you will be transformed into the image of God which refers to you. There can be no disease in your body when you are perfected in Christ the second part of this book more specifically deals with this issue.

Keep thinking about what God says about you and the transformation will continue to take place. As the Bible says, "you will change from glory to glory." There

are three levels of meditation. As you begin meditating on the Word, the first level is simply thinking about it. And then you begin to mutter it, saying something like "Glory to Jesus, my Lord and Savior. I have the life of God in me. Sickness cannot stay in my body. Thank you, Jesus, for making my life and the life of my family beautiful." You fill your brain with God's Word. You fill your consciousness with it and purposely decide to do it. Your consciousness is so filled and you are so fully persuaded that you begin to roar. You cannot keep it in anymore, as it is written in 2 Corinthians 4:13: "But since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, 'I believed and therefore I spoke,' we also believe and therefore speak." You cannot be quiet. You find you must speak out: "I am the Glory of the Lord. I am the life of God in me."

As you keep meditating on God's Word, suddenly you start shouting God's Word and giving glory to God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit because the Word has filled your consciousness and your heart. As you continue looking, there is a transformation in your thinking and speech and then in your deeds. Instead of looking for the pain, you look up to Jesus. Look for healing; do not check for the pain. If you check for pain you will find it; so do not do that. Look, instead, for a change in your healing, even a small change, like Elijah did. This little change will give you a strength that accelerates your healing. Remember that the Bible says, in Proverbs 23:7: "For as he thinks in his heart, so is he." This means that our way of thinking determines our

personality and our identity. And Joshua 1:8 declares that if we keep speaking God's Word by meditating on it, that activity will cause us to do accordingly meaning that our personality will change. Therefore, Joshua 1:8 is the tool God has made available to us to give us His mind so that we can effortlessly do as He commands. Therefore, meditation on God's Word over a period of time is the principle of making a lasting change of our mind towards God.

In your walk with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, you need the Holy Spirit in your heart to get the ability to change the circumstances of your life and live the glorious, victorious, and wondrous life of the children of God. Now, you may wonder: How can I receive the Holy Spirit? According to Scripture, we receive the Holy Spirit either by listening to God's Word or when an anointed man of God lays hands upon us, as it is written in Acts 10:44: "While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word;" in Acts 8:16 17: "For as yet he had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit;" and in Acts 19:1 6: "And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples he said to them, 'Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?' And they said to him, 'We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit.' And he said to them, 'Into what then were you baptized?' So they said, 'Into

John's baptism.' Then Paul said, 'John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied;" and, finally, in Acts 11:15: "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning." So if you have not yet received the Holy Spirit, first go find a good and anointed pastor or priest of Jesus Christ, who will help you receive the person of the Holy Spirit together with the power of God. We can also receive the Holy Spirit as we listen to good pastors, since our faith is being built when we hear the Word of God and the Holy Ghost falls upon us while we are listening to God's Word. In fact, reading aloud from this book could also produce the same effects.

You must also be aware that the content of your heart and mind is the reflection of your true identity, that's why the purpose of this book is to fill your heart to the brim with Jesus's words and renew your mind with Jesus's thoughts so that you outwardly manifest your divine nature or glory. You will then only talk like Jesus and only act with the power and authority of Jesus and also have the ability to change every circumstance in life you do not like. There will be no more failure, sickness, or defeat in your life, only love for Jesus and one another, which comes with the

consciousness that greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world, catapulted into God's realm of abundant life, reigning in life with your invincible weapon — the power in the name of Jesus.

Jesus declares in John 15:5: "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." The phrase "I am the vine; you are the branches" means having the same "sap" as Jesus, in other words, having the same life as Jesus. No wonder the Bible declares concerning us — the believers in Christ — in Colossians 3:4, that Christ is our life. Without the knowledge of the truth that Jesus's life flows in us, we will continue to act like ordinary men. Our consciousness of the life and nature of Jesus — and who Jesus really is — changes everything. No wonder the Bible says, in John 17:3, that eternal life is our knowledge and consciousness of the only true God and Jesus Christ whom the Father sent to earth.

Our knowledge of Jesus Christ puts Christ in us and, once this happens, Christ begins to live in us, giving us the life and nature of Christ or God. This means that our knowledge of God the Father and Christ is greater than our sensory perception, feelings, or human knowledge. This same truth is revealed in Romans 8:1–2, where it says: "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and

death." "Flesh" in this scripture stands for our senses and feelings, while "Spirit" refers to the Word of God, as it is also written in John 6:63: "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life." Do you get the picture? First of all, Romans 8:1 declares that those who walk in the Spirit cannot be condemned. Then, John 6:63 says that God's Word is Spirit and life. What does this tell you?

God is saying that there is no condemnation for those who do not walk according to their senses or feelings but according to the Word of God. Indeed, the Bible says, in 2 Corinthians 12:7–10: "And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelation, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffer me, lest I should be exalted above measure. Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of God may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecution, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong." Jesus is saying His power works best in weakness, so take your eyes away from your weakness and fix your gaze on the power of Christ. You may wonder: "Weren't you saying, earlier, that there is no weakness when you are living the Word?" Matthew 19:21 tells us: "Jesus said

to him, 'If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.'" 2 Timothy 3:16 17 says: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work." Psalm 138:8 also states: "The LORD will perfect that which concerns me; Your mercy, O LORD, endures for ever; Do not forsake the works of your hands." Romans 12:2 declares: "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is good and acceptable and perfect will of God." It is written in 1 Corinthians 13:10 13: "But when that [love] which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away. When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known. And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest is love." With love, your knowledge is greater than knowledge acquired with faith or hope. 2 Corinthians 12:9 ads: "And He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." Grace is love. James 1:2 4 specifies: "My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into

various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing;" and James 3:2 says: "For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body." 1 John 4:12 also says: "No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and his love has been perfected in us." Finally, 1 John 4:17 states: "Love has been made perfect among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world." We have the same love Jesus has. Paul the Apostle understood the message of Christ and started taking pleasure in his weakness, as well as in the insults, hardships, persecution, and troubles that he suffered for Christ and once he did this he received strength from Jesus. So I will not say "I am weak" because I feel weak. I will not say, "I am sick" because I feel the pain of sickness, but I speak God's Word which says, "I am healed or I am in perfect health" because the Bible says, in 2 Peter 2:24, that by the stripes of Jesus we are healed. I also do not say "I am healed" because I feel healed, but because God's Word says so. Our faith is not based on our *feeling*, it is based on the Word of God.

Romans 8:2 specifies: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death;" and Galatians 3:13 says: "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who

hangs on a tree.'" The law of life, in other words the law of eternal life brought by Jesus, has redeemed us from the curse of the law and causes us to become productive, for Jesus is the vine and we are the branches.

The eternal life of Christ in us is the principle that gives birth to our productivity. So unless we get the life of Christ we will never bear fruit, and we will never be productive. It is not my wisdom or any human's wisdom; it is the revealed knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ that says so: "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." That is why Scripture says, in 2 Corinthians 5:17: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; all things are become new;" and in Galatians 2:17 21: "But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found to be sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain."

So the believer in Christ is no longer an ordinary man, because he has Christ in him. He has a supernatural life of Christ in him that makes him invincible

and impregnable to sickness or any other curse of the law such as poverty, failure, and so on. Sickness can no longer stay in the body of the believer, our awareness of who we are and the name behind and in us casts away fear, doubt, disbelief, and any bad circumstances. The life of Jesus in us cannot be subjected to death, to poverty, or to defeat. We are champions; only love, joy, peace, victory, and all of the other blessings of God are allowed in our lives. Why? Because this awareness of who we are in Christ and who Jesus is controls our way of thinking. If we never forget who we are and who Jesus really is we will always act like sons of God, like supermen, or champions, not like ordinary human beings.

While you are reading this book, use the information it provides to exercise your faith to heal sickness, beginning the next time you have a headache. When you gain victory over your headache, thank God the Father, and then use your faith to overcome any other adversity in your life. Jesus declares, in John 17:3: "And this is eternal life that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent." What does this tell you? Until you change your thinking or thought, you cannot change your life, your state, and your estate. In fact, your knowledge about Jesus changes your thinking. Proverbs 4:23 says: "Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life." According to the Good News Bible, Proverbs 4:23 becomes: "Be careful how you think; your life is shaped by your thoughts." In the first chapter of this

book, I will show the basis in the Word of God that proves that the spirit of man refers to the heart for an ordinary man but the spirit of man refers to the heart, mind, and will for a genuine child of God. Therefore, for a child of God, the Bible uses heart, mind, and spirit to talk about the same thing.

But, for our spirit to get hope, our mind must picture our belief in God's Word, including God's mercies or grace and his unfailing compassions or love and the greatness of His faithfulness. You will learn in this book that hope and hopelessness are based on our thoughts. So unless we win the battle that takes place in our mind by focusing on God or Jesus or His Word or His grace, fear or unbelief and the doubt and worries which are in control of our minds will not allow our spirits to fulfill His destiny. No wonder the Bible says, in Deuteronomy 10:16: "Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer." The one who is "stiff-necked" is determined not to change his opinion, his feelings or thoughts, or his mentality or attitude. Until our mind changes its own thoughts to be God's thoughts, God's Word cannot make its way into our heart. Therefore the first purpose of this book aims to change your thoughts, to turn your thoughts into God's thoughts through the seven steps mentioned above.

Now, before going any further, I highly recommend you read the fifteen faith proclamations, below, and I greatly recommend you speak them aloud three times

(in the morning, at noon, and at night). These proclamations have the power to change your thoughts into God's thoughts and start charting the course of your life. Once you have read all of these, come back here to read on.

We will learn in this book that there are four dimensions of faith. The first dimension of faith is an understanding of God's Word, and the last one is love for Jesus. 1 Corinthians 13:11 13 alludes to this reality when it declares: "When I was a child, I spoke as a child; I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part but then I shall know just as I also am known. And now abide faith, hope, love, these three, but the greatest of these is love."

A natural man speaks first, then thinks, and finally understands. But a wise and spiritual man a genuine believer thinks first, then understands, and finally speaks. In the Bible, this principle is called the spirit of faith. We cannot understand God's Word until we picture with our mind what God's Word says, and we cannot automatically speak the Word of God until we believe it or become fully persuaded that it is true. When you listen and pay attention to God's Word or speak it for yourself you get hope. When you keep meditating on God's Word, this hope is turned into faith. And when you start exercising your faith, it is perfected and becomes a true love for Jesus.

Read on and start to grow your faith "from glory to glory," from an understanding of God's Word, passing by exercising your faith to getting a deep root and giving priority to God's Word in your life (in other words, being moved only by God's Word, not by your sensory perception or feelings) in order to attain the last and most perfect stage of faith, which is your full love for Jesus. It is important and vital to know that God loves you, and that Jesus loves you, because it will be impossible for you to really start loving Jesus if you do not know that Jesus loves you. This is what Jesus reveals in John 15:5 when He says that He is the vine, so that without Him we would be nothing.

The following faith proclamations come from a book *entitled Faith's Proclamations of HEALTH and HEALING Volume 2* published by Christ Embassy Healing School. The book can be downloaded by students of the Healing School. Others can listen to an MP3 of the book on line.

These proclamations will activate the power of God in you and frame the course of your life. They will also heal whatever sickness you have in your body, soul, and spirit, while changing the circumstances of your life. When you wake up in the morning, at noon, and before you go to bed, confess these fifteen proclamations. You will begin to feel the power of God in your body when you begin to profess these words and read this book.

"And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, 'I believed and therefore

I spoke,' we also believe and therefore speak" (2 Corinthians 4:13). These professions are designed to help you keep yourself in divine health through the proclamation of God's Word. The Bible says: "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, . . ." (Proverbs 18:21). As you speak these words, you will chart the course of your life, and walk vitally in the divine health Jesus Christ died to give you.

Use these professions daily, and watch as your life is transformed through the Word.

CONFESSION 1

The Bible says, in Isaiah 33:24, "And the inhabitant will not say, 'I am sick'; The people who dwell in it will be forgiven their iniquity." I refuse to be sick because it's not in my nature. I'm a new creation in Christ Jesus; old things are passed away, and all things are become new. The man that could be sick is dead; the "me" that's alive today has Zoe the supernatural life of God that makes me invincible and impregnable to sickness, disease, and infirmity. I have the life of God in me; it's the superior life of glory, success, and victory. Thank you, Lord, for making it possible for me to receive this glorious and wondrous life into my spirit, thus making me superhuman. Praise God.

I belong in God's class of divine beings; therefore I look beyond the natural realm of existence to my heavenly rights, blessings, and provisions in

Christ Jesus! Today, I recognize and take hold of my divine right to live in health, prosperity, victory, success, dominion, and excellence! Thank you, Lord Jesus, for giving me the right to reign and rule over the circumstances of life and exercise dominion over Satan and the power of darkness.

I have dominion over sin, sickness, and circumstances. I'm superior to Satan, and I've overcome the world. I am seated together with Christ in heavenly realms, far above all principality and power! I exercise the authority of Christ in and around my sphere of contact, in Jesus's name!

CONFESSION 2

The Bible says, in 1 John 5:11 12, "And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life." I have the miracle-life of God in me. Therefore, I am an associate of the God-kind, and a partaker of the divine nature, having been made free of the corrupting influences, decadence, and destruction in the world. Today and always, I'm conscious of the transcendent life of glory and victory that God has given me through Christ Jesus. The indestructible life of God is in me; therefore, sickness, disease, lack, and death cannot find place in my life. The life and nature of God in me makes me invincible and superhuman. I'm a product of God's word! Jesus Christ is my Lord

and Savior! When He died, I died; when He was buried, I was buried with Him; now that He's risen, I've been raised together with Him with the resurrection-life that is sin-, sickness-, death-, and disease-proof! I'm an ordained saint of God, with the life of God and His nature of righteousness.

Dear heavenly Father, I thank you for making it possible for me to receive eternal life! I declare that this life is working in every fiber of my being, repelling sickness, disease, infirmity, death, poverty, and everything that is inconsistent with the provisions of the divine life, in the name of Jesus. I'm the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus; I'm dead to sin, but alive unto God. My limbs are yielded to God as instruments of righteousness; therefore sin doesn't reign in my body, for the nature of sin has been supplanted with God's nature of righteousness.

CONFESSION 3

Dear Father, thank you for the glorious and triumphant life in Christ into which You've brought me, where there is no sickness, disease, or infirmity. I thank you for Your indestructible life that flows through every fiber of my being, making me unsusceptible and impregnable to the attacks of the devil, in Jesus's name. I have the life and nature of God in me; I've put on the new man, which, like God, is created in righteousness and true holiness. I'm excited about my new life

in Christ. I've passed from death to life; from sin to righteousness; from sickness to health; from poverty to wealth. Praise God!

Dear Father, thank you for justifying me and making me unreproveable and unblameable in your sight. I refuse to allow the devil or the opinions of others or even my own mind to put me in a place of self condemnation. I'm free to serve You and free to live the good life, in Jesus's name. Amen.

I declare that I've received the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness; therefore I'm reigning in life as a king. I'm dominating the devil, sickness, and disease! I've overcome the world and its systems, in Jesus's name. Amen.

The Bible says, in Proverbs 18:21: "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it shall eat its fruit." Therefore, I declare that I am enjoying life to the fullest extent possible. I know that greater is He that is in me, than he that is in the world. My body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and no sickness can triumph in this body in the mighty name of Jesus. Hallelujah!

CONFESSION 4

The Bible says, in 2 Corinthians 5:17: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold all things have become new." I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live. Yet not I, but Christ, lives in me because the

life that I now live in the body, I live by the faith of the son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me. He is my Lord, my King, and my all. Christ is my life; in Him I live and move and have my being. Hallelujah!

My body is the temple of the Holy Ghost; every fiber of my being from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet is vitalized by the Spirit of God. The life of God in me destroys sickness, disease, and infirmity; therefore I'm "uninfectable." I am not ordinary; I refuse to accommodate any form of weakness in my body. In the name of Jesus, I refuse arthritis, diabetes, cancer, tumor, paralysis, kidney failure, heart failure, lung failure, or illness any place in my body. I declare that I live, rule, and reign above them all in the mighty name of Jesus. I live in absolute victory over sickness, disease, and poverty today and always! No weapon of darkness fashioned against me shall prosper, because I live in the name of Jesus! I've been delivered from sin, sickness, and death, and catapulted into God's realm of abundant life where I reign victoriously with Christ, every day, in Jesus's name.

CONFESSION 5

The Bible says concerning me in Colossians 3:4, that Christ is my life! Hallelujah.

I thank you, Lord, for the life of Christ in me that makes me superhuman! I recognize Your divine ability, efficiency, and might that's at work in me today. And,

by virtue of the divine life of Christ in me, I declare that I'm superior to Satan; nothing shall be impossible unto me in the name of Jesus. Thus, I refuse to allow sickness, disease, and infirmity in my body or to accommodate poverty and failure in my life. I've been catapulted into God's Kingdom of light and life, where only divinity, success, victory, joy, peace, prosperity, and divine health reign. Hallelujah!

Thank you for the victorious life You've called me into, a triumphant life above sickness, poverty, failure, death, and every form of disease. I walk worthy of this calling today and always, fully taking advantage of the power of divinity at work in me, in Jesus's name. Amen.

Thank you, Father, for the power of the name of Jesus, and the authority I have to use that name against the devil, sickness, disease, and everything that hurts or binds. By the power of that name, I declare that I'm living the higher life of glory that You prearranged for me, in Jesus's name. Amen.

I am confident of this very thing: that the life of God is in me. Therefore, poverty, failure, sickness, and death are not a part of my life because the life that's at work in me is superior to the devil and all his works. Today, I walk with the knowledge that greater is He that is in me, than he that is in the world for eternal life is at work in me.

CONFESSION 6

The Bible says, in Hebrews 4:12: "For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any

two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Dear Father, I thank you for Your Word and its ability to recreate my world. I thank you for enlightening my heart with the revelations of Your Word and granting me insight into the realities of the kingdom. By the power of Your Spirit, I'm effecting changes in every situation and circumstances that's not consistent with Your Word to me. Thank you for granting me the ability to effect changes through the Spirit, by the Word, and prayer, in Jesus's name.

I am born of the Word and Spirit of the Lord, therefore I'm impregnable to everything that hurts or binds, because I hail from God! I've overcome the devil and the cohorts of darkness, because the Greater One dwells in me! I am a master over Satan, because my spirit, soul, and body are now infused with divinity. I am a product of God's Word, for my origin is the Word of God; therefore my words and actions are backed by divine authority.

CONFESSION 7

I'm born again; therefore, I'm not ordinary. As the Father has life in Himself, even so has He given me to have His life life without limits. Thus, I function with supernatural strength and abilities

today; nothing and no one can hurt or harm me, for my sufficiency is of God. Hallelujah!

Through the power of Your Word and by the working of Your Spirit, I walk in Your perfect will for my life today. There are no accidents or mishaps on my path, for I walk in preordained pathways of blessings! Goodness and mercy follow me everywhere I go, and I have the supernatural grace to excel in all my endeavors today, in Jesus's name. Amen.

I refuse to lack any good thing, knowing that the Lord is my shepherd, and that I've been blessed with spiritual blessings from heavenly places, in Christ Jesus.

Dear Father, I thank you for making me a testimony to and the inheritor of the blessings of Abraham through my association with Christ. I'm prospering and living in the manifestation of your infinite blessings because I'm Abraham's seed. I'm an heir according to the promise and joint-heir with Jesus. I'm blessed in the city, I am blessed in the field, and in my going out and in my coming in! I'm blessed to be a blessing! Your Word is my life and the light that illuminates my path! I fix my gaze on the Word today, for guidance, direction, strength, wisdom, and inspiration. Thank you for the transformation in my spirit and renewal in my soul that I experience daily through Your Word, in Jesus's name. Amen.

CONFESSION 8

I declare that Your Word is my light and my life! It's nourishment for my spirit, food for my soul, and health to my body! I live by Your Word today, and declare its mighty power at work in me as I meditate on it and observe to do what it says. Your Word to me is reality, and that's the basis for which I know I'll never be sick, broke, or defeated.

The Word is growing mightily in me, prevailing, and producing health in every area of my body. I refuse to be a victim; I continually live above sickness, disease, and infirmities; for as He is, so am I in this world. I declare that I'm strong and healthy. Sickness has no place in me. Jesus's body was bruised and broken for me; I refuse to be broken by any infirmity or disease!

The anointing of God is upon me and His presence is evident in my life. I declare that I experience the miraculous in my body every day by the power of God's Spirit in Jesus's name. I'm superior to Satan; therefore, he has no power over me! The Greater One lives in me; no sickness can reside in my body. My body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, therefore it is void of any form of sickness.

CONFESSION 9

I've put on the new nature of righteousness. I have in my spirit the incorruptible life of God.

This new life is in every cell of my blood, every bone of my body, and in every fiber of my being! Today, I walk in the reality of the new life of righteousness which I've received in Christ. My path is illuminated to see and experience the glory of God in my health in Jesus's name. Amen.

I declare that my faith is alive and producing health in my body. Therefore, I refuse to entertain doubts in my heart, for I know my faith always works. I'm not moved by what I see, feel, or hear; I'm only moved by the Word of God. I'm living in health twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week; no weapon formed or fashioned against me shall prosper. There's life in my bones, tissues, muscles, tendons, and ligaments; I'm alive unto God.

Christ lives in me; therefore, no sickness or infirmity can dwell in me. Jesus bore my infirmities, that I may never bear any infirmity. I declare today that my body is strong and healthy! Sickness and infirmity have no place in me; the life of Christ is at work in every fiber of my being, in every bone of my body, and in every cell of my blood. I am born of God and my origin is in Him! No sickness has the power or ability to destroy my body! I have the overcoming life of God in me, and that makes me indestructible and impregnable to disease and infirmity. Hallelujah!

CONFESSION 10

My body is the temple of the Holy Ghost; therefore, every organ, tissue, and cell in my body complies with the Word of God. My body is not sustained by blood, but by the vitalizing power of the Holy Spirit in me. I declare that the Holy Spirit is at work in me; therefore, my body is daily renewed! I dwell continually in health through the working of His mighty power in me, Hallelujah!

Today, I walk free of every sickness, disease, or infirmity and walk in the light of God's Word. The Word of God is life and health to my body. Its transforming power is changing the circumstances of my life and causing my health to spring forth. I declare in the name of Jesus that divine health is mine; it is working from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet. I refuse to accommodate cancer, tumors, or HIV in my body; for greater is He that is in me, than he that is in the world. I declare that every organ, tissue, and cell in my body complies with the Word of God. My body is not sustained by blood; therefore, no virus can live in my blood. That same spirit that raised Christ from the dead dwells in me; therefore, my entire being is vitalized. I dwell continually in health through the working of His mighty power in me, Hallelujah!

Jesus has made my life beautiful! I'll never walk in sickness or defeat! The victorious and glorious

life is mine now and always, in the mighty name of Jesus. Amen.

CONFESSION 11

The Bible says in 3 John 1:2: "Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers." I declare that I'm a new creation, born superior to Satan and all the demons of darkness. I'm an offspring of divinity and a product of Christ's resurrection! I'm a partaker of the divine nature and I dwell in Zion; therefore, I don't get sick. I'm born for health, success, and the glory of God! Hallelujah!

No weapon fashioned against me shall prosper because my body is the temple of the Holy Ghost. I'm complete in Christ Jesus, and I've been perfected through my union with Him. I've been created for good Works and predestined for the good life; there is nothing wrong in my body. I've got everything I require for an excellent life and sickness is not part of it. The word of God is working mightily in me. It doesn't matter what may come my way; I'm a victor and I've overcome because I'm more than a conqueror. The life of God is working in my spirit, soul, and body, and it's manifested in all that concerns me. I declare that sickness and ill health are far from me. I'm protected from harm and I dwell in health all of my days, in Jesus's name. Amen.

The same spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead lives in me; it's impossible for me to be brought down by sickness. The healing power is working in my bones, tissues, tendons, ligaments, and in every cell in my blood. The Holy Ghost vitalizes my body; my body cannot be destroyed.

CONFESSION 12

My faith is the victory that overcomes the world. I believe God's Word that says He who has the Son, has life. Therefore, my health shines forth from one level of glory to another. I am walking in divine health every day of my life; sickness cannot prevail over my body because eternal life is working from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet. I'm a new creation in Christ Jesus. Old things are passed away and all things are become new for me. I'm not of this world; I'm from above. I'm born of God and I've got His life and nature in me. I'm divinely enabled to do as God's word says; therefore, I refuse to subject myself to circumstances and situations that are contrary to the Word of God concerning me. I have eternal life. This life produces everything I need to live and enjoy a fruitful and productive life here on earth. I refuse to consider what my body tells me, because the life that I have is indestructible. Greater is He that is in me than he that is in the world. I rule and reign over every form of sickness; no cancer, tumor, diabetes, or

arthritis can stay in my body, in the name of Jesus. Hallelujah!

CONFESSION 13

The Bible says, in Philippians 2:9 10: "Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, . . ." I declare that Jesus is the Lord of my life; therefore, I cannot be defeated! The Word of God is producing in me what it talks about. A thousand shall fall at my side and then a thousand at my right hand, but no evil shall come near me! My life is for the glory of God! I'm blessed in my body; no sickness, disease, or infirmity has any place in me.

I receive the word of God into my heart; I declare that it is working in me, producing the results it talks about in my body.

The Word of God is health and life to my body. I declare that the Holy Spirit is at work in me; therefore my body is daily renewed! The Holy Ghost lives in me; therefore, I have the dynamic ability to effect changes. I declare that no sickness has the power or ability to destroy my body! I have the overcoming life of God in me, and that makes me indestructible and impregnable to disease and infirmity, Hallelujah!

Christ is Lord over my spirit, soul, and body. Therefore, no disease or infirmity has any place in me. No weapon fashioned against me shall prosper. Jesus has all authority over my body and I declare that I dwell daily in health and strength, in the mighty name of Jesus. Amen!

CONFESSION 14

The Bible says, in Romans 8:11, "But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you." That same Spirit lives in me; therefore, I declare that my body is vitalized by His power in me. There's no death or failure in my body; the life-giving Spirit is at work in every fiber of my being. I declare that my body is daily filled with strength from within by the power of the Holy Ghost. God's Word is health to my body. It's medicine to my flesh and I meditate upon it constantly.

My words are full of divine power and authority, and they produce changes in my life. I choose and live the good life. I have health, strength, and vitality. I live in divine health, enjoy prosperity, and walk in victory every single day of my life. I refuse to consider any infirmity in my body; rather I see my health in the Word of God. It doesn't matter how hopeless the situation may seem; as

I meditate on God's Word, I'm transformed and my mind is renewed. I live above every situation that's contrary to God's Word for me. I'm a doer of God's Word; therefore, I refuse to be subject to cancer, HIV, or tumors; I ascend above every form of disease because my life is hid in Christ, and Christ in God. The name of Jesus has been named upon me; I'll never be sick in my life. No sickness or infirmity of the body can overwhelm me! Hallelujah!

CONFESSION 15

"Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:9–11). I've been given the all-conquering name of Jesus; therefore, I have power over all things! No sickness or infirmity of the body can overwhelm me! I live in the name of Jesus; therefore I live in dominion over sickness, disease, and infirmities. Everything in this world is subject to the name of Jesus that includes all manner of sicknesses and infirmities. Therefore, I declare that every sickness is subject to me, because I function in the name of Jesus.

I have authority over all devils in the name of Jesus, I'm a believer, and I have authority. I have

> the will to use my authority in Christ Jesus. Satan, demons, devils, and evil spirits, you're losers because I know who I am; I know what belongs to me. I'm a victor, am not trying to be one; that's who I am. Greater is He that is in me, in every fiber of my being, in every bone of my body, in every cell of my blood; greater is He that is in me than he that is in the world.

These professions should be your words to live by all your days in this world. They should become your lifestyle. Keep on confessing them and you will never be a failure and never be sick again in your life.

As you read this book, your spiritual eyes will be opened, and you will understand every word of these fifteen confessions in a way you never thought you would before you started professing these words. Welcome to God's life-changing message for you.

If you are sick, in prison, afraid or anxious, addicted, conscious of guilt, unable to bear the trials of life, desperate, poor (physically or spiritually), or crushed emotionally, or if you need deliverance, happiness, peace and joy, this message is for you. Children who want to be wise, and fathers and mothers who want to give good education to their children, this message is also for you. Your children will never fail at school and in life if you help them listen to my message. This message is easy to understand for anyone who wants to listen.

People who intend to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, who aim to be a priest or a pastor, this book is

for you. Anyone who is already Christian and wants to know the principles of the Kingdom of God so that he can live by them and become a true disciple of Jesus or a genuine imitator or follower of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior, this book is for you. (Do not forget that the main personality of the genuine follower or imitator of Jesus Christ is to be meek, as will be discussed in Chapter Twenty-two.)

If you are a believer, but do not see the impact of your faith in your life or fail to see the results of your prayer, but want to make changes in your situation and experience the power of wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, redemption, joy, peace, healing, prosperity, and so on this book is the answer to your desires. Today is your day. Do not weep any more. You will never experience fear, anxiety, anger, poverty, failure, guilt, or a lack of joy and happiness again. It is your time to fulfill your destiny.

I am anointed to bring you good news. Come to me, and listen to my words, they are the words of Jesus Christ, the wonderful Word. Have you understood what I have said? I call you again. Come to me, come and listen to my words, the words of Jesus Christ. This is the only thing you need to do to enter into the kingdom of heaven, to become citizens of heaven, and to become children of God. Only listen and pay attention to my words, the words of Jesus Christ, which I am anointed to bring you. If you listen to me, your life will change forever.

Listening to me will open the door of heaven, and you will become a genuine son of God, there will

be no need to mourn any more, and you will never be the same. You will get wisdom — not human wisdom, but the wisdom of Jesus Christ; the wisdom and insight he gave to Solomon the great king. Getting wisdom and insight is the first step to receiving happiness, and all you desire. All of the other resources I will give you are free; you do not need to pay anything for them.

I do not ask you to leave your church; rather, stay where you are, the Holy Spirit — who will come upon you and live in your spirit — will guide you. Do not be afraid about the church where you are, even if you do not go to any Christian church. It doesn't matter. This book also aims to bring to Jesus those who don't believe in Him at the very moment they come in touch with my book. The power of God's Word will transform them and cause them to become believers in Christ.

Simply listen to the words of Jesus Christ, which I am anointed to bring you. After you give your life to Jesus, He will show you a good church where you will be able to go to help you grow in your spiritual life.

Your pains are over, your poverty is over, and your frustrations are over. What belongs to you now, as a child of God, are happiness, joy, peace of mind, honor, protection, prosperity, success, and more. When you are ready to listen to me wherever you are, I will teach you the words of Jesus, the beloved Son of God, in a new way that will empower you and satisfy all your needs.

You will no longer experience sickness, if you do, it will mean that you have stopped studying and meditating on the words of God every day. Do not worry about sickness I will teach you the words of God to shatter your sickness.

Your duty is only to listen to me, listening to me with your:

- Will (to focus on God's Word)
- Eyes (to read God's Word)
- Mind (to picture God's Word or receive from your spirit the picture of your victory in any battle of life)
- Mouth (to read aloud God's Word to keep it alive and increase your faith in Jesus)
- Ears (to incline to God's Word and give attention to It)
- Body (to act and feel according to God's Word)
- Heart (to treasure what you understand)
- Spirit (to understand God's Word and draw God's Word out of your heart when the opportunity arises to use it and live by its seven spiritual senses)

If you listen to me, you will get what your heart desires most. The only way to get what you are looking for is to get wisdom, the wisdom of Jesus Christ. It is your passport to heaven. Once you get wisdom, you will be able to fulfill your destiny both on earth and after your physical death. As a matter of fact, this book will answer any question you have in mind concerning

God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, who you are in Christ, what to do in any situation of life you find yourself in, the realm of the Spirit, and the life of this world and the afterlife.

Have a good journey.

About this Book

This book contains two parts. Part One focuses on Faith According to Jesus Christ: How to Grow in the True Knowledge of Our Lord and Savior. Part Two deals with the Principles of Wisdom revealed by King Solomon, entitled "Wisdom Principles." This second part is tabulated and will help you to understand the right attitude to have when faced with any challenges in life. (You will also find Part Two of this book as a free resource on my website.)

The first seven chapters (in Part One) are the foundation of this book and the basis for understanding any scriptures in the Bible. These seven chapters are your passport to living the wonderful life of God's children. As soon as you master them, you will start to live as Jesus did when He was on earth: to speak with authority and power, to have fellowship with the Holy Spirit, to make changes in your circumstances of life, and to live a balanced and wonderful life. Once you master them, it will be easy for you to live according to the spirit of faith, and the God-kind of faith, which God Almighty has had in store for you from the creation of the world.

I am aware that reading the Bible written in Hebrew or Greek is better than doing it in English. I also know

that reading the Bible in English is a whole lot better than doing the same in French. So I recommend readers from French-speaking countries to read my book as well as the Bible in English to grasp all of God's power, thoughts, feelings, will, and purpose for mankind. Free resources are at your disposal on my website to help you read my book and any Bible written in English. This will, at the same time, help you (readers from French-speaking countries) grow in the spiritual realm and master English, the most-spoken language of God today.

Acknowledgments

In December 2008, I wrote a book titled, in French, *La Demarche Ethique ou les Clés du Bonheur Humain*. A year later, in December 2009, I translated that book into English: *The Ethical Approach or the Keys to Human Happiness*. The purpose of that first book was to demonstrate the six abilities or dimensions in the development of the natural human being, which are:

1) Think,
2) Speak,
3) Act,
4) Go through trials,
5) Reason,
6) Communicate with the transcendental or supernatural.

The only subject I did not treat was the last: "Communicate with the transcendental or supernatural," which is one of the main points which I deal with in this book.

I did not know at that time the dream God had for me. Indeed, I wrote my first book in three days, the ideas simply came to me and invited me to write the book. In the past three years, starting in April 2011, I

studied and meditated on God's Word daily, as it was written in different version of the Bible, such as La Bible de Jerusalem; The Good News Bible; La Bible TOB; Holy Bible, New King James Version; the Amplified Topical Reference Bible; the Holy Bible New Living Translation, Second Edition; and the New Saint Joseph Sunday Missal, Complete Edition. Meanwhile, I was hearing God's Word spoken by great pastors of the Lord on TBN (Trinity Broadcasting Network), CTV (Christian TV), LoveworldSat, YouTube (especially Kenneth E. Hagin), Emmanuel TV, and KICC-TV. That is to say that I was listening to Pastor Joel Osteen, Pastor Chris Oyakhilome, Joseph Prince, Billy Graham, Andrew Womack, Robert Morris, Philip Morris, Creflo Dollar, Doctor Charles Stanley, Doctor David Jeremiah, Bishop Clarence E. McClendon, and Bishop TD Jakes, to name but a few.

One of them (Pastor Chris Oyakhilome, PhD) helped me discover the dream God has already predestined me for: writing this book. I extend my special thanks to Pope Francis for his book or apostolic admonition titled *The Joy of the Gospel* or *Evangelii Gaudium*. This book reconciles me with the real Catholic Church. Great thanks to all the teachers of Pastor Chris Healing School of Randburg in Johannesburg, especially evangelist Dr. Eddy Owase, and Rev. Ray Okocha.

I also would like to thank all the promoters of these TV channels, and these pastors and bishops who continue to help me grow in the knowledge of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and my special thanks go

to Pastor Chris Oyakhilome, PhD, and TBN (Trinity Broadcasting Network).

Above all, let me show my gratitude to Jesus Christ because He is the one who loves me and found me; through all of His instruments, He anointed in the world to preach the gospel and bring human beings into the true light who is Jesus, our Lord and Savior.

NOTE: It is VITAL and ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY to read the CONCLUSION of this book before you continue with reading this book, so that you can keep in mind the transformation that will take place in your mind, will, heart, and body as you are reading this book, meditating on God's Word, and putting into practice what it tells you to do.

1. Definition of Heart, Soul, and Might According to Jesus Christ

Before going any further, let us see how God defines the inner man and the outer man. In Genesis 2:7, the Bible says: "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being." This means that man is composed of two parts: the outer man made of the dust of the ground, and the inner man made of the breath of God, which is the breath of life. Genesis 2:7 also adds that the breath of life is the principle of life that gives life to a human being ("and man became a living being"). The Scriptures also declare, in Ecclesiastes 12:7: "Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, And the spirit will return to God who gave it." Combining Genesis 2:7 and Ecclesiastes 12:7, we get that the dust comes from the ground and will return to the ground and the spirit, which is the breath of life, originates from God and will return to God. We can conclude, then, that every human being is made of two parts: the inner man and the outer man. So the real you is your spirit, therefore, every time you see pronouns "I" and "he" referring to a human being in the Scriptures,

consider that the Bible is talking about *your* spirit every man's spirit.

This chapter will explain that our spirit is our real personality and identity, as it is written in Proverbs 23:7: "For as he thinks in his heart or his spirit, so is he." As you read on, this will become even more obvious, and you will come to understand how I came to this conclusion: the real you is your spirit.

Now let us examine thoroughly the different parts of the inner man, which is also the spirit of man. To do this, it is important to know the real meaning of two fundamental words: heart and soul, otherwise it will be difficult for us to find God and to have genuine fellowship with Him.

The purpose of this chapter is to point out the definition of soul and heart through the Scriptures.

The first time the two words "heart" and "soul" are used together in the Bible is found in Deuteronomy 4:29. Deuteronomy 4:29 says: "But from there you will seek the LORD your God, and you will find Him if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul." So God is telling us that the condition we need to fulfill in order to find Him is to seek Him with all our heart and with all our soul. The second time these two words are used together is in Deuteronomy 6:5, but this time they are associated with the word "might." God declares in Deuteronomy 6:5: "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might."

In the New Testament, Jesus quotes this passage of the Old Testament and qualifies it as the greatest

commandment, but how can we put into practice a commandment we do not understand? Therefore, we must understand the meaning of these three words: heart, soul, and might. According to the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* "might" refers to great strength, energy, or power.

Let us see how Matthew, Mark, and Luke talk about this greatest commandment. In Mark 12:30, Deuteronomy 6:5 becomes: "And you shall love the LORD with all your heart, with all your soul, and with your mind, and with all your strength." Taking into account that Mark's use of "strength" is similar to the word "might," we also observe that Mark 12:30 adds the word "mind." The quotation of Deuteronomy 6:5 in Luke is found in Luke 10:27: "You shall love the LORD with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with your mind." So Luke also adds the word "mind." In Matthew 22:37, Jesus is quoted as saying "You shall love the LORD with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." You will notice that in Matthew 22:37 the word "might" which is found in the other quotes has been removed. It is possible that, for Matthew, "might" dwells somewhere in our heart, soul, or mind.

Throughout the Bible, especially in the Old Testament, the word "heart" refers to both "heart" *and* "mind." Deuteronomy 7:17 declares: "If you say in your heart, 'These nations are greater than I; how can I dispossess them?'" What is this idea of saying something in your heart? Isn't it the same as a thought?

Yes, it is a thought — and it is also a belief. Why? It is a thought because it is not expressed aloud, but it is also a belief because — if it comes from the heart — then you are convinced that it is true. Let us look at another illustration. As we have already discussed, the Bible says, in Deuteronomy 10:16: "Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer." We know that to be "stiff-necked" means to be stubborn, and stubbornness is a character of the mind. This means that our mind is the cover of our heart; unless we remove our own mind or our own thoughts and turn our mind towards God, God's Word cannot reach our heart and take deep root in it and grow.

Another scripture, 1 Chronicles 12:38, identifies "heart" with "mind," saying, "All these men of war, who could keep ranks, came to Hebron with a loyal heart, to make David king over all Israel; and all the rest of Israel were of one mind to make David king." Another wonderful scripture declares, in Deuteronomy 30:6: "And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and that you may live." Do you see what this mind-blowing scripture is showing? This scripture is saying that the key factor of our love for God and for Jesus is the circumcision of our heart — the changing of our mind towards God and our repentance (another change of mind) towards God gives birth to our love for Jesus and God. While, physically, circumcision

refers to the removal of the male foreskin, our spiritual circumcision refers to the removal of our own mind or owns thoughts so that God's thoughts can replace our own thoughts and therefore our hearts can become good ground. God's Word is a seed planted in the heart (spiritual ground). If anyone continues to keep his own thoughts, there is no way that the seed of God's Word can grow, since our own thoughts always contradict the Word of God.

No wonder Jesus declares, in Mark 1:15: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel."

Without our change of mind towards God our repentance there is no way to believe in Jesus or to love Him. Our heart is united with our mind when we change our mind towards God so that the spark of our love for both Jesus and God is kindled in our heart. Our heart and mind become one when our mind follows God's will or God's thoughts or God's Word but, if our mind follows its own thought, it closes the gate of our heart to God's Word. It is also written in Deuteronomy 29:4: "Yet the LORD has not given you a heart to perceive and eyes to see and ears to hear, to this very day;" and in Proverbs 2:2: "So that you incline your ear to wisdom, And apply your heart to understanding; . . ." We all know that one of the definitions of "mind" is the ability to think or reason. So understanding and the ability to perceive are also attributes of the mind.

Therefore, in Deuteronomy 29:4 and Proverbs 2:2, God is telling us that unless we decide to turn the

focus of our minds to God's Word and then treasure it in our hearts we cannot have true revelations or visions or true knowledge, as it is written in Proverbs 29:18 of the Amplified Bible: "Where there is no vision [no redemptive revelation of God], the people perish; but he who keeps the law [of God, which includes that of man] blessed (happy, fortunate, and enviable) is he." This same reality is revealed in Hosea 4:6, where God says: "My people perish for lack of knowledge." Why is it so? Again, I tell you that unless your mind becomes one with your heart God's Word cannot make its way in you. God's Word is a seed, as it is written in Luke 8:11: "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God." Our heart is the soil where the Word of God is sown, takes root, and grows to build our inner man. But if our mind is the fallow ground of our heart; our own mind must be broken up in order to let that seed take deep root in it and grow.

It is written in Hosea 10:12 13: "Sow for yourselves righteousness; Reap in mercy; Break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek the LORD, till he comes and rains righteousness on you. You have plowed wickedness, you have reaped iniquity. You have eaten the fruit of lies, because you trusted in your own way, in the multitude of your mighty men." The New Living Translation Bible, Second Edition, puts the same verse in this way: "I said, 'Plant the good seeds of righteousness, and you will harvest a crop of love. Plow up the hard ground of your hearts, for now is the time to seek the LORD that He may come and shower

righteousness upon you' but you have cultivated wickedness and harvested a thriving crop of sins. You have eaten the fruit of lies trusting in your military might, believing that great armies could make your nation safe."

To sow righteousness, then, means to seek the Lord or trust in God's way of doing things and to believe in Jesus or love Jesus, as well as to do good unto others. Once you have done this, then you will reap a crop of love according to what Jesus Himself says in John 14:21: "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him." But to sow in wickedness signifies trust in your own way to do things to seek yourself or sow selfishness.

Do you know what "Break up your fallow ground" means? "Fallow ground," which refers to your mind in the quotes, above, literally means "ground which is not already being farmed." So "Break up your fallow ground" means "plow up your mind" or "change your mind." Unless you change your mind towards God and Jesus, you cannot love Jesus and God. No wonder the Bible declares, in 1 John 4:7–8: "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God, and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love." True knowledge is the principle of genuine love a love for Christ.

If you sow seed in a soil full of thorns, you cannot produce good fruit, because the thorns will destroy

the seed when they sprout, as it is written in Jeremiah 4:3 4: "For thus says the LORD to the men of Judah and Jerusalem: 'Break up your fallow ground, And do not sow among thorns. Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, and take away the foreskin of your hearts, you men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, lest My fury come forth like fire, And burn so that no one can quench it, Because of the evil of your doings.'" In these lines from Jeremiah, "Break up your fallow ground," "Circumcise yourselves to the LORD," and "Take away the foreskin of your hearts" all speak of the same need to change our minds and look towards Jesus and God.

God is telling us to change our mind towards Him before we start sowing God's Word in our heart, otherwise we will sow God's Word among thorns, which will stop the growth of the Word of God in our heart. In other words, we will stop the growth of our love for Jesus and God in our heart. Likewise, God's Word cannot grow when it is sown in the mind and heart that are full of cares of this world, because all other kinds of desires will choke the message and God's Word will not bear fruit, as it is written in Mark 4:18 19: "Now these are the ones sown among thorns; they are ones who hear the word, and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in, choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful."

Trusting your own way to do things is sin in the sight of God. Jesus Himself shows the ultimate importance

of our mind when He declares in Mark 11:23: "For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believe that those things he says will come to pass, he will have whatever he says." We doubt with our mind, but we believe with our heart, as it is written in Romans 10:10: "For with the heart one believes to righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made to salvation." So Jesus is saying that unless your mind ceases to doubt, your profession of God's Word cannot grow in the spiritual realm (or in the heart) and become reality in the physical realm.

Moreover, Acts 20:32 adds: "And now, Brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified." Have you noticed that God's Word sown in our heart has the power to build our spirit up? As believers in Jesus, we are the trees of righteousness, and these trees of righteousness are built up by the seed of God's Word, according to what is written in Isaiah 61:1–3: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for a spirit

of heaviness, that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified."

Let us also be reminded of the declaration of our Lord and Savior Jesus Himself in Luke 4:16 19: "So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as the custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: 'The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me to preach gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the broken-hearted. To preach deliverance to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, To preach the acceptable year of the LORD.'" Jesus quotes Isaiah 61:1 2, but does not go on to Isaiah 61:3, which is quoted above. What does this tell you? Jesus stops his quotation at Isaiah 61:2, but if you continue to quote until Isaiah 61:3, the prophecy of Isaiah concerning Jesus also talks about the transformation He will oversee in us by making us the trees of righteousness.

So far, we know that our inner man is composed of both heart and mind. When your mind and heart work together on things beyond the physical realm they bring your inner man (your spirit) into the kingdom of God, which is the way God calls us to live by faith the normal kind of faith or the spirit of faith. (In the next chapter, we will learn more about the spirit of

faith. But there is a second kind of faith, which is faith in God, or the God-kind of faith. We will discuss this second kind later in this book.)

Now let us see what the meaning of the word "soul" is in the mind of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. In Matthew 10:28, Jesus declares: "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell;" and, in Mark 8:34–38: "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."

What does "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul" tell you? This means that our soul possesses its own life and Jesus balances our soul against our body, meaning that our soul is our spirit. Jesus went on and declared, in Mark 8:35–37: "For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" In this, it is crystal clear that, for Jesus, the soul stands for life. And, as we

know, the spirit of man is the principal piece which gives life to him. So, as far as Jesus is concerned, our "soul" is our "spirit."

Jesus also states, in Matthew 6:22 23: "The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness." In this passage of the scripture, Jesus teaches us the role of our spirit, because "eye" stands for the human being's spirit. Indeed, Proverbs 20:27 states: "The spirit of the man is the lamp of the LORD, searching all the inner depths of his heart;" Proverbs 6:23 tells us: "For the commandment is a lamp, And the law is light; . . . ;" Proverbs 24:19 20 also declares : "Do not fret because of evil-doers, Nor be envious of the wicked; For there will no prospect for the evil man; The lamp of the wicked will be put out;" and finally John 8:12 says: "Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, 'I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life." John 1:1 5 says: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it." Jesus gives to Christians His light that turns on our spirit so that it becomes the lamp of the Lord that helps us keep our

steps on the path of Jesus Christ. Jesus Himself declares in Matthew 5:14: "You are the light of the world . . . ." But unbelievers live in darkness because their lamps or spirits have been put out.

Therefore, unless you hear the gospel of Jesus Christ and believe in Him as your Lord and Savior, your spirit remains in darkness, like a lamp turned off. But, if you believe in Jesus and receive Him as your Lord and Savior after hearing the gospel, then your spirit is lit and works as God had purposed in Proverbs 20:27: "The spirit of a man is the lamp of the LORD, Searching all the inner depths of his heart."

God, through our faith in Jesus Christ, must light our spirit to give it the ability to do His work to search all the inner depths of our heart and then give to our mouth what to say, our mind what to think, our will what to desire, our eyes what to see, our ears what to hear, our body what to do, and our heart what to treasure and feel. These are the seven spiritual senses of mankind, which are created in our spirit when our spirit is lit by God.

The first spiritual sense is the power of our spirit to distinguish the right things to treasure and feel in our heart. The second spiritual sense is the ability of our spirit to detect the right things to say. The third spiritual sense is the power of our spirit to perceive the right things to think or imagine and focus on. The fourth spiritual sense is the capability of our spirit to discover the right things to want or desire or hope for. The fifth spiritual sense is the aptitude of our spirit to

recognize the right things to see and focus our eyes on. The sixth spiritual sense is the capacity of our spirit to determine the right things to hear. Finally, the seventh spiritual sense is the ability of our spirit to discern the right things to do. This means that we must first put into our heart God's Word, otherwise our spirit will not find good things to provide to our mouth, mind, will, eyes, ears, body, and heart. No wonder Proverbs 20:5 declares: "Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out." Only a man whose spirit is enlightened can search and find the right counsel treasured in his heart and then send it to the faculties of his being which need it (mouth, mind, will, eyes, ears, and body and back to the heart itself).

Let us see where the strength of our inner man dwells. In Matthew 26:41, Jesus said: "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Jesus said, in Luke 22:42–43: "'Father, if it is Your will, remove this cup from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.' Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him." Have you noticed that, at first the will of God the Father was not the same as Jesus's will, but then Jesus spoke, asking God to do His own will? After that, God sent an angel to strengthen Jesus's will in order to align it with the will of His Father. So in the mind of Jesus our will is the power or might of our spirit. Indeed, the body is weak, so we must pray to receive strength from God so that our will is energized to keep

aligning with God's Will in order to maintain its control over our body.

Therefore our will must also dwell in our spirit. And thus our spirit (or soul or inner man) is composed of heart, mind, and will. Jesus wants our free will to respond to His call as it is written in John 6:35: "And Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me will never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst;'" and, in John 4:13 14: "Jesus answered and said to her, 'Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of waters springing up into everlasting life." In other words, Jesus is both our bread and our drinking water. Eating and drinking of Jesus in other words, listening to God's Word feeds our spirit and turns our spirit into a source of living water which never dries up, but springs up into everlasting life to heal our mortal body and also to bring divine healing to others. Concerning the term "a fountain of waters" in John 4:13-14, Jesus was talking about the power of the Holy Spirit as He explains clearly later in John 7:38-39. So Jesus was talking about the Holy Spirit, whom the born again will receive in His name, as it is written in John 7:38 39: "'He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.' But this He spoke concerning the Spirit whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet

glorified." In this quote, "rivers of living water" refers to the power of the Holy Spirit (or of God) that gives life to any lifeless thing in this world, or brings into the physical realm whatever a believer says in agreement with God's Word. God, in His wisdom, made the same call to the people of the Old Testament, saying in Proverbs 9:5: "Come, eat of my bread and drink of the wine I have mixed." Isaiah the prophet foresaw what Jesus did in the New Testament, saying in Isaiah 55:1–2: "Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat. Yes, come; buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good and let your soul delight itself in abundance."

There is no way to become a believer unless our free will gives a "Yes" answer to the call of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. All things in the realm of the Spirit begin with decisions of our free will. We have to decide to say "YES!" to the call of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Jesus gives us the parable of the wedding feast to emphasize the importance of our will in Matthew 22:1–14: "And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. Again, he sent out other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared

my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding."' But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, and another to his business. And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them. But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.' So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests. But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on the wedding garment. So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' For many are called, but few are chosen."

In this parable, the king is God the Father. His son symbolizes Jesus. The wedding symbolizes God inviting all of us (the guests) to come to marry His Son, by believing in Him, and by loving Jesus. The dinner represents the Word of God, available to all who will hear it. Those who killed the servants represent the wicked men whose fate is death. The man who did not put on the wedding garment represents those who

believe in God or Jesus, but do not put into practice the Word of God; sharing the same fate as the unbelievers. Those who were invited but refused to come represent people minding their own business who are not willing to accept the invitation of God, because worry about this life is more important for them than the Kingdom of God. Those who accepted the invitation and came with humility became worthy to be citizens of heaven.

Anything in the spiritual realm, the kingdom of God, begins with a "Yes" decision of our will. After our will's approval, we are taken in by the Grace of God, receiving unmerited favor such as faith, love for Jesus, righteousness, everlasting life, and an understanding of God's Word, wisdom, and the Holy Spirit, as well as the power of God that comes with the Holy Spirit (and so on).

It is our responsibility to make the choice to look to God. The only thing which matters is saying "Yes" of our own free will. Why? Because meditation on God's Word will cause us to do what He tells us to do and to never be afraid. (We will see how this works later in this book.) It is no wonder that Jesus said in Matthew 11:28–30: "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." All the Kingdom of God is about is responding positively to the call of Jesus and then remaining focused on Jesus. In other words,

keep your mind focusing on Jesus or His Word no matter what you are going through. As for the rest, it is not your job it is Jesus's business.

Now that we understand our will, let us look for a definition of heart. Jesus states, in Matthew 12:33 37: "Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit. Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the Day of Judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned." This means that, in the mind of Jesus, a human being's heart is the principal factor of his talking and his behavior, so the content of his heart determines the course of his life. As far as God and Jesus are concerned, a human being's personality dwells in his heart, as it is written in 1 Samuel 16:7: "But the LORD said to Samuel, 'Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him. For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart;" and in Matthew 12:34 and 15:19: "Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks . . . For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries,

fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies." This means that a human being's attitude is a reflection of his beliefs, knowledge, or revelation knowledge and that desires are stored in his heart. In fact, when we picture God's Word with our mind and meditate upon it, we store this picture in our heart when we are convinced of the truthfulness of and understand God's Word. This means that anything we think about becomes a belief stored in our heart, as long as we think that the thought or picture in our mind is true. No wonder Proverbs 23:7 says: "For as he thinks in his heart, so is he;" and Proverbs 27:19 states: "As in water face reveals face, so a man's heart reveals the man." Another wonderful scripture, Psalm 116:10, says: "I believed therefore I spoke." No wonder the Bible says, in 2 Corinthians 4:13: "But since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, 'I believed and therefore I spoke,' we also believe and therefore speak."

Our heart is the headquarters of our beliefs and desires: revelation knowledge, scientific knowledge, feelings, emotions, passions, and the storeroom of any thoughts which have become true for us. Wrong beliefs and evil desires are stored up in our heart as well as good beliefs and desires and feelings. Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ warns us of this in John 14:1, saying: "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in me." Proverbs 4:23 is more explicit: "Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life." We are advised to guard

the door of our heart and prevent any evil thoughts, desires, words, or negative feelings or emotions from going in. Why? Because what we believe controls our life. If we put into practice the commandment of Jesus, then our heart will remain pure and we will see God as Jesus said in Matthew 5:8: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Therefore, we should behave like Jesus did on earth, so that only good things will flow from our heart and fill our mind, will, mouth, body, eyes, ears, and actions.

Do you see now the extreme importance of these three notions (heart, soul, and might)? Our heart is the storeroom of the things which have become true for us. In other words, our heart is the storeroom of our riches, as Jesus said in Luke 12:31–34: "But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you. Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." This means that our spirit is responsible for what we treasure in our heart. So God and Jesus are asking us to make up our mind and choose to give first place to God's Word by listening to the gospel of Jesus Christ on a daily basis.

The gospel of Jesus Christ has the power to restore a human being's soul (spirit) or change his mind towards God and Jesus, to strengthen his will and give

him everlasting life through faith, and to give hope to his spirit, as well as the picture of his reliable victory carried by God's Word to his mind. (This process will be dealt with in the next chapter.) The law of the Lord gives life to the soul, making it righteous in the eyes of God. The testimony of the Lord, namely the thing that shows that God exists or what He has done is true has the power to make simple men wise. The statutes or precepts of the Lord (in other words, the rules about how to behave or to think, or the principles of life according to God) are good and give joy to the heart. Finally, obeying God's commandments purifies us and gives us understanding. God's Word encapsulates His law, testimonies, statutes, and commandments. So God's Word has the power to give life, to make wise the simple, to give joy to the heart, and understanding to all, as it is written in Psalm 19:7 8: "The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes."

Our spirit, which also contains our mind and heart, must be wise and have understanding to have the ability to draw from our heart the specific knowledge (or revelation knowledge) we need to remind ourselves of when the opportunity to use it occurs. This is why Proverbs 20:5 says: "Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water, But a man of understanding will draw it out." Our heart, at its foundation, is the seat of our

emotions, desires, beliefs, passions, riches, and revelation knowledge. But Jesus said in John 12:27: "Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour;" and in Matthew 26:38: "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with me." This means that, in the mind of Jesus, a human being's emotions dwell in his soul and because we already know that our heart is the seat of our emotions, we must realize that our heart is a part of our soul and of our spirit. This is confirmed throughout the Scriptures, such as in Psalm 84:2: "My soul longs, yes, even faints for the courts of the LORD; My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God," which likens our soul to our heart.

Our heart is a part of our soul, therefore our spirit (or soul or inner man) is made of three main parts:

- The heart is the storeroom of beliefs, desires, passions, emotions, feelings, and riches, the things we love the most or thoughts which have become true for us.
- Will is the spirit's ability to control man's thoughts and actions in order to achieve what he wants to do.
- Mind is the part of our spirit or soul which pictures what is in our heart and what our spirit is focusing on. Our mind is also the cover of our heart. Unless our mind becomes one with our heart or changes its focus towards Jesus and God, God's Word cannot make its way into our heart and build our spirit up.

Most of the time, however, the spirit of man in the Bible is considered to be composed of only two parts:

- the heart, as described above, and

the soul made of both the will and mind.

The description of the spirit of man as being divided in two parts is the best representation of our inner man because it is similar to our outer man. Indeed, as our outer man is composed of our body and its natural senses, likewise our inner man is made of our soul and its spiritual senses (the heart).

As a matter of fact, the spirit of a *natural* man is not equal to his soul. However, when the mind of man becomes one with his heart — where God's Word is implanted — only then the spirit of man becomes equal to his soul.

Note: the quickest way to make our mind one with our heart is to speak in tongues. Doing so activates the power of God in us and casts away any fear, unbelief, and doubt from our mind as it is written in 2 Timothy 1:6–7: "Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of sound mind." When we speak God's Word we see the manifestation of the life of God and also see the spirit of God in action. So, in order to have a sound mind, we must stir up the power of God in us by speaking in tongues and speaking the same things as God.

It is no wonder that the Bible says, in Hebrews 4:12: "For the word of God is living and powerful, and

sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thought and intents of the heart." For the one who has not a perfected spirit — or for a natural man — his soul (both his mind and will) is different from his spirit (heart), in other words, his thoughts are different from his beliefs in Christ.

Therefore this imperfect believer will struggle with his faith. He may believe in Jesus, but fail to fix his gaze on Jesus Christ — in other words, there is doubt in his mind. For instance, he may believe God's Word that says, "By Jesus's stripes he is healed," but when his mind focuses on his own medical report he doubts that he is healing.

In the case of the imperfect believer, his heart in the Scriptures stands for his spirit and the reference to his mind refers to his soul. The context helps you to know if heart refers to the spirit as a whole (heart, mind, and will), or a spirit apart from his soul (only mind and will). Therefore, when our heart is not united with our mind through our union with Christ Jesus, then, as human beings, we are composed of three parts:

- spirit (heart),
- soul (mind and will), and
- body (flesh and sensory perceptions).

Remember that the perfected man created by God the Father was created in two parts — spirit and body — not of three parts, as the sinful man is composed. Our heart and our mind are united when we really know

Christ, as it is written in John 17:3 ("And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent") and in John 15:5 ("I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing").

This understanding of the spirit of man as being composed of his heart and his soul led the disciples of Jesus Christ and Apostle Paul to describe the salvation Jesus brought to human beings in two phases. The first phase of salvation is reached by accepting or receiving God's Word in our heart, while the second phase concerns our speaking in line with God's Word, which brings us our salvation or brings into being our future. The second phase consists of the salvation of our will and mind.

This first phase turns us toward the righteousness of God, and we become righteous before Him. According to Romans 10:10, by believing in Jesus we are granted the righteousness of God, but by *speaking* we frame our salvation and our future: "For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

James, the disciple of Jesus Christ, is the one who gives the best picture of our salvation, saying in James 1:21: "Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflowing wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls." The New Living Translation, Second Edition reading of this same verse (James 1:21) puts it in this way: "So

get rid of the filth and evil in your lives, and humbly accept the word God has planted in your hearts, for it has power to save your souls." This means that our first responsibility is to accept God's Word in our heart when we listen and pay attention to the gospel, the Good News of Jesus Christ. When we endorse God's Word, which has been stored by God in our heart, we receive our first salvation, the salvation of our heart, and we become righteous before God.

The salvation of our heart takes place by purification through God's Word as Jesus declares in John 15:1–3: "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you." Then God performs the salvation of our mind and will by renewing our mind through His Word so that our will is strengthened, as it is written in Romans 12:1–2: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." Always remember that God's Word has the power and ability to save our souls—to save our mind and will.

A man's spirit has the responsibility and the ability to choose what must be most important in his life; it

must choose between God's Word or the riches of this world. Our spirit waits for God to give it the wisdom, understanding, faith, hope, counsel, fear of God, and strength to play its role. This means that our heart is in the leading role. What it longs for and what it believes will be stored up in it and also will be pictured by our mind. However, throughout the Bible, heart and mind are mingled together. If our heart craves God, God's Mercies will dawn in our heart and a picture of our desire will arise in our mind and then give hope to our spirit and, finally, this hope will bring strength to our will. On the contrary, if our heart has a passion for the riches of this world or evil things, then fear, evil thoughts, and the like will appear in our heart and a picture of our hopelessness or defeat will arise in our mind and give hopelessness to our spirit and this hopelessness will weaken our will.

Let us see what God's thought about our heart is. We find it in Genesis 8:20 21: "Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, and took of every clean animal and every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And the LORD smelled a soothing aroma. Then the LORD said in His heart, 'I will never again curse the ground for man's sake, although the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done." Unless God intervenes in our life to give us a new heart it is impossible for a natural man to think good things with his natural heart, as it is written in Ezekiel 11:19 20: "Then I will give them one heart, and I will put a new

spirit within them, and take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in My statutes and keep My judgments and do them; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God." Do you see why God gives us a new heart along with His Spirit?

First of all, God gives us a new heart to put His judgments in our heart so that we think or imagine only good things in our heart and then do them, as Jesus said in Matthew 12:34: ". . . For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks." A human being always does things according to what is in his heart.

Secondly, God gives us His Spirit to walk in His statutes, meaning that our life is regulated by the spirit of God, as it is written in Isaiah 11:2: "The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD." When the spirit of God comes upon us, He grants us the gifts of wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, and reverence for the LORD. These are all our spirit needs to live according to God's Word in this life. Our spirit is in need of wisdom, understanding, faith, counsel, hope, and reverence for the LORD; our will longs for might to overcome any challenge that tries to cause our will to give up any purpose which is in line with God's Word; and our mind craves good pictures of our victory in Christ over the curse of the law.

How does the spirit of God rest upon a believer? Let us look to the teachings of Jesus Christ to learn the way. In John 14:10 23, Jesus declared: "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves. Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it. If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever, even the spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also. At that day you will know that I am in My Father and you in Me, and I in you. He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.' Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, 'Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?' Jesus answered and said to him. 'If anyone loves Me,

he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him."

What does this quote from John mean? Jesus is saying that the words He spoke are not His own, even though people saw the words He spoke producing results. Jesus spoke to the tree, and Peter saw it die the next day. He spoke about the fish to get money out of its mouth. Peter went there and got money out of its mouth. He talked to the winds and to the waves, and they responded. Jesus spoke to the dead He raised up. The deaf ears heard the voice of Jesus. The blind eyes heard Him. The lame limbs heard Jesus. Folks heard Jesus speak and they saw the results. But Jesus explained that the words He spoke were not His and the results that the people saw were performed by the Father dwelling in Him.

The Father who dwelt in Jesus was the Holy Ghost, different from the Father in heaven where Jesus was going. Jesus said in John 14:12: "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father." Who did the works? The Spirit that dwelt in Jesus. So why did Jesus say, "the works that I do the believer will do also"? This means that Jesus and the Holy Spirit were one, so as far as Jesus was concerned His words were the Holy Spirit's words and His works were the Holy Spirit's works. Therefore, when Jesus used the pronoun "I," He was also referring to the Holy Spirit. So the believer or

born-again Christian, like Jesus, has to say the same words as the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit will also perform the works about what the believer says.

If Jesus performed the works through the Holy Spirit, that means no born-again believer can perform miracles without the intervention of the Holy Spirit. In John 14:17, Jesus said: "the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him, but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you." Jesus is telling us that the spirit of truth that dwelt with the disciples was Jesus Himself, and this same spirit of truth will later dwell in them. Jesus brought us the Spirit, as it is written in Galatians 3:13 14: "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree'), that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."

We receive the Holy Spirit through faith. In other words, we receive the Holy Spirit through the Word of God. It is no wonder, then, 1 Corinthians 12:13 tells us: "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body whether Jews or Greeks whether slaves or free and have all been made to drink into one Spirit." We all know that Jesus and His Father are now in heaven and that Jesus, His Father, the Holy Spirit, and God's Word are one, so Jesus and His Father making their headquarters in us also means the coming of the Holy Spirit into our spirit. Moreover, Jesus is the

Word of God, so the Word of God implanted in our heart also brings us the living presence of Jesus at any time of our life. So the Holy Spirit brings us both the presence of God and Jesus, and the Word of God in our heart brings us the living presence of Jesus Christ in us.

Furthermore, as we have discussed, Jesus states in John 6:63: "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life." Jesus is saying here that when we speak God's Word we see the manifestation of the life of God and also see the spirit of God in action. In other words, Jesus is saying that God's Word has the power to cause the Holy Spirit to come to dwell in the heart of the believer and also to give him His everlasting life. And, if the Holy Spirit is already in our heart, God's Word activates the power of God in us and therefore the power of God is ready to give life to everything we say. So if we keep on being exposed to God's Word through meditation, prayer, and worship, we will continue to experience the presence of Jesus and the Holy Spirit in our life and the Holy Spirit and the Word of God will give to our heart, to our spirit, to our will, and to our mind the necessary food they need to function well. In other words, the living presence of Jesus and the Holy Spirit cause us to become the righteousness of God, doing good and loving Jesus as Jesus states in John 14:23: ". . . If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him."

What does the word "Righteousness" mean? The chapter titled "Righteousness" (Chapter Nineteen) gives more precise details about the definition of the word, but, for the time being, let us take the definition given by Deuteronomy 6:25, which declares: "Then it will be righteousness for us, if we are careful to observe all these commandments before the LORD our God, as He has commanded us." So righteousness and keeping the commandments are the same thing in the Old Testament. But, in the Old Testament righteousness also refers to our own efforts to do God's Word or to please God. What about the New Testament? In the New Testament, righteousness is the gift of God that enables us to do God's Word or to please Him. In John 3:3 5, Jesus answered Nicodemus and said to him: "'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' Nicodemus said to Him, 'How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?' Jesus answered, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." In this context, being "born of the Spirit" means to become righteous. And no one can stand before God unless he is righteous.

Since entering into the kingdom of God gives us the right to stand before God, therefore we need to receive the gift of righteousness for this to happen. And this gift of righteousness will cause any genuine believer to treasure God's Word and put it into practice. Jesus has already told us, in John 14:21: "He who

has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him." That means that those who have His Word in their heart and put it into practice are those who love Him.

Here is the process: believing in Jesus and professing Jesus as our Lord and Savior turn us into a born-again believer, and, born again, we receive from God the gift of righteousness that causes us to receive the love for Jesus in our heart and leads us to store God's Word in our heart and do as it commands.

The beliefs stored up in our heart work in two ways. The first way concerns our obedience to Jesus's commandments and acting according to God's Word, which leads to life. The second way of acting deals with our disobedience to God's Word, which produces death. I will illustrate these two ways through examples from the Bible.

Let us begin with Matthew 9:28 29: "And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them, 'Do you believe that I am able to do this?' They said to Him, 'Yes, Lord.' Then He touched their eyes, saying, 'According to your faith let it be to you.'" It is their faith in the healing power of our Lord Jesus their belief and their conviction that Jesus has the power to make them recover their sight that produces their healing. This is the power behind our beliefs, and our belief or faith in Jesus has the power to produce the corresponding fruit.

The second illustration is derived from the book of Genesis 19:17 28: "So it came to pass, when they had brought them outside, that he said, 'Escape for your life! Do not look behind you nor stay anywhere in the plain. Escape to the mountains, lest you be destroyed.' Then Lot said to them, 'Please, no, my lords! Indeed now, your servant has found favor in your sight, and you have increased your mercy which you have shown me by saving my life; but I cannot escape to the mountains, lest some evil overtake me and I die. See now, this city is near enough to flee to, and it is a little one; please let me escape there (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live.' And he said to him, 'See, I have favored you concerning this thing also, in that I will not overthrow this city for which you have spoken. Hurry, escape there. For I cannot do anything until you arrive there.' Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar. The sun had risen upon the earth when Lot entered Zoar. Then the LORD rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the LORD out of the heavens. So He overthrew those cities, all the plain, all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground. But his wife looked back behind him, and she became a pillar of salt. And Abraham went early in the morning to the place where he had stood before the LORD. Then he looked towards Sodom and Gomorrah, and towards all the land of the plain; and he saw, and behold, the smoke of the land which went up like the smoke of a furnace."

Do you see something striking and strange in this account? How come Lot's wife looked back toward

the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, and became a pillar of salt, but Abraham looked at the same cities and nothing strange happened to him? There was a big difference in the hearts of Lot's wife and Abraham. Lot's wife heard the warning from God telling her that she would be destroyed if she looked back, and she believed. In that connection, according to her belief, she was doomed to eat the fruit of her disobedience and to be destroyed. But, in the case of Abraham, God never forbade him from looking at the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. So there was no belief in his heart about being punished by looking at these cities; that is why he remained alive even though he did the same thing as Lot's wife.

Proverbs 24:12 says: "If you say, 'Surely we did not know this,' Does not he who weighs the hearts consider it? He who keeps your soul, does he not know it? And will he not render to each man according to his deeds?" God is telling us that if a belief or piece of knowledge is not in our heart, He will take this fact into account when judging our deeds. So when you study God's Word you must take into account the context and your personal condition so that you can find out the specific ways that it will apply to you. The critical lesson we can derive from Matthew 9:28 and Genesis 19:17 28 is this: Anything we believe in God's Word has the power to produce in our life its corresponding fruit. It is extremely important to carefully study God's Word in order to understand the corresponding fruit to each of our actions and then be fully

persuaded or convinced that these good things (God's mercies, graces, or favors) will come to pass in our lives.

We must be fully persuaded by Jesus Christ or by the Word of God to be able to experience in our life the testimonies of God. Why? Throughout the Bible, God and Jesus warn us to have no fear, no doubt, and no unbelief. God said to Abraham, in Genesis 15:1: "Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward;" to Isaac, in Genesis 26:24: "I am the God of your father Abraham; do not fear, for I am with you. I will bless you and multiply your descendants for my servant Abraham's sake;" to Joshua in Joshua 10:8: "Do not fear them, for I have delivered them into your hand; not a man of them shall stand before you;" to Gideon in Judges 6:23: "Peace be with you; do not fear, you shall not die;" in 2 Chronicles 20:15 to Judah, all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and King Jehoshaphat: ". . . Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's;" and to Daniel in Daniel 10:12: "Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words."

In the New Testament, Jesus said to His disciples, in Matthew 10:31: "Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows;" to Simon Peter, in Luke 5:10: "Do not be afraid. From now on, you will catch men;" to Paul the Apostle, in Acts 18:9: "Do

not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent;" to Peter, in Matthew 14:31: "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" to His disciples, in Matthew 21:21: "Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' it will be done;" to His disciples, in Mark 11:23: "For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that those things he says will come to pass, he will have whatever he says;" to His disciples, in Luke 24:38: "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts?" and to His disciples, in Matthew 17:20: "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you."

Why are God and Jesus so concerned about our fear? The answer is in Proverbs 29:25: "The fear of man brings a snare. But whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe." If our fear brings us a snare, then the major problems any believer will have to face in life are fear, doubt, and unbelief.

Why else are God and Jesus so concerned with our fear? Because what we believe controls our life. Fear is a belief. So, if you fear, fear controls your life. Only one thing matters: our trust in the Lord or fear of God or love for Jesus. Fear of God refers to reverence to God

and it is one of the important things since Proverbs 9:10 tells us: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom . . .;" and Proverbs 4:7 says: "Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding." Otherwise, we will weaken our trust in the Lord. (In the next chapter we will discover that our mind is the key factor which keeps us from having genuine faith. In other words, unless we change our mind and replace it with God's Mind we cannot get rid of our fear. The next chapter will teach us how to have a genuine faith without fear, doubt, and unbelief.)

In Matthew 10:28, Jesus declares that there are two kinds of fears, one is right and the other is wrong: "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." This means that "Fear God" or "Trust in the Lord" is the right thing to do. Do I mean to say that "Fear God" and "Trust in the Lord" are the same? Yes. Proverbs 14:26 tells us: "In the fear of the LORD there is strong confidence . . . ." We are not allowed to have fear unless this fear is rightly directed. Fear of God is the right aim for our fear. No wonder Proverbs 1:7 states that "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction;" and Psalm 111:10 says: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all those who do his commandments. His praise endures forever."

The ultimate truths of any human being's power lie in his word, provided that he believes what he declares and he does not have any doubt in his heart. These truths are encapsulated in Mark 11:23, which was included above: "For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that those things he says will come to pass, he will have whatever he says."

Do you see the power of our tongue or mouth? Anything we say will come to pass provided that we have no doubt in our heart. (We will deal with the issue of the power of our tongue in detail in the chapter titled "Our Tongue Determines our Destiny.") Fear, doubt, and unbelief are able to break the power of our beliefs. In fact, they cause us to be double-hearted, where one part of our heart believes, while the other part which is our mind does not. Therefore we are not fully persuaded or convinced by our belief and so God's mercies cannot be reproduced in our life. (As we have already discussed, most of the time when the Bible uses the word "heart" it refers to both heart and mind. The next chapter will help you to understand why this is so.)

Indeed, it is critical to have one heart, as it is written in Ezekiel 11:19: "Then I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them, and take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh." This is the essential condition or requirement: We must have one heart, not a divided heart. We must

be fully persuaded that God is able to accomplish whatever His wonderful Word talks about, otherwise we will not experience His miraculous power when we are faced with challenges in our life.

Let us look at Matthew 14:22 31, a passage which deals with this critical point: "Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away. And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on a mountain by Himself to pray. And when evening had come, He was alone there. But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary. Now in the fourth watch of the night, Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, 'It is a ghost!' And they cried out for fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid.' And Peter answered Him and said, 'Lord, if it is you, command me to come to You on the water.' So He said, 'Come.' And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried out, saying, 'Lord, save me!' And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him. 'O you of little faith, why did you doubt?'"

Why did Peter fail to walk on the water? At first, he had faith in Jesus so he began to walk on the water, but the fear of the boisterous wind dawned in his heart and destroyed the power of his faith in Jesus.

Therefore, we must guard our heart and not let any fear come in. Have you noticed something striking? Peter was afraid, but Jesus qualified his fear as *doubt*. This means that the principal component of fear is doubt. Our beliefs cause us to do things. Therefore, our life is regulated by our beliefs. No wonder Proverbs 23:7 says: "For as a man thinks in his heart, so is he." Anytime God, Jesus, His disciples, Apostle Paul, or one of the prophets said in the Bible phrases like: "says in his heart," "purposes in his heart," "thinks in his heart," "presumes in his heart," "says to oneself," or in general "does something in his heart," what follows are beliefs — strong beliefs or deep convictions.

The process of creating a belief is as follows. First of all, you focus on something in your mind and, thus, you put in your heart this thing — or your thoughts or what you are thinking about. (This stage is represented in the Bible by phrases like those listed, above.) Secondly, you begin to think that your thoughts — or what you put in our heart — are true. (This is the meaning of belief.) In the Bible, we are told that our belief follows what we put in our heart or what we think. Thirdly, what comes after your belief are the actions you take according to your beliefs — or the spoken words you declare according to your beliefs. We can summarize this process by saying, "What we focus on with our mind, we then put it in our heart, and it becomes our belief when we arrive at the conclusion that our thought is true and then this belief causes us to speak or take actions accordingly."

Let us scan through the Bible to verify this truth. We begin with Abraham in Genesis 17:15 19: "Then God said to Abraham, 'As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. And I will bless her and also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; king of peoples shall be from her.' Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, 'Shall a child be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?' And Abraham said to God, 'Oh, that Ishmael might live before you!' Then God said: 'No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his descendants after him.'" Abraham believed that since he was one hundred years old and Sarah ninety years old, they could not give birth to a son, so, that belief led him to tell God that Ishmael might live before Him, but God replied and specified that Sarah his wife would be the mother of his son Isaac. Our belief always causes us to speak things in line with what we think or what we have put in our heart. In other words, our thoughts in our mind or our beliefs in our heart have creative power and cause us to speak and act accordingly. Only hypocrites try to deceive people by not acting according to their beliefs, but this attitude does not last. Sooner or later the true identity of the hypocrites will show up.

Our second example of how our beliefs are created is about David in 1 Samuel 27:1 2: "And David said in

his heart, 'Now I shall perish someday by the hand of Saul, There is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape to the land of the Philistines; and Saul will despair of me, to seek me any longer in any part of Israel. So I shall escape out of his hand.' Then David arose and went over with the six hundred men who were with him to Achish the son of Maoch, king of Gath." David believed in his heart that if he stayed with King Saul, Saul would one day kill him, so this belief caused him to flee from Saul.

Our third illustration concerns Daniel, in Daniel 1:8: "But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself." Daniel's belief was that he did not want to defile himself with any portion of the king's delicacies, so he took a step to talk about his concern to the chief of the eunuchs because of his strong belief.

Our fourth case comes from Obadiah 1:3 4: "The pride of your heart has deceived you, You who dwell in the clefts of the rock, Whose habitation is high; You who say in your heart, 'Who will bring me down to the ground?' Though you exalt yourself as high as the eagle, And though you set your nest among the stars, From there I will bring you down,' says the LORD." The proud men believe that nobody can bring them down. This conviction leads God to pull them down. Do you see an amazing thing in these verses? God

reacts to each of the beliefs, to the men's thoughts. He does not wait to react to what they do or say. So, for God, a belief, thought, or conviction is the same thing as an action or a speech or an expression or any other outward manifestation of that belief.

The fifth example comes from Psalm 10:13: "Why do the wicked renounce God? He said in his heart, 'You will not require an account.'" The wicked strongly believe that God will not punish them, so this deep conviction leads them to renounce God and to state publicly that they no longer believe in God.

The sixth case is given to us in Matthew 9:20 22, which says: "And suddenly, a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years came from behind and touched the hem of His garment; for she said to herself, 'If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made well.' But Jesus turned around, and when He saw her He said, 'Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well. And the woman was made well from that hour." This woman, who had an issue of blood, was fully persuaded that if she touched Jesus's garment, she would receive her healing. So she acted upon her belief by coming near Jesus and touching His garment, and this action released the healing power of Jesus that healed her. Her faith changed her situation.

When our thoughts and our beliefs are united in God's Word or in Christ Jesus, our belief releases the healing power of God. Matthew 5:28 encapsulates many of the central themes of belief found in the Scriptures: "But I say to you that whoever looks at a

woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart." As far as Jesus is concerned, any belief, thought, or conviction is the same as a physical reality. Why? Because a thought or belief refers to *spiritual* reality and a spiritual thing is real in the kingdom of God and more real than physical reality. What matters to God and Jesus is our belief what we say, think, intend to do, or desire in our heart or in our mind. For God and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, belief equals doing, and so it is extremely important to pay attention to our beliefs or thoughts because they make us who we are. Do not forget what King David said in Psalm 15:1 2: "LORD, who may abide in your tabernacle? Who may dwell in your holy hill? He who walks uprightly, and works righteousness, and speaks the truth in his heart."

Three conditions are needed to dwell in the presence or the house of God. First of all, you must have the right intentions in your heart; secondly, you have to work righteousness; and, finally, you are compelled to speak the truth God's Word treasured in your heart. The first condition defines the state of your heart, which has to be pure. Only good things are allowed to be treasured in your heart, so you must only have good or right intentions by first treasuring the Word of God in your heart. The second condition defines your obedience to God's Word. You can only obey God's commandments if they are already stored in your heart and you have received the gift of righteousness or love for Jesus. The third condition

defines the character of your speech. You are not allowed to be a hypocrite; your speech ought to be the reflection of the content of your heart, in other words, God's Word treasured in your heart. This means that you must only confess what God says, no matter the situation you find yourself in this is where your power is, as it is written in Proverbs 18:21: "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit." So use your tongue to bring forth life and not death.

Because we know that Jesus is the Word of God, it is no wonder, then, that Jesus says in John 14:6: "I am the way, the truth, and the life." In this scripture, Jesus is saying that the one who has Jesus also has the way, the truth, and the life of God. We all know that Jesus is the Word of God, as it is written in John 1:1,14: "In the beginning was the word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . And the word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

That's also why Jesus states, in Matthew 12:37: "For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned." There are two ways for each of us to choose from. The way of Jesus gives you the power to give birth to anything God's Word talks about through your declaration, as long as it is in line with God's Word. Anything which is not in agreement with God's Word is a lie, and the way of the devil that gives you the power to bring about death is your evil speech

that speaks lies, and the things you do which are not in agreement with God's Word but contradict God's Word. No wonder the Bible says, in Ephesians 4:29: "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers."

That is why God is interested in our heart and mind, as it is written in Jeremiah 17:10: "I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give every man according to his ways, And according to the fruit of his doings;" in Proverbs 17:3: "The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold, But the LORD tests the hearts;" and in 1 Samuel 16:7: "But the LORD said to Samuel, 'Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him. For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." No wonder Jesus said in Matthew 5:8: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Surely those who are pure-hearted, who have no evil beliefs or thoughts, whose speech, thoughts, and deeds are in line with God's Word will see God and have fellowship with Him. At the end of the day, we can say that our speech, our deeds, our thoughts, our focus, our determination, and our hearing are manifestations of our beliefs and thoughts.

Do you see now why Jesus told us to believe in God so that we will experience everlasting life as it is written in John 5:24: "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has

everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life"? Did you notice that 'has everlasting life' is in present tense? We experience now in this life eternal life. All we have to do is to put God's Word in our heart and change the focus of our mind to align with the Word of God and then our beliefs and our speech or actions upon those beliefs will follow. But what is eternal life?

The Bible says, in John 17:1 4: "Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: 'Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have seen." Eternal life is not merely life after death but it is *now*, from our own existence on earth, from our spiritual and supernatural birth which comes from our knowledge of God and Jesus. Knowledge of God the Father and Jesus is eternal life. True believers always follow the Word of God and the promises of God become real in their lives as it is written in Psalm 37:31: "The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide."

Matthew 16:13 20 shows one of the mind-blowing revelations of Jesus Christ: "When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, 'Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?' So they said, 'Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.'

He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' And Simon Peter answered and said, 'You are Christ, the Son of the living God.' Jesus answered and said to him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.' Then He commanded His disciples that they should tell no one that He was Jesus the Christ."

Indeed, Jesus reveals in this passage that there are two kinds of knowledge. The first comes from our natural being; we get it with our worldly focused mind. The second comes from God and is revelation knowledge. We only have access to revelation knowledge by means of our spirit, once it has been enlightened by God through His Word or the Holy Spirit, and we store that revelation knowledge in our heart. Notice that a natural spirit cannot receive revelation knowledge.

Jesus also shows us there are two types of senses. We have already dealt with spiritual senses. There are also natural senses (the five physical senses smell, hearing, taste, sight, touch as well as senses of feeling or emotion anger, joy, fear, depression, despair, lust or natural love, sadness, hunger, thirst, hatred, sympathy, pride, resentment, disappointment, thinking with our mind [our own thoughts], and determination of our

will [which is subject to change]). But these natural senses are not in line with God's Word. We cannot connect to God with our natural senses. God is Spirit. In the same way that education at school and university refines our natural senses, our inner man can only discover spiritual senses through God's Word. So God's Word, which is sown in our hearts, takes root, sprouts out, grows, develops, becomes mature, and lives in our heart and causes our spirit to be strong and energized by the spiritual life brought by God's Word, as Jesus expounded in John 6:63. Then this spiritual and divine life brought by God's Word gets into our blood, cells, tissues, bones, and physical heart to heal any sick cell of our being and gain dominion over us so that our words, feelings, thoughts, determination, and deeds will become in line with God's Word only then can it bear fruit.

When God's Word reaches its final, perfect development, it becomes flesh, as it is written in John 1:14: "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Above, I say that this quote refers to Jesus walking among us. But, here, I say it is about the Word of God being active within us. Is this correct that the same passage can mean both things? In the same way Jesus that became flesh by coming into the world, Jesus (the Word of God) is active in us to make us genuine believers. Jesus said in John 15:5: "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit;

for without Me you can do nothing." So Jesus works in us to build our spiritual being so that we can be more productive. No wonder Colossians 1:27 says: ". . . Christ in you, the hope of glory." As children of God and imitators of Jesus, God's Word also becomes flesh in us when the Word of God that grows in us reaches its full and perfect maturity in us. When God's Word becomes mature in us, we outwardly start shining the glory of Jesus who lives in us.

This is how the process works. I hear about something good or bad, or I see something good or bad, or I think about something good or bad, and it produces fear or joy or love, or peace, or worry, or sadness in my heart and immediately causes my physical heart to pound with excitement or beat quickly and loudly and, at the same time, brings hope or hopelessness to my spirit. Then the hope, hopelessness, fear or joy will impact my mind, my mouth, eyes, will, ears or my body and cause them to take action.

It is important to notice that the term "heart" in the Scriptures refers to the spiritual heart the heart of the spirit of man. This means that there are two hearts in human beings, the physical heart and the heart of the spirit. God's Word becomes faith or revelation knowledge in the spiritual heart, is treasured in the spiritual heart, and also cleanses the spiritual heart of the sons or daughters of God. But the words of the world turn into fear; evil desires or lust in the spiritual heart. The gift of understanding turns God's Word into revelation knowledge in the spiritual heart.

While evil thoughts and feelings are stored up without transformation in the spiritual heart and defile the heart, good thoughts are treasured without transformation in the spiritual heart and purify the heart. All the information received by a human being, first of all, is stored in his heart to feed his spirit, but only God's Word in his heart can satisfy his spirit's needs (wisdom, understanding, hope, faith, counsel, and the fear of God).

Next, the information stored in a human being's heart is sent to his whole being as his body's feelings and actions, his mouth's speech, his will's decisions, his eyes' focus, his ears' attention, and his mind's thoughts. Then, he takes action according to his beliefs and thoughts. So unless a man feeds his spirit by treasuring God's Word in his heart, there is no way to change his mindset, feelings, speech, determination, focus, attention, or deeds.

As far as Jesus is concerned, revelation knowledge is the most important thing in life. Jesus commended the centurion and the Canaanite woman for their great faith because of their knowledge and understanding of spiritual realities. We find the account of the encounter of Jesus with the centurion in Matthew 8:5 10: "Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, saying, 'Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented.' And Jesus said to him, 'I will come and heal him.' The centurion answered and said, 'Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof.

But only speak a word, and my servant will be raised. For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it. When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, "Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel." The account of the Canaanite woman is reported in Matthew 15:21–28: "Then Jesus went out from there and departed to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, 'Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed.' But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and urged Him, saying, 'Send her away, for she cries out after us.' But He answered and said, 'I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.' Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, 'Lord, help me!' But He answered and said, 'It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs.' And she said, 'True, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.' Then Jesus answered and said to her, 'O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire.' And her daughter was healed from that very hour."

And Jesus praised Simon Peter for the revelation knowledge he got from God and made him the foundation of His church. After His resurrection, Jesus gives more specifics about His thought about the keys

of the kingdom of heaven which He has given to Peter by giving one illustration in John 20:23: "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

Do you see the importance of revelation knowledge? Revelation knowledge is the main thing in life, second only to the "Yes" decision of your will and the changing of your mind towards God. It is the first thing you need to get to start the growth of God's Word in you. No wonder we are told in Proverbs 4:7: "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom; and in all you're getting, get understanding."

Unless you understand it, God's Word cannot develop or grow in you, as it is written in Mark 4:14 15: "The sower sows the word. And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. And when they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts;" and in Matthew 13:19: "When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside."

Satan is the one who most fears our understanding of God's Word, so he is always ready to immediately steal the Word of God sown in our heart, lest we understand it and start to develop our spiritual being. Why? Because Jesus declares, in Matthew 13:23: "But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty,

some thirty;" and in John 10:28 30: "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one." Saying that they "follow" Him means that they imitate Jesus and understand the Word of God. The sheep who hear His voice represent the believers in Jesus who listen to Jesus. This means that being born again is not sufficient to keep Satan from snatching you from the hand of Jesus and God any one who is born again must also follow Jesus and understand God's Word. Until love for Jesus resides in the heart of the new born-again believer, stumbling blocks remain, which can bring a new born again Christian to fall or sin. A lack of understanding, fear, selfishness, and worry about this life are the four key factors of sins, according to Jesus. (We will deal with these four factors in the chapter titled "Solutions for Powerless Faith, and the Four Dimensions of Faith.")

We must do our best to keep our heart in good shape and to have always a merry heart, according to what is written in Proverbs 17:22: "A merry heart does good, like medicine. But a broken spirit dries the bones;" and in Proverbs 15:13: "A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance, but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken." These two passages help us know the causes of our sickness and disease. A happy heart gives life to our body while a sorrowful heart breaks our spirit

or makes us lose our hope and willpower, bringing sickness to our body. No wonder Proverbs 15:15 says: "All the days of the afflicted are evil, but he who is of a merry heart has a continual feast." Thus, we are all compelled to never let our heart be controlled by sorrows, otherwise we will surely lose our health and our wonderful and genuine fellowship with Jesus Christ.

How can we have, on a daily basis, a merry heart and never let our heart be controlled by sorrows? By meditating on God's Words or doing good for people and believing in Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior and always having love for Him. We can also do this by professing God's Word and giving thanks to God, as it is written in Philippians 4:4–7: "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your request be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." This is the secret of victorious life and the spirit of faith of the genuine born-again Christian. (We will learn more about this in the next chapter.)

And then God says, He will fill your mouth with laughter, not with tears, but with laughter, as it is written in Psalm 126:1–2: "When the LORD brought back the captivity of Zion, We were like those who dream. Then our mouth was filled with laughter, And our tongue with singing. Then they said among the nations, 'The LORD has done great things for them;'"

and in Job 8:21: "He will fill your mouth with laughing, And your lips with rejoicing." So laughter is a symbol of victory.

You should not only laugh because there is something funny. The best time to laugh is when everything is turning against you and there is no hope. Things are just going so bad and the devil says, "See yourself." And you say, "Me." The devil wants you to cry and to say, "O God, see what happens to me." But you should answer by laughing, "Ha Ha Ha!" and if someone asks you, "At what are you laughing?" You can respond, "I am laughing at the devil."

When the devil tells you, "You, you cannot be healed; your condition is so bad. I will kill you." He will give you all kinds of suggestions. The devil will tell you, "Die!" and begin to give you different images of your life, trying to get you to believe that everyone has abandoned you and you are wandering alone. That is the best time to laugh. You are to do the opposite that the devil wants you to do, as it is written in James 4:7: "Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you." Because God is not saying, "You should die." God is not saying, "You are frustrated." God is not saying, "It is too late," or "there is no hope." This is the devil who is saying these words contrary to God's Word. And what should you do to the devil? You should mock him and laugh at him and say, "I am alive." Laughter is the state of our spirit the state of the spirit of the genuine believer so this is why I connected this topic to this chapter. No wonder

Philippians 4:4 7 declares: "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your request be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

2. The Spirit of Faith

To help you get an understanding of the topic of this chapter we will look to the Word to give a practical illustration of what we are going to discuss.

We will take a portion of the Bible concerning the life of Abraham our father in faith to illustrate the principle of the realm of the Spirit. The Bible says in Genesis 15:1–6: "After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, 'Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward.' But Abram said, 'Lord GOD, what will You give me, seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?' Then Abram said, 'Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed one born in my house is my heir!' And behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, 'This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir.' Then He brought him outside and said, 'Look now towards heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.' And He said to him, 'So shall your descendants be.' And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness."

What do you think God is doing? Do you think God is asking Abram to see with his optical eyes, or to see

with his mind? Abram's answer proves that he perceived what the purpose of God is, since he believed and God "accounted him for righteousness." If Abram had looked at the stars with his optical eyes, he would not have believed, and God would not have rewarded him.

Let us take another example of the life of Abraham to demonstrate the vital importance of our mind. We find it in Genesis 13:14 15: "And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: 'Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are northward, southward, eastward, and westward; for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever.'"

God clearly revealed the law of our mind: Until you see the promise of God with your spiritual eyes or with your mind you cannot take possession of your blessings. Pastor Chris Oyakhilome expressed it like this: "The extent of your vision is the boundary of your blessing."

Here is a final illustration from Jesus's time. This time I use Mark 5:25 34 because the process of faith is crystal clear in this passage of the Bible:

"Now a certain woman had a flow of blood for twelve years, and had suffered many things from many physicians. She had spent all that she had and was no better, but rather grew worse. When she heard about Jesus, she came behind Him in the crowd and touched His garment; for she said, 'If only I may touch his clothes, I shall be made well.' Immediately

the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of the affliction. And Jesus, immediately knowing in Him that power had gone out of Him, turned around in the crowd and said, 'Who touched My clothes?' But His disciples said to Him, 'You see the multitude thronging You and You say, "Who touched Me?"' And He looked around to see her who had done this thing. But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth. And He said to her, 'Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction.'"

The Bible says that this woman had simply heard of Jesus, and that made her faith strong. This is because the first step of faith is to hear of Jesus or God's Word. (Romans 10:17 states: "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.") What brought faith to this woman is what she heard, because faith comes by hearing the Word of God. Mark (whose report of this we read in the last chapter) did not report the second step of faith that Matthew reported: "For she said to herself, 'If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made well.'" This means that when she heard of Jesus certain thoughts came to her, and she allowed herself to be persuaded by what she heard. So the second step of faith is to be persuaded, to let the things you have heard enter into you, and to allow yourself to believe God's Word. In other words, when God's Word comes to you, you must drop your own thoughts and

pick up God's thoughts as true — that is what belief is all about.

Coming back to the account of the story in Matthew, the woman said: "If only I may touch His clothes, I shall be made well." The Bible says, in Proverbs 23:7: "For as he thinks in his heart, so is he." With her thought, she took possession of her blessing, and then this blessing took deep root in her heart and became a strong belief, which finally became her profession. She was convinced that if she tapped into Jesus's power through His clothes she would be healed.

The response of God is the result of what you say. Matthew 17:20: "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you." This means that faith causes you to speak. This verse does not say "you *can* say" — which would mean you have a choice — but says "you *will* say'" meaning that simply believing forces you to speak. If you really have belief in your heart, you will simply begin to say things associated with that belief. Your words will change when you have faith. When your faith starts growing, your words start changing.

Another scripture that talks about this same truth is 2 Corinthians 4:13: "But since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, 'I believed and therefore I spoke,' we also believe and therefore speak." Again, this says that belief causes speech. This means that the third step of faith is to speak according

to our belief. When you believe, you start testifying, declaring, and singing with joy. That's what faith does. Profession has two purposes: first of all, profession is the natural result of believing; and, secondly, it makes things happens. When you allow yourself to be fully persuaded by God's Word, you will use a different kind of language. The Bible says in Matthew 12:35: "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things."

So the important thing to do if you wish to believe is to hear the Word of God. As you hear the Word of God and believe it, and then allow yourself to be fully persuaded, it will enable you to produce a different kind of language. Regardless of what you can see with your physical eyes, you will begin to speak differently.

Faith is easy. The more you hear the Word of God, the more you will find yourself speaking accordingly. You will not fight to profess the Word of God, in other words, you will not try hard to do it. Your speaking will be the result of your believing. Let us remember that Jesus was anointed by God according to His declaration in Luke 4:18: "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me to preach the gospel to the poor . . .;" and in Mark 1:9 11: "It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove. Then the voice came from heaven, 'You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'" And Jesus declares in Acts 1:8 that

the power of God always accompanies the Holy Spirit: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Coming back to Mark 5:25 34 and the woman healed by touching Jesus's robes; it's not surprising to understand that we can tap into the power of God when we touch anybody who is anointed by God and Jesus is the Anointing One, full of the Holy Spirit. So the woman perceived and believed she could tap into the power of God by touching Jesus's clothes, and she acted on what she believed and was healed. So the fourth step of faith is to act on our belief.

You have to act on what God says. Many of the children of God agree with the Word of God, but do not act on it. But what is faith? Faith is acting on the Word of God. Ask those who have received miracles; there is always a point where you will be asked to do something that sounds crazy, unbelievable, or out of this world. Those who have received miracles have had to ask themselves "Am I going to act on the Word or am I going to act according to my mindset?" If your mind tells you, "I cannot stand; I cannot walk," but your pastor says, "Stand up and walk," what do you do? You stand up and walk. Just do it. In your mind you may feel that it is a dilemma, but the answer is simple: do it or do not do it, it's up to you. Acting on the Word will release the healing power of God as the woman in the scripture received.

Faith is as simple as laughing. When the woman acted on her faith by coming near Jesus and touching His garment, the anointing — the power of God — was transferred from Jesus to the woman and she was healed. All you have to do is to take the fourth step of faith by acting on your belief, instead of letting reason get in the way. No matter whether or not it seems crazy, do what God's Word tells you to do and the miracle will take place. All God wants is your response. That's all.

The last step of faith is testimony.

The woman, healed, testified, as is described in Mark 5:33–34: "But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth. And He said to her, 'Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction."

Our testimony settles the issue, as it says in Revelation 12:11: "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; and they did not love their lives to the death." When our mind focuses on what is in our heart, it causes our heart to believe without doubt what we have already stored in our heart, which then causes our mouth to speak. The third step of this process of faith described above (let ourselves to be persuaded by what we heard) — when thought and belief align — is called the union or oneness of mind and heart, which could also be called the spirit of faith or the spirit of fear, depending on what our mind focuses on. Our mind is

the key to our way to the kingdom of God. When we keep our mind on God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son of God, the Holy Spirit, and God's Word, then we begin to see the pictures of God's Word in our mind. This step corresponds to the creation of spiritual realities in our mind, which are brought forth by God's Word.

Before going any further, let us consider some definitions. According to the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* "hope" is "a belief that something you want will happen;" and "will" means "the ability to control your thoughts and actions in order to achieve what you want to do; a feeling of strong determination to do something that you want to do." Jesus said, in Luke 22:42 43: "'Father, if it is Your will, remove this cup from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.' Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him."

Knowing what we now know about beliefs, do you understood why Jesus's speech produced what He said? If not, let us be reminded of the teaching of Jesus Christ about the power of our words. We find it in Mark 11:23: "For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will come to pass, he will have whatever he says." In other words, you can have whatever you say, but there is one requirement: you must have no doubt in your heart and be fully persuaded that what you say will come to pass.

As we have discussed, we believe with our heart, but we doubt with our mind. Therefore, our heart and mind are united when what we think lines up with what we believe about God's Word. So, by speaking, Jesus cast away any thought in His mind (as described in Luke 22:42–43, just above) which was contrary to God's will. This caused God the Father to send His angel to strengthen Jesus's will in order to line up Jesus's will to God's will according to the principle of faith in Romans 10:17: "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Do you see now? Speaking God's Word has the power to cast away anything in your mind that is contrary to God's Word. Therefore the strength of our inner man or spirit resides in our will (one of the three component of man's spirit) provided that we turn our mind towards God. No wonder Jesus said to His disciples, in Matthew 26:41: "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." The will of our spirit desires to serve God, but we must pray to receive strength from God so that that same will can get the ability to take control of our flesh and thoughts. That means that prayer also has the ability to activate the power of God in us and strengthen our will.

Let us now take another scripture to build our understanding of the principle that governs the spirit realm, including the power of our thought— Lamentations 3:17–26: "You have moved my soul far from peace; I have forgotten prosperity. And I said, 'My strength

and my hope Have perished from the LORD.' Remember my affliction and roaming, The wormwood and the gall. My soul still remembers And sinks within me. This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope. Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. 'The LORD is my portion,' says my soul, 'Therefore I hope in him!' The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, To the soul who seeks Him. It is good that one should hope and wait quietly For the salvation of the LORD."

The prophet started out thinking about his condition: "You have moved my soul far from peace; I have forgotten prosperity." Before we can truly understand what this means, we should find out what is meant by "peace." The Bible says, in Isaiah 26:3: "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You." According to the New Living Translation Bible, Second Edition, "peace" can be described as "freedom from disquieting or oppressive thoughts or emotions." The same quote from this second Bible reads as: "You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in You, all whose thoughts are fixed on You." In both cases, these scriptures reveal that peace comes to us when our thoughts are fixed on God.

Therefore, when Lamentations 3:17 says: "You have moved my soul far from peace," it means his soul has failed to focus on God, or has ceased to focus on God's Word. The first lesson we can learn from this study is

that as born-again Christians we are obligated to keep meditating on God's Word daily, otherwise we will lose our peace. It also means that our thoughts have both creative and destructive power. They can bring us the peace of God when we fix our gaze on God's Word, but can take away the peace of God when we fail to keep our focus on God's Word.

The prophet in Lamentations then went on to say: "My strength and my hope Have perished from the LORD." His lack of peace has caused him to declare that his strength and his hope have been destroyed. Remember that Jesus said in Mark 11:23: ". . . He will have whatever he says," meaning we always get what we say. Therefore, by declaring that his strength and his hope have perished from the LORD, this prophet actually caused his mind to cease to focus on God and, instead, to focus on his earthly condition. The lack of focus on God's Word destroyed his strength, and his spirit has lost his hope due to the absence of focus on God's Word.

The second lesson we can learn from this verse concerning our strength and hope is that our thoughts have destructive power: They destroy strength in our will and hope in our spirit. The thought of his pain and the prophet's homelessness is bitter poison: "Remember my affliction and roaming, The wormwood and the gall." He thinks about it constantly and his spirit is depressed: "My soul still remembers And sinks within me." When we constantly focus on our afflictions we become depressed.

Yet hope returns when the prophet remembers that the Lord will sustain him: "Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. 'The LORD is my portion,' says my soul, 'Therefore I hope in him!'" When he focused on God's grace, he received hope. This means that the principal requirement of hope is simply to focus on God's grace.

Moreover, meditating on God's Word brings you hope, life, joy, and gladness as it is written in Psalm 51:8: "Make me hear joy and gladness, That the bones which you have broken may rejoice;" in Psalm 119:111: "Your testimonies I have taken as a heritage forever, For they are the rejoicing of my heart;" in Psalm 119:14 16: "I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, As much as in all riches. I will meditate on Your precepts, and contemplate Your ways. I will delight myself in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word;" and in Psalm 119:49 50: "Remember the word to Your servant, Upon which You have caused me to hope. This is my comfort in my affliction. For Your word has given me life." When we read these scriptures, it becomes obvious that when we line up the focus of our mind with our belief concerning God's Word we produce joy and hope.

The next lesson we can learn from the verse from Lamentations is that our thoughts possess creative power. They bring forth hope in our spirit when we fix our gaze on God's Word or on Jesus. The prophet realizes the Lord is good, and shows kindness to everyone

who trusts in Him, as he says: "The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, to the soul who seeks Him. It is good that one should hope and wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD." Our trust in God causes God to pour out His grace upon us. The fourth lesson we can learn from the verse about our trust in God is that our daily attention to God is what brings his overflowing grace upon us on a daily basis.

From the study of this verse from Lamentations, we can deduce that the principal requirement of peace (of the mind), hope (in the spirit), and strength (our will) is the focus of our mind on the Word of God; while the main cause of depression, weakness of will, hopelessness of spirit, and lack of peace of mind is the focus of our mind on our afflictions, problems, circumstances, and all that our natural senses perceive. And, finally, the primary requirement for receiving God's grace is simply our trust in Him.

Our trust in God or love for Jesus compels God to be kind to us and to pour out His grace upon us. Jesus summed up what we have just said in John 17:3: "And this is eternal life that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent." What does this tell us?

Until we change our mind and truly know Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior, we cannot change our life, and therefore cannot change our estate. But for our spirit to get hope, our mind must picture our belief in God's Word, because both hope and hopelessness are based on our thoughts. Unless we win the battle

that takes place in our mind by focusing on God's grace, fear and doubt which are in control of our mind will not allow our spirit to fulfill its destiny. It is because of this that the Bible says in, Deuteronomy 10:16: "Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer." Until we align our thoughts with God's thoughts, God's Word cannot make its way into our heart.

But how can we remove, once and for all, our own thoughts and replace them with God's thoughts?

The answer is found in Joshua 1:8: "This book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success." Meditating on the Word on a daily basis will gradually change your own thoughts and replace them with God's thoughts, as it is written in James 1:23 25: "For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does." So if you merely read the Word, but then forget about it, you are like the man who looks in the mirror then forgets what he sees. But if you meditate daily on the Word, you focus on the Word and become a blessed doer of the work of God.

Let us look at another scripture, because it is so

important to understand this idea: 2 Corinthians 3:18 says: "But we all, with unveiling face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord." God calls the one you see in the mirror "the glory of the Lord." And, if we see in a mirror the glory of the Lord, that means that we are, in fact, the glory of the Lord. That's the name God calls us so we should answer to that name. As you continue to look at the glory of the Lord, you are transformed. This is the mirror's principle: Keep looking at what God says about you and, as you do, you are transformed into the image God or His Word has about you. Keep reflecting on what God says about you and the transformation will continue to take place. And, as the Bible says, you will change from glory to glory.

When you meditate, you must realize that there are three levels of meditation. The first level of meditating on the Word is simply to think it over. Then you begin to mutter it (this activity corresponds to the second level of meditation), saying something like "Glory to Jesus, My Lord and Savior. I have the life of God in me. Sickness cannot stay in my body. Thank you, Jesus, for making my life and the life of my family beautiful." You fill your brain with God's Word. You fill your consciousness with it, and you purposely decide to do so. Your consciousness becomes so filled and you become so fully persuaded, that you begin to roar (this step corresponds to the third level of meditation);

you cannot keep it in anymore, as it is described in 2 Corinthians 4:13: "But since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, 'I believed and therefore I spoke,' we also believe and therefore speak." You cannot be quiet, and feel you must say to everyone: "I am the glory of the Lord. I have the life of God in me." As you keep meditating on God's Word, suddenly you start screaming God's Word and giving glory to God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit because the Word has filled your consciousness and your heart.

As you continue looking in the mirror, there is a transformation in your thinking and speech and then in your deeds. You begin to look away from the pain and look up on Jesus. As you continue looking, there is a transformation. You find that you begin to look for your healing; and do not check for the pain, knowing that if you check for the pain you will find it, but there is no pain when you look to Jesus.

And, when you look for a change in your healing, be sure to look for even the slightest of changes. A small change can be the start of something much bigger, as in 1 Kings 18:41–44: "Then Elijah said to Ahab, 'Go up, eat and drink; for there is the sound of abundance of rain.' So Ahab went up to eat and drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmen; then he bowed down on the ground, and put his face between his knees, and said to his servant, 'Go up now, look towards the sea.' So he went up and looked, and said, 'There is nothing.' And seven times, he said, 'Go again.' Then it came to pass the seventh time that he said, 'There is a

cloud, as small as a man's hand, rising out of the sea!' So he said, 'Go up, say to Ahab, 'Prepare your chariot, and go down before the rain stops you.'"

What you must remember is this: Fix your gaze on the little change or sign that you are healing, not on any medical report or any bad circumstances you are facing. And this little change will give you a strength that will accelerate your healing. Where does this teaching come from? Remember the Bible says, in Proverbs 23:7: "For as he thinks in his heart, so is he." It matters what we think about, because our way of thinking determines our personality and our identity. And Joshua 1:8 declares that if we keep on speaking God's Word by meditating on it, that activity will also cause our identity or personality to change, allowing us to understand God's mind so that we can effortlessly follow His commandments. Therefore, meditation on the Good News over a period of time is the primary force behind the lasting change of our mind towards God.

As God redeemed Israel and paid the price for its salvation and made available provisions for the righteous living on earth and brought to them no more sorrow but satisfied all their needs, in the same manner Jesus paid the ransom of our salvation with His blood and made us coheirs with Him, as it is written in Galatians 3:26 29: "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free,

there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

Before we go on, let us see what redemption really means.

The Bible says, in Galatians 3:13–14, "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become curse for us (for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on the tree'), that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." And Deuteronomy 28:15–68 describes the thirty curses of the law which are poverty, generational curses, curses wherever you go, weakness when you face bad circumstances or a difficult situation, spoliation, being a laughingstock for others, unproductiveness, decrease in glory, being the tail and not the head, being a borrower and not a lender, sickness, defeat or failure, fear, doubt, spiritual blindness, poor vision, weakness, being in need of all things, confusion or lack of wisdom, disaster or tragedy or misfortune, oppression, anxiety, hopelessness, despair, trusting wrongly in the riches and protections of this world, incurable diseases, madness, slavery or bondage, focusing on what you see, unknown disease which is not written in the book of the law, and, finally, destruction or death.

But every curse of the law has its corresponding blessing and our faith in Christ Jesus is the law of God that gives us this specific blessing. Indeed faith is the law as it is written in Romans 3:27: "Where is boasting,

then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith." Because faith is a law, if you correctly apply faith any time and anywhere, it will always produces the same results Jesus got when He was on earth. No wonder the Bible says, in Hebrews 13:8: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever."

Moreover, the Scriptures say, in 1 John 5:4, that "Whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world our faith." Since Romans 3:27 says that faith is a law, this means that faith cannot fail and that whenever we apply faith its result will remain the same. In other words, faith is our means to overcome any curse of the law and turn it into the corresponding blessing of Abraham, as 1 John 5:4 states.

Your knowledge of the principle of faith will give you the confidence and the boldness to express your spirit of faith and also act upon it to bring into being every blessing of God and casts away any curse of the law from your life.

This same truth was expressed by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ when He declared in John 17:1 4: "Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: 'Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent." Your knowledge of who God the Father and Jesus Christ our Lord

and Savior are gives eternal life to everything you think, believe, say, and do. Your consciousness of the Lordship of Jesus Christ over your life gives you power and authority over anything that can hurt or bind. This means that we must be aware of the Lordship of Christ over our spirit — our mind, will, and heart. Take your stand on the consciousness of the Lordship of Jesus Christ over your mind, will, and heart, and you will never be defeated by anything that hurts or binds such as sickness, poverty, or addiction.

You can, therefore, bring upon your life the blessings God has in store for you and cast away any curse of the law you do not like. Our faith holds within it our consciousness of who God the Father and Jesus Christ are. Our faith encapsulates our beliefs concerning God's Word, as well as our professions, and what we say in agreement with God's Word. And, finally, our faith is made of what we do in agreement with God's Word. It is no wonder that, in the scriptures, every time Jesus healed someone, He said, "Your faith has made you whole." *You* are the one to create the changes.

And, when we consider it this way, faith is actually our entire lifestyle — what we think, believe, say, and do based on what God's Word says about us and our condition. No wonder the Bible says, in Romans 1:17: "The just shall live by faith," meaning that a Christian, shall live by faith, and is under obligation to do anything by faith so that he always gets a victorious result, with no more failure in his life. This is the destiny God has in store for every born-again Christian.

So let us look at Deuteronomy 28:15–68 to see what it really tells us:

> "But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you:
>
> "Cursed shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the country.
>
> "Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl.
>
> "Cursed shall be the fruit of your body and the produce of your land, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks.
>
> "Cursed shall you be when you come in, and cursed shall you be when you go out.
>
> "The Lord will send on you cursing, confusion, and rebuke in all that you set your hand to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, because of the wickedness of your doings in which you have forsaken Me. The Lord will make the plague cling to you until He has consumed you from the land which you are going to possess. The Lord will strike you with consumption, with fever, with inflammation, with severe burning fever, with the sword, with scorching, and with mildew; they shall pursue you until you perish. And your heavens which are over your head shall

be bronze, and the earth which is under you shall be iron. The Lord will change the rain of your land to powder and dust; from the heaven it shall come down on you until you are destroyed.

"The Lord will cause you to be defeated before your enemies; you shall go out one way against them and flee seven ways before them; and you shall become troublesome to all the kingdoms of the earth. Your carcasses shall be food for all the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and no one shall frighten them away. The Lord will strike you with the boils of Egypt, with tumors, with the scab, and with the itch, from which you cannot be healed. The Lord will strike you with madness and blindness and confusion of heart. And you shall grope at noonday, as a blind man gropes in darkness; you shall not prosper in your ways; you shall be only oppressed and plundered continually, and no one shall save you.

"You shall betroth a wife, but another man shall lie with her; you shall build a house, but you shall not dwell in it; you shall plant a vineyard, but shall not gather its grapes. Your ox shall be slaughtered before your eyes, but you shall not eat of it; your donkey shall be violently taken away from before you, and shall not be restored to you; your sheep shall be given to your enemies, and you shall have no one to rescue them. Your sons and your daughters shall be given to another people, and your eyes shall look and fail with

longing for them all day long; and there shall be no strength in your hand. A nation whom you have not known shall eat the fruit of your land and the produce of your labor, and you shall be only oppressed and crushed continually. So you shall be driven mad because of the sight which your eyes see. The Lord will strike you in the knees and on the legs with severe boils which cannot be healed, and from the sole of your foot to the top of your head.

"The Lord will bring you and the king whom you set over you to a nation which neither you nor your fathers have known, and there you shall serve other gods wood and stone. And you shall become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword among all nations where the Lord will drive you.

"You shall carry much seed out to the field but gather little in, for the locust shall consume it. You shall plant vineyards and tend them, but you shall neither drink of the wine nor gather the grapes; for the worms shall eat them. You shall have olive trees throughout all your territory, but you shall not anoint yourself with the oil; for your olives shall drop off. You shall beget sons and daughters, but they shall not be yours; for they shall go into captivity. Locusts shall consume all your trees and the produce of your land.

"The alien who is among you shall rise higher and higher above you, and you shall come down lower

and lower. He shall lend to you, but you shall not lend to him; he shall be the head, and you shall be the tail.

"Moreover all these curses shall come upon you and pursue and overtake you, until you are destroyed, because you did not obey the voice of the Lord your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you. And they shall be upon you for a sign and a wonder, and on your descendants forever.

"Because you did not serve the Lord your God with joy and gladness of heart, for the abundance of everything, therefore you shall serve your enemies, whom the Lord will send against you, in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in need of everything; and He will put a yoke of iron on your neck until He has destroyed you. The Lord will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flies, a nation whose language you will not understand, a nation of fierce countenance, which does not respect the elderly nor show favor to the young. And they shall eat the increase of your livestock and the produce of your land, until you are destroyed; they shall not leave you grain or new wine or oil, or the increase of your cattle or the offspring of your flocks, until they have destroyed you.

"They shall besiege you at all your gates until your high and fortified walls, in which you trust,

come down throughout all your land; and they shall besiege you at all your gates throughout all your land which the Lord your God has given you. You shall eat the fruit of your own body, the flesh of your sons and your daughters whom the Lord your God has given you, in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you. The sensitive and very refined man among you will be hostile toward his brother, toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the rest of his children whom he leaves behind, so that he will not give any of them the flesh of his children whom he will eat, because he has nothing left in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates. The tender and delicate woman among you, who would not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground because of her delicateness and sensitivity, will refuse to the husband of her bosom, and to her son and her daughter, her placenta which comes out from between her feet and her children whom she bears; for she will eat them secretly for lack of everything in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates.

"If you do not carefully observe all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and awesome name, THE LORD YOUR GOD, then the Lord will bring upon you and your descendants extraordinary plagues great and prolonged plagues and

serious and prolonged sicknesses. Moreover He will bring back on you all the diseases of Egypt, of which you were afraid, and they shall cling to you. Also every sickness and every plague, which is not written in this Book of the Law, will the Lord bring upon you until you are destroyed. You shall be left few in number, whereas you were as the stars of heaven in multitude, because you would not obey the voice of the Lord your God. And it shall be, that just as the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good and multiply you, so the Lord will rejoice over you to destroy you and bring you to nothing; and you shall be plucked from off the land which you go to possess.

"Then the Lord will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other, and there you shall serve other gods, which neither you nor your fathers have known wood and stone. And among those nations you shall find no rest, nor shall the sole of your foot have a resting place; but there the Lord will give you a trembling heart, failing eyes, and anguish of soul. Your life shall hang in doubt before you; you shall fear day and night, and have no assurance of life. In the morning you shall say, 'Oh, that it were evening!' And at evening you shall say, 'Oh, that it were morning!' because of the fear which terrifies your heart, and because of the sight which your eyes see.

"And the Lord will take you back to Egypt in ships, by the way of which I said to you, 'You shall

never see it again.' And there you shall be offered for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but no one will buy you."

Do you see in this passage why Jesus came to earth? The Bible says, in Galatians 3:13, that: "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree')." Jesus came to earth to redeem us from the curse of the law, and to make us the righteousness of God by giving us blessings instead of each of the curses described in Deuteronomy.

Do you see why people are filled with joy and love for Jesus when they listen to the gospel of Jesus Christ? With Christ, we are catapulted into God's kingdom of light and life, where only prosperity and the blessings of life reign. Without Jesus, we are condemned to darkness and the consequences of our sin.

But what is sin?

The Bible answers this fundamental question in Romans 14:23, saying, "But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not from faith, for whatever is not from faith is sin." And we know that faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the Word of God (Romans 10:17). Taking together Romans 14:23 and Romans 10:17 tell us that sin is anything that is not consistent with the Word of God or anything that contradicts God's Word.

The Bible also says, in 2 Corinthians 4:13, that we manifest our faith by speaking according to our belief. If we manifest our faith by speaking according to our

belief that originates from God's Word, likewise we sin by speaking words that are contrary to God's Word. Therefore, our words, when they are not in agreement with God's Word, are the originators of our sin and also the causes of our sicknesses and diseases, as described above in Deuteronomy 28:15 68. This explains why Proverbs 18:21 says, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit." Furthermore, Proverbs 23:7 adds, "For as he thinks in his heart, so is he," meaning that our identity, our attitude and expression, and our deeds are all the result of our thoughts.

Proverbs 23:7 is saying that our words and actions and behavior are the products of our thoughts. Do not forget that, as we have discussed, "A belief is a thought that you make real, or accept as true." This truth is what the scripture is saying in Proverbs 23:7 when it says, "For as he thinks in his heart, so is he." And 2 Corinthians 4:13 says our words are the product of our beliefs. Therefore, spiritual sins such as bitterness, anger, hatred, and pride are the result of our thoughts while physical sins such as lying and wrong actions are the product of our beliefs (thoughts transformed into beliefs). Consequently, our words, attitudes, and actions are the products of our thoughts that have become our beliefs. If our beliefs are thoughts which we have given solidity in our hearts, doesn't that truly mean that all actions are from our thoughts? Doesn't that mean that I am saying that all of these things come from the same place? Yes, thoughts and beliefs come from the

same place. This means, then, that our thoughts and beliefs, when they are not in line with God's Word, are the causes of our sicknesses and diseases.

Coming back to Proverbs 18:21 ("Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit."), we realize that this scripture repeats the same truth as Romans 8:6: "For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." Can you see that they are the same? Proverbs 18:21 is saying that our words can bring us death or life, according to what they are founded upon, whereas Romans 8:6 is saying our mind brings us death and life depending on what gives our thoughts birth: God's Word or our own thoughts.

Our thoughts and words are the causes of our sicknesses and diseases when they are not in line with God's Word, because the principle of life or death is our thoughts. All things begin with our thoughts, which become beliefs. When a belief turns into words, those words frame our life and death. In fact, if we follow God's Word and God's thoughts, they will bring us life and the blessings of God, but our own thoughts and words bring us death and the curse of the law. As far as Jesus is concerned, He made crystal clear the fact that our words have creative power when He declared this wonderful statement in Mark 11:23: "For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will come to pass, he will have whatever he says."

Jesus is saying that the only requirement to give power to your words is to change your thoughts. This is where the power of your words lies. This is how all the creative process works within us, which corresponds to the five steps of faith.

- First of all, in accordance with John 6:63 and Romans 10:17, by speaking God's Word we create the spiritual realities pictured by our mind.
- Secondly, according to Lamentations 3:21–22, our mind has the power to create hope and faith trustworthy beliefs treasured by our heart.
- Thirdly, in accord with 2 Corinthians 4:13, our heart has the power to transform our beliefs into words spoken by our mouth, which is automatic through faith.
- Fourthly, according to Mark 5:25–34, the fourth step of faith is to act on our belief.
- Finally, according to Mark 5:33–34 and Revelation 12:1, the last step of faith is testimony.

Therefore our responsibility is to change our thoughts and words into God's Words and God's thoughts. How do we do this? The Holy Spirit gives us the secret, as well as the most powerful revelation of God's Word, in Philippians 4:4–7, saying: "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which

surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

At the end of this chapter we deal in detail with this scripture. But, for the time being, observe that by professing God's Word through prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, we allow God to know our desire which is in line with God's Word about us and our condition, and so we cause God to bring to our mind and heart His peace, which surpasses all understanding. Do you get the picture?

By our profession, we cause God to change our thoughts and beliefs into His thoughts and beliefs through Jesus Christ His Peace. This is what the phrase "the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" means. By professing God's Word with thanksgiving, we cause God the Father to guard our mind/thoughts and heart/beliefs through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This is how we put into practice the Word of God, as declared by the Holy Spirit in 1 Peter 5:6 7: "Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you." Once we do this, our mind worries no more and our heart has no more fear. By focusing on giving thanks to God, instead of worrying, we cause God to grant us His peace that protects our mind and heart. So what matters is the focus of our mind: by changing the focus of our mind from worries to giving glory or thanksgiving we receive the grace of God in exchange.

Why is it so important to give glory to God? First of all, because giving glory to God is expressing our faith, as it is written in two wonderful verses: Romans 1:17 ("The just shall live by faith.") and 1 Corinthians 10:31 ("Therefore, whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."). If the just are expected to live by faith, and the Scriptures also say that whatever we do we must do all to the glory of God, then giving glory to God is the lifestyle of the believer, the just, and the righteous. Therefore, giving thanks and glory to God is real and genuine faith. Secondly, the Bible declares, in Romans 1:21: "Because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened." This means that if you know God and forget to give Him glory and thanks your heart will be darkened, and you will become confused. But if we give thanks and glory to God, He gives us His deepest Peace, as it is written in Philippians 4:6 7: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving , let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God; which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus;" and in Luke 2:14: "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, good will towards men." Therefore, according to these two passages, giving glory to God in whatever you do activates the power of God that drives His grace the Peace of God towards you. And we already know that our peace of mind is the principle

that turns our mouth into a powerful weapon that brings into being whatever we say (Mark 11:23).

Moreover, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ says in John 6:63: "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life." Jesus added, in Matthew 12:34–37: "Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the Day of Judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned." This means that the causes of our sins—thus also the causes of our sicknesses and diseases—are first and foremost spiritual, since our words and thoughts are spiritual.

As we have discussed, the Scriptures say, in Genesis 2:7: "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being." This means that man is composed of two parts, the outer man made of the dust of the ground and the inner man who originates from God and is made of the breath of God which is the breath of life. Therefore a human being is formed by a spirit living in a body. John 6:63 and Genesis 2:7, respectively, declare that God's Word and the spirit of God give life to our body. And Romans 14:23 and Matthew 12:34–37 show that any words

which are contrary to God's Word cause us to sin, thus bringing death to our body. So we bring life to our spirit, soul, and body by constantly professing God's Word, or by activating the power of the Holy Spirit by speaking in tongues, as it is written in 1 Corinthians 14:4: "He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself . . ."

According to the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, the Greek words *oikodomeo* ("to build") and *oikodome* ("the act of building") are each used both literally and figuratively in the New Testament. These words are translated as "edify," "edifying," and "edification," in the King James Version of the Bible and are used in some twenty passages all in the figurative sense of the promotion of growth in Christian character. The Revised Version (British and American) in 2 Corinthians 10:8; 2 Corinthians 13:10; Ephesians 4:12; Ephesians 4:16; and 1 Thessalonians 5:11 translates this as "build up" and "building up," making the meaning clearer to the English reader.

According to Thayer's *Greek Lexicon*, the Greek word *oikodomeo* means "to build a house, erect a building; to build (up from the foundation); to restore by building, to rebuild, repair; or metaphorically to found, establish; to promote growth in Christian wisdom, affection, grace, virtue, holiness, blessedness; or to grow in wisdom and piety." No wonder Pastor Chris Oyakhilome made this wonderful statement: "When we speak in other tongues, we build up ourselves, like an edifice brick by brick, block by block as you would a physical structure. Just as the builder lays the blocks

of the house he's building upward and higher, so is your spirit built stronger as you speak in tongues!" No wonder Jude 1:20 speaks to us, saying: "But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit."

Can you see what this means? Our faith is our foundation — the infrastructure from which we build the superstructure of our spiritual being — and can become a spiritual giant. In Acts 20:32, Paul said to the brethren at Ephesus: "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified." In the same way that, by eating food, a human being builds his body and makes it strong, our inner man — our spirit — is built up when we speak in tongues and meditate on God's Word. So, as believers of Christ, we are all compelled to every day speak in tongues, meditate on God's Word, and give glory to God to become spiritual giants (who are strong, powerful in words and deeds, and fully persuaded about the things of God). Whatever activity a spiritual giant puts his mind to, it is turned into success.

When Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden, God said to him, in Genesis 3:17–19: "Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat from it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you. And you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground. For out of it you were taken; for dust

you are and to dust you shall return." Did you notice that, when God created Adam, He qualified him as a living being having the breath of God in him? It is written in Genesis 2:7: "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being." But, after Adam sinned, God qualified him as dust that will return to dust; meaning that he no longer had His Spirit in him. But we all know that Adam did not simply die after being cursed by God, so his body, deprived of the spirit of God, was then sustained by his blood, according to the Word of God in Leviticus 17:11: "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul."

Before our new birth as Christians or believers of Christ we were born of our human parents and, as seed of Adam, we inherit the blood of Adam to sustain our flesh. But, when we are born again, we receive the life of Christ which is different from the life of the blood, as Jesus declared in John 3:5 6: "Most assuredly, I declare to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit;" and in John 1:12 13: "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Do

you see something mind-blowing in those two wonderful scriptures?

As born-again Christians, our bodies are no longer sustained by our blood but by the spirit of God, which dwells in us because we are now spirit beings as Jesus said ("that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" [John 3:6]). This means that the life of our blood has been supplanted by the life of the spirit of God that lives in us. How do we have the life of God in us? Let us carefully follow our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who explains this truth to us in John 15:4–5: "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branches cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing."

A vine is a plant composed of its roots, stem, branches, and fruits. This means that vine sap is, in essence, the life of the vine, therefore if any part of the vine does not receive vine sap, it dies. So Jesus is saying we must receive His sap—His life—to be able to bear fruit. Without the life of Jesus in us we cannot bear fruit, and we cannot be productive in life. The key question, then, is: What does Jesus mean by the phrase "Abide in Me and I in you"? Fortunately Jesus gives us the answer of this critical question by taking His own example with God to reveal this wonderful truth to us when He declares, in John 14:10: "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on

My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works." (This is the God-kind of faith that we will deal with in the next chapter.)

The Father who dwelt in Jesus was the Holy Spirit. So the Holy Spirit gave Jesus what to say and also performed the miracles Jesus performed. In the same way, when Jesus tells us to abide in Him and He will abide in us, He is really telling us to continually declare the same words He tells us to say or that the Holy Spirit who is in us advises us to say and then the power of the Holy Spirit will perform the miracles our words talk about. The Holy Spirit is the conveyer of the presence of the Father, as well as the conveyer of the presence of the Son Jesus Christ in us, as we can see in John 14:16 17 ("And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you"), and John 14:26 ("But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you").

Thus, the Father sends the Holy Spirit when we utter or shout the name of Jesus. In other words, God the Father activates the power of God in us to perform whatever we say in the name of Jesus. The name of Jesus is an "instrument." Jesus and the Holy Spirit are one being, so calling the name of Jesus causes the Holy Spirit to show up and perform the works. *Glory*

to Jesus our Lord and Savior! No wonder the Bible says, in Colossians 3:4: "Christ is our life;" and Jesus said in John 14:6: "I am the way, the truth and the life." Can you see that Jesus's life flows in our body and so in every organ, tissue, muscle, and cell in our body? This is in agreement with the Word of God, which is also spirit and life, as it is written in John 6:63: "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life." No wonder Jesus says, in John 15:5: "I am the vine, you are the branches," meaning the sap of the vine Jesus gives life to the branches the true believers.

Let us look at another Scripture which deals with this same truth revealed in the vine analogy of John 15:4 5. The Bible says, in 1 John 5:11 12: "And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life." We are told, here, that unless you have Jesus Christ in you, you cannot have life. This is another example of what Jesus meant by the phrase "Abide in Me, and I in you."

Therefore the phrase "Abide in me, and I in you" also means "to have eternal life or the life of Christ in you." Unless you have eternal life in you, you cannot be productive or bear fruit as Jesus did on earth. Our God-kind of faith is the tool that causes us to become one with Jesus, speaking only the Word of God and performing what our words talk about through the power of the Holy Spirit who dwells in us. The Bible says: "Without faith, it is impossible to please

God" (Hebrews 11:6), because it is only by faith that we relate to God, whom we cannot see. So you must understand faith. The Bible says, in 1 John 5:4: "For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world our faith." This means that our faith is our victory; and our faith is the key to our victory, so that we can become free to live a life of victory. We have to live a life which is consistent with God's Word. And, to do that, we've got to understand faith. We've got to be comfortable with faith. After all, if you do not know how to use a tool you will not get the best work out of it.

Faith is a law, and a law is something which is consistent, so faith is also consistent and the same every day. I want to show you something more about faith.

Look at Romans 4:9 12, which says that some people walk in the steps of the faith of Abraham.: "Does this blessedness then come upon the circumcised only, or upon the uncircumcised also? For we say that faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness. How then was it accounted? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while still uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised, that the righteousness might be imputed to them also, and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham had

while still uncircumcised." What does that mean?

This means that Abraham, who was known as the father of faith, took certain steps of faith to get what God had promised him when he was not circumcised which he received after he was circumcised. So what is the point? The point is that the Bible says we must follow the steps Abraham took. This means that those steps of faith are steps that we *can* follow and that faith is something we can see as it is moving. Faith is not a mystery. Once we identify the steps of faith we can follow them. Even if I did not understand faith; even I did not know how to act on God's Word; I would know how to follow step-by-step instructions. And, by doing that, I can find myself where he found himself. Remember, as well, that faith is the law according to what is written in Romans 3:27: "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith." Therefore if you follow the same steps of faith you will get the same result.

I want us to think again of the woman in the book of Mark who was healed when she touched Christ's robes (Mark 5:25 34). When we look at her story, we are going to see certain steps of faith that we can follow and have the same result. Remember that Jesus, after listening to the account this woman's accounts qualified all her deeds as faith. I want us to identify certain steps of her faith steps that we can also follow. The story starts with the problem of this woman who had been sick for twelve years. She had spent everything that she had, and had tried everything,

going to all the doctors that she could to get healed, but with no results.

The Bible says, in Mark 5:27, that she heard of Jesus ("When she heard about Jesus. . ."). As we know, the first step of faith is to hear the Word of God, as is also explained in Romans 10:17: "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." So the first step of her faith — and of her miracle — was to hear the Word of God. When you listen to the Word of God, you are filling your attention with things which are moving your faith in the right direction. When we tell you "Hear the Word of God" what we are saying is "Give your attention to what God has said, to what God is doing."

People who are sick, poor, or in bondage focus on their condition, focusing only on the symptoms of their sickness, their lack of livelihood, or their addictions. No wonder the Bible says, in Romans 8:15: "For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father.'" So take your attention off of bondage or addiction or fear, and instead look up to God, your Father, and thank Him for your healing, and your salvation will begin to show up.

I want you to take your attention off of what is still in your condition and look at what really happens — the little signs of positive change in your life brought on by your profession and thanksgiving to God — when you begin to meditate on God's Word and confess your healing in agreement with the Word of God.

Sick people — those without faith — look at medical reports, and listen to what the doctor says. What did the woman in the passage from Mark do? The Bible says "She heard" — because faith comes by hearing — and then she focused on what she heard. Whatever you give attention to is what is going to produce results. If you give attention to the Word of God and to the possibilities of God, faith will grow up strongly within you. If you give attention to negative news such as bad medical reports, faith will decrease. The Bible says: "The things which are impossible to men are possible to God," as it is written in Luke 18:27.

The more you hear God's Word and meditate on God's Word the more your faith will be strengthened. The more you hear God's Word or meditate on God's Word the more your faith will grow. With God, all things are possible, so stop hearing anything else apart from God's Word.

The second step of faith, having heard God's Word, is to picture the thought of God. Matthew 9:21 says: "She said to herself, 'If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made well.'" Her thoughts convinced her. She allowed herself to be persuaded by what she heard. This means that when she heard of Jesus, certain thoughts came to her.

So the third step of faith is to be persuaded, to let the things you have heard enter into you, and to believe that the pictures brought to you by the Word of God are true. In other words, allow yourself to believe God's Word. As God's Word comes to you, you must

drop your own thoughts and pick up God's thoughts.

The fourth step of faith is to profess what you believe. This is what the woman did, as reported in Mark 5:28: "for she said, 'If only I may touch His clothes, I shall be made well." The response of God depends upon what you say.

Remember: faith causes you to speak. Faith makes you say something. If you really have faith, you begin to say things like: "I am well," "I am whole," "I can see my future," "I am sound," and "I am healed." Your words will change when you have faith. When your faith starts growing, your words start changing even though nothing might yet change in your physical condition. This same truth is found in 2 Corinthians 4:13: "But since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, 'I believed and therefore I spoke,' we also believe and therefore speak." Our believing causes vocalizing. When you believe, you start testifying, declaring, and singing with joy. That's what faith does. Speaking out does not make things happen in the spirit of faith, but in the God-kind of faith; it is the natural result of believing in the spirit of faith. When you allow yourself to be persuaded by God's Word, you will have a different kind of language. The Bible says, in Matthew 12:35: "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things."

So the most important part of faith is hearing the Word of God. As you hear the Word of God, believe it and allow yourself to be persuaded, and it will

produce a different kind of language. Regardless of what you see with your physical eyes, you will begin to speak differently. Faith is easy. The more you hear the Word of God, the more you find yourself speaking accordingly.

And then what happened in Mark 5:27? "When she heard about Jesus, she came behind Him in the crowd and touched His garment." She acted on what she believed. So the fifth step of faith is to act on our belief. You have to respond to what God says. Many of the children of God agree with the Word, but do not act on the Word. What is faith? Faith is acting on the Word of God. It is asking yourself "Am I going to act on the Word or am I going to act according to my own mindset?" If your mind tells you, "I cannot stand, I cannot walk," but the Word of God says "I am healed by the stripes of Jesus" (1 Peter 2:24), what do you do? You stand up and walk.

It will be a dilemma: whether to do it or not do it but it's up to you. Acting on the Word of God will release the healing power of God, as the woman in Mark received. When she acted on her faith by coming near Jesus and touching His garment, the power was transferred from Jesus to the woman and she was healed. All you have to do is to take this step of faith by acting on your belief, without overthinking it. Whether it seems crazy or not, just do what God's Word or your pastor tells you to do and the miracle will take place. All God wants is your response. That's all.

The final step of faith is testimony. The woman testified, in Mark 5:33 34: "But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth. And He said to her, 'Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction." Your testimony settles the issue, as Jesus said in Revelation 12:11: "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; and they did not love their lives to the death;" and in Acts 1:8 that says: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." To be a witness to Jesus is to speak and communicate the things that you have seen and heard in your life that happened because of Jesus. Its the Holy Spirit who makes Jesus real to us, and makes Jesus real through us.

The good news or goodness of God causes people to sing with joy and change their mind to follow the goodness of God according to what is written in Jeremiah 31:10 12: "Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, And declare it in the isles afar off, and say, 'He who scattered Israel will gather him, And keep him as a shepherd does his flock.' For the LORD has redeemed Jacob, And ransomed him from the hand of one stronger than he. Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, Streaming to the goodness of the LORD For wheat and new wine and oil, For the young of the flock and the herd; Their souls shall

be like a well-watered garden, And they shall sorrow no more at all." In the same way, the purpose of the gospel of Jesus is to lead us to repentance, as Jesus said in Matthew 12:41: "The men of Nineveh will rise in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here." Therefore the goodness of God or the Good News of Jesus Christ is the principal factor for our change of mind towards the goodness of God or Jesus.

So let us go back to Lamentations 3:17 26: "You have moved my soul far from peace; I have forgotten prosperity. And I said, 'My strength and my hope have perished from the LORD.' Remember my affliction and roaming, The wormwood and the gall. My soul still remembers And sinks within me. This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope. Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. 'The LORD is my portion,' says my soul, 'Therefore I hope in Him!' The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, To the soul who seeks Him. It is good that one should hope and wait quietly For the salvation of the LORD.

Have you noticed the key factor that produced the change in the state of the speaker? His spiritual condition changed immediately when he called to mind God's mercies and grace, His unfailing compassion, and the greatness of His faithfulness. His state changed once he changed his mind's focus from his

own condition to God, His Grace, and the Word of God. (We will deal in detail with love, grace, and the Word of God in Chapter Seven.) This is the creative, living power of our imagination and thoughts. Before this change, he constantly thought about his condition and circumstances, which brought depression to his spirit, focusing on the creative *dying* power of our imagination or thought.

What is most important to our faith and health is the picture brought to our mind by what we focus on: God's grace or our condition and circumstances. How does this process take place? First of all, we think about our condition and we speak about it and we lose our peace, hope and strength ("You have moved my soul far from peace; I have forgotten prosperity"). Then we constantly call to mind our condition, and our spirit becomes depressed ("My soul still remembers And sinks within me"). Then we can think about God's grace and unfailing faithfulness and talk about it and hope will come back to our spirit ("This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope. Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is your faithfulness. 'The LORD is my portion,' says my soul, 'Therefore I hope in Him!'").

Our mind is the television set of our spirit. Therefore, if we bring the pictures of our condition or circumstances onto the screen of our television set, these pictures have the power to destroy our hope and then weaken our will and bring us depression.

But if we bring the good pictures of God's grace or Jesus onto the screen of our television set these pictures have the greatest power to bring hope and peace to our spirit and then strengthen our will and cause God's grace to overflow upon us. Have you noticed that he said: "This I recall to my mind, therefore I have hope"? This means that he brought to his mind what he had already treasured in his heart. No wonder the Bible declares, in Jeremiah 17:10: "I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give every man according to his ways, And according to the fruit of his doings."

In the mind of God, it is not enough to be conscious hearted, but we get to be conscious minded. We must have a united heart and mind, following God's thoughts or God's Word. This is the main purpose of God for our life, and the principle that governs the spiritual realm. God wants to take hold of our heart and mind, both together. This is how the process works.

What do these wonderful scriptures teach us about how man's spirit functions? First of all, notice the central role played by the mind in the production of either hope or hopelessness in man's spirit, peace or depression in man's mind, and strength or weakness in man's will. Man's mind works in the same way as a television set, it pictures what man's spirit focuses on. Our mind is our spiritual eye. What our spirit focuses on becomes our belief, and this belief is stored in our heart. What a man's spirit focuses on

becomes the signal he sends to his mind. His mind uses this signal to produce pictures on its screen. And these pictures generate hope or hopelessness in our spirit, peace or depression in our mind, and strength or weakness in our will, while also bringing about emotions in our heart and mind. Hope and peace in our spirit have the power to strengthen our will and hopelessness and depression in our spirit have the power to weaken our will.

Our will is the custodian of our mind. If our will is strengthened, then it gets the ability to allow only good pictures to go through the gate of our mind and also to take control of our mind to command the pictures it must show. The signals transformed into pictures by our mind come from six sources: God's Word or grace, the words of the world, our own words, our own thoughts, our natural senses (apart from our ears), and any data stored in our heart (such as our past life experience, emotions, knowledge, revelation knowledge, beliefs, etc.). But take note that only God's Word or grace (and our own words and thoughts and the information stored in our heart when they are in line with God's Word) brings with it unfailing and trustworthy hope and peace. This means that only the pictures displayed by our mind that originate from God's Word have the power to create unfailing and trustworthy hope and peace in us. Our mind is the powerful instrument that God has put in us to create faith. In essence, Good News produces joy.

It is no wonder that the gospel of Jesus Christ has the power to stir up joy in our heart, as it is written in Luke 2:10–11: "Then the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord;" and in Psalm 19:8: "The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes." The other ways of thinking that contradict God's Word, when implanted in our heart, transport hopelessness and depression.

Because hope is simply a belief that something might happen, there is no guarantee that what you hope for will come true; therefore, hope without certainty is far from being the same as faith – there must be absolute certainty for hope to become faith. The best definition of faith is given in Hebrews 11:1: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." But faith is also the process, which is why we need the rest of the book. Compare this definition of faith with the operation of our spirit when God's Word or God's grace causes our mind to produce pictures that generate unfailing and trustworthy hope.

First of all, the pictures displayed by our mind are not seen by optical eyes, but spiritual eyes. These pictures hail from God's Word, which corresponds to the part of the definition of faith that says, "the evidence of things not seen." The unseen evidence comes from

the fact that the hope originates from God and Jesus who are faithful and trustworthy.

Secondly, our mind's pictures, which come from God's Word or God's grace, produce unfailing, trustworthy hope. This corresponds to the part of the definition of faith which says it is "the substance of things hoped for." What does this teach us? Simply this: unless you succeed in changing the focus of your mind towards God by using the power of your will you cannot cause God to generate in you unfailing and trustworthy faith.

Naturally, our soul — especially our mind — likes to focus on our affliction and on the problems we are facing. That is why Lamentations says: "Remember my affliction and roaming, The wormwood and the gall. My soul still remembers And sinks within me." So unless our will gets the strength to control our mind — or our speech through meditation on God's Word changes our way of thinking in order to line up with God's Word — there is no way to change the focus of our mind. Bad pictures in our mind send negative emotions to our heart and, at the same time, our spirit feels hopeless and depressed, and our will becomes weak. If our spirit remembers God's mercies, it sends the picture of God's mercies to our mind. When our spirit sees the good pictures of God's mercies we get hope, and our mind gets peace if our focus can remain on the good things. This hope and peace strengthen our will, and our will takes control of our thoughts, mouth, and actions to perform good things.

Lamentations 3:17 26, and our study of these wonderful scriptures, has taught us something mind-blowing: God's power is carried by His Word and grace and is available to us. It is up to us to take advantage of this knowledge not only of the fact that we can use it to cause God to give us faith, but also to employ His power to live a victorious life. Only our awareness of who Christ, God the Father, the Holy Spirit, God's Word, God's grace, and God's love are and who we are in Christ through the power behind Jesus's name and our oneness with Christ through our love for Him activates the power brought by God's Word and God's grace and the Holy Spirit. Indeed, our consciousness of who Christ, God the Father, the Holy Spirit, God's Word, God's grace, and God's love are, casts away anything which can hinder us from getting genuine faith and expressing our everlasting joy as it is written in Isaiah 51:11: "So the ransomed of the LORD shall return, And come to Zion with singing, With everlasting joy on their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, And sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

Why does your faith need everlasting joy? Because faith which does not last is not faith as far as Jesus is concerned. In your life you will have to face challenges. You declare God's Word and see the answer in your mind. Do you understand what I just said?

I repeat it again, "*You* declare God's Word and see the answer in your mind." What I want you to catch is this: *Our* words, when they are in line with God's

Word, have the same effect as God's Word. In other words, our words in agreement with God's Word also can lead our mind to change its focus towards God or His Word, and so bring unfailing hope to our spirit, peace to our mind, and strength to our will. This means that we get faith and increase our faith when we speak words which are in line with God's Word, as it is written in Romans 10:17: "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." You may wonder: "You say that we get faith when we speak the words, but this quote says we get faith when we *hear* the words." When you speak to yourself, it becomes hearing, and then faith arises and grows. This is the powerful secret of our mouth revealed by Jesus: if you ask God to bring into being what you have already pictured in the spiritual realm of your mind's television set, He will answer you.

But, sometimes, you ask God to bring into being what you are asking for and have seen in your spiritual television set, and you are certain it will come to pass in the physical realm, but you wait and do not see the accomplishment of your desire. This kind of challenge can cause you to give up. That's why Jesus warns us, in Luke 18:1 8, to never give up no matter what situation we find ourselves in: "Then he spoke a parable to them to this end, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart, saying: 'There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, "Avenge me of my adversary." And he

would not for a while; but afterwards he said within himself, "Though I do not fear God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me."' Then the Lord said, 'Hear what the unjust judge said. And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?'"

Therefore, we need to keep asking for what we want if God delays responding to our desires. We know that we have seen it in the spiritual realm so it will, without fail, come true. We must simply wait for God's timing. Why? Because faith, which does not have everlasting character and everlasting joy, is not genuine faith. Only faith that is deeply rooted and founded on the rock of Jesus Christ never gives up, as it is written in Luke 6:46–49: "'But why do you call me "Lord, Lord," and do not do the things which I say? Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock';" and in Ephesians 3:17–21: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height — to know the love of

Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

We must be rooted and grounded in love in other words, on the rock or in Jesus Christ for Christ is love, according to what Jesus said in John 15:5: "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing;" and John 14:23: "Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him and We will come to him and make Our home with him.'" Do you understand now? Luke 6:46–49 states that the doers of God's Word are those who lay the foundation on the rock. John 14:23 specifies that those who love Jesus are those who are doers of the Word of God, who do right because we love Jesus. Our works are based on our love for Jesus. From these two scriptures we can understand that those who love Jesus are also those who lay the foundation on the rock, and are rooted and grounded on the rock, Jesus Christ. Finally, John 15:5 declares that only those who are the branches of the vine, Jesus Christ, are productive. And we know that those who abide in Jesus (and Jesus in them) are rooted and grounded on the rock and, therefore, are rooted and grounded in love. (This importance of being rooted and grounded in love will be dealt with in detail in Chapter Seven.)

Now it's time to see the key issue of our mind on our path to genuine faith. Let us go to the Scriptures for this purpose. God spoke to Moses in Deuteronomy 2:24, saying: "Rise, take your journey, and cross over the River Arnon. Look, I have given into your hand Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land. Begin to possess it, and engage him in battle." Pay careful attention to the past tense ("I have given") of God's statement and also at the word "look." Now tell me: Did Moses look at what God had already given him with his optical eyes, or with his mind? Of course, Moses looked at Sihon, king of Heshbon, and the land of Heshbon, which God had given him, with his mind. Let us break down how that process works.

First of all, God spoke and said He had given the land of Heshbon to Moses. Secondly, Moses accepted it and put the Word of God in his heart. Thirdly, God said, "Look," causing Moses to picture with his mind what God had already given him. And this is what happened and was reported in Deuteronomy 2:31 33: "And the LORD said to me, 'See, I have begun to give Sihon and his land over to you. Begin to possess it, that you may inherit his land.' Then Sihon and all his people came out against us to fight at Jahaz. And the LORD our God delivered him over to us; so we defeated him, his sons, and all his people." Can you see that faith's principal requirement is simple: accept God's Word, and then picture what God has already given you with your mind? When you succeed in seeing with your spiritual eyes in long-lasting ways what God

has already given you, it becomes yours in the realm of the spirit. Therefore, it is simply up to you to act upon it to take possession of your inheritance.

This process describes the spirit of faith; it is different from the God-kind of faith (which will be discussed in the next chapter). In the process of developing the spirit of faith, you believe first, then you picture with your mind what you believe and take hold of your possession in the spiritual realm, and then take corresponding action to bring into being what you have already seen and possessed. The corresponding action can be speaking according to your belief and thought combined as one, or taking other actions accordingly. The second step of the process is the union between our mind and our heart (or the oneness of heart and mind) the stage where our thoughts line up with our beliefs. Let us scan through the Scriptures to see how the process of faith works with other characters of the Bible and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Joshua 6:2 declares: "The LORD said to Joshua: 'See! I have given Jericho into your hand, its king, and the mighty men of valor.'" This time, the word "see" has replaced "look" but it does not change anything. Joshua had to receive the Word of God in his heart, first, then see what God had already given him (Jericho) with his mind before he could take the city of Jericho. Joshua believed in God's Word, pictured God's Word in his mind, followed God's instructions, and took the city of Jericho, as it is written in Joshua 6:20: "So the people shouted when the priests blew

the trumpets. And it happened when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat. Then the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city."

The same thing happened to King Solomon in 1 Kings 3:12: "behold, I have done according to your words; see, I have given you a wise and understanding heart, so that there has not been anyone like you before you, nor shall any like you arise after you."

God said: "See, I have given you a wise and understanding heart." Tell me, by what means King Solomon saw that God had given him a wise and understanding heart, his eyes or his mind? Again, the process of faith remains the same: You have to accept God's Word in your heart, and then look with your mind at what God has given you, and then act upon it to enjoy it. This is what King Solomon did. No wonder the Bible says in 1 Kings 3:15: "Then Solomon awoke; and indeed it had been a dream. And he came to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, offered up burnt offerings, offered peace offerings, and made a feast for all his servants;" and in 1 Kings 3:28: "And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had rendered; and they feared the king, for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to administer justice."

Now let us see what our Lord and Savior thinks about this process of faith and the central role of our mind. Jesus Himself declares, in Luke 10:19: "Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and

scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you." The Amplified Bible, citing the same verse, says: "Behold! I have given you authority and power to trample upon serpents and scorpions, and [physical and mental strength and ability] over all the power that the enemy [possesses]; and nothing shall by any way harm you." The New Living Translation Bible, Second Edition states: "Look, I have given you authority over all the power of the enemy and you can walk among snakes and scorpions and crush them. Nothing will injure you." Again, Jesus Christ Himself declared that He has given us power and authority over all of our enemies and that nothing can by any means hurt us. He also tells us to see the power and the invincibility He has given us. Tell me, do you see that what He says is true with your optical eyes? Of course not! So the born-again Christians who had already accepted the Word of God in their heart get to picture in their mind the power and the invincibility that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ has already given them before they can enjoy it and act on it.

Moreover, Jesus says in John 17:22: "And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one." Do you see what I see? Jesus has already given us the glory God has given Him. What do you think must be our next action? All we have to do is to treasure this beautiful and mind-blowing verse in our heart and then picture it with our mind so that we can take possession of it in the realm

of the spirit in order to enjoy it in both the physical and spiritual realms.

The last scripture we will quote on this topic is John 15:3, where Jesus said: "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you." We know that any use of the past tense by God or Jesus Christ found in the Bible means that what is spoken has already given us a blessing; all we have to do is to accept it by putting this specific Word of God in our heart, and then we simply have to picture the blessing (or the corresponding fruit God's Word has associated with it) to possess it in the realm of the spirit. Finally, acting upon it brings it into being in the physical realm. So, according to John 15:3, Jesus's Word has already cleansed us.

Therefore, we only have to store this verse in our heart, see with our mind that Jesus's Word has already made us clean, and then enjoy the purification of our heart through our daily meditation on God's Word, according to Joshua 1:8: "This book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success."

Now let us take a simple example from our life to see how our faith works. Suppose a born-again Christian is sick, and has a growth in his body. Let us assume a Christian chooses to use 1 Peter 2:24, which says: "who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for

righteousness by whose stripes you were healed." All he will have to do is to receive this verse in his heart. Then he has to see his healing with his mind. Finally, he has to act upon his faith by giving thanks to God for his healing or saying, "I am healed in the name of Jesus," and then enjoy his new condition. We call into physical existence that which does not exist in the physical realm but exists in the spiritual realm, according to Romans 4:17: "(As it is written, 'I have made you a father of many nations') in the presence of Him whom he believed, even God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things, which do not exist as though they did." So by speaking healing over ourselves we bring healing upon ourselves.

Life is a choice. It is our responsibility to choose life as God tells us to do in Deuteronomy 30:19: "I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life that both you and your descendants may live." You may wonder, "How can I choose life?" And the scriptures answer your question in Proverbs 18:20 21: "A man's stomach shall be satisfied from the fruit of his mouth, And from the produce of his lips he shall be filled. Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit." We bring life upon us by speaking of life, but we bring death upon us by speaking of death. This is where the power of our tongue lies.

Now let us suppose a born-again Christian instead of using 1 Peter 2:24, which declares that as a child of

God he is healed by Jesus's stripes as his first action looks for a physician according to what is written in 2 Chronicles 16:12: "And in the thirty-ninth year of his reign, Asa became diseased in his feet, and his malady was very severe; yet in his disease he did not seek the LORD, but the physicians. So Asa rested with his fathers; he died in the forty-first year of his reign."

This Christian's first reaction is to go to the doctor and the latter tells him he is going to die because he has cancer or a terminal disease. Hopelessness will come upon him. And if he then tries to put his faith to work the first step of which is to accept God's Word or God's grace and put it in his heart, it will not cause him any problem. But he will have difficulties when trying to picture his healing with his mind, because his healing picture will struggle with the picture of death given to his mind by the doctor. Most of the time, people in this kind of situation fail to overcome the picture brought to mind by the words of the doctor. My advice is to begin by putting to work your faith in God's Word. This is the best way to get healed.

Even so, if you start seeking physicians, do not lose hope, it's not over yet. Keep speaking concerning your healing and your healing will come to pass without fail. Why? Because Romans 10:17 says, "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." When you speak continually about your healing, the pictures of your death and burial, will be replaced by the pictures of your healing. And your healing will

manifest in the physical realm. No wonder Joel 3:10 declares: ". . . Let the weak say, 'I am strong.'"

We are compelled to say what we want to be and not to speak of any condition we do not want to stay in. But what you have to say must be in line with God's Word. In the case above, our spiritual foundation is not only 1 Peter 2:24: "who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness by whose stripes you were healed;" but also Proverbs 4:20 22: "My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your eyes; Keep them in the midst of your heart; for they are life to those who find them, And health to all their flesh;" and Matthew 13:10 15: "And the disciples came and said to Him, 'Why do You speak to them in parables?' He answered and said to them, 'Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not given. For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have in abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.' Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: "Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive; For the heart of this people has grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they

should understand with their heart and turn, So that I should heal them.""

Unless you see, hear, and understand God's Word you cannot be healed by God or Jesus. Do you see the vital importance of your understanding of God's Word? Jesus is saying the principle of healing is our understanding of God's Word. So if you suffer from any disease, all you have to do is to take in more and more of God's Word, particularly those passages which talk about healing. Then the flow of your knowledge concerning God's Word will uproot any disease. So it is not surprising that an abundance of knowledge about Christ destroys any virus or sickness in our body. Why? Because if you see, hear, and understand the Word of God, Jesus is under obligation to heal you, according to the Word of Jesus in Matthew 13:15 that says: ". . . So that I should heal them."

Do you see something striking about your mind? You can use your mind to take hold of everything you want to have, to take hold of anything you want to be, to go everywhere you want to go, and to receive from God any blessing or gift or grace you want to have. What do all of these have in common? They are the activities of your life. This means that you can control your life with your mind, from inside of your being. You can control your outside from your inside. That is what faith is all about living above the physical realm, and seeing the invisible with your mind.

It is written in Luke 8:11: "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God." The seed of anything

you need in life is in the Word of God. In fact, God's Word is the answer to all our needs because the Scriptures declare in Philippians 4:19: "And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." When you have a need, all you have to do is to find the place where the word concerning your situation is written in the Scriptures (My book Wisdom Principles will help you to reach this goal) and meditate on it, speaking of your need without giving up too soon. As you keep on talking about your needs, the things you call into being will come to pass. Once you know what you want to have, or where you want to go, or what you want your circumstances to be, then you must act upon this decision by taking possession of what God has already given you and what you have just seen in the spiritual realm with your mind.

How can you act upon it? You have two ways to do it: One is quick and the other one takes time. The quickest way is to use the name of Jesus to cast out fear, doubt, and unbelief so that only the picture of God's Word remains in your mind. According to the Word of Jesus spoken in Mark 16:17: "And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons . . ." All we have to do is to say: "In the name of Jesus I command fear, unbelief, and doubt to leave my body and spirit now. Out!" Once you have done this, there will be no more fight between the picture in your mind brought by the Word of God and the picture in your mind brought by fear, unbelief, or doubt. And then you can enjoy the fruit God's Word

has associated with it by acting upon it. However, you must still keep guard over your heart and mind as the Scriptures say in Proverbs 4:23 of the Good News Bible: "Be careful how you think; your life is shaped by your thoughts;" and the New Living Translation, Second Edition: "Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life."

When we were still sinners they [God and Jesus] loved us so much that God sent His only begotten and beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to earth to suffer in our place, die in our place, be buried in our place, and be resurrected from the dead to give us salvation. So if we keep focusing on God's grace this activity will stir up our love for Jesus and allows Jesus's love to flow toward us, bringing to us God's grace so that we can become a blessing for others, as Jesus Himself said in John 14:23: ". . . If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him."

We must remain the branches of the vine of Jesus in order to receive His life that brings to us all the blessings and grace and love of God the Father. (We will handle the issue of God's grace and love in Chapter Seven.) The way we see Jesus or who Jesus is has the power to make us the destination, and source, of God's grace for others, according to what is written in John 4:13 14: "Jesus answered and said to her, 'Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will

become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.'" Genesis 12:2 tells us: "I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing." We are blessed by God and we bless others by our sweet words and good deeds. Therefore a genuine believer is the destination of God's blessings and the source of blessings for others.

Habakkuk 2:4 says, "Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his faith." So we are compelled to live by faith. Then the question is: How can we live by faith? The Bible says, in Hebrews 11:1: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the substance of things not seen." This means that faith is about things which are not seen with our eyes but, instead, faith concerns things we hope for. As we have learned, hope is a belief that something you want will happen. Therefore faith is the evidence that something you want will happen with certainty. If you have proof of the things you want, it means you get to see something with your spiritual eyes, since these things cannot be seen by your optical eyes. Why? Man is a spirit living in a body; therefore he has two abilities to see: either by his optical eyes or by his spiritual eyes (his mind). And so living by faith means that every day you get to see everything with your mind and you must be sure that those things you see are certain and real. We all know that only God's Word gives birth to spiritual things which cannot be seen with our physical eyes, as it is written in John 6:63: "It is the Spirit who

gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life."

By nature, God's Word is truth as Jesus Himself declares in John 17:17: "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth." God's Word also produces hope, as it is written in Lamentations 3:21 23: "This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope. Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness." Thereby we derive from John 17:17 and Lamentations 3:21 23 that God's Word or God's grace produces an unfailing hope, meaning that any picture brought into our mind by the Word of God or God's grace is real and so this picture fulfills all the requirements of faith: it is unseen by optical eyes, it is real and trustworthy, and it is hoped for by man's spirit.

In conclusion, we can say that unless we see with our spiritual eyes on a daily basis the pictures brought into our mind by God's Word we cannot live by faith. The Word of God or Jesus is for us to live by. At any moment of our life, we have to ask ourselves what God's Word tells us about the challenges we are facing and put our faith to work.

The image brought to you by God's Word or God's grace carries God's purpose for your life at the specific moment when you see the picture. If you do not know what you should do, you simply need to pay careful attention to the Holy Spirit and follow His instructions and do it. That's all. (If you fail to hear the

voice of the Holy Spirit, go to Chapter Six and you will learn what you must do to hear the voice of the Holy Spirit.) Sometimes you can face some difficulties or challenges which have the ability to destroy the image of God's Word in your mind if you cease to focus on God's Word. So, when you find yourself in such situations, turn to the Word or God's grace and find God's Word which deals with your problem. Once you accept what God says about the situation then you can focus your mind on the picture brought to you by God's Word concerning your personal situation until you get peace, which is the manifestation of the end of struggle in your mind. There is a quick way to put an end to the struggle between the picture brought to you by God's Word and the picture brought to you by your personal condition: simply speak aloud the specific Word of God. Then you can either act upon your belief and thought by taking corresponding actions or again speak aloud to bring into being in the physical realm what you picture in your mind. This vision of God's Word about your personal situation will bring you the purpose of God for you in your specific situation. (The speaking that gives birth to physical realities will be dealt in Chapter Three.)

The rest that you need to do is just to listen to the Holy Spirit to be told what to do and make it happen for you. Why? Because it is God's good pleasure to give you the kingdom, as it is written in Luke 12:29–32: "And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. For all these

things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things. But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you. Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Can you see that Jesus is telling you not to be anxious when you face any situation but, instead, to seek the kingdom of God?

But how can you seek the kingdom of God and where can you find the kingdom of God? In your mind, when you focus on God's Word or God's grace concerning your personal situation, you will see a picture of your deliverance, which is placed there by God. You will see a vision and God's plan for your life in order to get you out of the situation you are facing. Then, when you pay attention to the voice of the Holy Spirit and follow His instructions, they will lead you to your deliverance. This means that your mind is the instrument God Almighty has given you for your salvation. Your mind is the place where your faith is realized and comes true.

We also know that "knowledge of God" refers to a love for God, as it is written in Proverbs 1:28 29: "'Then they will call on me, but I will not answer; They will seek me diligently, but they will not find me. Because they hated knowledge And did not choose the fear of the LORD, . . ." This means that we cannot find God if we hate knowledge even if we diligently seek Him. No wonder the Bible says, in Ephesians 4:19: "To know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God." Can

you see that knowledge and a love of Christ are of the same basic nature, but that the love of Christ is the perfection of the knowledge of Christ?

What can we do to find God when we seek Him? God answers this in Proverbs 2:1 5: "My son, if you receive My words, And treasure My commands within you, So that you incline you ear to wisdom, And apply your heart to understanding; Yes, if you cry out for discernment, And lift up your voice for understanding, If you seek her as silver, And search for her as for hidden treasures; Then you will understand the fear of the LORD, And find the knowledge of God." God is saying that you will find Him if you eagerly seek the wisdom or knowledge of God. It is impossible to find God if love for wisdom does not dawn in your heart. And Jesus Christ is the wisdom of God, according to 1 Corinthians 1:24: "But to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." Unless love for Jesus dawns in your heart, you cannot have fellowship with God, the Holy Spirit, or Jesus Himself as it is written in John 14:23: ". . . If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him." (This theme concerning our love for Jesus and the ultimate importance of that topic is covered in the final chapter detailing the foundations of this book Chapter Seven.)

Love for wisdom is your thirst and hunger to possess wisdom or to know God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. Remember that the wisdom of God declares in

Proverbs 8:22: "The LORD possessed me at the beginning of His way, Before His works of old." Am I saying that "Wisdom" is a person who is making this statement? Yes, His declaration begins in Proverbs 8:12: "I, wisdom, dwell with prudence . . ." and keeps speaking until Proverbs 8:22. Therefore wisdom is part of God's being. It also means that wisdom is Jesus, our Lord and Savior, as it is written in 1 Corinthians 1:24: "But to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." And so coming back to Proverbs 1:28 29, to "hate knowledge" means that you hate God. Therefore Hosea 6:6 ("For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And knowledge of God more than burnt offerings") becomes "For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And love for Jesus more than sacrifice." And thereby we can conclude that mercy means love for Jesus wisdom.

Let us go back to Matthew 9:13: "But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice.' For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Notice that Jesus balances the righteous against sinners who desire to repent. Deuteronomy 30:6 says, "And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and that you may live." As far as Jesus is concerned, He is saying the change of our mind towards God leads to our love for Him. Therefore, the principle of our love for Jesus is the changing of our mind towards God, or our repentance. This is why

Jesus and John the Baptist began their ministry on earth by calling sinners to repent, and to change their minds towards God and Jesus.

In this chapter we have deeply treated the subject of the mind, and in Chapter Seven we will deal with the topic of our love for Jesus and the consequences of changing our mind to focus on God.

Moreover, we have already found out that our change of mind towards God and to a mind which pictures only God's thoughts causes our mind to be one with our heart and, therefore, our spirit becomes one with our soul. In other words, changing our mind towards God turns us into genuine, unshakeable sons of God, who are no longer ordinary men. It is written in Ezekiel 18:30 32: "'Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways,' says the Lord GOD. 'Repent, and turn from all your transgressions, so that iniquity will not be your ruin. Cast away from you all the transgressions which you have committed, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. For why should you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies,' says the Lord GOD. 'Therefore turn and live!'"

Repentance or changing our mind towards God gives us a new mind, a new heart, and a new spirit. No wonder 1 Samuel 15:22 declares: "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams." In Hosea 6:6 and Matthew 9:13 God and Jesus

say: "I desire mercy and not sacrifice," or "I desire love and not sacrifice." Now, in 1 Samuel 15:22 God is saying: "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice." This means that obedience and doing the Word of God are synonymous with our love for Jesus. No wonder Jesus declares in John 14:23: ". . . If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and we will come to Him and make Our home with him." As a matter of fact, in Chapter Seven, Jesus Christ, our Master, Lord and Savior will teach us that our love for Him causes us to obey His Commandments.

Now that you know what your mind is all about, that is to say, our change of mind towards God makes us live by faith on a daily basis and causes us to love Jesus, you have also learned in this chapter that the principle of our love for Jesus is the change of our mind towards God. Therefore our change of mind is the key to possessing the Kingdom of God, to loving Jesus, to receiving God's grace, to being blessings for others, and to doing God's Word. Moreover, meditation on the Word of God and the goodness of God are the principal factors of our change of mind towards God. Therefore, what matters the most in our walk of faith is our daily meditation on Jesus, God's Word, God's love, or God's grace. Meditation brings us all the blessings of God.

Let us look at a wonderful illustration from the Bible of how our thinking process must change in order to cause our outward circumstances to change. Only

spiritual things give birth to physical realities, so unless we change our mind towards God and adopt God's thoughts, there is no way to change our circumstances and our behavior. The Bible says, in Judges 6:11: "Now the angel of the LORD came and sat under the terebinth tree which was in Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, while his son Gideon threshed wheat in the winepress, in order to hide it from the Midianites." Do you see that, in this scene, Gideon was threshing wheat secretly in a winepress, so that the Midianites would not see him, because Gideon was afraid of the Midianites? It is then written in Judges 6:12: "And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him, and said to him, 'The LORD is with you, you mighty man of valor!'" The angel of the Lord saw Gideon as a mighty man of valor, while Gideon saw himself as a weak man since he was hiding from the Midianites. Consider what happens when our picture of ourselves does not line up with the picture of God about us brought by God's Word. When this happens, we cannot access His kingdom. This means that the picture of God concerning us has to match with the picture we have of ourselves in order to bring the kingdom of God into our mind, our heavenly place. In the same way, any believer or anyone born again in Christ is a mighty man of valor. But do you see yourself as a mighty man of valor? If not, you cannot fulfill your destiny in Christ. You must continue to eagerly meditate on God's Word until you see yourself as a mighty man of valor.

Let us read on. Judges 6:13 declares: "And Gideon said to him, 'O my lord, if the LORD is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all His miracles which our fathers told us about, saying, 'Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt?' But now the LORD has forsaken us and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites." Follow the reasoning of Gideon: he balanced what the angel of God said against his situation. The angel of the Lord declared that the Lord was with Gideon, but Gideon looked at his condition and saw a difference between the Word of God and his own situation. Likewise, a non-genuine born-again Christian fails to see himself as God or Jesus sees him. The angel of the Lord went on, in Judges 6:14: "Then the angel turned to him and said, 'Go in this might of yours, and you shall save Israel from the hand of the Midianites as one man. Have I not sent you?" In the same manner, God's Word says to every believer in Jesus: "Use the strength brought to you by the Holy Spirit and God's Word to complete your salvation and to change your circumstances."

But Gideon replied in Judges 6:15: "So he said to him, 'O my Lord, how can I save Israel? Indeed my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house.'" Can you see how this applies to us? When our mind focuses on what we see or think about ourselves, we fail to see ourselves how God sees us. The angel of the Lord continued and said, in Judges 6:16: "Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat the Midianites as one man."

This time, Gideon responded and asked for a sign, in Judges 6:17–18: "Then he said to him, 'If now I have found favor in your sight, then show me a sign that it is you who talk with me. Do not depart from here, I pray, until I come to you and bring out my offering and set it before you.' And He said, 'I will wait until you come back.'" Gideon wanted a sign so that he could believe in the Word of the angel of God, and be convinced about the Word of God.

But asking for a sign is not allowed in the life of a true Christian, as Jesus teaches us in John 20:24–29, "But Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said to him, 'We have seen the Lord.' So he said to them, 'Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.' And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them, Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, 'Peace to you!' Then He said to Thomas, 'Reach your hand here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.' And Thomas answered and said to Him, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him, 'Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." Jesus wants us to believe in Him and His gospel without seeking signs, and He wants this belief to change our mind to align with God's thoughts.

Let us go back to the encounter of Gideon with the angel of God in Judges 6:19 23: "Then Gideon went in and prepared a young goat, and unleavened bread from an ephah of flour. The meat he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot; and he brought them out to Him under the terebinth tree and presented them. The Angel of God said to him, 'Take the meat and the unleavened bread and lay them on this rock, and pour out the broth.' And he did so. Then the Angel of the LORD put out the end of the staff that was in His hand, and touched the meat and the unleavened bread; and fire rose out of the rock and consumed the meat and the unleavened bread. And the Angel of the LORD departed out of his sight. Now Gideon perceived that He was the Angel of the LORD. So Gideon said, 'Alas, O Lord GOD! For I have seen the Angel of the LORD face to face.' Then the LORD said to him, 'Peace be with you; do not fear, you shall not die.'" Gideon needed a sign to believe, and to change his mind towards God. This is what repentance is all about.

You may tell me: "You seem to be saying that everyone who repents must see a sign before believing. Is that your intended meaning?" No. I am saying that repentance is the change of mind towards God. Some need signs, but 99% of believers change their minds at the preaching of the gospel according to the message of Jesus Christ in Mark 1:15: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel."

Repentance is the process that leads any human being to replace his own thoughts or his own way of thinking about any situation in life with God's thoughts or God's Way of thinking about the same situation.

If you wish to put God's Word to work for you, find the place in the Scriptures where God's Word is talking about your personal situation. Every word of God talks about a spiritual reality that takes place in the mind of a human being. A man's mind might capture this spiritual reality and take hold of it before he can fulfill this same reality in the physical realm. When you are newly born again, in your mind you will have to struggle with your own thoughts in order to overcome your own thoughts and allow God's thoughts to stay in your mind.

You have two ways to become a genuine born-again Christian. You can become a genuine born-again Christian in a split second if the preaching of the gospel of Jesus gives a great gift to you and raises inside you a great love for Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. This great love for Jesus will impact your mind so much that there will be no way for your own thoughts to prevail against God's thoughts. This is why some folks experience tremendous miracles in their life and have good communication with the Holy Spirit.

But there is another way to become a genuine born-again Christian. It is by meditating on God's Word day and night, as it is written in Joshua 1:8. And, step by step, God will unite your heart and mind, casting away

all fear, unbelief, and doubt, as it is written in Psalm 86:11: "Teach me Your way, O LORD; I will walk in Your truth; Unite my heart to fear Your name;" in 1 John 4:18: "There is no fear in love: but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love;" and in Psalm 97:5: "The mountains melt like wax at the presence of the LORD, At the presence of the Lord of the whole earth." In the final passage, "mountains" can stand for any fear, anxiety, sins, issues, sickness, problems, etc., which you may have, while "the presence of the Lord" simply means your love for Jesus.

Love for Jesus is the principle that unites our mind with our heart and causes us to become a genuine born-again Christian. In other words, our love for Jesus has enough power to maintain the focus of our mind towards God, granting us peace of mind according to what is written in Isaiah 26:3: "You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You;" and in Philippians 4:6 7: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your request be made known to God, and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." When our mind remains focused on Jesus and the Word of God, this focus casts away our own way of thinking and causes us to endorse God's way of thinking.

You may wonder why I say, "Perfect love casts out doubt and unbelief," while the Scriptures only talk

concerning fear. I say this simply because doubt and unbelief are the principles of fear as Jesus teaches us in Matthew 14:28 31: "And Peter answered Him and said, 'Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.' So He said, 'Come.' And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, 'Lord, save me!' And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, 'O you of little faith, why did you doubt?'" Peter felt fear, but Jesus saw doubt and a lack of belief.

The Scriptures say, "Peter was afraid," but Jesus said, "Why did you doubt?" So doubt or unbelief in Jesus or in the Word of God is the same as the principle of fear. Therefore, when 1 John 4:18 says: "Perfect love casts out fear," it really means, "Perfect love casts out fear, doubt and unbelief." And, with this substitution, 1 John 4:18 becomes: "There is no fear, doubt and unbelief in love: but perfect love casts out fear, doubt, and unbelief because fear involves torment. But he who fears, doubts, or does not believe has not been made perfect in love." On the other hand, when you love Jesus, you delight in God's Word and in the Lord as it is written in Psalm 1:1 3: "Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth

its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper;" and Psalm 37:4: "Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart."

The one who loves Jesus lives by the river of eternal love of Jesus, and so he cannot wither, but, on the contrary, receives all he needs to live a wonderful and victorious life, as it is written in 1 John 5:11–13: "And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God." Our love for Jesus causes God to grant us eternal life, and God wants us to know it, otherwise we will not be able to stand our ground against sickness, fear, and so on. This is the same thing Jesus teaches us in John 15:5 when He declares: "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." The phrase "He who abides in me, and I in him" means that we need to have the Son of God in us. And the expression "I am the vine, you are the branches" means that we must have the same sap—the same life—as Jesus.

The Bible declares, concerning the believers in Christ, in Colossians 3:4, that Christ is our life. Without the knowledge of the truth that Jesus's life flows in us, we will continue to act like ordinary men. Our

consciousness of the life and nature of Jesus in us and who Jesus really is, changes everything. No wonder the Bible says in John 17:3 that eternal life is our knowledge or consciousness of the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom the Father sent on earth. Our knowledge of Jesus Christ puts Christ in us and Christ lives in us, giving us the life and nature of God. This means that knowledge of God the Father and Christ is far greater than sensory perception, feelings, and human knowledge. This same truth is revealed in Romans 8:1–2 that says: "There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death." In other words, the law of life—the law of eternal life brought by Jesus—has redeemed us from the curse of the law and causes us to become productive, as it is written in John 15:5.

The promise of having the life of Christ in us—eternal life—is what gives birth to our productivity. Without it, our lives will never bear fruit. This is not simply human wisdom; it is the revelation knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ that says so. That is why the Scriptures say, in 2 Corinthians 5:17: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; all things have become new;" and in Galatians 2:17–21: "But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found to be sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! For if I build again those things which I

destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain."

So the believer in Christ is no longer an ordinary man, he has Christ in him, which means he has the supernatural life of Christ in him that makes him invincible and impregnable to sickness or any other curse of the law such as poverty, failure, and so on. Once we reach this point, sickness can no longer stay in our body, our awareness of who we are and the name behind and in us casts away fear, doubt, unbelief, and any bad circumstances. The name of Jesus is an instrument to make things happen, there is power in the name of Jesus. The life of Jesus in us cannot be subjected to death, poverty, or defeat. We are a champion; only love, joy, peace, victory, and all the other blessings of God are allowed in our life. Why? Because this awareness of who we are in Christ and who Jesus is controls our way of thinking. If we never forget who we are and who Jesus really is we will always act like a son of God a superman, a champion not like an ordinary human being. (This love for Jesus will be dealt with in detail in Chapter Seven, which deals with how to get this genuine faith through our love founded on the rock, Jesus Christ love which is effective and productive.)

It's important to be aware of a key point that is revealed in 2 Corinthians 4:13: the importance of our speech, according to our belief or the spirit of faith. It reads: "But since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, 'I believed and therefore I spoke,' we also believe and therefore speak." The spirit of faith that existed in the past with Abraham, Moses, Caleb and Joshua, David, and Elijah and continues to exist today is "I believe and therefore I speak accordingly." Why is it so important to have the spirit of faith? Because your life is framed by either your spirit of faith or your spirit of fear, and God the Father will reward you either for your faith or your fear by giving you what your speech carries. The best illustration of this reality is found in Numbers 13:27 14:38.

This is the background: God said to Moses to choose one of the leaders from each of the twelve tribes and send them as spies to explore the land of Canaan which He had given them. After exploring the land for forty days, the spies returned to Moses, Aaron, and the whole community of Israel at Kadesh in the wilderness of Paran, reported what they had seen, and showed them the fruit they had brought, in Numbers 13:27 33 ("We went to the land where you sent us. It truly flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. Nevertheless the people who dwell in the land are strong; the cities are fortified and very large; moreover we saw the descendants of Anak there. The Amalekites dwell in the land of the South; the Hittites, the

Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea and along the banks of the Jordan.' Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, 'Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it.' But the men who had gone up with him said, 'We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we.' And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, 'The land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people we saw in it are men of great stature. There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.'") The companions of Caleb saw themselves as grasshoppers in comparison to the people they saw in the land of Canaan. They were moved by what they saw by the spirit of fear. But Caleb was moved by a different spirit; he held onto God's Word and he refused to let what he saw prevail on his belief about God. Caleb was moved by the spirit of faith.

Now see the impact of this bad report on the whole community of Israel in Numbers 14:1–12:

> So all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night. And all the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, and the whole congregation said to them, "If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in this wilderness! Why has the

Lord brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and children should become victims? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?" So they said to one another, "Let us select a leader and return to Egypt."

Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel.

But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes; and they spoke to all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying: "The land we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land. If the Lord delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, 'a land which flows with milk and honey.' Only do not rebel against the Lord, nor fear the people of the land, for they are our bread; their protection has departed from them, and the Lord is with us. Do not fear them."

And all the congregation said to stone them with stones. Now the glory of the Lord appeared in the tabernacle of meeting before all the children of Israel.

Then the Lord said to Moses: "How long will these people reject Me? And how long will they not believe Me, with all the signs which I have performed among them? I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will

make of you a nation greater and mightier than they."

But Moses interceded for the people and God answered and did not destroy the people of Israel. However, in Numbers 14:20 38, God reveals the two kinds of spirit of mankind and their respective fate or fortune:

Then the Lord said: "I have pardoned, according to your word; but truly, as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord because all these men who have seen My glory and the signs which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have put Me to the test now these ten times, and have not heeded My voice, they certainly shall not see the land of which I swore to their fathers, nor shall any of those who rejected Me see it. But My servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit in him and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land where he went, and his descendants shall inherit it. Now the Amalekites and the Canaanites dwell in the valley; tomorrow turn and move out into the wilderness by the Way of the Red Sea."

And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, "How long shall I bear with this evil congregation who complain against Me? I have heard the complaints which the children of Israel make against Me. Say to them, 'As I live,' says the Lord, 'just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will do to you: The carcasses of you who have complained against Me shall fall in this wilderness, all of you

> who were numbered, according to your entire number, from twenty years old and above. Except for Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun, you shall by no means enter the land which I swore I would make you dwell in. But your little ones, whom you said would be victims, I will bring in, and they shall know the land which you have despised. But as for you, your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness. And your sons shall be shepherds in the wilderness forty years, and bear the brunt of your infidelity, until your carcasses are consumed in the wilderness. According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty days, for each day you shall bear your guilt one year, namely forty years, and you shall know My rejection. I the Lord have spoken this. I will surely do so to all this evil congregation who are gathered together against Me. In this wilderness they shall be consumed, and there they shall die.'"
>
> Now the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land, who returned and made all the congregation complain against him by bringing a bad report of the land, those very men who brought the evil report about the land, died by the plague before the Lord. But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh remained alive, of the men who went to spy out the land.

God declared that His servant Caleb had a different spirit — the spirit of faith — which the ten other spies did not have. They had a spirit of fear, an ordinary

man's spirit, according to what is written in Romans 8:15: "For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father.'"

Now let us focus on what the two groups of people said and their respective fate or fortune. The ten spies who had the spirit of fear expressed fear and death. They feared dying and God said "just as you have spoken in my hearing, so I will do to you." And, since they had talked about their death, death came upon them. This echoes what is written in Proverbs 10:24: "The fear of the wicked will come upon him, And the desire of the righteous will be granted." So the ten fearful spies, who were afraid to die, died.

Let us now look at what happened to the two hopeful spies, Caleb and Joshua. Their declarations showed that they had confidence in God and had no fear they had already received the land they visited in their hearts and minds. Caleb spoke according to God's Word, which he treasured in his heart ("I brought back word to him as it was in my heart") and did not let any fear overtake his mind to cause him to speak words different from God's Word.

This is the spirit of faith. He spoke according to his belief in God. Caleb wholly followed the Lord of Israel. And, in accord with God's Word spoken by Moses, He asked Joshua to give Caleb the mountain part of the land of Canaan where the cities were fortified and where lived the Anakim. Even though the ten fearful spies had described the inhabitants as giants,

Caleb who believed in God asked for the more difficult part of the land of Canaan and overcame the Anakim.

Now listen carefully and see how Caleb pictured God's Word and took hold of it before he acted upon it to make it real in his life. Indeed, Caleb said to Joshua: "Moses swore on that day, saying, 'Surely the land where your foot has trodden shall be your inheritance and your children's forever, because you have wholly followed the LORD my God'" (Joshua 14:9). Do you see now the thought and speech of Caleb? He made his spirit align with the Word of God, and his words were in line with God's Word.

So Caleb possessed the promise of God in his mind and spoke accordingly. And Joshua blessed him, and gave Hebron to Caleb as an inheritance. Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb because he wholly followed the Lord of Israel, and then the land had rest from war.

Do you see now how the spirit of faith operates? You must believe in God's Word, and focus on it through your daily meditation until your mind is saturated with the picture of your victory as promised by God in order to make it yours in the spiritual realm then you can express your belief and thought to bring your victory into being and finally take corresponding actions to make it real for your optical eyes.

Do you understand the whole truth? Jesus declares in John 6:63: "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit,

and they are life." I want you to focus on this awesome revelation from Jesus: "The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life." This means that God's Word carries the God-kind of spirit, the spirit of faith and also the God-kind of life to give birth to spiritual realities and also give life to our mortal bodies, in other words, to heal our body. Likewise, when a human being expresses himself with words which are in line with the Word of God, he also manifests the same spirit of faith that God's Word carries. This means that God's Word has two characteristics: it is spirit and it is also life. God's Word produces spiritual realities in our mind, and also brings these spiritual realities into life in the physical realm.

Let me remind you of our spirit of faith, as found in Corinthians 4:13, which says: "But since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, 'I believed and therefore I spoke,' we also believe and therefore speak." Remember that Romans 10:17 says: "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." If it is true that faith comes by hearing the word of God, it is equally true that fear comes by hearing the word of the world words that are contrary to God's Word. Therefore, Romans 10:17 could say: "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Fear comes by hearing the word of the world." Likewise, Romans 10:17 could be rewritten in this way: "Faith is produced by speaking, and speaking by the word of God. Fear is caused by speaking the word of the world." Do you see the two kinds of spirit?

There are two kinds of spirit: The spirit of faith and the spirit of fear. Caleb and Joshua had the same spirit of faith as all believers in Jesus, including born-again Christians. This spirit of faith comes down to this: "We believe and therefore we speak according to God's Word." Caleb and Joshua saw the same things as the ten other spies, but they clung to God's Word and did not let their minds be affected by what they saw in Canaan's land, instead speaking according to their belief in God. On the other side, the ten other spies were led by the spirit of fear brought to them by what they saw. They failed to recall the wonderful signs God had performed before them from Egypt to Mount Sinai (such as the ten plagues, the Passover, and the Red Sea crossing). Even worse, they failed to pay attention to God's Word as it is declared in Numbers 13:1–2: "And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 'Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the children of Israel; from each tribe of their fathers you shall send a man, everyone a leader among them.'" They let fear overcome them and failed to have faith in God's Word, even though he specifically said, "The land of Canaan, which I am giving to the children of Israel."

Now this is the law of God that follows our spirit: If we believe in God, picture with our mind what God has given us, and speak according to both our mind and heart — if we have the same spirit of faith our fathers had in the Bible — then what we say will come

to pass and we will eat the corresponding fruit. But if we do not believe in God's Word but let our mind be affected by what our natural senses perceive, the spirit of fear will overtake us and what we fear the most will come to pass, according to Proverbs 10:24: "The fear of the wicked will come upon him, and the desire of the righteous will be granted." This is the same law which is revealed in Numbers 14:28: "'Say to them, 'As I live,' says the LORD, 'just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will do to you." Can you see that God rewards us according to our words? If we speak life, we get life. If we speak death, we get death. If we speak victory, we get victory. If we speak defeat or failure, we get defeat or failure. Whatever our words intend to do, is what we get. This is why it is so important to have the spirit of faith.

Speaking with a spirit of faith produces many fruits. First of all, as it is written in Romans 10:17: "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." This means that our own words, when they are in line with God's Word, have the power to increase our faith. Therefore, during our meditation we must speak aloud God's Word to increase our faith. This is why the Bible says in Joshua 1:8: "This book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success." Secondly, our word frames our destiny, as it is written in Numbers 14:28.

Let us now consider the best and easiest way to live a victorious life as a genuine born-again Christian or son of God, as it is written in 1 John 5:4: "For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world our faith."

If faith is the principle of victorious life, then the question is: How can I use my faith to live this victorious life? The Holy Spirit revealed this principle to the Apostle Paul and also gave him the easiest and most straightforward way to put into practice our spirit of faith. This principle is hidden in Romans 5:17: "For if by one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ." We already know that those who are born again have received from God the gift of righteousness. So the born-again Christian satisfies one of the conditions to reign in life. What's about the second requirement, which is to receive abundance of grace?

We find the answer in Philippians 4:6 7: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Pay careful attention to this mind-blowing scripture. Remember, Proverbs 4:23 says: "Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life." Do you see the connection? In Proverbs 4:23, God tells us to guard our heart because the

course of our life depends on it, while in Philippians 4:6 7, God declares that if we cease to be anxious we will get the peace of God. How can we cease to be anxious? The Holy Spirit goes on and explains how. We must give glory to God and ask Him for what we want, then we can receive the peace of God His blessing that guards our hearts and minds. So "Be anxious for nothing but giving glory to God" is the principle that produces for us an abundance of grace in our life. Jesus expresses this same truth in Mark 11:24, saying, "Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them." As we have discussed, believing that you have what you seek is the definition of faith. And God always answers your faith. The Bible talks about this same reality when it declares in 1 John 5:14 15: "Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him."

These two scriptures deal with the way we ask God to help us. Mark 11:24 emphasizes we must believe that we will receive what we ask for, while 1 John 5:14 15 points out that we must have the knowledge that Jesus hears us. Remember that John 17:3 reveals that our knowledge of Jesus brings us eternal life when we become one with Jesus (as Jesus Christ declares in John 15:5: "I am the vine, you are the branches"). When we become one with Christ we become confident that whatever we ask will come to pass. Why?

Because the Scriptures say in 1 Corinthians 6:17: "But he who joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him." How can doubt prevail in my mind if I am one spirit with Christ Jesus? When I become one spirit with Christ then I know that I will receive everything I ask of God. Also, because we step into Jesus's shoes, we use Jesus's name, so that we and Jesus now respond to the same name. Therefore, the believers as branches of the Vine Jesus, as described in John 15:5 have the same name as Jesus, and God the Father cannot refuse anything to us. Once you have become Jesus, whatever you then say or ask is brought into physical being by the power of God or the power of the Holy Spirit that dwells in you.

Coming back to 1 John 5:14 15, how can we know that Jesus hears us? 1 John 5:14 answers, saying: "Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us." This means that we know that Jesus hears us if we ask anything according to His will. The question that arises then is this: What is His will? Jesus Himself explains His will in John 16:23: "And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name he will give you." No wonder Jesus said many times that we receive healing as the basis of faith. Let us look at some illustrations. To the woman with the issue of blood, Jesus said in Matthew 9:22: ". . . Be of good cheer my daughter; your faith has made you well." To the two blind men in Matthew 9:29, Jesus declared: ". . . According to your faith let

it be to you." To the centurion, Jesus said in Matthew 8:13: "Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you." To the Syro-Phoenician woman, Jesus declared in Mark 7:29: ". . . For this saying go your way; the demon has gone out of your daughter." Can you see that our spirit of faith is the principal factor of our healing?

But how can we profess God's Word if we do not know it? Listening to God's Word is essential to getting faith and then being blessed by professing it or acting upon it. The principle revealed in Philippians 4:6 7 is the same that Isaiah the prophet of God says in Isaiah 26:3: "You (LORD God) will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You." At this point we can conclude that the born-again Christian who gets rid of anxiety by giving glory to God is the one who reigns in life.

Let us go back to Philippians 4:6 7 to note another mind-blowing truth: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus;" which is also revealed by Jesus Christ in Mark 11:23: "For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will come to pass, he will have whatever he says."

These passages show that the only hindrance that prevents our professing from coming true is doubt,

and we know that we doubt with our mind. But Jesus states that if there is no doubt in your mind you get whatever you say. And the Holy Spirit says through the Apostle Paul that the one who ceases to worry about anything but keeps giving glory to God and making his request be known by God will receive the peace of God, which will guard his heart and mind. Therefore, our professing — which gives glory to God and makes our request known to Him — will produce without fail what we desire. For instance, if I keep saying, "I am healed" (according to 1 Peter 2:24 ". . .By whose stripes you were healed.") instead of talking about my sickness or condition, or telling people that my medical report declares that I have a terminal disease, I will get my healing no matter what the doctors say.

The next question which arises, then, is this: How can we be anxious for nothing but only give glory to God? The answer is in 2 Corinthians 4:13: "But since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, 'I believed and therefore I spoke,' we also believe and therefore speak." We have already demonstrated in the story of Caleb and Joshua that those who have the spirit of faith worry for nothing but, instead, in all their doing give glory to God. Their speech is always in line with the Word of God and they always give glory to God.

This is exactly what King David did when he faced Goliath, as it is written in 1 Samuel 17:37–54:

> Moreover David said, "The Lord, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of

the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine."

And Saul said to David, "Go, and the Lord be with you!"

So Saul clothed David with his armor, and he put a bronze helmet on his head; he also clothed him with a coat of mail. David fastened his sword to his armor and tried to walk, for he had not tested them. And David said to Saul, "I cannot walk with these, for I have not tested them." So David took them off.

Then he took his staff in his hand; and he chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag, in a pouch which he had, and his sling was in his hand. And he drew near to the Philistine. So the Philistine came, and began drawing near to David, and the man who bore the shield went before him. And when the Philistine looked about and saw David, he disdained him; for he was only a youth, ruddy and good-looking. So the Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. And the Philistine said to David, "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!"

Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts,

the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the Lord will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you. And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. Then all this assembly shall know that the Lord does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord's, and He will give you into our hands."

So it was, when the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David, that David hurried and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. Then David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone; and he slung it and struck the Philistine in his forehead, so that the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the earth. So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, and struck the Philistine and killed him. But there was no sword in the hand of David. Therefore David ran and stood over the Philistine, took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him, and cut off his head with it.

And when the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled. Now the men of Israel and Judah arose and shouted, and pursued the Philistines as far as the entrance of the valley and to the gates of Ekron. And the wounded of the Philistines fell along the road to Shaaraim, even as far as Gath and Ekron. Then the children of

> Israel returned from chasing the Philistines, and they plundered their tents. And David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem, but he put his armor in his tent.

Do you see the principle of faith that produces a victorious life, the life of a champion, a life full of abundant grace in a born-again Christian? Therefore, to live a victorious life or a life of God full of health without sickness and diseases you need first to be born again to receive the gift of righteousness, then you've got to learn God's Word and profess the Word of God and always give glory to God. In other words, when you cease to worry about anything you will receive an abundance of grace that will guard your heart and mind so that your desire will come to pass.

The Word of God shows us how to respond to sickness and disease. We find God's Way of following His Word and to demonstrate our spirit of faith in Proverbs 4:20 22: "My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your eyes. Keep them in the midst of your heart; For they are life to those who find them, And health to all their flesh." Can you see that, in this, God has revealed His Truth and explained how to receive His blessing? In this case, the blessings are life to the dead limbs of your body and healing and health to your body. Your responsibility is therefore to do what He tells you to do. First of all, pay full attention to His Word, as it says in Proverbs. Secondly, picture with your mind what

God's Word tells you concerning your condition and cast away the pictures given to you by anyone who is merely of this world. Do not let the images from God depart from your eyes. Keep them in the midst of your heart. See yourself in the Word of God and become the description God gives about you. Thirdly, let God's Word take deep root in your spirit, soul, and body through your daily meditations, as the Bible says in Psalm 107:20: "He sent His word and healed them, And delivered them from their destructions."

How does God send His Word? God Himself responds to this question in Isaiah 55:10–11 saying that He sends His Word by speaking; likewise, our profession of God's Word gives the same result: "For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, And do not return there, But water the earth, And make it bring forth and bud, That it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it." Can you see that God's Word is the rain that accomplishes whatever it talks about, no matter which mouth utters it—whether God Himself, Jesus, or a born-again Christian? This means that our speaking, when in agreement with God's Word, is our "rain" and can cause whatever we want to bring into the physical realm to come to pass. Therefore, like God, we send our words over our life by speaking His Word.

For example, God's Word says in Psalm 107:20: "He sent His word and healed them, And delivered them from their destructions." The Word of healing has been sent to you. As you listen to the Word of God concerning healing, the Word of healing comes to you. As you receive the Word of God, the Word of healing comes to you and produces healing in your body, soul, and spirit. Therefore, any sickness cannot stay in you; it is cast out by the spread of God's Word throughout your entire being, beginning from your heart.

Ecclesiastes 11:3 shows us a better way to grow our rain (as in Isaiah 55:10 11) and increase its power or the power of God in us: "If the clouds are full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth." This means that when we meditate on God's Word, we begin to think about it and, thus, we fill our mind. When we mutter, our conviction has not reached its full maturity. But, when we are fully persuaded, we suddenly begin to roar and our rain empties itself from the cloud of our mind and causes what we declare to come into being. In other words, our rain (or words) give life to our seed in the physical realm. In the same way, if God's Word talks about wisdom, prosperity, salvation, victory, joy or peace of mind, as we receive these words and profess them they bring to us whatever they talk about. Why? Because those who receive abundant grace and the gift of righteousness shall reign in life (as is noted in Romans 5:17). Indeed God's Word is grace, so if you receive God's Word

about healing in your heart, you become master over your sickness and what you say produces healing in your body. Jesus said, in Matthew 9:29: ". . . According to your faith, let it be to you." So faith is the primary factor of healing, and we all know faith comes by hearing the Word of God.

Therefore the first principle of healing is the Word of God, which is a seed sown in our heart when we understand it because faith starts at the point of knowledge. Then it starts growing and gives fruit when it reaches maturity. Romans 10:17 says: "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." If faith comes by hearing God's Word; that means that the more of God's Word you hear, the more faith you have; and, conversely, the less of God's Word you hear, the less faith you have. Faith does not come by prayer. Faith begins at the point of knowledge. If you do not know something; you do not get faith for it. If you do not understand something, you cannot believe it. You cannot have faith for it. Understanding refers to the knowledge that somebody has about a particular subject or situation. And Jesus said in Matthew 13:19: "When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart . . ." And Romans 10:17 shows us the principal of faith. So without knowledge, there is no faith. So, first, you must hear the Word of God. What does God say about your condition, about your situation, or about the circumstances of your life? As

you hear or speak the Word of God, it sparks something in your spirit. It sparks faith in your spirit. In fact, faith is the response of the human spirit to the Word of God, as Pastor Chris Oyakhilome likes to say. Faith naturally will come up. That is how faith is programmed.

The Bible says we believe with our heart, not with our mind, as it is written in Romans 10:10: "For with the heart one believes to righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made to salvation." When we recognize the presence of God in us, we manifest our awareness of God in us, and this expression of that knowledge shows up in our spirit of faith, which pleases God, as it is written in Hebrews 11:6: "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." In this passage, "he who comes to God must believe that He is" means that we must be conscious of the presence, the glory, and the power of God in us and His greatness. At the same time, "He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him" means that God always responds to the believer who diligently seek Him, or boasts in Him, or vocalizes his faith.

Therefore, our profession always pleases God and causes Him to make it come true. God's power is always working in the believer, but only our profession activates this power of God in us to bring into physical existence whatever we say that is consistent with God's word. We can conclude that Hebrews 11:6, above, tells

us that our declaration of faith always activates God's power in us and brings about our profession according to the level of consciousness we have of God in us.

The same thing happens if you are fully persuaded on the presence, glory, and power of God in Jesus as the woman was in Matthew 9:20 22, or in a man of God who is inhabited by the Holy Spirit. The experience of the Healing School of Pastor Chris Oyakhilome is the proof that listening abundantly to God's Word and doing your profession daily causes the Word of God planted in your heart to grow mightily in two weeks and to prevail against any evil spirit or sickness and disease, as it is written in Acts 19:11 20: "And God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul: So that even handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them. Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists took it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, 'We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches.' Also there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, 'Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?' Then the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overpowered them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. This became known both to all the Jews and Greeks dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. And many

who had believed came, confessing, and telling their deeds. Also many of those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted up the value of them, and it totaled fifty thousand pieces of silver. So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed."

Can you see what happened in this story? Paul so professed the Word of God that his skin was impregnated by God's power and even the handkerchiefs and aprons that touched his body were used to heal people. Moreover, when the name of the Lord was magnified and the believer confessed and told their deeds, it resulted in the mighty growth of God's Word in them that prevailed against evil spirits and sicknesses and diseases. We can also deduce from the passage above that our abundant listening to God's Word and our confession that glorifies God and focuses on our true identity as sons of God instead of worrying about ourselves or our circumstances cause God's Word planted in our heart to grow mightily in our spirit and soul and then become flesh, impacting our body with the divine life of Jesus while casting out any disease and sickness.

I highly recommend that for your daily confession you read the two books published by Christ Embassy Healing School about confession titled *Faith's Proclamations of Health and Healing* (*Volume 1* and *Volume 2*). I have used them and I was greatly blessed and I received my healing from an incurable disease. Pray in tongues thirty minutes, day and

night, and make about fifteen confessions found in these books. The two books contain a total of forty confessions; the first volume has twenty-five, and the second has fifteen.

3. God-Kind of Faith or Perfected Faith

Before we start this chapter, let us be reminded of the two kinds of power defined in the New Testament by an article posted by: Egypt 4 Christ [https://egypt4christ.com/en/?author=1 Accessed date:15/11/2013]. This article will help you to have a deep understanding of the God-kind of faith given to us by Jesus:

> "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Literally, "power" means the possession of controlling influence, superiority or authority. When you study in the King James Version of the Bible, two different words are translated "power" in the Greek. The first one is "exousia," and the second one is "dunamis." In Mark 6:7, the Bible says "And He called unto Him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits." The Greek word for "power" here is "exousia," and it means "authority." So, Jesus gave us authority over unclean spirits.

Then in Acts 1:8, another Greek word: "dunamis" is translated "power." Let us read it: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you . . . ." "Dunamis" refers to divine energy, might, strength for wonderful works, efficiency, or miracle-working ability. This means inherent power, or the dynamic ability to cause changes. This power is what you received when the Holy Spirit came to live in you. From the foregoing, we see that the Christian has both "exousia" (authority) and "dunamis," the dynamic ability to cause changes. Thus, you can do supernatural things (power to do), and you can make supernatural things happen (power to effect or cause changes). Now that you're born again, Christ lives in you, and He has empowered you for the transcendent life. He's given you the spirit of power, of love, and of a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7). In Luke 10:19, Jesus said "Behold, I give unto you power (Greek: 'exousia,' authority), to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power (Greek: 'dunamis,' ability) of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you." You have the authority to control and tame Satan and his cohorts; you can put them in check! You've been empowered with authority to do the impossible, and filled with the dynamic ability to cause changes as you desire. This power will work anywhere, and under any circumstance: put it to work in your family, finances, job, health or in your business.

Now that you are aware of the two types of power given to us by Jesus, let us go to the Word of God to see how it works in human beings. To see the best illustration of how a human being functions together with the person of the Holy Spirit and the power of God in the Bible, follow me in Exodus 4:10 17: "Then Moses said to the LORD, 'O my LORD, I am not eloquent, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.' So the LORD said to him, 'Who has made man's mouth? Or who makes the mute, the deaf, the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the LORD? Now therefore, go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall say.' But he said, 'O my Lord, please send by the hand of whoever else You may find.' So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses, and He said: 'Is not Aaron the Levite your brother? I know that he can speak well. And look, he is also coming out to meet you. When he sees you, he will be glad in his heart. Now you shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth. And I will be with your mouth and his mouth, and I will teach you what you shall do. So he shall be your spokesman to the people. And he himself shall be as a mouth for you, and you shall be to him as God. And you shall take this rod in your hand, with which you shall do the signs.'" (The rod of Moses was his tool his power to perform miracles.)

Aaron, Moses, and the rod of Moses symbolize the functioning of the believer. Aaron represents the mouth of the believer or born again in Christ. Moses

personifies the Holy Spirit, and the rod of Moses is the power of God that comes to the believer with the Holy Spirit, as it is written in Acts 1:8: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; . . ." God also said something awesome to Moses: "I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and I will teach you what you shall do." This means that God the Father in heaven is always with the Holy Spirit and with the mouth of the believer to bring into existence what He tells them to say. It also means we speak and do things under the authority of God the Father in heaven. In other words, God is telling us to be conscious of His presence in heaven and the person of the Holy Spirit and the power of God within us. Secondly, God is saying that we have to say what He tells us to say. How does God the Father tells us what to say? He gives us His Word by the written Word and through the Holy Spirit.

Moreover, God states that until we say with our mouth what He tells us to say, the divine energy or flow of His power will not bring into existence our dreams or desires. God the Father in heaven is especially declaring that He will be with our mouth not with our heart. In other words, God only responds to the words of faith uttered by our mouths. That is why God declares: "Now you shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth. And I will be with your mouth and his mouth, and I will teach you what you shall do."

Before going any further, let me remind you of the wonderful words of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

about the Holy Spirit and the divine flow of God's power in John 7:38: "He who believes in Me, as the Scriptures has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." And the next verse (John 7:39) specifies that Jesus was talking about the Holy Spirit who will come to reside in us: "But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was yet not given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." This means that any believer in Christ or any born-again Christian possesses the Holy Spirit and the person of the Holy Spirit is the principle that causes rivers of living water to flow from his heart. What are the rivers of living water? Matthew Henry's *Concise Commentary* says: "The Spirit dwelling and working in believers is as a fountain of living, running water, out of which plentiful streams flow, cooling and cleansing as water." In other words, the phrase "rivers of living water" refers to the divine flow of God's power, which is always available inside the heart of any believer of Jesus Christ. We must simply be aware of the presence of this divine flow to take advantage of it.

Let us go back to Exodus 4:15 17, where the Lord was telling Moses how to deal with Aaron: "Now you shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth. And I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and I will teach you what you shall do. So he shall be your spokesman to the people. And he himself shall be as a mouth for you, and you shall be to him as God. And you shall take this rod in your hand, with which

you shall do the signs." Do you see what happens in the last step? When God has taught you what to say and you say it, the divine flow of God's power through you (or, in the case of Moses, his rod) will bring it into existence in the physical realm. So you see that the divine power of God continues to flow from the heart of the believer waiting for his declaration to carry out what he says. When we speak God's Word, we release the power of God that dwells in our heart. Remember that the word Godhead is used in the Christian religion to mean God, including the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Thus, "Godhead" means one God in three persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, as it is written in 1 John 5:7: "there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost." Every Christian, no matter who is his pastor, believes in that truth. Therefore the Holy Spirit is a person, so the work of the Holy Spirit or the fountain of living, running water is the power of God that comes with the Holy Spirit, as it is written in Acts 1:8: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." The power of God in you is available for you and others.

God's statement "I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and I will teach you what you shall do" also means that our words, which are in agreement with God's Word, bring the presence of God the Father in heaven into our life through the person of the Holy

Spirit and the power of God. In other words, when the Holy Spirit and the power of God are already present in us (as in the case of the born-again Christian), our words come in contact with the continual flow of God's power in us and the divine energy performs whatever we say. Can you see what this means to us? When we vocalize our faith, the power of God that dwells in us takes over our declaration and brings it into being. When a believer is speaking, he releases the divine flow of God's power the anointing. If the anointing takes over a listener, the spirit of the listener makes contact with the flow of God's power and anything he says is accomplished by the God's power. This explains why the Bible says in Luke 12:32: "Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

The same operation happened in the life of Jesus Christ. And He described it as follows in John 14:10: "Do you not believe that I am in the Father; and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works." The Holy Spirit who dwelt in Jesus told Jesus what He should say and the power of God (the anointing) performed the miracles. And, in the same way Moses (who represents the Holy Spirit) received instructions from God the Father in heaven, the Holy Spirit in any believer receives instructions from the Father in heaven, as Jesus specifies in John 16:13: "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak

on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come."

Look at the Word of Jesus in Mark 11:20 24 to see how our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, defines faith: "Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. And Peter, remembering, said to Him, 'Rabbi, look! The fig tree which you cursed has withered away.' So Jesus answered and said to them, 'Have faith in God. For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will come to pass, he will have whatever he says. Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.'"

Now let us look more closely at this statement. Jesus begins by saying, "Have faith in God." (Having faith in God means having God-kind of faith.) And then Jesus goes on and defines what He means by "Have faith in God," declaring "whoever says to this mountain." (Notice in this that speaking comes first in the God-kind of faith.) Then Jesus says "and does not doubt in his heart." Here He is pointing out that there is one requirement to satisfy, which is to have no doubt in your mind; meaning that our mind and heart must be united before or at the moment we speak.

This piece of the God-kind of faith is the same as the spirit of faith we have already talked about, since we speak according to our belief united with our thinking so that there is no doubt in our mind, but

the spirit of faith is based on what God has already told us or promised us. On the other hand, the key characteristic of the God-kind of faith is that it is not only based on God's promises which were made in the past, but it is especially based on the future — focusing on what you want to bring into being in the physical realm. In the case of God-kind of faith, there are no corresponding actions. The flow of God's power brings into being whatever we say with our mouth. The God-kind of faith is the spirit of faith brought to perfection. So believing in the reality of what you desire to create comes next. This means that you picture with your mind your desire, and then what you hope for is brought into physical existence by the power of the Holy Spirit that lives in you. Do you see now what the God-kind of faith or have faith in God means, so far? There is more.

Jesus ends His speech in Mark by saying, "Whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them." Can you see that Jesus repeats the process to show us that it is sealed: speak first, believe second? This is what the God-kind of faith is all about: Speak first, believe next, to receive what you hope for, and what you say will come to pass.

It is important to remember that the divine flow of God's power is always available in the spirit of the believer but only his consciousness of the process of the God-kind of faith — and his spoken words — will cause the divine flow of God's power to take hold of his declaration and bring his dream into the physical realm.

This power of God in you is available for you and others. You can tap into it in the same way someone else can tap into it by touching you or listening to your words, as the sick woman did with Jesus in Luke 8.

Jesus was loaded with the power of God, but only that one woman tapped into this power, though many were touching Him. Why? It is because only our consciousness *and* declaration of faith can cause God's healing power to flow toward us, as it is written in Luke 8:43 46. This story teaches us that the touch filled with faith is different from an ordinary touch.

The Bible also says, in Job 32:8: "But there is a spirit in man: and the breath of the Almighty gives them understanding." This means that the power of God is available in any believer; you can tap into it to produce healing in your body, or give understanding to your spirit. In other words, the power of God is available; it is simply up to us to use it to produce whatever fruit God's Word talks about or to effect changes in our life circumstances.

Did you ever read in the Bible of the Syro-Phoenician woman who wanted healing for her daughter? Matthew 15:22 28 reports her encounter with Jesus: "Then Jesus went out from there and departed to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to him, saying, 'Have mercy on me. O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon possessed. But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and urged Him, saying, 'Send her away, for she cries out

after us.' But He answered and said, 'I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.' Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, 'Lord, help me!' But He answered and said, 'It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs.' And she said, 'True, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.' Then Jesus answered and said to her, 'O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire.' And her daughter was healed from that very hour."

Now tell me, how did the woman's daughter get her healing? Jesus only said, "Let it be to you as you desire," and the daughter of that Syro-Phoenician woman got her healing. At the Word of Jesus, the power of God that resides in Jesus flowed like running living water to her daughter to heal her. Do you see now what Jesus meant by the phrase "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water"? Out of the belly or heart of Jesus Christ flows the healing power of God when He speaks, and this power of God can go anywhere in the universe to heal or produce whatever God's Word talks about.

The same thing happened to the nobleman whose son was dying. He came to Jesus and talked to the Master, and the Lord said in John 4:50 53: "'Go your way; your son lives.' So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went his way. And as he was now going down, his servants met him and told him, saying, 'Your son lives!' Then he inquired of them

the hour when he got better. And they said to him, 'Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.' So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, 'Your son lives.' And he himself believed and his whole household."

The power of God does not know the barrier of distance. When our Lord and Savior Jesus speaks, the power of God flows out to produce whatever God's Word talks about. Likewise, the words of the believer produce whatever he talks about because he also possesses the power of God as it is written and spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ in John 7:38: "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."

To see what Jesus thinks about our words, let us recall the account of the healing of the centurion's servant in Matthew 8:5 8: "Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, saying, 'Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented.' And Jesus said to him, 'I will come and heal him.' The centurion answered and said, 'Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be raised.'" The focus of the centurion was on the words of Jesus. As far as the centurion was concerned he was convinced that Jesus's Word had the power to heal his servant. That is why he was waiting on Jesus's Word and was sure that his servant was healed. The centurion went on and said, in Matthew 8:9: "For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me.

And I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." Pay careful attention of the principle of faith defined by the centurion. He first specified that he acted under the authority of his superior officers. Then he continued, saying he had authority over his soldiers. Finally, he declared that whatever he said was carried out by the soldiers under his authority.

This is the principle of faith revealed by the centurion. You must first know from whom you receive authority, because the identity of whom you receive the authority from determines the greatness and the nature of your authority, as well as the extent of your power. Secondly, you must know over what (or whom) you can exercise your authority. Then you have to speak and provided that you exercise your authority with respect to the greatness, nature, and extent of the authority you have received and the area you are allowed to exercise your power over then what you say will come to pass.

So from whom do we, as believers in Christ Jesus, receive authority? This question also arose between those who were listening to Jesus; some asked Jesus for a sign to be sure that He was really the Messiah, Christ the Anointed One, the Lord, and the Son of God, so Jesus answered them, in Luke 11:29 32: "And while the crowds were thickly gathered together, He began to say, 'This is an evil generation. It seeks a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet. For as Jonah became a sign to

the Ninevites, so also the Son of Man will be to this generation. The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here. The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here." So Jesus stresses three characters of His identity that prove He is the Son of God, Christ the Anointed One.

First of all, Jesus pointed out the sign of Jonah, meaning that He would be in the earth for three days and three nights in the same way that Jonah was in the belly of the great fish for three days and three nights (as it is written in Jonah 1:17: "Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights"). So Jesus first emphasized His resurrection from the dead as proof of His identity as the Son of God according to what is written in Romans 1:1 4: "Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God which He promised before through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Can you see that resurrection from the dead is evidence that Jesus is the Son of God? The Scriptures say it, and

Jesus arose from the dead, so He proved by His resurrection that He is the Son of God.

Secondly, Jesus points out He is wisdom and, therefore, the queen of Sheba will also stand up against this generation (the leading priests, the Pharisees, the scribes, and the Sadducees) on Judgment Day and condemn it, for she came from a distant land to hear the wisdom of Solomon and, though Jesus is greater than Solomon, this generation refuses to listen Him. Remember what God said to Solomon in 1 Kings 3:1: "Because you have asked this thing, and have not asked long life for yourself, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have asked the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern justice, behold, I have done according to your words; see, I have given you a wise and understanding heart, so that there has not been like you before you, nor shall any like you arise after you." In this passage, God is saying that there has not been a man wiser than Solomon, and there will not rise one greater than Solomon. This also points out that Jesus was not born of the seed of a human being, as it is written in Matthew 1:18: "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit." So the Scriptures declare that Jesus is the wisdom of God, and also the Son of the Holy Spirit, as Matthew 1:18 declares. And, of course, if Jesus is the Son of the Holy Spirit, then Jesus is also the Son of God, since the Holy Spirit is the spirit of God the Father.

Moreover, the wisdom of God declares in Proverbs 8:22 31: "The LORD possessed me at the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I have been established from everlasting, from the beginning, before there was ever an earth. When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, I was brought forth; while as yet He had not made the earth or the fields, or the primeval dust of the world. When He prepared the heavens, I was there, When He draw a circle on the face of the deep, When He established the clouds above, When He strengthened the fountains of the deep, When He assigned to the sea its limit, So that the waters would not transgress His command, When He marked out the foundations of the earth, Then I was beside Him, as a master craftsman; And I was daily His delight, Rejoicing always before Him. Rejoicing in His inhabited world, and my delight was with the sons of men." So wisdom, and therefore Jesus, is a part of God's being, meaning that Jesus is God. It is no wonder that Jesus's wisdom is greater than the wisdom of Solomon, who was only human. The queen of Sheba was craving wisdom and came from her distant land to hear Solomon's wisdom, contrary to the generation of Pharisees and the scribes who had no thirst for wisdom.

Thirdly, Jesus underlines the importance of repentance and the fact that He is the principal factor in repentance. We learned in the previous chapter that the change of our mind towards God is the principle

of our love for Jesus Christ, and that our change of mind is the principle that brings the kingdom of God to us. And we know Christ is the mighty king of the Kingdom of God. Consequently, Jesus is both God and the Savior of the world as promised by God.

The people of Nineveh repented of their sins at the preaching of Jonah. And Jesus is the Word of God who became flesh, meaning that Jesus is the greatest preacher of the Word so how come those He preached to failed to repent or change their mind? One day, the leading priests and Pharisees sent the temple guards to arrest Jesus and this is the report they gave in John 7:45 46 when they came back from their mission: "When the officers came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, 'Why have you not brought Him?' The officers answered, 'No man ever spoke like this man!'" This means that the people who truly listened to Jesus had no excuse to remain the same or become worse. His awesome and authoritative preaching was more evidence that He was the Son of God. Anyone who listens to Jesus will never be the same. His Word God's Word has the power to bring anybody to repentance, or to change his mind towards God. Our repentance is the fruit of God's Goodness and the Good News brought by God's Word.

When you face Jesus, when you are confronting Jesus, what is your reaction? Who is Jesus Christ for you? You cannot escape Jesus if you pay attention to His message or His Word, the Word of God. Jesus is completely human and God. He has all the characteristics

of the man but He never commits a sin. He went through all kinds of temptations and overcame all of them. He claimed to be the Son of God and He proved it by His resurrection from the dead. Therefore, we have the assurance that the one (Jesus Christ, the Son of God) from whom we receive authority to act on earth is trustworthy and able to back the power He has given us. In conclusion, we have received authority from Jesus Christ the Son of God, who has all of the authority in heaven and on earth, as it is written in Matthew 28:18. So we can obtain anything we ask of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, since God has given to Him all authority in heaven and on earth.

Now that we know where our authority comes from, let us examine over what or whom we have authority. It is written in Genesis 1:26 28: "Then God said, 'Let us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.' So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him, male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth." This scripture tells us that we receive authority or dominion from God over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing including viruses, microbes, and germs that

moves on the earth. (This is also written in Psalm 8:4 8: "What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, And You have crowned him with glory and honor. You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet, All sheep and oxen Even the beasts of the field, The birds of the air, And the fish of the sea That pass through the paths of the seas.") Again, the Bible lets us know that we have authority not only over the beasts of the earth, but also over all things created by God like mountains, hills, trees, plants, and so on. (Although the passage from Genesis only refers to "moving things," we must remember that Jesus said in Mark 11:22-23: ". . . 'Have faith in God. For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, "Be removed and be cast into the sea," and does not doubt in his heart but believes that those things he says will come to pass, he will have whatever he says.'" Therefore we have power over not only moving things, but everything on the earth.)

It is written in Psalm 49:13 14: "This is the way of those who are foolish, And of their posterity who approve their sayings. Like sheep they are laid in the grave; Death shall feed on them; The upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; And their beauty shall be consumed in the grave, far from their dwelling." This time, God states that the upright have dominion over the foolish. This means that as believers in Christ, if we are upright we can receive authority (or

power) over foolish men. It is also written about Jesus in Mark 16:15–18: "And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In my name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover." This wonderful scripture clearly states that as believers we act under the authority of Jesus and we do it by using the name of Jesus as our staff of authority (much like Moses's rod) to cast out demons—including the spirit of infirmity (including viruses, which cannot be seen by optical eyes) that causes sickness and diseases. This means that the phrase "In the name of Jesus" causes the divine flow of God's power to take our words and bring into physical being whatever we talk about.

It is not surprising, then, that Jesus said in John 14:13–14: "And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it." How does Jesus do it? Jesus does everything we say or ask through the power of God that continually flows from our heart. This is what faith is. We give glory to God through the Son by asking in the name of Jesus, and we activate the power of God by calling the name of Jesus.

As the centurion revealed in Matthew 8, you must know under whose authority you act. In our case, we

act under the authority of Jesus Christ. In John 14:13 14, Jesus has given us authority to speak under His authority, saying that our will will be done according to our speech. This means that our authority depends on the authority of Jesus. And the Bible says in Matthew 28:18: "Then Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.'" Therefore, as Christians we have all the authority on earth, because Jesus has given us authority on earth, and our authority is greater than any other power on earth, since God the Father has given "all authority" to Jesus not just some, but all, authority.

The second thing the centurion taught us was over whom (or what) we have authority. And we have found out that we have authority over the beasts of the earth, the birds of the air, the fish of the sea, the mountains, hills, trees, plants, and every living thing (including viruses, microbes, and germs), even demons, including the spirit of infirmity that causes sickness and diseases.

Finally, as the centurion said, our authority resides in our words; likewise, Jesus gives power to our words when we speak them in the name of Jesus, as it is written in John 14:13 14: "And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it." Do you see now why Jesus was surprised when He heard the centurion? Indeed, it is written in Matthew 8:10: "When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I have not

found such great faith, not even in Israel!'"

Here is the great faith that surprised our Lord and Savior Jesus: Man's words get authority and power driven by the divine flow of God's power to make things happen, provided those words are spoken in the consciousness that the one who speaks acts under the authority of Jesus and acts on what or whom he has authority over. Your consciousness of the identity of Jesus casts away any doubt in your mind and gives you the boldness that whatever you say will come to pass. This is the God-kind of faith that Jesus wants us to release all the days of our lives as born-again Christians. This God-kind of faith revealed by the centurion and endorsed by Jesus has been fully understood by the Apostle Paul, and his report about the God-kind of faith in Romans 10:6 17 proves this reality.

Let us begin our discussion of this passage with Romans 10:6 9: "But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, 'Do not say in your heart, "Who will ascend into heaven?" (that is, to bring Christ down from above) or, "Who will descend into the abyss?" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? "The word is near you, even in your mouth and your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead you will be saved." In other words, professing the Lordship of Jesus and believing that God has raised Jesus from the dead means you are

born again and that you are no longer under the curse of the law but under God's grace. Therefore, once this happens, you are catapulted into God's Kingdom of:

- Prosperity instead of poverty,
- Generational blessings instead of generational curses,
- Blessings wherever you go in the name of Jesus instead of curses wherever you go,
- Dominion over the circumstances of life instead of weakness when you are faced with bad circumstances or a difficult situation,
- Real estate instead of being plundered,
- Being the favorite of others instead of being the laughingstock of others,
- Productivity instead of unproductiveness,
- An increase in glory instead of an increase in disgrace,
- Being the head and not the tail, instead of being the tail and not the head,
- Being a lender instead of a borrower,
- Healing instead of sickness or unknown disease which is not written in the book of the law,
- Success instead of defeat or failure,
- Light instead of spiritual blindness,
- Happiness, joy and gladness of heart instead of disaster, tragedy or misfortune,
- Strength instead of weakness,
- Faith in Jesus instead of fear,
- Trust in Jesus instead of doubt,

- The ability to focus on God's Word instead of what you see,
- Satisfaction of all your needs instead of being in need of all things,
- Wisdom and understanding instead of confusion or lack of wisdom,
- Freedom instead of oppression, slavery, or bondage,
- Peace of mind instead of anxiety,
- Hope instead of hopelessness and despair,
- Trust in Jesus instead of trust in the riches and protections of this world,
- Divine healing instead of incurable diseases,
- Sound mind instead of madness,
- Better eyesight instead of poor vision, and, finally,
- Life instead of destruction or death.

These spiritual gifts are yours. They exist already in the spiritual realm and it is up to you to take possession of them with your mind by speaking upon them to cast away any doubt in your mind and then to bring them into being in the physical realm. Moreover, anything you say which pertains to the sons of God about your future or your salvation comes to life in the physical realm.

It is written in Romans 10:9: ". . . that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead you will be saved." Jesus is our salvation and God's salvation for all mankind, as it is reported in Luke 2:30: "For my eyes have seen Your salvation."

Moreover, the Bible says in Luke 24:27: "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." Taking Luke 2:30 and Luke 24:27 together, we picture Jesus as our salvation, and all prophets beginning with Moses talked about Jesus as our salvation, therefore every word of God is about salvation. Consequently, we can apply Romans 10:9 to every word of God. In conclusion, Romans 10:9 (". . . if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead you will be saved") is the general law of faith or the general law of the God-kind of faith and the pattern applicable to any scripture of the Holy Bible. There is no need to wait until you go into heaven to know the truth about what to do. God's Word is truth, so we cling to it.

Let us go back to Romans 10:9 that declares: ". . . if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead you will be saved." This means that we must say aloud and also believe in our heart that God has raised Jesus from the dead. In other words, we must speak in the name of Jesus, the Son of God. Speaking in the name of Jesus means we believe in our heart that God has raised Jesus from the dead to redeem us from the curse of the law, as it is written in Galatians 3:1: "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree')."

In Chapter Two we defined the thirty kinds of curses of the law revealed by God in Deuteronomy 28:15–68. And therefore we have at our disposal all the blessings of God, which are the opposite of the thirty curses of the law (as repeated, above). This means that when we speak we must remind ourselves that Jesus has redeemed us from the curse of the law in order to burn any doubt, unbelief, and worry in our mind. We must have the consciousness that Jesus is our Lord and Savior, and that His power that resides in us will bring into physical being whatever our profession talks about.

Although we are looking at dominion over the curse of the law, it leaves us with questions, such as "Do I have dominion over disease?"

Let's say that you know someone who is told he has a certain terminal disease. Getting the diagnosis is like being told "goodbye." The doctor says, "It's a cancer. It is a terminal disease. There is no hope." Your sick friend responds, "Cancer. O, cancer. I am finished!" But who said so? That's the question we must ask. If we are not careful, we can find ourselves living our life based on human dictates and man's desires—including whether we live or do not live. The doctor claims to know more than his patient; he claims to know about how the body of a human being functions. He says, "This sickness is incurable, so get ready to die." When you talk to your friend, you ask "Who said so?" And his response is, "My doctor!" But we have found out something: man has limitations and sciences have

limitations. The knowledge man has is based only in the five senses.

There was a time in this world when almost all diseases were said to be incurable. And when people contracted those diseases they were told they were going to die and they died. After some time, doctors said, "We have found out the cure," and hope came: "There is a cure; we are not going to die." But who said, "There is no cure"? A man said it. Who said, "There is a cure"? A man said that, as well. So when a man said, "There is no cure," everybody said, "Whoever has the disease dies." There was a time when malaria was incurable, and everyone who got the disease was finished. Then came a time when doctors said they had found a cure. But how can a man say, "There is no cure" when only God has the final say? Man does not know everything only God does. So no sickness is incurable, and no curse is incurable. This means that there is something you can do about any circumstance in your life. But what do you do?

Is there anything you can do about your condition today? That's the most important question. Ask yourself: "Do I have the ability to change it? Do I have the power to change it or must I accept it and die with it? Can I change it? Can I come out of it? Is there anything I can do? Am I hopeless and perplexed? Can I really influence what happens in my life, in my body, in my family, in my sphere of contact? Can I influence it from the realm of the spirit? Can I decide what

happens to me? Can I decide what will happen to me? Is there something I can do about it?"

We know what Jesus did for us. He took our place to take on all of our curses. He went on the cross as our substitute, but we went on the cross with Him. We died on the cross, and we were buried with Him, but Christ paid for our sins.

The Bible says, in Isaiah 53:5, "But He was wounded for our iniquities; He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed." If that is true, that means you can do something with that truth.

Do not say, "O God, do it for me. O God, help me." Do not say, "O God, heal me," or "O God, touch my money. O God, make me rich." Do you know God's answer concerning this kind of speech or thought? God says, "No! O daughter, heal yourself; O son, heal yourself." You say, "O God, do it," and God answers, "O son, heal yourself."

Indeed, the Bible says in 1 Corinthians 6:19–20: "Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you are bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." As born-again Christians, our body and spirit belong to God. We have a responsibility to glorify God with our body and in our spirit. But how can we glorify God with our body when we are sick? We give glory to God through the Son by calling, asking, or demanding in the name of Jesus, as it is

written in John 14:13–14: "And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it."

Mark 16:15–18 also teaches us how to take care of our body and spirit, when Jesus says to His disciples: ". . . Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover." If you cast out the devil from someone else and heal somebody else who is sick, you can do the same thing for yourself if you are sick or possessed by an evil spirit. You are the custodian of your body and spirit.

Some folks say, "O God, heal me," and God answers, "O son, heal that body." How? Mark 16:15–18 teaches us how to heal our body and spirit. You may tell me: "It doesn't really tell us *how* to do this. It simply says we can." No, Jesus said: "And these signs *will follow* those who believe . . ." He did not say "And these signs *can* follow those who believe . . ." You say, "O God, get me out of this poverty," and God answers, "Heal this curse of poverty, I have already given you the weapons to do it." God wants you to do something because he knows you can. God cannot tell us to do what we cannot do. He gives us the ability, the authority, and the power to do what we need to do. He gives us the authority and

the power to do what must be done. We simply have to know what God has given to us to do.

Is it possible to live on this earth sickness free and free of the curses of the law? Is it possible to dictate what will happen to you and what will not happen to you on this earth? Yes! That is the life God wants you to live. That's the life we received. Look at John 3:14 16: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

For a believer in Christ, this declaration that we "should not perish" is as good as a law. You should not die; you should not suffer, but have eternal life. This means that if you have eternal life you do not have to perish or suffer. What destroys sickness is eternal life the life God has given us which is what you have. God has brought us to His level. He has given us His kind of life. You have a God-kind of life. What makes God, God, is what you have. You have the nature of God. You may look like a human being, but the real you, your spiritual being, has been re-created. And that drives away sickness and any curse of the law.

God gave us faith to reign in this life; to reign over any circumstances or situations of life; not to reign over one another (apart from the foolish men, as noted in Psalm 49:13 14), but to reign over poverty, and the other curses of the law. He gave us both the authority

and the power to do so. God does not want us weak. He does not want us sick. God does not want us dying. If a man wants to die, he has to decide that he wants to die. It's a choice. Are you aware that the power of death, the keys to death, and the keys of hell have been taken from the devil? It is in the Bible. Those keys are no longer with the devil. Jesus took them from him. That means that death and the sting of death or the curse of the law is no longer in the hands of the devil. In other words, you *can* say no to death. And death cannot be forced upon you. It is written in 1 Corinthians 15:54 57: "So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: 'Death is swallowed up in victory.' 'O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?' The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Jesus took away the power of death and hell in His victory over the devil. Indeed, it is written in Isaiah 25:8: "He will swallow up death forever, and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces; the rebuke of His people He will take away from all the earth; For the LORD has spoken." In this passage, God revealed to the prophet Isaiah what Jesus would do to the devil, and the Holy Spirit reminded the Apostle Paul about this very powerful truth in 1 Corinthians 15:54 57. Are you aware that Satan cannot kill a man without his permission? If you say, "I am dying," God

cannot do anything to help you, because if you say it you will have it. You shall have what you say, according to Mark 11:23: "For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will come to pass, he will have whatever he says." If you say, "I am dying," you will die not because the devil has the power to kill you, but because you have spoken this and it has become the truth. There must be a giving of permission, and cooperation with the devil for you to die. In other words, as a child of God, you have the life of God and you cannot be killed.

If you give the life of a human being to a dog, what will happen to this dog? It will think like a human being, it will talk like a human being and act like a human being. That's what God has done for us by giving us His life. God has brought us up to His level and it is a level where sickness and the curse of the law cannot dominate you, and where death cannot dominate you. In other words, you can stay healthy, strong, wealthy, prosperous, victorious, and free; and when sickness, poverty, defeat, oppression, or weakness strike you can come out of it. This is what God is showing us in Matthew 10:1: "And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease." Not *some* kinds of disease, but *all* kinds of diseases and all kinds of sicknesses in other words, all kinds of curses of the law.

Many times, sicknesses are caused by evil spirits. Jesus gave His apostles power against unclean spirits not merely to talk with them, but to cast them out remember that power also means authority. He gave them the ability and the authority to cast out unclean spirits and to heal all kind of diseases. Look at Luke 10:19: "Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you." Jesus says He gives us power not over *some* but over all the power of the enemy. Who is this enemy? The devil is the enemy.

This means that you have power over sickness, power over failure, power over poverty, power over death, power over all the power of the enemy, and power over any curse of the law. Let us re-read the last phrase: ". . . and nothing shall by any means hurt you." Did Jesus say, "And something shall by any means hurt you"? Is that what Jesus is saying? No! Jesus is saying, "And nothing shall by any means hurt you." But you answer, "I feel the pain of cancer; I am poor; I am not free from alcohol." And Jesus responds, "Yes! But that cancer has no power over you; that poverty has no power over you; that alcohol has no power over you. They are not permitted to hurt you." God's Word is absolute. It is not debatable. God says, "And nothing shall by any means hurt you." Jesus said it, so God said it. Jesus's Word is authoritative, and it becomes law. So you can say, "Hey! Nothing can by any means hurt me." If you have a cancer, you can simply cast it out.

When Jesus said that you had the power, the devil heard it, nature heard it, sicknesses and diseases heard it, every curse of the law heard it, and all of the demons in hell heard it. In other words, Jesus said to the agents of darkness: "All you demons, you devils, sicknesses and diseases, poverty, you are not permitted; you are not allowed to hurt these ones: the born-again Christians." That is what Jesus said, and that is the truth. Jesus is showing you what you have and what you can do. As a child of God, as a believer in Christ Jesus, you are bigger than any condition or any curse of the law. Whatever condition you find yourself in, whatever it is called, no matter how long ago it began, and no matter how terrible it looks like, you are bigger than it. You must simply say, based on God's Word, "I am bigger than this condition, because nothing shall by any means hurt me."

What does a man of power and authority do? Does he beg, or does he exercise his authority? He has power over unclean spirits to do what negotiate with them? No, to cast them out! God defines the relationship we should have with Him. He also tells us how we should relate with men Christians and non-Christians and how we should relate with devils. In other words, God made it clear that there is a devil and showed the character of this devil. The devil is wicked and deceitful he is the destroyer. God also shows us that this devil has no authority over us. The power that he had has been taken from him by Jesus and given to us.

Phrases such as "O God, please help me; take this

sickness away from me" must be removed forever from your vocabulary. You are the one who has the power to say "Sickness, go away from my body" or "Poverty, go away from my life." You have the ability and power to come out of any situation. It does not matter how long they have been there, for time does not change the truth.

Do you want Jesus to appear to you and say, "My name is Jesus Christ of Nazareth, the Son of God; I am here to heal you"? No! It does not work like this. Jesus has given to us all the authority and power to settle all matters in our own lives. Jesus is in heaven, but He has told us how we can bring Him into our situations. Jesus said, "I give you authority and power." What more do you want? He has given each of us all the authority and power we need to live a wonderful life. Cancer or any curse of the law has no hold over you, because Jesus said He has given us the ability to run over any sickness or any curse of the law. Not only did Jesus give us all the blessings of God when we were born again, but He gave us authority and power to move away from any curse of the law to any corresponding blessing of God. We have passed from poverty to prosperity, from generational curses to generational blessings, and so on through all thirty curses of the law. This means that when we speak we must remind ourselves that Jesus has redeemed us from the curses of the law in order to burn any doubt, unbelief, and worry in our mind. We must be conscious of the fact that Jesus is our Lord and Savior and His power that

resides in us will bring into physical being whatever our profession talks about.

Now, let us look again at the passage from Luke, because we are looking at dominion over the curses of the law. There is something all these curses fear — something that any of these conditions fears the most — and it is the name of Jesus. Can you see this? Jesus gives us all the authority and power to defeat the power of darkness in Luke 10:19: "Behold, I give you the authority, to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you."

All the curses of the law come from the devil, but Jesus has given us authority and power to dominate them, to run over them, to crush them. No wonder the Bible says in Philippians 2:9–11: "Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." When it says that "every knee should bow at the name of Jesus," that means it is a law. It is also written, in Acts 4:12: "Nor is there salvation in any other for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." As a child of God, the name of Jesus has been given to you to live by. You have the legal right and power of attorney to use the name of Jesus. That name has been given to you — use it! The Bible says ". . . whatever

you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him" (Colossians 3:17).

The Bible also says that we are seated with Christ in heavenly places, far above all principality and powers and dominion that every name that is named not only in this world but also in that which is to come and has put all things under His (Christ's) feet and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church which is the fullness of Him that fills all in all (Ephesians 1:20–23). This means that, as believers, all things are under our feet—so we are the men of authority and power, and we get what we say. This is why the Bible says in Ephesians 2:6 that God "raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Moreover, Jesus has given to any believer the right to use His name, according to Mark 16:15–18: "And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover." And John 14:13–14 Jesus says: "And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it."

But God reveals, in James 4:7, the condition we, as believers, must satisfy to cause the devil to obey our

words: "Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you." God and His Word are one so the phrase "Therefore submit to God" really means submit to the Word of God — in other words, submit to Jesus the Righteousness of God (as we are told in Romans 10:3), or love Jesus, or live by the Word of God and by faith. If you have the spirit of faith; if you let God's Word dictate your life; if God's Word governs your life; if you let God's Word govern your talk, and dictate what happens to you; and if you let God's Word give you the true picture for yourself; then, no evil or unclean spirit — or anything else — can withstand to your words when they are spoken in the name of Jesus. This same truth is revealed by the Apostle Paul in Romans 8:1–2: "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ has made me free from the law of sin and death." As soon as you start living by faith — when you function according to the Word of God and not according to your senses and feelings — you are no longer under the curse of the law.

God teaches us how to relate with Him and how to relate with the devil. When we relate to Him, God tells us to let His Word control us, but when relating to the devil, we are to resist him with His Word uttered by our mouth. You resist the devil by going against the devil himself and all his curses of the law.

God tells us to submit to Him, but to treat the devil and his curses harshly. Our relationship with the devil

and his agents is defined in Luke 10:19: "Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you." We are bigger than them they have no power over us. On the contrary, we have power and dominion over them. Remember: you resist the devil by doing the contrary of what the devil wants you to do. If the devil tells you to worry about your condition, you oppose the devil by giving glory to God for having already given you victory over your condition. This is the real definition of living by faith: not being moved by what you can see, feel, or hear, but only being moved by the Word of God. You withstand the devil by using your voice, by professing or speaking God's Word, as it is written in Ecclesiastes 8:4: "Where the word of a king is, there is power. And who may say to him, 'What are you doing?'"

So you must make room for the blessings of God in your mind by picturing these blessings before you can enjoy them in the spiritual realm. Therefore, you can bring any of God's blessings into being by speaking aloud that specific blessing of God over your life. By speaking God's Word, we release the power of God carried by His Word, which has the ability to grant us the blessing we seek. John 4:43 54 illustrates what we have just said: "Now after the two days He departed from there and went to Galilee. For Jesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country. So when He came to Galilee, the Galileans received Him, having seen all the things He did in Jerusalem at

the feast; for they also had gone to the feast. So Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee where He had made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and implored Him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. Then Jesus said to him, 'Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe.' The nobleman said to Him, 'Sir, come down before my child dies!' Jesus said to him, 'Go your way; your son lives.' So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went his way. And as he was now going down, his servants met him and told him, saying, 'Your son lives!' Then he inquired of them the hour when he got better. And they said to him, 'Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.' So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, 'Your son lives.' And he himself believed, and his whole household. This again is the second sign that Jesus did when he had come out of Judea in Galilee."

Do you see what happened in this passage? This nobleman begged Jesus to go with him to Capernaum and heal his son who was at the point of death. But when Jesus told him, "Go your way; your son lives" he believed and went back to Capernaum. He acted on the Word of our Lord Jesus Christ, and did not wait to see the healing of his son with his physical eyes to believe. Instead, upon hearing the Word of Jesus he believed that his son was healed. This kind of behavior

is called "living by faith or by the Word of God." Believing in what God or Jesus has said (or is saying) and speaking what God has said or is saying and acting upon it releases His healing power. No matter the distance, His healing power heals instantly.

Did you notice something strange in what was just said? Jesus came to earth to redeem us from the curse of the law, but unless we speak the specific blessing we desire we cannot enjoy it. No wonder Romans 10:10 declares: "For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." This means that it is not enough to believe that God has redeemed us from the curse of the law and has given us all the blessings; we will not see them in the physical realm if we fail to speak those blessings and bring them to bear in our lives. This means that our consciousness of who Jesus really is for us will determine the power of our authority, and how we see Jesus is how we receive His blessings.

Speaking in the name of Jesus is the same thing as speaking about Jesus and believing that God has raised Him from the dead. When you do this, you receive the fruit God's Word is associated with, in this case, salvation you will be saved. The Apostle Paul continued and said in Romans 10:11 13: "For the Scripture says, 'Whoever believes in Him will not be put to shame.' For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. For 'whoever calls upon the name of the LORD shall be saved.'" Can you see this?

Paul the Apostle of Jesus Christ is saying that we are made right with God by believing with our heart but we are saved when we call upon the name of the Lord. Calling upon the name of the Lord means speaking in the name of God or Jesus. And we call upon the name of the Lord (or speak in the name of Jesus) only if we believe in the authority and power of God and Jesus. Therefore calling upon the name of the Lord or speaking in the name of Jesus refers to the God-kind of faith, which is speaking and believing that what you said will come to pass and that the things you ask for will happen. In the above passage, calling (or asking, or speaking) focuses on the power of your speech. In the same passage "upon the name of the Lord (or in the name of Jesus)" refers to the believing part of the God-kind of faith. It focuses on who is behind you or from whom you derive your authority. (*Have I called upon the name of the Lord? Yes. So what am I supposed to be? I am saved.*) Finally, in the passage, "shall be saved" points out the salvation part of the God-kind of faith, focusing on our deliverance from the power and effects of sin, the thirty curses of the law, and the danger of difficulty by God's intervention, grace, or blessings. This deliverance is the result of the God-kind of faith in other words, the manifestation of your God-kind of faith in the physical realm.

The Apostle Paul went on and, finally, declared in Romans 10:14 17: "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they

believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: 'How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!' But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, 'Lord, who has believed our report?' So then faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God." If it is true that faith comes by hearing the word of God, it is equally true that fear also comes by hearing the word of the world that contradicts the Word of God. Therefore Romans 10:17 could also say: "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Fear comes by hearing the word of the world." Likewise, Romans 10:17 could be rewritten in this way: "Faith is produced by speaking, and speaking by the word of God. Fear is caused by speaking the word of the world." It is wonderful that the more you speak the more you believe, and thus the more you cause God to make happen in the physical realm whatever you say. Why? Because the more you speak God's Word, the more you burn up any doubt in your mind and strengthen your belief.

Paul's conclusion concerning faith (in Romans 10:17) makes it crystal clear that faith comes by hearing the word of God and that the speaking of the Word of God gives birth to faith. This means that the principle of faith is to speak God's Word, first, and then believing faith will arise from the heart of those who are listening. Most of the time, folks believe after they have

heard the preaching of a man of God. So the speaking comes first, and the hearing next. When you become a believer, you speak aloud God's Word to yourself. Also the speaking comes first and then the hearing. This is the fact that I have emphasized in this passage. In the same way, if a non-believer, reading my book, reads it aloud, and pays attention to what he is saying, he will understand God's Word, and faith will arise in his heart. Therefore, if you speak to yourself you will produce either faith or fear in you, depending upon whether you speak of God or of the world. Do not forget this truth: We can speak God's Word for ourselves. This means that we can create faith in ourselves by speaking on our own and hearing the Word of God. As you keep speaking God's Word to yourself, your mind will begin to change and align with God's vision for your life. Then the definition of faith in God — the God-kind of faith — becomes: Speak and believe and things will happen. Therefore, if you have any doubt in your mind concerning one area of your life, keep speaking God's Word about that situation and you will burn your doubt and increase your faith.

As a matter of fact, the declaration of Romans 10:17 really means "Speak first the Word of God and next believe in the authority and the power of Jesus, who backs your declaration and has given you authority to act in His name, and what you are asking for shall be done for you." (In Chapter Seven, we will learn who backs our authority, and gives power to our words, in other words, who Jesus is and how the power He gives

us works inside and outside us.)

Let us go back to Mark 11:23 to expound upon the power of the God-kind of faith hidden in this wonderful scripture: "For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will come to pass, he will have whatever he says." Get this idea in your mind and your heart: Unless you understand the parable of the seed which is given below in Matthew 13:1 23, you cannot understand any other parable of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and therefore any other scripture of the Bible. For all believers, the parable of the seed refers to Luke 8:4 8 ; Mark 4:1 9; Matthew 13:1 9, as explained by Jesus in Luke 8:11 15; Mark 4:13 20, Matthew 13:18 23, and Luke 8:11 Jesus said: "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God." This is why this parable is called "the parable of the seed." This declaration is not mine; I only repeat what Jesus Himself declares in Mark 4:13: "And He said to them, 'Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables?" First of all, the Word of God is a seed according to Jesus's Word spoken in Luke 8:11: "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God." So the question which arises is: What is this key or primary parable of Jesus Christ? We find it in Matthew 13:1 23:

> On the same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the sea. And great multitudes were gathered together to Him, so that He got into a

boat and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: "Behold, a sower went out to sow. and as he sowed, some seeds fell by wayside; and the birds came and devoured them. Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away. And some fell down among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do you speak to them in parables?"

He answered and said to them, "Because it has given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.

"Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing, they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. And in them, the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says:

'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand,

And seeing you will see and not perceive;

For the hearts of this people have grown dull.

Their ears are hard of hearing,

And their eyes they have closed,

Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears,

Lest they should understand with their heart and turn,

So that I should heal them.'

"But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

"Therefore hear the parable of the sower: When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. But he who received the seed on the stony places, this is he who hear the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. But he who received seed on the good

ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."

You may wonder what this parable has to do with Mark 11:23 ("For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will come to pass, he will have whatever he says"). This is the answer: You already know that you are composed of spirit and body. Your spirit (the "real" you) comes from God and your body (where your spirit dwells) comes from the earth. Therefore in the same way you feed your body with food and water to help it grow; your spirit must be fed with God's Word in order to build it, as it is written in Acts 20:32: "And now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified." Just as a builder lays the blocks of the house he's building upward and higher, so our spirit is built stronger as we meditate on God's Word and profess it. God's Word, as described in Acts 20:32, has the power to build your spirit and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. Unless your spirit is built up you cannot be an heir to the Kingdom of God. You must become a spiritual king to make your declarations and see your word coming to pass.

Do you see now the relation between Mark 11:23 (where faith moves mountains) and the parable of the

seed? Before I give you the explanation of the parable of the seed; we need to know the two natures of the Word of God. These two natures were revealed by Jesus in John 6:63: "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life." This means that God's Word is spirit and life, so if you sow God's Word in your heart it will grow in you and become a strong and powerful spirit in you, mingled with your spirit and also will give life to your body, soul, and spirit. (Romans 1:16 says the gospel of Jesus Christ is "the power of God to salvation to everyone who believes.")

But there are four obstacles in the way of building your strong and powerful spirit or in your way to becoming a spiritual giant. The parable of the seed teaches us these four obstacles in order to make us know the four degrees of faith we all have to go through. The first barrier is a lack of understanding: "When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside" (Matthew 13:19). The second impediment is a lack of root or foundation: "But he who received the seed on the stony places, this is he who hear the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles" (Matthew 13:20 21). The third hindrance is the lack of a change of our mind towards God: "Now he who received seed among the thorns is

he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful" (Matthew 13:22). The fourth obstacle is a lack of love for Jesus: "But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty" (Matthew 13:23). Although this passage from Matthew may not say anything about an impediment, let us read the same verse quoted by Luke 8:15: "But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble heart and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience." So lack of patience is an impediment to bearing fruit. And in this book and all my books and in the Bible you will learn that love is the principle of patience. Moreover, John 15:5 tells us that we cannot bear fruit without being the branches of the Vine Jesus. And Jesus states in John 14:21 23 that only those who love Him do His commandments. Psalm 111:10 and Psalm 119:100 are references to the principle that doing God's Word gives rise to having a better understanding of God's Word, which leads to love for Christ or doing God's Word.

In the core of this book you will learn how to overcome these four obstacles; you will receive the remedy given by Jesus for every problem you are facing or will have to face in your life. Every word of God is a seed. Your responsibility is to plant it on good ground, or to prepare your heart so that it can be good ground a heart which loves Jesus. But you cannot love Jesus and

make your heart good ground until you change your mind so that it turns towards God, you understand God's Word, and finally become strong by practicing and exercising your spirit or faith through patience and self-control during the challenges and circumstances of life. You must overcome any challenge of life by using the name of Jesus as your instrument, or by remaining joyful in the midst of trials and therefore cause your endurance or patience to grow so that you can turn you into a perfect and complete man. Unless you sow the Word of God in your heart, your spirit cannot grow, become strong, and gain the power to be productive and effective.

Therefore we must first change our mind towards God to allow His Word, which is planted in our heart, to start to grow. If we accept God's Word and put it in our heart and do not change the focus of our mind to be towards God then the cares and worries of this life will choke God's Word and it will be unfruitful. However, if we succeed in changing our mind towards God, then we receive understanding from God if we maintain our focus on God's Word, and thirst to know God. This is a free gift, as it is written in Proverbs 2:1 6: "My son, if you receive my words, And treasure my commands within you, So that you incline your ear to wisdom, And apply your heart to understanding; Yes, if you cry out for discernment, And lift up your voice for understanding, If you seek her as silver, And search for her as for hidden treasures; Then you will understand the fear of the LORD, And find the knowledge

of God. For the LORD gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding." Finally, we must be patient and exercise self-control through thick and thin, and in all situations, so that our spirit will grow and become strong.

You have learned in the previous pages that the consequence of your change of mind towards God is your love for Jesus. This means that your love for Jesus is the spark of faith that starts the process of the growth of the Word of God in you that makes your heart "good ground" by purifying it and giving you an understanding of His Word, and then building your spirit to become stronger and causing you to be patient when you face adversity.

Your love for Jesus is also the power of God in you. Your love for Jesus brings Jesus into you, as Jesus Himself declares in John 14:23: ". . . If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him." There are two great revelations in this wonderful scripture. Jesus is the Word of God, so our love for Him permits God's Word to start its growth in us. The second revelation is that the well-known Holy Spirit, the spirit of God, will come and dwell in us. The Godhead is present in us two ways: through God's Word (or Jesus or God's Love) that grows to build our spirit; and through the presence of the Holy Spirit, who helps us to communicate with God and Jesus. (You will learn more about the cohabitation in us of both the Word of God and the Holy Spirit in Chapter Six.)

The Word of God sown in your heart continues to grow and, since His Word is spirit according to John 6:63, your spirit grows at the same time as God's Word grows in you. Moreover, the Bible declares in Romans 1:16: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek." Taking these two scriptures together, we can deduce that as our spirit grows the power of God in us grows at the same time, and also that the Word of God carries both the power of God and the God-kind of life. Therefore, *our* words carry the power of God and the God-kind of life according to the level of the growth of God's Word in us if we speak in agreement with God's Word. Your spirit reaches its full maturity when there is no more fear in you, at which point you are full of love for Jesus.

Having no more fear is the sign that your inner man (your spirit) is full of love and that you have become a spiritual giant, as 1 John 4:18 declares: "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love." This step of faith corresponds to the stage of the greatest faith and therefore the phase of the greatest authority and power of Jesus Christ in you.

Have you noticed that, as our love for Jesus grows, our spirit becomes stronger and powerful? Then, as our love for Jesus grows our faith becomes stronger and vice versa. Why? Because when our understanding

of God's Word increases, our faith and our love for Jesus also increase. Likewise, when our self-control and patience grow in maturity, our faith and our love for Jesus also increase. Finally, the power of God in you is proportional to the love for Jesus and the level of faith in you.

We can even say that our love for Jesus is the rain that waters the Word of God, which is sown in our heart, as it is written in Psalm 1:1 3: "Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper." Note that "But his delight is in the law of the LORD" refers to the man's love for Jesus, and his love for Jesus leads him to meditate day and night in God's Word. In other words, the man's love for Jesus causes him to maintain the focus of his mind on Jesus. Acting like this will make him a tree planted by the river of water, meaning that he will remain connected to Jesus. And Jesus's love or life will flow towards him and he will lack nothing; everything he does will prosper. It is this same reality, just as Jesus explains that a faithful man can move a mountain in Mark 11:23.

Now tell me, who is the born-again Christian who has no doubt, unbelief, or fear in his heart? He is the one who is full of love, because fear, unbelief, and

doubt have been cast out from his heart, as it is written in 1 John 4:18: "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love." What does this tell you? Love for Jesus is superior to knowledge and to patience and self-control. Love for Jesus is superior to any physical thing, because love for Jesus *is* Jesus. Therefore, love Jesus and live by your love for Him or, in order words, live by faith. This is why the Bible says in Ephesians 3:14 21: "For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the width and length and depth and height to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." Do you see something mind-blowing about these wonderful Scriptures? Unless we become rooted and grounded in love we cannot really know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge.

But how can we be rooted and grounded in our love of Christ? By remaining joyful and focused on Jesus

when we face trials, hardships, challenges, and so on, as it is written in James 1:2–4: "My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing." We become perfect and complete when we are full of love for Christ, as it is written in 1 John 4:15–18: "Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. In this respect love has been made perfect among us, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as He is so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love."

It is only when we overcome our tests, persecutions, hardships, and challenges by focusing on the love of Jesus that caused Him to die for each of us on the cross to save us that we receive the power to wait patiently for the time of the victory we have already seen in the spiritual realm. In other words, we remain focused on Jesus by living by faith (or through our love for Christ or by the Word of God) no matter what situation we find ourselves in. In Revelation 3:15–22, the Bible gives a clear explanation of how this works: "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot,

I will vomit you out of My mouth. Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. He who has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

Can you see what is going on in this passage? Jesus says that He will "anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent." He rebukes and chastens us because He loves every one of us and calls us to repent. Therefore, we have to focus on Jesus. Then the question is: When does Jesus rebuke and chasten? Through trials, persecutions, and challenges Jesus says to every one of us, in John 16:33: "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Jesus wants us use our minds to see the victory He has already given us over any trial, hardship, persecution,

challenges, or adverse circumstances we will have to face during our lifetime on earth. Therefore we need patience and self-control to overcome them. But unless we have enough love for Christ to stay focused on Him (or on the Word of God) no matter what we are going through, it is impossible to stay patient and be self-controlled when we face adversity. When we keep on focusing on Jesus, it is easy to endure adversity without complaining and to wait for the manifestation of our victory in Jesus Christ. After our mind has repented, Jesus wants us to let Him enter our heart, that's why He says in Revelation: "I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me." Our love for Jesus compels us to accept the invitation of Jesus and then He enters so that He can give us understanding of His Word. But we must continue to dine with Jesus to continue to focus on Him and to keep enjoying His presence to get the final victory, which is to gain the virtue of patience and self-control.

The sign of our victory is twofold: First, to have no more fear; and, second to be rooted and grounded in the love of Jesus Christ, as it is written in Ephesians 3:16 17. When we have overcome our fears, then Jesus grants us the chance to sit with Him on His throne and, once that happens, then everything we decree with our words will come to pass. Why? Because we will have become men of effective authority, spiritual giants, as it is written in Revelation 3:21: "To him who

overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne." The power of the authority given to us by Jesus Christ resides in our love for Jesus; the more we love Jesus, the more our inner man our spirit becomes strong and powerful and, thus, our words become powerful and bring into being whatever we say and we are able to gain supremacy over any adversity which comes our way in our life because we are rooted and grounded in the love of Jesus.

4. Our Tongue Determines our Destiny

Before we start with the topic of how our tongue and our destiny are connected, let us ponder what James, a disciple of Jesus, said in James 3:2: "For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body." This essential verse stresses the greatest importance of our tongue or mouth. It matters to master this topic; the course of our life depends on it.

Proverbs 18:21 says: "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit." This means that what we speak of with our mouth will come to pass. Therefore we are responsible for what happens to us. If we speak good things about ourselves, these good things will be established; likewise, if we speak bad things about ourselves, these bad things will come true. So we have a choice to make: to follow or imitate Jesus or not; to choose life or death; to lead a good life or a life full of fear and struggle. Isaiah 65:16 says: "So that he who blesses himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; and he who swears in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, And because they are hidden from my eyes." Let us see

the *Amplified* version of this same verse: "So [it shall be] that he who invokes a blessing on himself in the land shall do so by saying, May the God of truth and faithfulness to His promises [the Amen], because the former troubles they are hidden from My eyes." Can you see what this means? We can bring forth a blessing on ourselves by speaking it or professing it. In the book of Joshua, God revealed the secret and easiest way to keep His statutes and judgments. We find this answer in Joshua 1:8: "This book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success."

In this scripture from Joshua, the English word "meditate" is the Hebrew word הגה ("hagah"). *Thayer's Lexicon* defines *hagah* as "to moan, growl, utter, muse, mutter, meditate, devise, plot, or speak." *Strong's Lexicon*'s definition of the Hebrew word *hagah* is "to murmur (in pleasure or anger); by implication, to ponder: imagine, meditate, mourn, mutter, roar, speak, study, talk, or utter." To meditate on God's Word means you think about it over and over, filling your mind and even your mouth with it. Biblical meditation is about not only thinking, pondering, and imagining, but also about muttering speaking the Word of God. So although in English "meditation" is usually an internal action, in the Bible "meditate" actually has three meanings. First it means to ponder; secondly it means to murmur; and, finally, to shout, roar or read aloud.

Most people are acquainted with the first meaning, but are not aware of the second and third meanings.

Let us go to Psalm 5:1–3 to get to know the second meaning, "Give ear to my words, O LORD, Consider my meditation. Give heed to the voice of my cry, My King and my God, for to you I will pray. My voice you shall hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning I will direct it to you, and I will look up." Meditation in this context stands for talking. During his meditation, he cries, and during his prayer he makes his voice be heard by God.

Maybe you haven't got it yet, so let us compare Psalm 5:1 of the New King James Version to the Amplified Topical Reference Bible. Psalm 5:1 of the New King James Version says: "Give ear to my words, O LORD, Consider my meditation." Psalm 5:1 of the Amplified Bible states: "Listen to my words, O Lord, give heed to my sighing and groaning." From the comparison of these two versions of Psalm 5:1, we can deduce that the word "meditation" can stand for "sighing and groaning." Moreover, Psalm 5:1 of the New Living Translation, Second Edition says: "O LORD, hear me as I pray; pay attention to my groaning;" and the Good News Bible version of this same verse declares: "Listen to my words, O LORD, and hear my sighs."

Let us now consider the third meaning of meditation: "reading aloud." This is what a man described as "a eunuch of great authority" did in Acts 8:28–30: ". . . And sitting in his chariot, he was reading Isaiah the prophet. Then the Spirit said to Philip, 'Go near

and overtake this chariot.' So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, 'Do you understand what you are reading?'" Philip had heard him reading, meaning that the man not only read with his eyes, but also with his mouth. So we can see that, in the Bible, meditation consists of three versions: pondering, sighing and groaning, and speaking aloud or shouting.

Now, coming back to Joshua 1:8, we see that God taught Joshua the best and easiest way to become righteous in the eyes of God — in other words, to do all that is written in the Book of the Law. That way is to ponder, sigh, groan, and speak aloud the written scriptures day and night; and practicing this exercise daily and continually will cause you to do the Word of God and to work righteousness. This is a free gift of God, the righteousness of God. Why does our continual meditation cause us to do God's Word effortlessly? It is simply because continual meditation on God's Word has the power to change our minds towards God.

Here is the principle governing kings, which God revealed in Deuteronomy 17:18–20: "Also it shall be when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book, from the one before the priests, the Levites. And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God and be careful to observe all the words of his law and these statutes, that his heart may not be lifted above

his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left, and that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel." Have you noticed the products or results of meditation on God's Word?

Meditation on God's Word has four consequences. First of all, meditation on God's Word brings forth to whomever meditates the fear of God, and causes him to be careful to observe all the words of His law and His statutes. Not *some* words but all the words of His law and statutes. Secondly, meditation on God's Word gives a humble heart, changes the meditator's mind towards God, and purifies his heart of pride and arrogance. Thirdly, meditation on God's Word keeps the one who does it from sin. Fourthly, meditation on God's Word prolongs the life of the one who does it, as well as the lives of his children.

How long must we meditate on God's Word? The answer is in Deuteronomy 17:19: "And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life." This means that during all of our lifetime on earth we are compelled to meditate on God's Word to give our spirit its daily food and drink in the same way we need to eat food and drink water to feed our body. You may say that the verses from Deuteronomy 17:18–20 do not concern ordinary men, because they were given by God for kings to live by. But you must remember what the Scriptures say about you. Romans 5:17 describes born-again Christians as kings: "For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much

more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the one Jesus Christ." We are kings because we reign in life through our Lord Jesus Christ. If it is still unclear to you, look at the same verse (Romans 5:17) in the Amplified Bible: "For if because of one man's trespass (lapse, offense) death reigned through that one, much more surely will those who receive [God's] overflowing grace (unmerited favor) and the free gift of righteousness [putting them into right standing with Himself] reign as kings in life through the one Man Jesus Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed One)." Therefore the blessings promised to kings through putting into practice the instructions in Deuteronomy 17:18 20 are also available for all of us.

Speaking aloud God's Word brings us faith and hope, as it is written in Hebrews 11:1: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Remember Romans 10:17 also says: "So then faith comes by speaking, and speaking by the word of God," provided that the one who speaks is the one who hears God's Word. This means that meditation on God's Word keeps our spirits alive. By speaking aloud the Word of God during our meditation, we bring to ourselves faith or a continued increase in faith. As we said before, in the same way that the hearing of God's Word produces faith, the speaking of the Word of God gives birth to faith in us. Therefore if we speak aloud God's Word for ourselves as we do during our meditation we bring forth faith or increase faith in

us. Moreover, our words frame our destiny. Do you see how powerful our tongue is?

Unless we are hypocrites, we always speak what is in our hearts, as it is written in 2 Corinthians 4:13: "But since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, 'I believed and therefore I spoke,' we also believe and therefore speak." Unless we speak out what we believe, our faith has no effect. We must activate our faith by acting upon it through our speech, as it is written not only in Corinthians, but also in Psalm 116:10: "I believed, therefore I spoke."

Our speaking is based on our believing. So our faith starts with our belief and is expressed in our speech. This is why the Bible says, in Deuteronomy 30:11 14: "For this commandment which I command you today, it is not too mysterious for you, nor is it far off. It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will ascend into the heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear and do it? Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it." Do you see now what God Almighty is saying? First of all, God and His Word and Jesus are one. Secondly, God's Word holds the power of God, as it is written in Romans 1:16: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek;" in 1 Corinthians 1:18: "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing,

but to us who are being saved it is the power of God;" and in Mark 12:24: "Jesus answered and said to them, 'Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of God?" God is telling us to be aware of the power of God, which is within us since His Word dwells in our heart through our daily meditation on God's Word.

Moreover, in Joel 2:32, God reveals the power of our tongue when we call upon His name to receive His gifts or to be delivered from any bondage or sins: "And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, As the LORD has said, Among the remnant whom the LORD calls." Note that the power of our tongue is backed by our faith as it is written in 2 Corinthians 4:13, and in 1 Corinthians 2:4 5: "And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God."

The Holy Spirit and His power dwell in us so we can change anything through the power of the Holy Spirit. All we have to do is to activate the power of God in us by speaking God's Word and doing it. By putting God's Word in your mouth and speaking it forth you demonstrate your faith and demonstrate the power of God that resides in you. The Apostle Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit and revealing the truths of Deuteronomy 30:11 14, declares in Romans 10:9 10: ". . . if you

confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." So beware what you believe, lest what has been spoken by the prophets come upon you. Believe in the Word of God, rather than in the words of the world, so that you speak and give birth to good things in your life, and can experience a wonderful life full of God's blessings, as Jesus said in Matthew 12:33–37: "Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit. Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

Do you see that it is your responsibility to make your tree good or bad? "Tree," of course, stands for any man, as it is written in Isaiah 61:3: "To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified." We know that any tree is the product of a seed. And Jesus declares, in Luke 8:11: "The seed is the

word of God." Therefore, only the tree whose seed is God's Word is a good tree. In the spiritual realm, there are only two seeds and two trees: the seed of God's Word which gives birth to the tree of righteousness, and the seed of the word of the world which gives birth to the tree of wickedness. If we fail to treasure God's Word in our heart, we are responsible for any bad things that happen to us. We have been warned that our tree will produce bad fruit. God has done His part by giving us His Word, and it is now our role to store God's Word and let it grow in us to become, over a period of time, a good, spiritual tree. The fruit of the spiritual tree is described in Galatians 5:22 23: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control. Against such there is no law." You may wonder why I say the fruit of God's Word is love, joy, and so on, when Galatians 5:22 23 talks about the fruit of the Spirit. Remember the words of our Lord Jesus Christ in John 6:63: "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life." This means that God's Word is Spirit and, therefore, its fruit is the same as the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Our words produce good or evil things on the one hand, and bring forth justification or condemnation on the other hand. "Justification" is so important that we are under obligation to do our best to get it, it means to be made righteous. Matthew 12:33-37: " . . . For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned." Jesus said

it so justification has to do with the rest of what is here.

Since our words produce our righteousness when we speak God's Word or our condemnation when we speak idle or worldly words we are responsible for the framework of our destiny.

Do not misunderstand what we are talking about. It is the Word of God that comes out of our mouth that gives birth to our righteousness, as it is written in Romans 8:1: "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according the Spirit." ("To walk in the flesh" means to function through senses and feelings. "To walk in the Spirit" means to follow the Word of God.) John 6:63 says that God's Word is spirit and life, and Romans 8:1 declares that the believers who walk according the Spirit are righteous and not condemned. What does this tell you? God is saying there is no condemnation for those who do not walk according to their senses or feelings but according to the Spirit or the Word of God. This means that they do not say "I am weak" because they feel weak, but they speak according the Spirit or the Word of God. They do not say, "I am sick" because they feel the pain of sickness but, instead, speak God's Word which says, "I am healed" or "I am in perfect health." They do not also say, "I am healed" because they *feel* healed, but because God's Word says so.

Our faith is not based on our feelings or our sensory perceptions, but on the Word of God. Our task

is to speak the Word of God or be quiet if it is filled with the words of the devil, as it is written in Proverbs 13:3: "He who guards his mouth preserves his life, But he who opens wide his lips shall have destruction;" and in Proverbs 30:32 33: "If you have been foolish in exalting yourself, Or if you have devised evil, put your hand on your mouth. For as the churning of milk produces butter, And as wringing the nose produces blood, So the forcing of wrath produces strife." Jesus Himself teaches us, in John 6:63, that God's Word produces life, and the Bible says in Proverbs 18:21: "Death and life are in the power of tongues, And those who love it will eat its fruit." That means that, as believers in Jesus Christ, we are compelled to speak only God's Word to give life to everything we utter, otherwise our words will produce death. So eternal life produces everything I need to live and enjoy a fruitful and productive life. Do you see this wonderful truth? Each Christian has eternal life. If he produces life by his speaking, the result of that life can only be eternal not natural life. He is a tree of righteousness, not a tree of wickedness.

An evil thought in our heart such as pride, arrogance, deceit, or violence produces unpleasant words which possess the power to hurt others and ourselves. The easiest way to cause God to purify our heart so that we can speak and produce good things and bring salvation and all the blessings of God upon ourselves is to expose ourselves continually to God's Word. When we do this, God's Word changes our

thoughts in order to align our way of thinking with His thoughts and fills up our heart to make us really believe in Jesus, and then soaks into our very being to saturate our mind, strengthen our will, and finally proceed out of our mouth. Do not forget the warning of Jesus about our mouth in Matthew 15:11 and Matthew 15:17–20: "Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man; but what comes out of the mouth, defiles a man . . . Do you not yet understand that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and is eliminated? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are things which defile a man, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man." Can you see what this means? Evil things we speak may defile us, but our mouth is compelled to speak these evil thoughts if they are stored up in our heart. So it matters to prevent our heart from allowing evil things to enter in. Indeed, our words are impressed upon our spirit (heart and soul or mind and will) and have the power to change our way of thinking and beliefs and, therefore, our behavior. Proverbs 23:7 says: "For as he thinks in his heart, so is he." This means that what we focus on in our heart and mind, or what we believe and think, determines our true identity and our destiny. So it matters to take care of the source (our heart) of our focus (our mind) that feeds our ears, eyes, will, body and mouth.

As a matter of fact, our heart and mind themselves are fed by what we see, read, and hear, and what we think. Proverbs 16:23 also says, "The heart of the wise teaches his mouth, And adds learning to his lips." The grace of God will then help our mouth to line up with God's Word once it is stored in our heart by changing the focus of our mind. Our love for Jesus Christ will cause our mind to look at the same picture that God's Word has stored in our heart so that our mind may replace our own thoughts with God's thoughts. Thereby we will then speak according to God's Word and so frame the destiny God had already predestined for us before the creation of this world. Proverbs 4:20 23 says: "My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your eyes; Keep them in the midst of your heart; For they are life to those who find them, And health to all their flesh. Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life." Our focus and our watchfulness to keep focusing on God's Word prevent the devil from stealing the Word of God out of our heart. And, if we are successful in keeping the devil out, then the purpose of God for our life will be fulfilled.

We are responsible for the course of our lives. If we lose our attention and fail to keep focusing on God's Word, immediately Satan comes to steal God's Word from our heart and we start speaking like the devil. And then, by our evil words, we frame a destiny that leads to death a destiny which is contrary to what God has predestined for us. This means that it is

important to focus our ears, mind, and eyes on God's Word. This is the real, genuine battle of faith a good fight of faith which leads us to a successful life full of the Grace of God or a life that establishes us in the Word of God.

In Matthew 23:13 15, Jesus says: "But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses, and for pretense make long prayers. Therefore you will receive greater condemnation. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel over land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves." Why is Jesus so concerned by the hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees? The answer is that Jesus intends to teach us that a lack of hypocrisy is the key to entering and living in the kingdom of heaven. This revelation of Jesus is hidden in Psalm 115:16 which says, "The heaven, even the heavens are the LORD's; But the earth He has given to the children of men." What does this mean? This means that God is in complete control in heaven, so there is no sickness, no evil there. Only good things are allowed. On earth, children of men can have total control only if they are pure-hearted or full of love. If they are in line with God, their speech, deeds, feelings, attention, and focus will be in line with God's Word. Therefore

their speech will have the same power God employed to create the universe.

Do you see now why Jesus emphasizes the need not to be a hypocrite? As Jesus said in Matthew 5:8: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." In other words, being pure in heart (or full of love) turns you from an ordinary man into a supernatural man who is a genuine child of God sharing God's intimacy. This is what allows you to carry the glory of God wherever you go, in what you do or say. So it is of extreme importance to be sincere, not hypocritical. God said in Isaiah 55:8–11: "'For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,' says the LORD. 'For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways than your ways, and My thoughts than yours. For as the rain comes down and snow from heaven, And do not return there, But water the earth, And make it bring forth and bud, That it may give seed to the sower And bread to the eater, So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it." Can you see that God is saying that His thoughts and His ways are far away from those of the ordinary men and that His word is powerful and does whatever He talks about? Jesus is the prototype, the perfection of God's children; He has the same thoughts as God, the same ways, and the same Word of God. This is how He performed countless wonders and miracles on earth and moved many folks into faith by His pleasant Word.

This is the goal of any believer: to be like Jesus, our model. To achieve this, we have been given some guidance. First of all, to get the thoughts and ways of God, we have the Word of God — the Scriptures — to lead the way. Secondly, to be able to have a powerful voice, we need to clean our heart and mind through meditation on God's Word day and night — and thus increase our love for Jesus — and then we will exercise the authority Jesus has already given us in Mark 16:15–18, "And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved, but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover;'" and in Luke 10:19: "Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you." Moreover, Jesus said in John 15:7: "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you." So in the name of Jesus, a believer's word gets power and achieves whatever he says or does.

Notice that God has given to His children, those who believe in His Son Jesus Christ, a powerful weapon — a mouth — to fulfill whatever He talks about (the next chapter gives an illustration of this power), as it is written in Isaiah 41:10–16: "Fear not, for I am

with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand. Behold, all those who were incensed against you Shall be ashamed and disgraced; They shall be as nothing, And those who strive with you shall perish. You shall seek them and not find them Those who contended with you. Those who war against you Shall be as nothing, As a nonexistent thing. For I, the LORD your God, will hold your right hand, Saying to you, 'Fear not, I will help you.' 'Fear not, you worm Jacob, You men of Israel! I will help you,' says the LORD And your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. 'Behold, I will make you into a new threshing sledge with sharp teeth; You shall thresh the mountains and beat them small, And make the hills like chaff. You shall winnow them, the wind shall carry them away, And the whirlwind shall scatter them; You shall rejoice in the LORD, And glory in the Holy One of Israel."

Let me explain something about faith, which is hidden in Romans 10:17: "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." If it is true that faith comes by hearing the word of God, it is equally true that fear comes by hearing the word of the world or any word that contradicts God's Word. There is also something hidden in the word "hearing." You must realize that you can hear words uttered by others, but you can in the same way hear words uttered by yourself. If you listen to God's Word, or meditate on it and speak aloud what you are meditating on this

activity has the power to increase your faith. Why? Because faith comes by hearing the word of God. You can take advantage of the power of hearing God's Word to speak God's Word for yourself and increase your faith.

But you must be careful, for if you listen to the words of the world or speak negatively about your own life your fear will increase. Moreover, you must remember that you bring into being what you fear the most, according to Matthew 12:37: "For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned;" and Proverbs 18:21: "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit." By our words, we produce either life or death. So whether it comes from God's Word or from the words of the world is important.

As child of God, a born-again Christian can use his words in three ways:

- He can bring into being what he wants by speaking God's Word.
- He can cause God to increase his faith by speaking aloud God's Word.
- He can cause God's blessing to come upon him, as we learn in Proverbs 18:21 ("Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit.")

This means that our words have three purposes, the first is to speak over our life to frame our future. The second is to build our spirit, as it is written in Acts 20:32: "And now, brethren, I command you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up

and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified;" and 1 Corinthians 14:26: "How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification." The third purpose of our words is to provoke God's blessing over our life.

5. Ask in the Name of Jesus

Before we go any further, let us look at the definition of salvation according to the New Living Translation, Second Edition dictionary. The word "salvation" means "deliverance from the power and effects of sin, danger, or difficulty by God's intervention." This means that God's salvation in our lives covers healing, rescue from physical danger, escape from personal enemies, deliverance from political oppression, deliverance from the curse of the law, and deliverance from sin and salvation, which also comes as a gift from God.

The New Living Translation, Second Edition dictionary defines "redemption" as "the act, or instance of redeeming, that frees or delivers someone from difficulty, danger, or bondage, usually by the payment of a ransom price." Indeed, it would appear that salvation and redemption refer to the same realities, but the key characteristic of redemption in comparison with salvation, is the fact that there is the payment of a ransom. The Bible says, in Galatians 3:13: "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become curse for us (for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on the tree')." (And, as we have seen,

Deuteronomy 28:15 68 describes the thirty kinds of curse of the law.)

The Bible declares, in Joel 2:32: "And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, As the LORD has said, Among the remnant that the LORD calls." In this, God Himself states that anybody who asks for help in the name of the LORD shall be saved.

How can we ask for help in the name of the LORD if we do not know of the truth revealed in Joel 2:32? This is why God points out, in Hosea 4:6: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." It is why Jesus also says, in John 8:31 32: "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." These two passages (Joel 2:32 and Hosea 4:6), along with the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ, are the basis of our salvation.

What is the gospel? The Bible answers this question in 1 Corinthians 15:1 4: "Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." So the gospel is the Good News of Jesus Christ the

salvation He brings us through His death, burial, and resurrection and which we received by faith.

All we have to do is to know the truth, which is: "Whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved." The time of fulfillment of this promise of God came true in Jesus's days when He declared, in John 16:23 24: "And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full." Jesus is saying that it is a wrong prayer to ask anything of Him ("And in that day you will ask Me nothing") for instead we must say: "Father, in the name of Jesus, Give me this or that." And it will be done. Jesus also declares, in John 14:12 14: "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it." In this wonderful scripture, Jesus likens "believe in Him" to "ask in His name." He goes on and specifies that He will give to the believer whatever he asks in His name. Jesus repeats the phrase "ask . . . in My name" to show that asking in His name produces results without fail, and that this great law is sealed in heaven. You may wonder "Jesus is in heaven, so how will He do it?" Remember that Jesus declares, in John 14:10: "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in

Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works;" and in John 14:12: "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father." In this, Jesus states that His Father who dwells in Him gives Him what to say, and also performs the miracles and at the same time, He declares He is going to His Father in heaven. It is therefore clear that Jesus's Father "who dwells in Him" is the Holy Spirit.

Consequently, when Jesus declares, in John 14:13 14: "And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it," He is referring to the Holy Spirit. In the mind of Jesus Christ, He and the Holy Spirit are one and therefore the Holy Spirit responds to the name of Jesus. In other words, we activate the power of God the power of the Holy Spirit any time we speak aloud the name of Jesus Christ. The only requirement for us is to believe in Jesus and then Jesus gives us the authority to back up what we ask in His name, so that the power of God or the Holy Spirit brings into physical existence whatever we say or ask in His name.

Colossians 3:17 states: "And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." The Bible is saying that whatever you do or say, do it in the name of Jesus. This means that you are to do all things with

love because Jesus is the measurement of love (John 13:34), and in thanksgiving to God the Father because God is love (1 John 4:8; 1 John 4:16). Love is the power of God. Let us look again at what John 13:34, 1 John 4:8, and 1 John 4:16 declare. John 13:34 says: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another." So Jesus Christ's love is our measurement of love. 1 John 4:8 further states: "He who does not love does not know God, for God is love." And 1 John 4:16 adds: "And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God and God in him."

The name of Jesus is an instrument. The name of Jesus is the power of love that our Lord and Savior has put in our hand. You can do the impossible in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Say the following with me: "Father, I thank you because everything I put my hands on today will be successful because I do it in the name of Jesus."

It is written in Mark 9:38–41: "Now John answered Him, saying, 'Teacher, we saw someone who does not follow us casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow us.' But Jesus said, 'Do not forbid him, for no one who works a miracle in My name can soon afterwards speak evil of Me. For he who is not against us is on our side. For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in My name, because you belong to Christ, assuredly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.'"

This man who expelled demons in the name of Jesus was the first apart from Jesus's disciples to use the name of Jesus to cast out demons. He understood that Jesus's name holds the same power as Jesus or His healing power. The power to cast out demons was given to Jesus's disciples first, as it is written in Luke 9:1: "Then he called his twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases," and this other man used Jesus's name to expel demons, which Jesus approved of. In this story, Jesus explains that only one thing matters: the using of His name. Using Jesus's name means that you believe in Him. There is no need to belong to a specific church or denomination; you only have to choose the church of Jesus Christ. Now let us follow the teaching of our Lord and Savior to see the power He put in our tongue by using His name in other words, by loving Him.

It is written in Matthew 21:18 22: "Now in the morning, as He returned to the city, He was angry. And seeing a fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it but leaves, and said to it, 'Let no fruit grow on you ever again.' And immediately the fig tree withered away. Now when the disciples saw it, they marveled, saying, 'How did the fig tree wither away so soon?' So Jesus answered and said to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, "Be removed and be cast into the sea," it will be done. 'And all

things, whatever you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.'"

Jesus was teaching His disciples what the kingdom of God is all about. In the spiritual realm, the realm of faith, there are two characters God and a human being and each of them has a role to play. God is faithful, dependable, and trustworthy so that what He promises, He has already done. All His promises already exist in the realm of the spirit. It is up to us to tap into His promises by receiving them by faith without any doubt. All He wants any human being to do is to ask or speak without any evil thought (not even fear, doubt, or the like) in his mind and heart and with total confidence in Jesus and love for Him. Jesus said, "And all things, whatever you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive." Jesus also said, in John 14:13 14, "And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it." What He is saying is that He would ensure that what is asked for is done. He wants you to know that there is enough power to back your demand with His authority.

But between our speaking and receiving what we ask for, there is the step of believing, as it is written in Matthew 21:22: "And all things, whatever you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive." Moreover Jesus declares in Mark 16:15 18 this wonderful scripture: "And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be

condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.'" Through this declaration, Jesus Christ has given to any believer, any born-again Christian, or any other Christian the power to use His name. The genuine believer in Jesus has no doubt in his mind, for he has made his heart clean by the Word of God (as found in John 15:3: "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you") through everyday meditation as God revealed in Joshua 1:8, and also by his increasing love for Jesus.

Jesus reveals something wonderful in His teaching: faith without hope is not faith. He said in Matthew 21:22: "And all things, whatever you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive." According to the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* "hope" is a belief that something you want will happen. So the phrase "believing, you will receive" in Matthew 21:22 really means "hoping, you will receive." No wonder Hebrews 11:1 says: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." In other words, to be able to move mountains you must picture with your spiritual eyes (or hope for) what you want, in order to enable your desire to come to pass. Indeed, if you picture with your mind what you hope for, you will get an image of your hope and your hope will be turned into faith. Therefore, whatever you ask

of God comes true or is accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit.

For a better understanding of what we have just said, let us read the report of Mark 11:20–24 about the event regarding the fig tree: "Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. And Peter, remembering, said to Him, 'Rabbi, look! The fig tree which you cursed has withered away.' So Jesus answered and said to them, 'Have faith in God. For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, "Be removed and be cast into the sea," and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will come to pass, he will have whatever he says. Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.'" Thus, Mark 11:23 teaches us how to use the name of Jesus in faith (the God-kind of faith), and Mark 11:24 teaches us how to use the name of Jesus in prayer.

Now let us compare the definition of hope given by the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* ("hope is a belief that something you want will happen") to Mark 11:23 ("believes that those things he says will be done"). Do you see the difference? Jesus uses the word "says" and the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* uses the word "want," but both refer to the same reality—the desire of your heart. What you picture with your mind and believe in your heart is what you say, and what you say is what you want. So the phrase in Mark "believes that those things he says

will be done" means "hopes." Therefore, Mark 11:23 becomes "For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but *hopes*, he will have whatever he says." When this passage is looked at in this way, Jesus is saying that if you hope without doubt in your mind, you will have whatever you say. This is a revelation of fundamental knowledge: The power of your tongue is strongly related to your state of mind. Unless you picture with your mind what you hope for without any doubt in your mind, you cannot bring into existence what you say.

How can you get this hope without doubt in your mind? The peace of God is the grace of God that gives you the condition which causes you to hope without doubt in your mind, as it is written in Philippians 4:6–7: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your request be made known to God, and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." So what should you do, since you now know the truth? Always, from now on, give thanks and glory to God, no matter the situation or circumstances or condition you are in. Say what God says you are and say what God says you have, and your professions will come to pass. Notice that you must make your request be known to God by saying what God says you are and what God says you have. This mirrors what is said in Mark 11:23–24.

But notice that Jesus begins speaking by saying, in Mark 11:22: "Have faith in God;" before going on in Mark 11:23. This means that there is a strong correlation between faith in God and hope. It also means that real faith cannot cohabitate with doubt in your mind. Therefore having faith in God or in Jesus means you have to see in your mind what Jesus talks about, what His Word says, what you want, or what you say. You manifest your unfailing hope (your faith) by having no doubt in your mind and no unbelief in your heart, since it is impossible to picture with your spiritual eyes what you do not hope for. If you struggle with your faith, your mind will waver between your own thoughts and God's thoughts about any situation you find yourself in. Going back to Mark 11:23, you see that doubt can hinder your ability to see in the physical realm what you say. So if you do not immediately see in the physical realm what you declare, do not give up. Instead, continue to speak until any doubt is cast out of your mind and then you will see in the physical realm what you used to say. In other words, if you keep on addressing your situation or circumstances in the name of Jesus so that you can turn your thoughts into God's thoughts, what you say in the name of Jesus will come to pass.

Anything in this world has the intelligence to hear the name of Jesus and bow its knees. At the name of Jesus, sickness cannot stand; at the name of Jesus, the devil cannot stand; at the name of Jesus, poverty cannot stand, and so on. You can use the name of Jesus to

change any circumstances you do not like and cause them to favor you, as it is written in Philippians 2:10: "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth." Can you see that everything in this world recognizes the power in the name of Jesus? What you have to do is to have faith, without being doubtful about the name of Jesus. When you call the name of Jesus in faith, God releases His power, the anointing of the Holy Spirit that dwells in you.

The principle that causes God's power to show up in our life is revealed in Lamentations 3:17 26: "You have moved my soul far from peace; I have forgotten prosperity. And I said, 'My strength and my hope Have perished from the LORD.' Remember my affliction and roaming, The wormwood and the gall. My soul still remembers And sinks within me. This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope. Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is your faithfulness. 'The LORD is my portion,' says my soul, 'Therefore I hope in Him!' The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, To the soul who seeks him. It is good that one should hope and wait quietly For the salvation of the LORD." (Remember that man's spirit is composed of our heart and our soul, and that our soul is made of our will and our mind.)

Now pay careful attention to these verses. In these verses and throughout the Bible the pronoun "I" refers to the spirit of man (not including the times

when Jesus says "I" or when God says "I"). These scriptures begin by saying that man's soul (will and mind) has lost its peace. Remember that Scripture says, in Isaiah 26:3: "You will keep in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you." This is the principle of peace: When our mind is focused on God's Word (or our thoughts are) and remains fixed on Jesus, our mind and our heart become one; they are united, and therefore our spirit is at rest, in perfect peace. This passage from Lamentations also declares that the man's spirit has forgotten prosperity and his strength and hope have perished. The soul of the man remembered his afflictions and roaming and sank within him. Then, the spirit of the man recalled his LORD's mercies and his spirit got hope. Our will needs strength to function well otherwise it becomes weak and cannot perform its tasks and control man's thoughts and actions in order to achieve what he wants to do. Our spirit needs hope to function well.

Now let us see what these verses are teaching us. Naturally our soul, especially our mind, likes to focus on our affliction. That is why the scripture says: "Remember my affliction and roaming, The wormwood and the gall. My soul still remembers And sinks within me." So unless our will gets the strength to control our mind, there is no way to change the focus of our mind. Bad pictures in our mind send negative emotions into our heart and cause our spirit to feel hopeless so that our will becomes weak. When our spirit remembers God's mercies, our spirit sends

the picture of God's mercies to our mind. When our spirit sees the good pictures of God's mercies, it gets hope, which strengthens its will so that it can take control of man's thoughts, mouth, and actions to perform good things. Do you see now what our daily task is? All we have to do every day is to focus on God's Word, especially on His mercies. In other words, we must focus on Jesus, who brings us at every moment of our life God's grace and truth as it is written in John 1:17: "For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ."

Is it possible to be a hypocrite and have a powerful tongue? The answer is, emphatically, no! Let us follow our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in Matthew 23:25 28 to grasp this truth: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness." Do you see now that being hypocritical is to say words which are not in your heart to speak words you do not believe?

On the other hand, Jesus declares in Mark 11:22 that anything a believer says will come to pass. This means that being a hypocrite makes your words powerless

and unable to produce a result. What matters, then, is threefold: What you believe about what Jesus said; what you say; and the awareness of the authority of the one (Jesus) from whom you derive your authority. This means that our heart is one of the main or key factors, and the content of our heart is essential.

Remember that Jesus said this wonderful declaration in Matthew 23:26: "Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also." This means that that there is no way to become righteous by doing your own effort (outward cleansing), there is only one way out to become righteous: Cleanse your heart, and this cleansing will cause your mouth to speak in agreement with God's Word. This is what Jesus is saying in Matthew 23:26. Jesus stressed in Luke 18:9 14 that we cannot declare that we are righteous because we do what God tells us to do. Only what we say in agreement with God's Word makes us righteous and a true believer.

Jesus has already given us how to cleanse our heart. We find it in John 15:3, which states, "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you." (In Chapter Seven, we will learn that our love for Jesus causes God to cleanse our heart so that we can love Jesus more.) So God's Word and our love for Jesus have power, and the ability to cleanse us from all our impurities. No wonder Jesus says, in Matthew 12:37: "For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned." Only what we say in agreement with God's Word makes us righteous

and a true believer, as Paul the Apostle said in Ephesians 5:3–4: "But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving thanks." We have to speak with God in the same saintly manner, with no foolishness, rudeness, or joking.

How can we speak in agreement with God's Word if we haven't heard God's Word? Paul the Apostle answered this question in Romans 10:13–17: "For 'whoever calls upon the name of the LORD shall be saved.' How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: 'How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!' But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, 'Lord, who has believed our report?' So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Can you see that this is the process in the kingdom of God? First of all, hear God's Word. Secondly, believe in Jesus as our Lord and Savior (this is the stage of faith). Thirdly, call upon Jesus's name to be saved, or to receive salvation or all the blessings of God. After receiving salvation, we become children of God—or gods—as Jesus states in John 10:34–38: "Jesus answered them, 'Is it not written in your law, "I said, 'You are gods'"? If He called

them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), do you say of Him whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'? If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him.'"

Before dealing with our new nature as gods, notice that Jesus reveals in John 10:38 that there is a second way to receive faith: by believing the works of Jesus or believing in the evidence of the miraculous works Jesus has done. But though we become gods by listening to the gospel and endorsing it, Psalm 82:5 7 ("They do not know, nor do they understand; They walk about in darkness; All the foundations of the earth are unstable. I said, 'You are gods, and all of you are children of the Most High. But you shall die like men, And fall like one of the princes") warns us of the importance of knowledge, the key factor of which is to call upon the name of Jesus, and to live by the name of Jesus our Lord and Savior, otherwise we will die like natural men who have refused to endorse the gospel of Jesus Christ. As born-again Christians we are gods sons or daughters of God but we've got to understand the Word of God, otherwise we will walk in darkness without the light of Jesus Christ and therefore die like unbelievers.

Finally, Acts 20:32 gives us God's way to take possession of our inheritance as God's children: "And now,

brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among those who are sanctified." Can you see that it is not sufficient to be sanctified and set apart? You need to build up your spiritual being by studying and meditating on God's Word. And God's Word will give you your inheritance as gods as God's children.

Now let us see why the name of Jesus is so powerful. The Bible says in Philippians 2:5 10: "Let this mind be in you who was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Can you see that the name of Jesus is far above any other name, such as death, Satan, demons, sickness, or the name of any circumstances or situation you find yourself in? So use the name of Jesus to solve any problem you face in life because anything or any name bows its knee before it. Jesus's name is your weapon, so take your inheritance as a son of

God and go everywhere with the name of Jesus. Live by the name of Jesus because His name is the most powerful weapon of Heaven and earth.

This wonderful knowledge brings you God's grace and peace, as it is written in 2 Peter 1:2 3: "Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and virtue." It is our knowledge of Jesus Christ or our awareness of who Jesus really is and His greatest authority in heaven and on earth that causes God to multiply our grace and peace. Only those who have intimate knowledge of Jesus Christ are able to use and live by the name of Jesus Christ. No wonder Jesus declares, in John 17:3: "And this is eternal life that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent." Our knowledge of Jesus produces in us eternal life, so it is not surprising that it is written in 2 Peter 1:2 that our knowledge of Jesus causes God to grant us grace and peace. This is why our knowledge of God and Jesus is so important to us.

Our knowledge of God and Jesus is the source of our rivers of living water and our source of the blessings which come from God. In other words, we open the source of our blessings when we begin to know God and Jesus, therefore the more we know Jesus the more grace, peace, and eternal life we receive from God. We are not supposed to be subject to the elements of this world, since we are not of this world as Jesus said in

John 15:19: "If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you." So Jesus has set apart Christians and believers so that they are no longer subject to the elements of this world. This is also found in Galatians 4:3: "Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world." The knowledge of Jesus and the use of his name redeem us from the bondage, circumstances, and elements of this world, and give us access to the blessings of God.

Do you see, now, the extreme importance of the knowledge of truth? Jesus declares, in John 8:31 32: "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." The truth is to use Jesus's name to live by and tap into your inheritance, which is to receive the grace and truth of God as a son of God. Jesus is the Word of God and the Word is true and says to use that name, so do it.

Brothers and sisters, you should not forget your weapon, but instead use the name of your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to overcome anything that comes against you.

Believers, we are told, are supposed to live above this world, but what does it mean to live above this world? First of all, the Scriptures say in Ephesians 5:30: "For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones." This means that any believer is a member of the body of Jesus Christ. Secondly,

the Bible states in Romans 6:1 11: "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

When Jesus died, we died with Him; when He was buried, we were buried with Him; and when He was raised up from the dead, we were also raised up together with Him and He made us sit together in the heavenly places in Him. As Ephesians 1:15 2:7 declares:

> Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not

cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power towards us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also that which is to come.

And he put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

> But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

Did you notice while reading that that you are member of Jesus's body and God has put all things under the feet of Jesus? Since you are in Christ as a member of His body, all things are under your feet, also. Do you see why Jesus gives you power to live by His name? You have the life of Jesus that flows in you; you have eternal life — the life which has no beginning and no end. You may be aware of your new status and the powerful weapon Jesus has given to you to function in this newness of life, but who is Jesus?

The Bible declares, in John 1:1–18:

> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.
>
> There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This man came for a witness, to bear

> witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light which gives light to every man who comes into the world.
>
> He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
>
> And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.
>
> John bore witness of Him and cried out saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.'"
>
> And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him."

Jesus also declares in John 3:11–16: "Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness. If

I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

Jesus is the Son of God, who was in the beginning with God, and who came to earth as a human being since He was born through the virgin by the workings of the Holy Spirit, as it is written in Matthew 1:18–21: "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins."

His was not a natural birth, for every human being ought to be born through the seed of man. But Jesus was born without the seed of man, so it means the

seed that gave birth to Jesus was carried by the Holy Spirit from Heaven to the womb of Mary the mother of Jesus, as it is written in Luke 1:26 38:

"Now in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And having come in, the angel said to her, 'Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!'

"But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. Then the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. He will be great, and will be call the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom there will be no end.'

"Then Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I do not know a man?'

"And the angel answered and said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that holy one who is to be born will be called the Son of God. Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible.'

"Then Mary said, 'Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word.' And the angel departed from her."

Remember that God's Word is a seed (as we learned from Luke 8:11). In the case of Mary, the seed was the Word of God (brought by the angel Gabriel): "And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS." When the angel gave this seed to Mary, she did not know how the process would take place, so her mind was not ready and could not picture the promise of God brought by the angel. So she asked how the conception of Jesus would take place, since she was a virgin. The angel answered and Mary understood — in other words, she pictured with her mind the promise of God. We know that God's Word has creative power, so God's Word had already given birth to Jesus in the realm of the spirit. By saying "Let it be to me according to your word," Mary, driven by her spirit of faith, spoke and accepted what the angel said to her, and at once Jesus was conceived in her womb. So this seed — God's Word — which was spiritual, became flesh in the womb of Mary.

Remember that the law of God in Ezekiel 18:20 declares: "The soul who sins shall die. . . ." The Bible also specifies in Romans 3:23: ". . . for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God . . . ." Notice that "glory" means "grace and truth given to us by God through Jesus Christ," as it is written in John 1:14: "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His

glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth;" and in John 1:17: "For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." This means that there was a time when nobody could have been saved since we are all sinners and doomed to die. But God so loved the world that He sent His Son to earth to suffer, be crucified, to die, and to be buried in our place as the perfect substitution of any sinner. He rose up from the dead on the third day to give us His life and finally to sit in heavenly places with us in Him to reign with His authority on earth. This is why Jesus says, in John 14:6: "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." This is the definition of salvation. Salvation is the way, the truth, and the life of Christ. Jesus shows us the way the means for our salvation and gives us His Word or His Truth or the scriptures and His name to live by.

At the end of His mission on earth, Jesus ascended to heaven, where He had been before, as it is written in Acts 1:9: "Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight." This means that Jesus's birth, sufferings, death, resurrection and ascension, and His teachings in the gospels are the evidence that He really is the Son of God. Jesus was proven to be the Son of God through the power of His resurrection from the dead, as it is written in Romans 1:3 4: ". . . concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, and

declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Therefore, this deep conviction about the gospel of Jesus Christ is our foundation to use His name to live by. The gospel declares that Jesus suffered and died for us to forgive our sins, and was resurrected from the dead to bring us eternal life. If you believe in that, it means you believe and are convinced that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, then, you know the power which is behind His name.

How can we live by the name of Jesus? Remember that the Bible says in Joel 2:32 that whoever calls upon the name of the LORD shall be saved — in other words, anyone who asks for help in the name of Jesus will receive the answer to his prayer, or whoever orders anything in the name of Jesus will see what he commanded in the physical realm. This is the way to experience your salvation in every area of the new, divine life of Jesus you have now.

Here are two illustrations of how to live by Jesus's name.

- If you receive bad news, then you should respond by saying: "I refuse to fear in the name of Jesus Christ."
- If you are addicted to alcohol, to get out of this bondage, you declare: "I refuse to be addicted to alcohol in the name of Jesus."

You may wonder why this deliverance works. Remember the Word of God in Philippians 2:9–11, which

says: "Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father;" and in Acts 4:12: "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." So any other name (such as addiction to alcohol, fear, death, adversity, affliction, bad circumstances, anger, bribery, evil thoughts, laziness, hopelessness, sickness, bad reports or news, worry, or any other cares of worldly life) is compelled to bend its knees when it hears the name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Jesus talked to a tree and it obeyed Him. He commanded bread to multiply and it did. He spoke to the wind and the waves and they were calm. He spoke to blind eyes and they opened up; deaf ears and they were unstopped; and even the lame got up and walked. Lepers were cleansed. He spoke to the dead and the dead responded to Him. If Jesus has this power, then we have the power when we speak in His name.

The Bible says in Hebrews 13:8 that Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever. So what Jesus did when He was on earth, His name continues to perform until the end of time. At the sound of that name, everything bows, demons tremble, hell quakes. God has declared that at that name every knee in creation should bend. He has given you all (enough) authority that nothing

shall by any means hurt you, as we have learned from Luke 10:19. It doesn't matter how the devil tries to hurt you or through what means he tries to rob you whether it be with negative thoughts or contradictory sensory evidence. Whatever happens to you, Jesus says nothing shall hurt you. The name of Jesus has power over every disease, no matter what name it is called. Cancer is a name; fever is a name; arthritis is a name; high blood pressure is a name. But the name of Jesus has power over every sickness and every disease. It is a name above all names. You say, "I rebuke this pain in the name of Jesus. I command it to die from the root," and it dies because you say so, even though you may not see any change immediately. Remember that when Jesus Christ spoke to the fig tree, it died immediately (Matthew 21:19). When you address a bad situation, it begins to die from its root.

The Bible also says that we are seated with Christ, who is placed in heavenly places by His Father who, as it is written in Ephesians 1:20–23: ". . . seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all." It follows, then, that the Bible says in Ephesians 2:6 that God "raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus." When the name of Jesus is

used by a believer a Christian in faith, the power of God is released to bring about whatever he commanded or desired because the name of Jesus is recognized in all three realms, in heaven, on earth, and under the earth.

Let us look at some more examples of how the believer lives by the name of Jesus.

- If you find yourself in a situation where you are unable to prevent yourself from being unfaithful to your spouse, you should respond to this situation by saying: "I refuse to deceive my spouse from now on in the name of Jesus Christ."
- Suppose you are facing adversity and you think it is impossible to overcome it, then you should start saying: "I refuse to give up in the name of Jesus." (This declaration is also in line with the statement of Jesus reported in John 16:33: "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.")
- If you are afflicted, you can say: "I refuse to be afflicted in the name of Jesus. I am of merry heart in the name of Jesus." When your affliction hears your declaration, it will flee from you and your joy will come back.
- If someone abuses you or insults you, or if you are filled with anger because of the way someone has treated you, you should reply by saying: "I refuse to be angry in the name of Jesus." That's all you

need to do so that anger will not be expressed and you will be able to calm down.

- You can also find yourself in a situation that causes you to be proud of what you possess, or what you have done. You should react to this situation by saying: "I refuse to be proud in the name of Jesus Christ. Only Jesus and God and the Holy Spirit deserve recognition for what I possess or have done." This statement will bring you great peace, as the New Living Translation, Second Edition Bible says in 2 Peter 1:2: "May God give you more and more grace and peace as you grow in your knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord;" and Jeremiah 9:23 24 (in the same translation): "That is What the LORD says: 'Don't let the wise boast in their wisdom, or the powerful boast in their power, or the rich boast in their riches. But those who wish to boast should boast in this alone: that they truly know Me and understand that I am the LORD who demonstrates unfailing love and who brings justice and righteousness to the earth, and that I delight in these things. I, the LORD, have spoken!'" In the New King James Version, this same passage is: "Thus says the LORD: 'Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, Let not the mighty man glory in his might, Nor let not the rich man glory in his riches. But let him who glories glory in this, That he understands and knows, That I am the LORD, exercising loving-

kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight,' says the LORD."

- You may not have forgiven someone who has hurt you in the past, but Jesus Christ is the way out of this lack of forgiveness. You simply have to say: "I refuse to continue to be bitter. I forgive my brother Mr. So and So in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth."

Let us deal with more cases:

- If someone comes to your office and gives you a bribe to cause you to pervert the ways of justice, you can reject this proposal by saying: "I refuse to take a bribe to pervert justice in the name of Jesus Christ." (This confession is in line with the Word of God reported in Deuteronomy 16:19: "You shall not pervert justice; you shall not show partiality, nor take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and twists the words of the righteous.")
- Suppose you see a brother in need, then you must say: "I will do my best to help my brother in the name of Jesus." This declaration will overcome all resistance in your will that tries to prevent you from putting into practice your compassion for your brother in need. This behavior is faithful to the teachings of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who commands us to love one another as He loves us according to what is written in John 13:34: "A new commandment I give to you, that

you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another." In contrast, God said in the Old Testament, in Leviticus 19:18: "You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the LORD." Do you see the difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament? Jesus tells us now to love one another not by *our* measurement of love but by His measurement of love.

- Imagine an evil desire or thought comes into your heart or mind. You should answer this evil thought or desire by saying: "I refuse this evil desire or thought in the mighty name of Jesus Christ." And the evil thought or desire will run away from you, and then you can act upon your confession by using God's Word to continue to live in the way Jesus wants.
- It may happen that you put more trust in what you see or hear or the circumstances you find yourself in than in the world promised by God. You should change this attitude by saying: "I refuse to be moved by what I see or what I hear or the situation I find myself in, in the name of Jesus Christ. I decide to be moved only by God's Word in the name of Jesus."
- When you wake up in the morning and you feel too lazy to go out or to work, you can respond to this laziness by saying: "I refuse to be lazy in the name of Jesus Christ." God will then answer your

prayer by giving you the strength to get out of bed and go to work.

- Maybe someone criticizes you, and your first reaction is to refuse his advice or counsel. You must declare: "I refuse to reject this advice in the name of Jesus." Then you must act upon your confession by searching in God's Word to find out whether the counsel you have been given is in line with God's Word. If it is, then you must put this advice into practice.
- If you find yourself in a hopeless situation, you simply need to respond by saying: "I refuse to give up in the name of Jesus Christ." Then, once you go to the Word of God, and set your mind on God's Word, God's Word will bring you hope.

Let us look at three final cases:

- You find yourself in a situation that compels you to lie in order to give others an image of yourself that is far away from your real personality. You should react to this evil desire by saying: "I refuse to lie, or to be a hypocrite in the name of Jesus Christ."
- You like to listen to breaking news on TV, instead of listening to God's Word. To overcome this tendency to focus on worldly news more than God's Word, you must simply declare: "I refuse to pay more attention to breaking news of the world than God's Word in the name of Jesus Christ. From now on, I will give more attention to God's

Word than anything else in the name of Jesus."

- Finally, if you are more concerned about this life than worshiping God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, you must respond to this worry by declaring: "I refuse to worry about the needs of this life in the name of Jesus Christ." (This declaration is in line with the statement of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, which is reported in Matthew 6:31 34: "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."

Do you see something amazing in all of these illustrations?

Jesus and God's Word are one. So using the name of Jesus Christ and receiving God's Word produce the same results in the believer's life as the Scriptures say in Psalm 107:17 20: "Fools, because of their transgression, And because of their iniquities, were afflicted. Their soul abhorred all manner of food, And they drew near to the gates of death. Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, And He saved them out of their distresses. He sent His word and healed them, And delivered them from their destructions." Can you

see that God saved them by sending His Word when they cried out to Him? Likewise, using of the name of Jesus Christ and receiving God's Word gives birth to Salvation. Isn't it wonderful? This is why the Bible declares Jesus is the Word of God in John 1:1 4: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, And the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men."

God's Word is the key to the visible things that you see in the world, because the unseen realities give birth to visible realities. This means that focusing on God's Word will impart visions in you, and then your visions will come to pass in your actual life, producing whatever fruit God's Word encapsulates. A man and his name are one; you cannot separate a man from his name. So God's Word, Jesus, and the name "Jesus" are one. This is what the Bible means when it declares in Hebrews 13:8: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever." Jesus is God so He is. That means He is the same yesterday, today and forever. His name continues to perform what He did yesterday in the Bible's days.

What Jesus did in His days continues to be done today in His name through the pastors He sends to us, like Pastor Chris Oyakhilome, PhD and Rev. Kenneth E. Hagin (who went to our Father's House on September 19, 2003) and those Jesus will send to our children in the future.

Coming back to our subject of living in the name of Jesus, we can say that living by the name of Jesus and receiving God's Word are the same as being obedient to God's Voice. To get a better understanding of what I just said, let us balance Deuteronomy 28:45 against Deuteronomy 28:1–2. Deuteronomy 28:45 says: "Moreover all these curses shall come upon you and pursue and overtake you, until you are destroyed, because you did not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you." And Deuteronomy 28:1–2 states: "Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the LORD your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the LORD your God."

If we compare "all these curses shall come upon you and pursue and overtake you" with "all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you" we realize that these two verses talk about the same realities from two opposite perspectives, but the word "pursue" is missing in the verse that deals with blessings. If we put the missing word in Deuteronomy 28:2, it becomes: "All these blessings shall come upon you *and pursue* and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the LORD your God." This means that our obedience to God's Word will cause the power of the Holy Spirit to come along with His blessings, which will pursue and

overtake us. Therefore the power of the Holy Spirit is a marker that draws God's blessings to people who put God's Word into practice. On the other hand, all of the curses written in the Bible pursue and overtake those who refuse to obey God's Word. In short, using the name of Jesus Christ to live by God's Word draws the power of the Holy Spirit to the believer, and this gives birth to anything they ask God for.

Now let us remind ourselves what King David said about the anointing oil of God and His blessings in Psalm 23:5–6: "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever." Can you see that the anointing of God—the power of the Holy Spirit—causes all good things to come to King David? It is no wonder, then, that the Bible says in Zechariah 12:10: "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they have pierced; they will mourn for Him as one mourns for His only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn."

The Holy Spirit is the spirit of grace; in other words, the Holy Spirit is the conveyor of God's grace or blessings. This same reality was told to us by Jesus in John 14:15–17: "If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever, even the

Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you." The helper in this passage is the Holy Spirit, whom God the Father gives the believer, together with the power of God that our obedience to God's Word or our love for Jesus produces in our life. Remember that Acts 1:8 says: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." Both the Holy Spirit of God and the power of God bring forth blessings that come upon the believer, pursue, and overtake him.

One final thing to say about the subject of this chapter is that we can receive the greatest gift of God by asking it in the name of Jesus. This awesome, powerful, and wonderful gift is the gift of the Holy Spirit, which we can receive if we ask to receive Him in the name of Jesus as our Lord Jesus declares in Luke 11:9 13: "And I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"

6. Is there any Difference between the Function of God's Word and the Holy Spirit?

Let us see what the Scriptures say about the role that God's Word and the Holy Spirit play on our own spirit or inner man.

They teach us:

- Holy Spirit: "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things I said to you." (John 14:26)
- God's Word: "Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up." (Deuteronomy 11:18 19)

They give us counsel:

- Holy Spirit: "And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Comforter (Counselor, Helper, Intercessor, Advocate, Strengthener, and

Standby), that He may remain with you forever." (Amplified Bible, John 14:16)

- God's Word: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." (2 Timothy 3:16)

They convict us of sin:

- Holy Spirit: "Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." (John 16:7–8)
- God's Word: "For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the hearts. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes to Him to whom we must give account." (Hebrews 4:12–13)

They have the power to heal:

- Holy Spirit: "But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you." (Romans 8:11)
- God's Word: "My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them

depart from your eyes; Keep them in the midst of your heart; For they are life to those who find them, And health to all their flesh." (Proverbs 4:20 22)

They have the power to give new birth:

- Holy Spirit: "Jesus answered and said to him, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.'
- "Nicodemus said to Him, 'How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?'
- "Jesus answered, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel, that I said to you, "You must be born again." The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.'" (John 3:3 8)
- God's Word: "Having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever." (1 Peter 1:23)

They sanctify us:

- Holy Spirit: "But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you

for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Thessalonians 2:13–14)

- God's Word: "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth." (John 17:17)

They dwell in our heart:

- Holy Spirit: "Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a deposit." (2 Corinthians 1:21–22)
- God's Word: "Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You." (Psalm 119:11)

They bring us peace and joy:

- Holy Spirit: "For the kingdom of God is not food and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." (Romans 14:17)
- God's Word: "Great peace have those who love Your law, And nothing causes them to stumble." (Psalm 119:165)
- "I rejoice at Your word As one who finds great treasure." (Psalm 119:162)
- "Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord." (2 Peter 1:2)
- "My son, if you receive my words, And treasure my commands within you, So that you incline your ear to wisdom, And apply your heart to

understanding; Yes, if you cry out for discernment, And lift up your voice for understanding, If you seek her as silver, And search for her as for hidden treasures; Then you will understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God." (Proverbs 2:1 5)

- "Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy meditate on these things. These things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you." (Philippians 4:8 9)

They bear witness that we are sons of God:

- Holy Spirit: "The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together." (Romans 8:16 17)
- God's Word: "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life." (John 6:63)
- "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God." (Romans 8:14)
- "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3:26)
- "So then faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God." (Romans 10:17)

They bring wisdom and strength:

- Holy Spirit: "The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD." (Isaiah 11:2)
- ". . . that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, . . ." (Ephesians 3:16)
- God's Word: ". . . and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." (2 Timothy 3:15)
- "And he said, 'O man greatly beloved, fear not! Peace be to you; be strong, yes, be strong!'
- "So when he spoke to me I was strengthened, and said, 'Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me.'" (Daniel 10:19)

They cause God's grace to come upon the believers:

- Holy Spirit: "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they have pierced; they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a first born." (Zechariah 12:10)
- God's Word: "Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, . . ." (2 Peter 1:2)

- "But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does." (James 1:25)

They are the power of God:

- Holy Spirit: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." (Acts 1:8)
- God's Word: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek." (Romans 1:16)

From this list of functions and the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, we can tell that they are the same. So can we deduce from these observations that the Holy Spirit and God's Word refer to the same reality? The Bible answers this question in 1 John 5:6–8, saying: "This is He who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ; not only by water, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three who bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree as one." "Water" in each of these descriptions stands for God's Word, while "blood" refers to the blood of Jesus Christ. We

learn that our heart turns into heaven (God's home) when we become a genuine believer or born-again Christian, as it is written in John 14:23: ". . . If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him." So God the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit bear witness in our spiritual heart when it is focused on the spiritual realm.

Jesus also declares, in John 14:26, what makes the difference between the Holy Spirit and God's Word with respect to their functions in our spirit: "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you." In this passage, the phrase "all things that I said to you" refers to God's Word as spoken by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

We all know that we get to store God's Word in our heart. We also know that God sends the Holy Spirit to come and dwell in our heart. And now Jesus is telling us that the main role of the Holy Spirit is to teach us all things and to remind us of God's Word. What does this mean to us? First of all, if a born-again Christian fails to treasure God's Word in his heart, the Holy Spirit will remind him but he will be unable to understand what the Holy Spirit is telling him. If a born-again Christian succeeds in storing God's Word in his heart, then he will be able to understand the message the Holy Spirit brings to him. But, if God's Word and the Holy Spirit are not at the same level in

his heart, communication between them becomes impossible. Therefore, unless you treasure God's Word in your heart, there is no way for you to understand what the Holy Spirit brings to you. Both God's Word and the Holy Spirit must speak the same language in your heart to enable you to understand the guidance and teaching of the Holy Spirit and lead you to take appropriate actions.

The same thing happens in our natural communication with others. When we want to communicate with someone who speaks another language, we are obliged to learn his language or look for an interpreter. Likewise, if we want to communicate with God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit, we have to learn their language the Word of God. Unless we master God's Word, there is no way to have good communication with the Holy Spirit, or to hear and understand the Holy Spirit when He talks to us, guides us, or teaches us. It is a matter of the utmost importance to any believer or born-again Christian to set God's Word as a top priority in the daily actions of his life.

Our daily salvation depends on our mastery of God's Language God's Word. Why? Because God has sent the name of Jesus and the Holy Spirit into the hearts of believers to help, guide, and teach them. God's Word, treasured in our hearts, gives our spirit the words, thoughts, and feelings of Jesus so that we can hear and clearly understand the Holy Spirit when He speaks to us. Once this happens, you will be able to "say what God says and it will be done for you"

through the inspiration given by the Holy Spirit. This is where the power of God in us lies, as it is written in Matthew 21:21–22: "So Jesus answered and said to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, "Be removed and be cast into the sea," it will be done. And all things, whatever you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.'"

The requirement for having powerful words is to have no doubt. Because the Holy Spirit testifies in our heart, when God's Word is implanted in our heart it casts out any doubt, unbelief, and fear from our mind and heart so that nothing in this world can stand before the words we speak in agreement with God's Word. You may wonder, "How can I cast away doubt, unbelief, and fear from my mind?" The answer is found in 2 Timothy 1:6–7: "Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind." Do you see that the Holy Spirit brings us divine power, the love of Christ, and a sound mind, and therefore casts away doubt, unbelief, and fear? We know this is true because doubt is a principal factor of fear, and perfect love casts out fear, as it is written in 1 John 4:18: "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love."

Notice, however, that it is not enough to possess the Holy Spirit and the power of God. The power of the

spirit of God must also be stirred up. How? First, by speaking in tongues, as it is written in 1 Corinthians 14:2 4 (New Living Translation Bible, Second Edition): "For if you have the ability to speak in tongues, you will be talking only to God, since people won't be able to understand you. You will be speaking by the power of the Spirit, but it will all be mysterious. But one who prophesies strengthens others, encourages them, and comforts them. A person who speaks in tongues is strengthened personally, but one who speaks a word of prophecy strengthens the entire church." Secondly, the spirit of God is stirred up by speaking the same things as God, or through our meditation on God's Word, as it is written in John 6:63: "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life." Jesus is saying here that when we speak God's Word we see the manifestation of the life of God and also see the spirit of God in action.

However, there are times when we have to wait to see the results of God's Word just as we must have faith that a plant's seed will eventually grow and produce fruit. This was the case of Abraham, when God said to him in Genesis 17:5: "No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations." Have you noticed something mind-blowing? First of all, God's Word is in past tense. And, second, God frames the physical world with His Word, which is spirit according to Genesis 1:3: "Then God said, 'Let there be light';

and there was light;" and in Hebrews 11:3: "By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible." This means that when God said to Abraham "I have made you a father of many nations," in the spiritual realm Abraham really became a father of many nations.

Today, we are witnesses of this truth since the Bible declares that all the believers in Christ are seeds of Abraham in Romans 4:16 17: "Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all (as it is written, 'I have made you a father of many nations') in the presence of Him whom he believed, even God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did." Can you see that God calls into being by His Word things which do not exist? So at the time that God said "I have made you a father of many nations," Abraham became, in the spirit realm, father of many nations even though the people of his time did not physically see this reality. But, over time, God's Word came true. This is what faith is all about.

The same thing happens to a seed of any plant. When you sow the seed of an orange in the soil of your garden, your eyes can no longer see the seed you have planted. Does this mean that the seed does not exist because your eyes cannot see it? No, of course not! Likewise, the Word of God which is merely a

seed when it is spoken by God creates in the spiritual realm the reality which carries God's Word, even though it remains invisible to our eyes.

At this point, I am glad to tell you that every reality conveyed by the spoken Word of God and our Lord Jesus is actually real in the spiritual realm, simply waiting for a believer or born-again Christian to use it. This reality that exists in the realm of the spirit needs to be put into good ground a receptive heart to start to grow. This also requires our love for Jesus to act in the same way that rain operates for physical seeds. Our love for Jesus causes us to accept God's Word; we therefore put the seed of God's Word into our heart. Then our spirit of faith acts like the rain and causes God's Word to grow, become mature, and bear fruit, as it is written in Isaiah 55:10 11: "'For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, And do not return there, But water the earth, And make it bring forth and bud, That it may give seed to the sower And bread to the eater, So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.'" This means that God's Word is the rain that accomplishes whatever it talks about. No matter the mouth which utters it either God Himself, Jesus, or a born-again Christian through profession in agreement with God's Word this is our rain to cause whatever we want to bring into the physical realm to come to pass. Therefore, like God, we send our words out over our

life by speaking God's Word. And, finally, this reality starts to be seen in the physical realm and becomes real to our human senses.

The grace of God in us or the effectiveness of the power brought by the Holy Spirit in us increases as our love for Jesus increases. Potentially, the power of God is infinite, but the flow of energy in us to fulfill God's Word depends on the level of our love for Christ. Remember that every human being is made of two parts: his spirit and his body. His spirit comes from God, so only spiritual food can satisfy it. Therefore, our spirit is built up by God's Word. As believers, first we have to believe that every one of God's Words found in the Scriptures is a reality which has already come true in the realm of the spirit. Secondly, we have to till the ground of our heart and turn our mind towards God in order to receive and accept every scripture into our heart and then keep it according to what Jesus said in Luke 8, in the parable of the seed and the sower. Thirdly, we must recognize the presence of Jesus Christ through our love for Jesus in us and His power within us, so that He can water with His love the ground of our heart and cause God's Word to grow, become mature, and produce fruit in abundance. Remember that Jesus is the vine and we are the branches, so His sap of life feeds us, as we have learned from John 15:5.

Fourthly, we must keep on speaking God's Word and meditating on God's Word to nourish our spirit and so help Him grow in us, as it is written in Joshua 1:8: "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your

mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success."

Fifthly, you have to proclaim God's Word once it has reached maturity in your heart to bring it into being in the physical realm, as it is written in Jeremiah 1:9 12: "Then the LORD put forth His hand and touched my mouth, and the LORD said to me: 'Behold, I have put My words in your mouth. See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out and to pull down, to destroy and to throw down, to build and to plant.' Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 'Jeremiah, what do you see?' And I said, 'I see a branch of an almond tree.' Then the LORD said to me, 'You have seen well, for I am ready to perform My word.'"

Do you understand that God's response always starts at the point of our vision of God's reality, or our understanding of His Word in other words, when we succeed in picturing what God is telling us? When God's Word has reached its full maturity in us or when we succeed in hearing the Holy Spirit, that means the Holy Spirit can start performing miracles through us. In the scripture from Jeremiah just above, references to the LORD reflect the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer in Jesus Christ. When you are born again, the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in you with His power to effect changes by giving you a powerful mouth, which is able to bring into reality the things which God has

already created in the realm of the spirit. But the Holy Spirit can do nothing until you are able to perceive with your mind what He tells you to do. The only way to understand what the Holy Spirit is telling you is to continue to meditate on God's Word until you begin to perceive His voice. At the end of the day, God's Word which has been sown in our heart turns our spirit into the glory of God in our life and starts shining and manifesting itself outwardly. When this happens, your speech, focus, and attention are changed, and you will only do good works.

Let us go back to John 14:26: "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you." As we look further into this, we will discover why this scripture is so powerful. Jesus said, in John 6:38–40: "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." Jesus specifies in this that His will is God's will by saying that He only does what God wishes. This is the responsibility of Jesus. After saying this, He goes further and explains the role that those who believe in Him have to play, in Matthew 7:21: "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom

of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven;" and in Matthew 12:50: "For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother." Everything He says points to the will of God, which is that anyone who believes in Jesus may have everlasting life — the God-kind of life — and Jesus will raise him up on the last day. But, for this purpose to be fulfilled, Jesus has His part to play and we, as believers, also have our roles to play. Jesus has already accomplished the first part of His responsibility by giving Himself as sacrifice so that we might have eternal life. After His ascension into heaven, He sent the Holy Spirit to help us do our part — according to the will of God — which told Jesus not to lose anyone who believes in Him. This is the second part of Jesus' responsibility.

Now let us look again at John 14:26: "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you." Do you understand now that the Holy Spirit's duty is to teach us and, above all, remind us of everything Jesus said to us so that we can put it to work and ensure our salvation? This is what is written in James 1:19–27: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God. Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflowing wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word and

not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does. If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless. Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world." We saw in Chapter Three concerning our commentary about Exodus 4:10–17 that the Holy Spirit tells us the will of God; therefore, at all times, the Holy Spirit reminds us the will of God. Therefore we must do all things according to what the Holy Spirit tells us to do. By doing so, you put into practice the purpose that God has already planned for your life.

There are four factors that will determine the fulfillment of your purpose in life and the meaning of your presence on this earth. First of all, your life's purpose must be the purpose God has already planned for you. You may wonder, "How can I know my life's purpose and whether it aligns with the purpose God has already planned for me?" Simple! Listen to the Holy Spirit. And, when I say that, if you think to yourself, "I try, but I fail to hear the Holy Spirit," do not worry. I gave you the answer at the beginning of this chapter

but maybe you were not ready for it yet. So here, again, is the solution: You must learn the language of the Holy Spirit in other words, you must master God's Word. It takes time to learn to speak a language well, but as you continue to meditate on God's Word, the Holy Spirit will teach you to master it and, afterwards, will remind you what He has already taught you. Over time, your ability to hear the Holy Spirit's voice will increase and your communication with Him will become better. Your love for Jesus will also increase, and you will start delighting yourself in God's Word and your faith also will grow. So read on this book and you will master the Word of God.

The second factor in fulfilling your purpose in life is the need to know God's plan for your life. But, again, you do not need to be concerned about this matter. Listen to the Holy Spirit and, if you fail to hear His voice, continue to learn His language and it will become easy to understand. The third factor in fulfilling your purpose is knowing God's timing, so that your impatience does not hinder you from getting to your destination in any area of your life. Again, I give you the same recipe for success in the kingdom of God: master God's language, which is the same as the Holy Spirit's language and then, step by step, the Holy Spirit will will tell you when you have to carry out any instructions He gives you and guide you to your destination safe and sound.

The key factor that will help you to carry out God's will for your life is the instruction of the Holy Spirit,

which will match with God's Word in your heart. This matching will stir up a strong conviction within you and cause you to put God's Word to work. It is important to remember that the Holy Spirit is the spirit of love, as it is written in 2 Timothy 1:6–7: "Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of sound mind." You must activate the power of God in you to make your love for Christ come to life and give you the ability to do God's Word and become righteous, just as Jesus declared in John 14:23 that our love for Him is the principle that causes us to do His Word.

Let us bring to mind the portion of the Scriptures that gives the characteristics that the Prophet Israel was expecting in the Messiah. Let us go to Deuteronomy 18:15–19: "'The Lord your God will raise up a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear, according to all you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, "Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, nor let me see this great fire any more, lest I die." And the LORD said to me: "What they have spoken is good. I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him."'" Jesus many times declares that He did not come to do His own will but the will of the

one who sent Him. For example: John 4:34 says: "Jesus said to them, 'My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.'" John 6:38 declares: "For I have come down from heaven not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me." Matthew 26:39 specifies: "He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, 'O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will." Jesus also declared, in John 14:10, that His Father put in His mouth what He said: "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works." Can you see that this is exactly the promise God the Father made to the people of Israel when He said to Moses in Deuteronomy 18:18: "What they have spoken is good. I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him"? The prophet whom God promised to send to Israel would only say what God told Him to say, as Jesus Himself professed in John 14:10: "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works." Therefore Jesus is the prophet after (or like) Moses. If you are not sure yet, that Jesus speaks for God, then look at John 8:28: "Then Jesus said to them, 'When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do

nothing of Myself, but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things." I hope that by now you understand that Jesus speaks for His Father.

Jesus only speaks God's Word, which He received from His Father, as God said in Deuteronomy 18:18. How does God put His Words in the mouth of Jesus? In answer to this question, the Bible says in Luke 2:40 52: "And the child [Jesus] grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him. His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast. When they had finished the days, as they returned, the Boy Jesus lingered behind in Jerusalem. And Joseph and His mother did not know it; but supposing Him to have been in the company, they went a day's journey, and sought Him among their relatives and acquaintances. So when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him. Now so it was that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, 'Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously.' And He said to them, 'Why is it that you sought Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?' But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them. Then He went

down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men." This is how God's Word grew in Jesus.

Jesus grew in wisdom and became strong in spirit both by studying God's Word and by the grace of God. The Word of God has power to make us wise and build our spirit so that our spirit becomes strong. Psalm 19:7 says: "The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple." So the word of God has power to make us wise and change our mind (which is what is meant by "converting the soul"). Acts 20:32 reminds us that the Word of God can build our spirit and make us strong when it declares, "And now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among those who are sanctified." 2 Peter 1:2 also says: "Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord." If our grace and peace are multiplied in the knowledge of God, then the question is: How can we get the knowledge of God?.

Here is God's answer from Proverbs 2:1 5: "My son, if you receive my words, And treasure my commands within you, So that you incline you ear to wisdom, And apply your heart to understanding; Yes, if you cry out for discernment, And lift up your voice for understanding, If you seek her as silver, And search for her as for hidden treasures; Then you will understand the

fear of the LORD, And find the knowledge of God." This means that we gain knowledge of God by eagerly seeking wisdom and receiving God's Word in our hearts and then applying our minds to understanding. Remember that Luke 2:40 says that Jesus grew and became strong, filled with wisdom, and that the grace of God was upon Him through His study of God's Word.

The four scriptures above (Psalm 19:7, Acts 20:32, 2 Peter 1:2, and Proverbs 2:1 5) demonstrate that God's Word has the ability to give birth to wisdom, make the spirit of man strong, and cause God to pour out His grace upon us. It is extremely important to take care of the seed of the Word of God which is implanted in our heart so that we can be equipped with all we need to live a wonderful life as our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ experienced on this earth.

Knowing that He will be resurrected from the dead, His sufferings and death do not alter the wonderful life He lived on earth. If we are spiritually minded, then the suffering of Jesus is the best gift of God to mankind.

Therefore, as followers of Jesus, we are called to change our mind and grow in wisdom and make our spirit strong through our meditation on God's Word and at the same time receive increasing grace from God through our knowledge of God's Word. Many Christians continue to have the mind of the world. So it is important to remind them to really become genuine believers. Likewise, all believers are compelled to speak only God's Word that they hear from

the teaching of pastors or priests, from their own study and meditation on God's Word, or through their fellowship with the Holy Spirit when they speak in tongues, or during their worship, prayer, or communication with the Holy Spirit.

God needs to speak words and needs the Holy Spirit to make what He says happen. Likewise, a believer needs to speak the Word of God and have the power of the Holy Spirit in him to trigger what his words carry. It is no wonder, then, that the Bible says in 1 Corinthians 14:15: "What is the result then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding." We must activate the power of God in us by speaking in tongues before the Word of God which we treasure in our heart can make things happen, because the Word of God and the Holy Spirit are both vital for our walk in faith in this world.

Without the presence of God or the power of the Holy Spirit in us, we cannot do anything, and Moses was conscious of this vital fact. Let us go to the Scriptures to study this situation. In Exodus 33:1 3 it is written: "Then the LORD said to Moses, 'Depart and go up from here, you and the people whom you have brought out of the land of Egypt, to the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, "To your descendants I will give it." And I will send My Angel before you, and I will drive out the Canaanite and the Amorite and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite. Go up to a land flowing with

milk and honey, for I will not go up in your midst, lest I consume you on the way, for you are a stiff necked people.'"

But what was the reaction of people? Let us read on, in Exodus 33:4–6: "And when the people heard these grave tidings, they mourned, and no one put on his ornaments. For the LORD had said to Moses, 'Say to the children of Israel, "You are a stiff necked people. I could come up into your midst in one moment and consume you. Now therefore, take off your ornaments, that I may know what to do to you."' So the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by Mount Horeb."

What was Moses's reaction? We find his reaction in Exodus 33:12–23: "Then Moses said to the LORD, 'See, You say to me, "Bring up this people." But You have not let me know whom You will send with me. Yet You have said, "I know you by name, and you have also found grace in My sight." Now therefore, I pray, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know You and that I may find grace in Your sight. And consider that this nation is Your people.' And He said, 'My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.' Then he said to Him, 'If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here. For how then will it be known that Your people and I have found grace in Your sight, except You go with us? So we shall be separate, Your people and I, from all the people who are upon the face of the earth.' Then the LORD said to Moses, 'I will also do this thing that you

have spoken for you have found grace in My sight, and I know you by name.' And he said, 'Please, show me Your glory.' Then He said, 'I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.' But He said, 'You cannot see My face for no man shall see Me, and live.' And the LORD said, 'Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen.'"

Do you understand why Moses refused to depart and go up without the presence of God? First of all, the presence of God brings us His rest, because God specifically said so in Exodus 33:14. Secondly, the presence of God convinces us that we have found grace in God's sight, as Moses said in Exodus 33:16. (This is also why 2 Corinthians 5:5 declares: "Now He who prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.")

Thirdly, God, by His Presence in our life, brings into being the things we speak according to Exodus 33:17. But there are two conditions which must be met before our words can bring things to being we must first find grace in God's sight, and secondly God must know us by name. The first condition is satisfied automatically by the presence of God in us through the

presence of the Holy Spirit, as it is written in Psalm 139:7: "Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from Your Presence?" and in Psalm 51:11: "Do not cast me away from Your presence, And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me." The second condition is also fulfilled for believers in Christ Jesus as the Scriptures say in Isaiah 43:1: "But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel: 'Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine.'" (Jesus confirmed this prophesy of Isaiah when He said, in John 10:4: "I am the Good Shepherd and I know My sheep.")

Hebrews 1:1–3 tells us that Jesus Christ is the perfect revelation of God's Glory: "God, who at various times and in different ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high." Can you see how God's presence reveals Jesus, the Word of God, to us? Any believer or born-again Christian has Jesus in him, since Jesus declares in John 14:23: ". . . If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him." And we know that any genuine believer loves Jesus, so he experiences the glory of

God through the Holy Spirit, who brings the presence of God and Jesus with him. Moreover, Hebrews 1:2 says God made the world through Jesus, the Word of God. The same truth is revealed in John 1:1 3,14: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. . . . And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth;" and in John 10:30, where Jesus said: "I and My Father are one." No wonder the Bible says, in Hebrews 11:3: "By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible." (In this passage, "framed" means "put in place.") Not only did Jesus create or put in place the worlds, but Jesus Himself declares in John 10:30 that He and the Father are one.

God and His Word (Jesus Christ) are one; therefore, by speaking God's Word, you allow God to arise in your life and you activate the presence of God in you and around you by confessing God's Word about you and your life. By acting like this, you bring into being, through the power of the Holy Spirit, everything your words talk about, as it is written in Psalm 68:1 3: "Let God arise, Let those who hate Him flee before Him. As smoke is driven away, So drive them away; As wax melts before the fire, So let the wicked perish at the presence of God. But let the righteous be glad;

Let them rejoice before God; Yes, let them rejoice exceedingly."

Let us go back to John 1:1–4: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made." This means that without the Word of God, we can create nothing. Likewise, without the power of the Holy Spirit we can create nothing. Remember that 2 Timothy 1:6–7 says: "Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of sound mind." Do you see that the Holy Spirit brings us divine power, love of Christ, and a sound mind, and therefore casts away doubt, unbelief, and fear from our mind? And notice that it is not enough to possess the Holy Spirit and the power of God, but the power of the spirit of God must be stirred up or activated so what we say in consent with God's Word comes true. The Holy Spirit and the Word of God are both needed in the life of the believer. The Word of God cannot work alone, neither can the Holy Spirit work without God's Word.

Acts 19:11–20 illustrates perfectly the fact that nobody can perform miracles without the Holy Spirit or the power of God: "Now God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul, so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits

went out of them. Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists took it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, 'We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches.' Also there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, 'Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?' Then the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overpowered them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. This became known both to all the Jews and Greeks dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. And many who had believed came, confessing, and telling their deeds. Also many of those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned in the sight of all. And they counted up the value of them, and it totaled fifty thousand pieces of silver. So the word of God grew mightily and prevailed." Do you see that the evil spirit knew Jesus and Paul because they had the Holy Spirit in them but the seven sons of Sceva and the chief Jewish priest did not have the power of the Holy Spirit in them so their words even though they were in consent with God's Word couldn't cast out the devil?

Jesus said in Mark 16:16 17: "He who believes and is baptized will be saved, but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons." Jesus declared that believers would cast out devils or

demons in His name. The seven sons of Sceva mentioned in Acts also called the name of the Lord Jesus to cast out evil spirits but failed because they were not believers. They spoke in consent with God's Word, but they were not believers. This is proof that it is not sufficient to speak God's Word, you must have the Holy Spirit dwelling in your heart to succeed because the power of God in you will then bring your words to pass. Only our faith has the ability to activate the power of God, according to the declaration of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in Matthew 17:20: "Because of your unbelief, for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you." I have already said that even with Jesus it is the power of the Holy Spirit that performs miracles. So if the power of God is not activated, we cannot move "mountains." In fact, the doer of God's Word is the Holy Spirit. But it is our genuine faith that activates the power of God, as we explain in many chapters.

It is no wonder, then, that the Bible says in Hebrews 11:6: "But without faith it is impossible to please [God] . . ." Any believer needs the presence of God and Jesus through the Holy Spirit to receive the rest or peace of God, and the guarantee of His grace and His glory, and to finally get whatever he says because he has found grace in God's sight and because God and Jesus know him by his name. Do you see why the born-again Christian needs both the Word of God and the

Holy Spirit? First of all, we need the Word of God to speak God's Word concerning any situation in life; secondly, we need the presence of God to enjoy His grace and glory; and, finally, we need the presence of God through the Holy Spirit to bring into existence whatever we say in line with God's Word. It is not surprising to find out that the Word of God and the Holy Spirit have the same function and nature when we study the Bible since Jesus (God's Word), the Holy Spirit, and God the Father are one, as it is written in 1 John 5:7–8: "For there are three who bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree as one."

Now let us look at the account of the death of Elisha, the great and powerful prophet of God, to show it is not sufficient to have the Holy Spirit in you to be healed, you must activate the power of the Holy Spirit to stay healthy or to be healed when sickness strikes you. Let us read together 2 Kings 13:14–21: "Elisha had become sick with the illness of which he would die. Then Joash the king of Israel came down to him, and wept over his face, and said, 'O my father, my father, the chariots of Israel and their horsemen!' And Elisha said to him, 'Take a bow and some arrows.' So he took himself a bow and some arrows. Then he said to the king of Israel, 'Put your hand on the bow.' So he put his hand on it, and Elisha put his hands on the king's hands. And he said, 'Open the east window';

and he opened it. Then Elisha said, 'Shoot'; and he shot. And he said, 'The arrow of the LORD's deliverance, and the arrow of the deliverance from Syria; for you must strike the Syrians at Aphek till you have destroyed them.' Then he said, 'Take the arrows'; so he took them. And he said to the king of Israel, 'Strike the ground'; so he struck three times, and stopped. And the man of God was angry with him, and said, 'You should have struck five or six times; then you would have struck Syria till you had destroyed it. But now you will strike Syria only three times.' Then Elisha died, and they buried him. And the raiding bands from Moab invaded the land in the spring of the year. So it was, as they were burying a man, that suddenly they spied a band of raiders; and they put the man in the tomb of Elisha; and when the man was let down and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived and stood on his feet."

Now tell me, why did the power of God in Elisha fail to heal him when he was sick, while this same power that resided in his bones gave life to the dead body? This is simply because Elisha did not believe that the anointing he used to perform many miracles also had the ability to heal his own body. If Elisha had known this truth of God's Word, he might have used it by speaking aloud so that it triggered the desired response from the Holy Spirit: his healing.

This wonderful story of Elisha's death showed us that we must be aware of the healing power of the anointing of God that resides in us and use it (through

our profession) in order to bring our own healing into existence. The story from Elisha's life shows us that the power of God and the anointing of the Holy Spirit permeate every fiber, bone, tissue, and cell of our being, which is why a long time after the death of Elisha the power of God still resided in his bones and was able to bring a dead man back to life. It is no wonder, then, that any time he healed someone our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ said: "Your faith has made you whole." Can you see that only our faith activates the healing power of God that lives in us or in Jesus or in the anointed man of God or in any genuine believer? We cannot have faith without the knowledge of the truth carried by God's Word.

You may wonder how the dead body which had no faith got healing. This is because the dead body, without the spirit of man, became like anything else in nature. We learned in the previous chapters that anything in nature responds to the name of Jesus or the Word of God, as it is written in Philippians 2:9 11. Only when we are alive does God need our cooperation to bring us into His kingdom. Anything in this world naturally complies with the Word of God including every cell of our body but our lack of faith may cause us to speak contrary to God's Word and bring back sickness, disease, and death to our body.

John 14:26 states: "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance

all things that I have said to you." John 14:16 further specifies: "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever." The word "another" comes from the Greek word "aloes" and it means "another one of the same kind or quality," exactly the same as Jesus. According to http://www.middletownbiblechurch.org/egreek/egreek03.htm, two different Greek words are both translated "another." The first means "another of a different kind" and the second means "another of the same kind." In the case of John 14:16, the Greek word which was translated another is another of the same kind.

The Holy Spirit speaks exactly like Jesus; the Holy Spirit brings us the presence of Jesus and the Father. The Holy Spirit has the ability to bring to us the very presence of the Father and the very presence of Jesus and makes Their very presence real to us.

When we pray, we feel the very presence of Jesus and the Father close to us. Jesus speaks to us by the Holy Spirit, and this is how I can know the presence of Jesus inside me. The Holy Spirit lets us know that we are children of God, as it is written in Romans 8:16: "The Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God." No Christian can live without the Holy Spirit. In His absence, Christianity becomes a mere religion. John 7:37–39 declares: "On the last day, that great day, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.' But this He

spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified."

The power of God comes with the Holy Spirit, as it is written in Acts 1:8: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all the Jude and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." In Acts 2:1–4, the Holy Spirit did not come in a calm way: "Now when the day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them forked tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." God has already given the Holy Spirit. So enjoy His presence in you. The Bible says in Acts 19:1–6: "And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples he said to them, 'Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?' And they said to him, 'We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit.' And he said to them, 'Into what then were you baptized?' So they said, 'Into John's baptism.' Then Paul said, 'John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.' When they heard this,

they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied."

In Acts 10:44–48, we learn that everyone in Cornelius's house receives the Holy Spirit and speaks in tongues: "While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then Peter answered. 'Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?' And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of our Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days." ("To be baptized in the name of Jesus" is to be born again after our commitment to Jesus by declaring Him as our Lord and Savior, as it is written in Romans 10:13: "For 'whoever calls upon the name of the LORD shall be saved.'") In Acts 2:5–6, God gave to those who were listening to Peter on the day of Pentecost the understanding of their language about what Peter was saying: "Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and was confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language."

Everything I speak in tongues, I am supposed to speak to God not to men as it is written in 1 Corinthians 14:2 4: "For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries. But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men. He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church." Speaking in tongues is speaking truths and mysteries, and is for your own private use and edification. 1 Corinthians 14:14 15 says: "For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful. What is the result then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding." I am compelled to speak first in tongues before I speak with any understanding. In the same way, I must sing in tongues before singing with understanding.

We receive the Holy Spirit by declaring: "In the name of Jesus, I receive the Holy Spirit." When we do this, instantly He comes in. After that, you thank Him and then begin to speak in unknown tongues. What should you do next? The moment you receive the Holy Spirit you receive utterance. "Utterance" means boldness in speaking, as it is used in Ephesians 6:10 20 ("Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities,

against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace, above all taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.")

There are five consequences when you receive the Holy Spirit:

1. The devil and his agents are cast out.
2. The things of God become more joyful for you; and you delight yourself in the things of God. (Ephesians 5:18 20 says: "And be not drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks

always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.")

3. Your love for Christ increases exceedingly.
4. You gain the power of God dwelling in you.
5. You attain a sound mind.

The fact that you've received the Holy Spirit doesn't mean you'll always be filled with the power of the Spirit. It's not God's responsibility to get you filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Godhead; He will always be with you as it is written in John 14:16: "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever." According to Ephesians 5:18 19 the instruction is that *you* get yourself filled with the Spirit not the person of the Holy Spirit, but the power of God by speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, and giving thanks to God the Father in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The level of the power of God in you is directly related to the degree of God's Word dwelling in your heart and your degree of speaking in tongues, psalms, hymns, or spiritual songs, and your level of thanksgiving in the name of Jesus.

How can you be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit if you do not know the Word of God? Ephesians 5:18 20 clearly shows us that we need to know God's Word to speak to one another in psalms and to give thanks to God the Father in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

In this chapter we have learned how to discover or to know better the inseparable link between the Word of God and the Holy Spirit in such a way that we can actually live our lives as children of God. The key to all life on earth is the Holy Spirit. The Word of God does not work without the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit cannot work without the Word of God. Both always work together. Jesus Himself declares that the spirit of God is the principle of life in John 6:63: "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life."

Furthermore, Acts 1:8 adds that the spirit of God comes to dwell in us with the power of God: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." This means that the presence of the Holy Spirit in the heart of man brings eternal life and God's power to the believer. In other words, the Holy Spirit is synonymous with eternal life and the power of God.

Notice that Jesus goes on and declares that God's Word is spirit and life in John 6:63. So, as the spirit of God, the Word of God has the same nature as the Holy Spirit, and is the key factor in God's power and eternal life. It is no wonder that the Bible says, in Hebrews 4:12: "For the word of God is living and powerful . . . ." When God speaks, the Holy Spirit brings what is said to pass. Likewise, when we speak God's Word, the Holy Spirit in us brings it to pass. The Holy Spirit makes the Word work otherwise our words are empty.

The Word of God is the living water, and the Holy Spirit is the conveyer of the living water that brings into existence whatever God's Word says. Jesus Himself expounded upon this reality in two scriptures. The first one is John 4:14: ". . . but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." The second scripture is John 7:37–39: "On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water. But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." Do you see that God's Word, once we have digested it, is turned into the power of God and when we confess the Word of God the power of the Holy Spirit is activated and brings what we talk about into spiritual (and then physical) existence?

But God's Word also can convey the Holy Spirit, as it is written in Acts 10:44: "While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word." The Holy Spirit is transferrable to another person through the hearing of God's Word. This is why the Bible says, in John 6:63: "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life." God's Word, then, is spirit, so it conveys the Holy Spirit and

His power. But the Scriptures reveal the secret of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in Acts 10:38, saying, ". . . how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him." This means that, as a follower of Jesus Christ, you must be anointed with the Holy Spirit, who comes with the power of God, to be able to do good and heal any curse of the law.

Without God with you through His Word and the Holy Spirit, you can do nothing. Remember that Jesus declares, in Acts 1:8: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

The Word of God cannot work without the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit cannot do His ministry in us and around us without the Word of God. The Holy Spirit does not move until we utter God's Word. The Word of God (Jesus) and the Holy Spirit are one, and only this oneness produces results in our life.

In the following chapter, you will learn that unless we become one with Jesus we cannot produce results in our life here on earth. The oneness that Jesus describes in John 15:5 (comparing us to branches of His vine) is vital to becoming productive and living a victorious life. Until we become one with Jesus, the Word of God, by thinking like Jesus, believing like Jesus, and talking like Jesus, we cannot activate the power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in us or perform like Jesus did

when he was on earth. We can only activate the power of God through the Word of God faith because fear activates the power of Satan in our life and brings defeat, failure, poverty and sickness. So it is vital to take in God's Word every day so that you become one with Jesus and gain the ability to make changes to the circumstances of life you do not like or that are inconsistent with God's Word.

7. Our Love for Jesus, the Principle Revealed by Jesus Christ that Causes Human Beings to Keep God's Word

As you continue reading this book, keep in mind the principle you are about to discover. It is the key that explains any scripture of the Bible, and will open your spiritual eyes and allow you to understand any scripture of the Bible or anything spoken by the Living Word, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

It is written in John 14:1–11: "'Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know.' Thomas said to Him, 'Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?' Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him.' Philip said to Him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.' Jesus said to him, 'Have I

been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, "Show us the Father"? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.'"

First of all, Jesus explains what is going to happen surrounding His departure. Although Jesus will explain later what He meant by "I will come again and receive you to myself," for the time being, let us focus on the other words of Jesus in John 14:3 4. We see Jesus tell His disciples that they knew where He was about to go and that they also knew the way. But Thomas answered, in John 14:5 that he did not know what Jesus meant. Jesus replied in John 14:6: "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him." Here, Jesus clearly showed where He was about to go (to the Father) and that the only way to gain access to the Father (the way for the Apostles to follow Him) is through Jesus Christ Himself. But Philip's response, in John 14:8, showed that although he understood where Jesus was about to go, he did not know the way. Then Jesus spoke again and once again specified that He is the way to gain access to God the Father. This means that knowing or

seeing Jesus is the same as knowing or seeing the Father. So Jesus identifies Himself with God the Father, meaning that the true identity of Jesus is God.

Jesus goes further to prove His identification with God the Father in John 14:10, reiterating that seeing Him is the same as seeing his Father. What we learn from this is that the very way to identify with somebody else is to be in them and for them to be in you. Jesus gave two signs that describe our identification with somebody else. The first sign is speaking only what someone else tells you to say, and the second sign is performing your works by the power of that other being. If you conduct yourself only in this way, that means you are identical to the one who speaks and does the works through you you are one with him.

We also know that Jesus states, in John 15:5: "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." What does this mean to you? It means the one who abides in Jesus has the life of Jesus eternal life and is one with Jesus. It also means that the one who speaks only Jesus's Word and becomes productive through Christ is God or a child of God and one who becomes one with Christ is identical to Jesus, since the same process turns Jesus Christ into God. And we know that Jesus is love, so He is saying here that our love for Him is the principle that produces our identification with Him. Are you surprised? You shouldn't be, because we have already read in John 14:10 that one

sign of identification with God the Father is that our works are performed by Him. And now Jesus is saying we keep His words (in other words, we do His commandments) as the product of our love for Him. This means that it is our love for Jesus that performs our works. When we become one with Christ, in our state of oneness with Christ, His life that flows in us causes us to be productive and performs our works.

Coming back to John 14:23, the passage ". . . If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him," means that we get the nature and life of God when we love Jesus. It also means that our love for Jesus is the principle of eternal life. Jesus does not stop there. He explains the easiest way to get our identification with Him and God the Father, in John 17:1 3, saying: "Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: 'Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent." Here, Jesus declares that we get the nature of God eternal life if we know the true God. From these scriptures, we can deduce that our love for Jesus is the same thing as our knowledge of God the Father and Jesus Christ, and that our love for Him (or our knowledge of God the Father and Jesus Christ)

produces in us and around us eternal life the nature and life of God the Father and Jesus.

Furthermore, the Bible says in Ephesians 3:19: ". . . to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God." Can you see that, once again, knowledge and love of Christ are of the same nature, but the love of Christ is a perfect form of the knowledge of Christ? This is why Romans 15:29 declares: "But I know that when I come to you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ;" and 1 John 3:2 says: "Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as He is pure." We must remember that, though Jesus was already God in the beginning, He came to earth as a man.

Jesus came to earth in the likeness of men, behaved like a man, and became obedient to God even to the point of death of the cross. And it was His perfect identification with God the Father when He lived on earth that proved that He was both God and the Son of God before He went back to His Father. In the same way, anyone who abides in Jesus (and whom Jesus abides in) identifies himself to Jesus by changing his mind so that he can only have God's Thoughts, speak only God's Word, and act accordingly. Doing this will activate the power of the Holy Spirit in a true believer and allow him

to do works powerfully, as Jesus did on earth; his words will have the power to perform whatever he wants which is in line with the will of Jesus (and, therefore, the will of God).

Let us look more closely into the power of our words. As we know, Jesus declares in Matthew 21:21: ". . . Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' it will be done." This is what genuine faith really is. True faith gives you powerful words which have the ability to bring into being whatever you say. Is this not the nature of God, who created the heaven and earth with His Words? This declaration of Jesus deals with the main character of God, as described in Hebrews 11:3: "By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible." This means that only God or those who have His nature or His eternal life are able to call things into being by using their words, as God did in the beginning and as Jesus did when He was on earth.

Jesus reveals in Matthew 21:21 that true faith enables us to receive the main characteristics of God. No wonder the Bible calls believers gods as it is written in John 10:34 38. God called those who listened to His Word in the Old Testament "gods." Because this is true, how do you think a born-again Christian will be called by God? Of course he is also a "god" in

the mind of God. Thus, the Scriptures declare that born-again Christians have a divine nature in 2 Peter 1:2 4: "Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." Since we have divine nature, in other words, the God-kind of life, it means that we have to live with new principles, as the Bible states in 2 Corinthians 5:7: "For we walk by faith, not by sight." But how can we live by faith?

In a wonderful way, 2 Corinthians 4:16 18 teaches us how to live by faith: "Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal." (If you want to learn more about the inner and outer man, you can refer back to Chapter One. In brief, "inner man" = man's spirit = heart + soul composed of will and mind.)

So 2 Corinthians 4:16 18 explains, first of all, that any believer has to be aware of the fact that his spirit (his

heart, will, and mind) is renewed day by day through God's Word.

Secondly, the believer must realize that his affliction is temporary, and he must focus on things that are unseen and eternal, because things which can be seen are subject to change. What your will, mind, and heart are focusing on will come true in your life. Therefore, you must focus on God's Word which is spirit and life (or the God-kind of life). The Word of God is the unseen reality that brings things into being in the physical realm. We must give our priority to what has the ability to create, rather than focusing on its result, which is by nature subject to change. Wise men focus on the factors and principles of things in order to master them so that they get the power to change their circumstances, as well as what they see, feel, and hear, but foolish men focus on their consequences. So we must be wise and focus on God's Word, which has the power to cause changes.

Let us go back to John 10:34 38 to continue our discussion about this scripture: "Jesus answered them, 'Is it not written in your law, "I said, 'You are gods'"? If He called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), do you say of Him whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, "You are blaspheming," because I said, "I am the Son of God"? If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is

in Me, and I in Him." This means that my works prove that I am God, and I have the nature of God. Why? Because only God — or those who have God's nature — are able to bring into being by their words everything they say. Eventually, Jesus reveals that there are two ways to get faith: believing in Him by listening to His Word, or believing in the works He performed that prove that He is God or that identify Him with God. (How can a born-again Christian can get this nature of God and express it? You will see that very soon.)

Jesus reveals the symbolism and the expression of identification in this beautiful verse from John 14:9–11: ". . . so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves."

The identification is "I am in the Father and the Father in me." That's why Jesus declares that He and God the Father are one. In other words, if you know Jesus, it means you know the Father. Jesus went on, explaining to His disciples the signs that manifest identification, which are expressed in John 14:10: "The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works." Jesus is saying, here, that our words and our works identify who we are. Speaking and doing the

same things as God is speaking and doing demonstrates that we are of God, and that God is our Father. This means that we know Jesus by listening to His Word and by seeing His Works.

Moreover our words and our deeds reflect who we really are. In this same verse (John 14:10), Jesus teaches us that knowing Him also means that we are conscious that His speech and works originate from God the Father. In short, Jesus identifies Himself to God the Father, because Jesus is in His Father and His Father is in Him, as He declared in John 14:11. Therefore the phrase "I am in the Father and the Father is in Me" means the same as if Jesus had said "I and my Father are one." It is God the Father who dwells in Jesus and who speaks through Jesus's mouth and performs miracles through Jesus's actions.

Jesus went on and declared, in John 14:12 14: "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it." Jesus is not limited by the life circumstances you are facing. What you could not do by your own power Jesus can do whenever you ask Him. The only condition you need to fulfill is believing in Jesus, and Jesus will perform whatever you ask in His name. This is grace receiving blessings from God or Jesus.

Jesus continued, and explained how this process works in John 14:15 24: "If you love Me, keep My

commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also. At that day you will know that I am in My Father and you in Me, and I in you. He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is He who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love Him and manifest myself to Him. Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, 'Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?' Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me.'"

Let us consider what Jesus declares in the final two sentences of that passage. Jesus reveals that the principle of keeping His word — and the main factor in doing as God desires — is to love Jesus. Jesus also reveals that our love for Him will cause God the Father and Himself (Jesus) to make their home or abode in us. How? Jesus will do this by giving us another helper, as it is written in John 14:15–17. Remember that Jesus

has already declared in John 14:6: "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

We have discussed what Jesus meant by "I am the way." Now let us deal with what He meant by "I am . . . the truth and the life." John 6:63 is crystal clear about it when Jesus declares that His words are spirit and they are life. This means that God's Word carries both spirit and life. In other words, the Word of God conveys God's power and His life (the God-kind of life, not the natural life we received from our natural parents when our mother gave birth to us). So as born-again Christians we are born of God's Word, according to James 1:18: "Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of first fruits of His creatures." Can you see that it is God's Word that gives birth to any believer or born-again Christian? So what do you think our nature must be? It follows that our new nature must follow God's Word, just as our natural birth follows the life of our natural parents. This means that any genuine believer must have the same thoughts, speech, feelings, and deeds as God since he originates from God's Word.

But how does our spiritual birth take place? When we hear the gospel and endorse it, we repent and change our mind towards God. Once we believe in Jesus we can make our faith proclamation and become born-again Christians. The Bible gives us a clear picture of our new nature in James 1:19–27: "So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does

not produce the righteousness of God. Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflowing wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does. If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless. Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world."

Do you get what God is telling us in this passage from James? Since you are a child of God, born of God's Word, you must be raised by God's Word. This is what God means when He says you must meekly accept the word and make it a part of your life. A mirror has the ability to show our reflection and our Father is telling us to look at God's Word as our mirror (instead of only looking at our own wants and desires) to see who we really are so that we can think, speak, and act in consent with God's Word.

Since we are born anew in God's Word, we must reflect the nature of our Father in our behavior. And we know God's Word is truth, as it is written in John

17:17: "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth." Therefore, as a child of the word of truth, you are under obligation to always tell the truth and to speak in line with the Word of God your Father, with no more lies in your life. In the same way that a natural man cannot feed his body by only looking at food and not eating it, it is impossible to feed our spirit by listening to (or looking at) God's Word and not acting upon it.

Let us look again at James 1:25: "But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does." This wonderful scripture reveals the best way to become a genuine believer in Christ Jesus by giving us the principle that causes us to effortlessly act on God's Word. The Word of God is saying that the one who sees himself and Jesus in the Word of God and does not forget this picture is acting upon the Word of God. Can you see that this means that if you hear God's Word and keep the picture of what you hear in your mind, this will cause you to do as God's desires? God the Father is saying, "If you hear My Word and remember it you will always and automatically do what I ask."

Therefore, memorizing the pictures of God's Word is the secret to doing the Word of God, as it is written in James 1:25. The one who does not forget the picture, which God's Word brings to him, is the doer of the Living Word. This same truth is also revealed in Romans 8:1 2: "There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the

flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death." When your thoughts have been turned into God's thoughts, when the pictures of yourself and the pictures of your Lord and Savior Christ Jesus remain forever in your mind, you will always do God's Word and God will never condemn you. Your real righteousness will remain in you as long as you keep in your mind the pictures of yourself, the pictures of your life, and the pictures concerning your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ that God's Word has brought to your mind. This reality is also what Jesus Christ Himself talks about in John 17:3 saying that our knowledge of the true God and Jesus gives us eternal life. And Romans 8:2 ("For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death") specifies that life in Christ makes us free from the laws of sin and death.

Our mind is the principle of our real union with Jesus, our Lord and Savior. If we succeed in keeping in mind God's pictures of ourselves about our life, our real identity, and Jesus Christ, we will automatically treasure them in our heart and then automatically speak them and do what God's Word says. Do you see now why the Bible says, in James 1:21: "Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflowing wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls"? The principle of doing God's Word is the change of our mind away from wicked thoughts. The pictures of God's Word in your mind

will cause you to be fully persuaded, as it is written in Romans 4:20–22: "He [Abraham] did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was able to perform. And therefore 'it was accounted to him for righteousness.'" When we are fully aligned with God, the picture of God's Word impressed in our mind becomes a belief. And, according to 2 Corinthians 4:13, our belief turns into our speech, giving glory to God. The process of belief is this: we hear God's Word that produces pictures to our mind. If we keep focusing on these pictures, they give rise to a strong belief that we treasure in our heart and then these beliefs cause us to give glory to God the Father.

God responds to our thanksgiving by giving us His peace, which surpasses all understanding, as it is written in Philippians 4:4–7: "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Do you understand that you should speak God's Word about yourself until there is no doubt in your mind, and then whatever you say will come to pass? That is what Jesus declared in Mark 11:23: "For assuredly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and

does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will come to pass, he will have whatever he says." Giving thanks to God and saying what God tells you to say about yourself and your life casts out any doubt in your mind and brings you the peace of God so that whatever you say will come to pass. After a while you will start to behave like your true identity: "swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath."

From the day we are born again we cannot be perfect overnight. The change takes time, in the same way that the process of growth works in natural life. If we continue to eat food and drink water, we will eventually grow in stature. But what is the food of our spirit? Romans 10:17 gives a good answer to this question: "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." So if we continue to hear God's Word, will we have the same measure of faith or will our faith increase? 2 Timothy 3:14–15 answers this question: "But as for you, continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." The Holy Scriptures, God's Word, has the power to make you wise. And this scripture is very clear that the power that causes changes in us is made by our faith. This means that our faith has to grow to effect changes.

The importance of the growth of our faith is emphasized in 2 Thessalonians 1:3–5: "We are bound to

thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds towards each other, so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all persecutions and tribulations that you endure, which is manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer . . . ."

The main subject of this book is the four dimensions of faith. The final dimension deals with the strong relation that exists between love and faith and the idea that if love increases faith increases, and vice versa. It is not surprising, then, that in the passage from Thessalonians it is said that when their faith grows exceedingly their love also abounds towards each other. So we must increase our faith by sticking to our meditation on God's Word.

The Bible goes on to focus on our speech, revealing that what matters the most concerning our new nature is our speech, saying in James 3:1–12: "My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn the whole body. Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. Even so the tongue is a little member

and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so. Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening? Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring can yield both salt water and fresh." It is obvious that the words we choose are important to our entry into the kingdom of God. Because if we have divine nature, our words have the power to make changes and if our mouth speaks evil, then we lose our divine nature because God cannot be associated with devils and sins.

The Bible speaks of true believers in 1 Peter 1:23, as ". . . having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever." And we know that God's Word is truth, as it is written in John 17:17: "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth." Therefore, as a child of the Word of truth, you are under obligation to always tell the truth and speak in line with the Word of God your Father. The Bible also says, in John 8:44: "You are

of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it." Can you see that the devil is the father of the liar? As a believer, you cannot have two fathers, both God and the devil. Therefore you must pay great attention to your words and do your best to not allow your mouth to speak evil, but only to speak words in line with God's Word. Your words determine your origins by telling others the identity of your Father. Are you born of the Word of God or of the words of the world?

Jesus also specifies in John 14:21: "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me." It is common sense to accept that our love for Jesus Christ is the principle that causes us to treasure God's Word or have His commandments and keep them, since it is impossible to keep God's Word if we do not have His Word in our heart. Therefore, listening to God's Word has the ability or power to feed our spirit with God's Spirit and the God-kind of life. But what can drive us to listen to God's Word and to keep it? Our love for Jesus Christ.

We can also ask ourselves this: What can stir up the love of Jesus in us? Of course the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ is bound to awaken our love for Jesus Christ. Why? Because, as 1 Corinthians 15:1–4 states: "Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and

in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you unless you believe in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." Do you see that the Good News brought by Jesus Christ is that He came to die for any sinner who is doomed to die according to God's Law? It is written in Ezekiel 18:20: "The soul who sins shall die."

But what about His burial and resurrection? Was Jesus buried for our sake and did He rise again the third day in our behalf? It is not clear in 1 Corinthians 15:1–4. So let us seek out another passage of the Scriptures which is clearer about this reality. Romans 6:4–9 will help us to reach this goal: "Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For He who died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him." This means that, as a sinner, when Jesus died, I died with Christ; when He was buried, I was buried with Christ; when He rose up from

the dead, I was raised up together with Christ. This is the gospel of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. This is the origin of our joy and love for Jesus.

Jesus Christ gave His life for us showing His great love for us, as it is written in John 15:12–13: "This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, to lay down his life for his friends." Now you can understand why we shout for joy when we become conscious of this good news and the love Jesus Christ had for us when we were still sinners dawns in our heart. This is also seen in Romans 5:8 ("But God demonstrates His own love towards us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us") and in John 3:16 ("God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have an everlasting life").

The very nature of God is love. The Scriptures declare, in 1 John 3:24–4:18:

> Now he who keeps his commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.
>
> Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of

God. And this is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.

You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. They are of the world. Therefore they speak as of the world, and the world hears them. We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love, in this the love of God was manifested towards us, that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. And we have

> known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God and God in him.
>
> Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.

As we can see, the gospel of Jesus Christ is about the love of Jesus Christ that causes Him to give His life in order to grant us His God-kind of life and stirs up our love for Jesus Christ in our heart. This love is the principle that leads us to treasure God's Word in our heart and to keep God's Word in our life.

Do you see why it is so exciting to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ? What Good News is better than this? Of course, the grace of God is available for anybody, but only the one who confesses this grace with his mouth and believes it in his heart will be saved, according to Romans 10:9 10: ". . . that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes to righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made to salvation." This means that we only gain access to God's grace and salvation through proclaiming our faith in Jesus Christ. All of what is described above is emphasized and summed up in Ephesians 2:1 10:

"And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath just as the others. But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."

Ephesians 2:1 10 summarizes everything we deal with above but adds a new twist to what we have already said: ". . . and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus . . . ." Can you see this? As a believer, I sit together with Christ in heavenly places, meaning that I am a man of authority, and I reign with Christ. I must be aware of this reality to put it to work.

Before going further, let us consider how we get this authority or power. Jesus said in John 14:15 17: "If you

love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you;" and in Acts 1:8: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." Can you see that unless the Holy Spirit comes upon us we cannot receive the ability to make changes? Jesus is teaching us in John 14:15 17 and Acts 1:8 that our love for Him causes us to keep His commandments and, as a result of our love for Jesus and our obedience, Jesus will ask His Father to give us the Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit will come upon us and enter into us and He will bring with Him the power to make changes in our life.

Do you want to know how powerful the power brought by the Holy Spirit in us is? Read what the Bible says in Romans 8:11: "But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you." What does this mean to you? It means that there will be no more sickness for anyone who has the Holy Spirit. It also means that your love for Jesus brings you the Holy Spirit and the power to change anything you do not like in your life. Do not forget that the previous chapter demonstrated that God's Word and

the Holy Spirit bring the same power and grace of God to the inner man. But this is not all. Look at what the Bible says in 1 Corinthians 2:12–16: "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. For 'Who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?' But we have the mind of Christ."

Do you understand what the Holy Spirit does in the life of a born-again Christian? The Holy Spirit causes the speech of a believer to be in line with God's Word and makes him know things which God has given to him. Moreover, we believers have the mind of Christ, and Jesus declares in Mark 11:23 that whoever has faith and does not doubt can move mountains. The Bible points out in 1 Corinthians 2:12–13 that we have the mind of Christ and that we know spiritual things and speak them. So, if we have the mind of Christ, can we have doubt in our mind? No. Therefore, since we have the mind of Christ, whatever we say will come to pass.

Why is it so important that our words match God's Word or Jesus's thoughts? Because our words get more

power over time when we drop our own thoughts and cease to speak idle words but, instead, speak only God's Word, if we keep on having Jesus's mind, then speaking only God's Word is the outward proof that we listen to the Holy Spirit who dwells in us and say what He tells us to say. This also improves our communication with the Holy Spirit. When we fail to listen to the Holy Spirit and put to work what he tells us to do, we weaken our communication with Him and also lessen the power He brings to us. We can have good communication with the Holy Spirit by putting into practice what God's Word says in 1 Corinthians 2:13: "These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual." We compare the spiritual things the Holy Spirit tells us to God's Word that is also spiritual, and this comparison gives us strong confidence in the truthfulness of God's Word as well as the boldness to speak and act upon God's Word and put to work what the Holy Spirit teaches us.

Let us read the rest of chapters fourteen and fifteen of the gospel of John, beginning with what Jesus teaches us in John 14:25–31: "These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let your heart not be troubled, neither let

it be afraid. You have heard Me say to you, 'I am going away and coming back to you.' If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, 'I am going to the Father,' for My Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe. I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me. But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do. Arise, let us go from here." Do you see what the grace of God is all about? We not only receive faith, the God-kind of life, righteousness, the Holy Spirit, the gift to sit with Christ in heavenly places, and the power to effect changes brought by the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, but we also receive peace and joy because of the ascension of Jesus Christ.

Our hope produces joy and peace. Indeed, Christ went to the Father who is greater than Him, therefore we are absolutely certain that we will receive greater grace from God as the Bible says in John 14:28. But we also have a role to play. Jesus explains this role in chapter fifteen of Saint John's gospel, so let us begin with John 15:1–17: "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vine-dresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine,

you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in Him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be My disciples. As the Father loved me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, to lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things I heard from My Father I have made known to you. You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. These things I command you, that you love one another."

We have already found out that the phrase "I am in the Father and the Father is in Me" means that Jesus and God the Father are one, and that Jesus speaks the same words and performs the same works as His

Father does. Now Jesus is being even more precise. He wants us to abide in Him as He abides in His Father. And He explains what He means by abiding in Him, as well. Let us compare John 15:10 ("If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love") with John 14:23 (". . . If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word . . ."). What do these mean? They mean that keeping Jesus's commandments makes the connection between our love for Jesus and Jesus's love for us, and this allows His love to flow towards us and feed our spirit with the God-kind of love that only Jesus can give. Once this happens, our love for Jesus becomes more real and we can love Jesus more and better and our love for Him will extend to others.

At the very moment that the connection is made between our love for Jesus and Jesus's love for us, the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in us, bringing the presence of God the Father and Jesus (and the power to make changes) as it is written in John 14:23. Our love for Jesus causes us to keep His Word, and by keeping it we abide in His love. This means that Jesus wants us to abide in His love through our love for Him. As a matter of fact, keeping God's Word reflects our personality and reveals our true identity. As our love for Jesus increases, our personality becomes better in the eyes of the Lord, because our spiritual advancement tends toward a divine nature. Jesus uses the allegory of the vine and branches to explain this reality in John 15:4 8. Therefore, as the sap carries food to all the branches of the vine, Jesus's love also carries His

grace God's grace to our heart and soul to feed our spirit and bless us.

But only our love for Jesus makes the necessary connection with Jesus's love. How? Because Jesus has love in God so His love (the vine's sap) conveys the food grace our spirit needs. The connection between Jesus's love and our spirit is made through our love for Jesus. So if we cease to produce love for Jesus, our spirit is disconnected from Jesus. If our love for Jesus simply remains the same, we will not receive more grace. But our love for Jesus will not become perfect overnight. Jesus explains our love's advancement with three phrases: "bear fruit," "bear more fruit," and "bear much fruit." Let us follow our Master to understand this concept He wants to teach us.

First of all, Jesus declares in John 15:2: "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vine-dresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit."

Now let us look for the meaning of "abide in me." "To abide" means "to stay, to dwell, to remain". John 15:9 10 will help us get the meaning: "As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love." So Jesus is saying that we will abide in His love in Him if we keep His commandments. But we know that, in John 14:23, Jesus states:

". . . If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word . . . ." Therefore to "abide in Jesus" means that we are to "love Jesus."

With these definitions in mind, John 15:2 becomes: "I am the true source of love, and My Father is the Creator of love. Every believer in Christ who does not love Jesus God the Father separates from Jesus; and every believer who loves Jesus God the Father cleanses from all sins, so that he may love Jesus more." Our love for Jesus is the principal factor that causes God to cleanse us and forgive our sins.

Our love for Jesus is also the principle that causes God to grant us more love for Jesus, and to be more rooted in the love of Jesus. This means that God's Word, which is seed, gets more root in our heart and causes us to do God's Word effortlessly. But, as far as Jesus and God are concerned, unless we bear more fruit we cannot stand firm against the troubles of the world, as it is written in Mark 4:16 17: "These likewise are the ones sown on stony grown who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and they have no root in themselves, and so endure for a time. Afterwards, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately they stumble."

But Jesus also specifies that bearing *more* fruit is not sufficient, since He declares in John 15:8 that we are compelled to bear *much* fruit if we wish to be His disciples: "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much

fruit; so shall you be My disciples." Jesus is saying we must have deep roots (so that we can bear much fruit), and not just more root (which lets us bear more fruit), in other words, God's Word or Jesus must have deep roots in our heart so that we will not fall when we face tribulation and persecution.

Only faith that is deeply rooted and founded on the rock of Jesus Christ never gives up or fails, as it is written in Luke 6:46–49: "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say? Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock;" and in Ephesians 3:17–21: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height — to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen."

First of all, Ephesians 3:17 reveals that love is a dimension of faith by saying that Christ may dwell in your heart through faith if you are rooted and grounded in love. Secondly, we must be deep-rooted and

grounded in love — the rock of Jesus Christ. Our rock and our love is Jesus Christ, according to what Jesus said in John 15:5: "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing;" and John 14:23: "Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him and We will come to him and make Our home with him.'"

But Jesus also teaches, in Luke 7:36–50, that forgiveness is also a principle of love:

> Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat. And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, and stood at His feet behind Him, weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil. Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, "This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner."
>
> And Jesus answered and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you."
>
> So he said, "Teacher, say it."
>
> "There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and

> the other fifty. And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell me, therefore, which of them will love him more?"
>
> Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one to whom he forgave more."
>
> And He said to him, "You have rightly judged." Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little."
>
> Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."
>
> And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?"
>
> Then He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

Notice that Jesus talks about this woman's love for Him that causes Him to forgive her sins and ends His speech by saying, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace." This is because, in the mind of Jesus, love is

an expression of faith — love is a *dimension* of faith.

In the parable told to Simon by Jesus, the two debtors loved their creditor because he forgave their debts. But the sinful woman was forgiven by Jesus because she loved Jesus. Therefore, love for Jesus produces forgiveness — and forgiveness of our sins gives birth to our love for Jesus — and both happen in proportional manners. Do you see why our love for Jesus springs up in our heart when the Good News comes to us, and why this gospel of Jesus tells us that He is ready to forgive all our past, present, and future sins if we receive Him as our Lord and Savior? The forgiveness of all our sins causes us to love Jesus. And the greater our sins are the greater our love for Jesus will be. This is why when wicked people who have done "unforgiveable" things during their lives come across the gospel of Jesus Christ, they experience tremendous miracles in their lives — while those who have always been faithful to Christ do not experience such miracles. It follows, then, that the Bible says in Proverbs 10:12: "Hatred stirs up strife, But love covers all sins;" and, in 1 Peter 4:8: "And above all things have fervent love for one another, for 'love will cover a multitude of sins.'"

If we define "bears much" as "love to the full," then John 15:5 ("I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing") becomes "I am the source of love, you are believers. He who loves me, and I love him, loves to the full; for without Me you can do nothing."

Our progress in the realm of the Spirit follows this pattern:

- First of all, we hear the gospel and our love for Jesus comes into existence (or if it does not, God the Father separates us from Jesus).
- Secondly, if our love for Jesus arises, then God the Father cleanses us from all sins.
- Thirdly, being cleansed of all our sins allows Jesus's love for us to flow more towards us.
- Fourthly, this flow of Jesus's love towards us results in our increasing love for Jesus.
- Fifthly, God cleanses us from all sins for a second time and Jesus's love for us flows much more until the day our love for Him is perfected. And, when our love for Jesus becomes perfect, we are turned into fonts of everlasting life, as Jesus said in John 4:14: "But whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."

God is love, as it is written in 1 John 4:8: "He who does not love does not know God, for God is love." Because God and His Word are one, then God's Word (or Jesus) is able to grant you His grace — which acts in the same way as His love — as it is written in 2 Corinthians 9:8–11: "And God is able to make all grace abound towards you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have in abundance for every good work. As it is written: 'He has dispersed abroad, He has given

to the poor; His righteousness remains forever.' Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness, while you are enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God."

We receive the grace of God and we become grace for others according to what is written in Genesis 12:2: "I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing." Remember that we are Abraham's seed, as it is written in Galatians 3:26–29: "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Our Lord and Savior revealed, in John 4:13–14, that He is the grace we need to receive to love others and be a blessing for them: "Jesus answered and said to her, 'Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.'" This means that God's grace in us turns into our love for others, as well as blessings for us and for others. So we create contact between our spirit and Jesus by switching on our love for Jesus through our constant meditation, prayer, and worship,

by speaking in tongues, by thanksgiving, and by doing God's Word. So all we have to do is to drink in the living water and to love Jesus.

It is impossible to continually drink in God's Word, and to focus our mind on the Good News if we do not have love for Jesus in us. Without our love for Jesus, it's impossible to bear fruit — as Jesus said in John 15:4: "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me." (Remember that "to bear fruit" means to keep God's Word and maintain our love for Jesus; it also means to receive grace from God, since receiving more grace from God helps us to get a better understanding of God's Word that leads us to improve our thinking and expression, applying the Good News in a good way, resulting in a better attitude.)

The phrase "I am in the Father and the Father is in Me" means the same as "I speak the same words and perform the same works as My Father does." In the same way, when Jesus says "abide in Me and I in you" it means that Jesus and the believer are one, with the same thoughts in their minds, the same beliefs in their hearts, the same speech in their mouths, and the same deeds and actions. Likewise, as born-again Christians we are compelled to have the same thoughts and beliefs as Jesus, to speak the same words as Jesus, and to perform the same works as Jesus. These are the signs — the fruit that proves our love for Jesus Christ and shows that we have a divine nature because we originate from God. Can you see that unless we have

the same thoughts in our mind and same beliefs in our heart as Jesus, we cannot outwardly speak like Jesus and perform miracles as Jesus did when He was on earth?

What I have just said is based on two scriptures. Our talk is the product of our beliefs, as it is written in 2 Corinthians 4:13: "But since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, 'I believed and therefore I spoke,' we also believe and therefore speak." And the power of our speech is the product of our thoughts, as Jesus states in Mark 11:23: "For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believe that those things he says will come to pass, he will have whatever he says." It is obvious that our thoughts whatever we focus our mind on give birth to the power of our speech and our beliefs, which are the focus of our heart, give birth to our speech.

I have already said that when thoughts become true for us they become beliefs. So if we focus our mind on something, and it becomes true for us, it can give birth to the power of our speech as our belief.

Our expression (both through our speech and deeds) is the result of God's grace if our thoughts and beliefs are in line with God's Word.

Where and how can we get the same thoughts and beliefs as Jesus and talk like Jesus and perform His Works in our daily life? We find all Jesus's words and thoughts, as well as His feelings and works, in the

Bible. This means that the way to increase our knowledge of God and Jesus has not changed. It remains the same as the way God explained it to Joshua in Joshua 1:8: "This book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success." Have you noticed that God did not say, "I will make your way prosperous" but "*you* will make your way prosperous"? This means that every man of God — every believer or born-again Christian — has a role to play in order to allow God's grace to overflow in his life.

Our primary responsibility is to keep loving Jesus in order to allow His love to flow towards us and bring about God's grace. Nowadays the process for the flowing and increasing of God's grace remains the same as when it is written in 2 Peter 1:2–11: "Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to

brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these things is short-sighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." This tells us that our love for Jesus Christ causes us to focus on God's Word, then our focused meditation on God's Word increases our knowledge of God and Jesus, and our increasing knowledge of God and Jesus increases God's grace and peace in our life.

Do you see why our knowledge of Jesus has the power to increase God's grace and peace over us? If not, follow this explanation carefully.

First of all, Jesus declares in John 17:3: "And this is eternal life that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus whom You have sent." Your knowledge of Christ brings you eternal life, a life which has no beginning and no end.

Secondly, Jesus also says in John 15:5: "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." The phrase "I am the vine, you are the branches" has the same meaning as "He who abides in me, and I in him" and can be read as "to have the same life as Jesus," because the same sap that flows in the

vine also flows in the branches — the believers. Therefore, it is not surprising that our knowledge of Christ Jesus causes God's grace and peace to abound towards us. Therefore we can easily put to work the gifts that God makes available to us, such as virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love — which are all parts of the life (or sap) of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Our mere consciousness of God's grace and peace and the growth of our knowledge of God and Jesus are the key factors that produce the overflow of God's grace and peace into our life.

Let us go back to John 15:5: "I am the vine, you are the branches." We, the branches, belong to the vine, so we have the same name as the vine, Jesus, although Jesus is the central portion of the vine. The life of Christ (eternal life, the grace or blessing of God) flows from the roots through the stem towards the branches. The branches do not support the stem, but the stem supports the branches. And it is the same life that comes through the stem that goes to the branches. The branches are the fruit-bearing part of the plant — not the stems or the roots. (That's why, when we talk about the "fruit of the spirit" we do not talk about the fruit of the Holy Spirit but the fruit of the re-created human spirit — the fruit of the born-again Christian. It is the responsibility of all believers in Christ — not Jesus Himself — to bear the fruit.)

Jesus said the same thing in His description of His relationship with the Father, in John 10:38: "I am in

the Father and the Father is in Me." So Jesus and His Father are one, as Jesus also states in John 10:30: "I and My Father are one." Therefore, the Father in Jesus namely, the Holy Spirit responds to the same name as Jesus. John 1:12 13 says, "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." No wonder the Bible says, in Philippians 4:13: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." When I was ignorant, I got sick or experienced poverty. But I have found out through God's Word that I'll never be sick and broke again in my life. Jesus is the vine, and I am the branch, so how could I have an infection? When I did not know about this connection, I had infections, because Satan put them on me. But, now that I know I have the life of Christ in me, I cannot be sick again or experience any curse of the law again.

Later in this book you will find out that talking about faith is another way to talk about love, knowledge (especially revelation knowledge), and the consciousness of Jesus Christ's personality and our real nature or true identity. Indeed, revelation knowledge, love, the consciousness of what Jesus did for us and continues to do, and our true identity are strongly related to faith, according to Jesus Christ. As our love for Jesus, our knowledge of God and Jesus, and the awareness of who we are dealing with when we deal with Christ increases, our true identity becomes better, as our

faith increases — and vice versa. It is important to note, then, that revelation knowledge, our true identity, the knowledge of who we are dealing with when we deal with Christ, and our love for Jesus are the four steps of our faith's growth. The study and mastery of these four dimensions of faith according to Jesus Christ is the main subject of this book. The greatest dimension of faith — the last step in our faith's advancement — is our perfect love for our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

From the first time the gospel of Jesus Christ is preached to you until the day you leave this world you will live by faith according to the four steps of faith. First of all, you listen to the gospel of Jesus Christ and gain revelation knowledge. Secondly, this revelation knowledge shows you your real nature or true identity and what Jesus came to earth to do, so that you can gain access to His divine nature and life — the God-kind of life. (This means that you become aware of Jesus's passion to save mankind.) Thirdly, you become conscious that Jesus Christ is who you are dealing with, and you shout and jump for joy. Fourthly, you start loving Jesus and you delight in meditating on God's Word and doing His Word. This new love for Jesus then leads you to repent and to believe in Him. At this point, God grants you faith and your faith causes God to grant you the righteousness of Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the power to make changes in your life. And then the faith cycle begins again.

Your meditation on God's Word and the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ increases your revelation

knowledge, which will show you your divine nature as in a mirror. God's Word in your heart is your mirror, as it is written in 2 Corinthians 3:18: "But we all, with unveiling face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord." In Chapter One, we discovered that the implanted Word of God is stored in our heart. In Chapter Two, we found out that our mind is our spiritual eye. So when the Bible says that ". . . beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, [we] are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory," it really means that our mind, looking at God's Word in our heart, begins to share the same thoughts as God's Word and focus on the pictures brought to us by the Word of God.

When we have doubt, unbelief, and fear, our mind looking at our circumstances projects pictures which are different from those brought by the Word of God and implanted in our heart. This results in a fight between the pictures brought by God's Word and the pictures of our own thoughts. (In other words, we struggle with our faith.) But if we keep focusing on the pictures brought by God's Word then, step by step, the images in our mind tend to become the same as those of God's Word implanted in our heart our mirror. When our mind realizes that its own picture is the same as the picture reflected by the Word of God, then the spiritual reality created by God becomes real for us in the spiritual realm and also becomes

personal for us so that we can cease to struggle with our faith. We are, then, ready to act upon our faith as the Bible teaches us in Joel 2:32: "And it shall come to pass that whoever calls in the name of the LORD Shall be saved."

What does salvation mean? Salvation has two meanings. First of all, according to the New Living Translation Bible, Second Edition salvation means "deliverance from the power and effects of sin, danger, or difficulty by God's intervention." Secondly, salvation is "a gift from God for His love, grace and mercy," according to the Amplified Bible. This means that we will receive God's gift or be delivered from the power and effects of sin, danger, or difficulty, if we call upon His name. But let me give you the best definition of salvation, which is found in Galatians 3:13 14: "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for as it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree'), that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." If we believe in this final definition of salvation, then we will no longer be under any curse of the law and will have all of the blessings of the law all in one package.

The Bible says in 1 Timothy 6:12: "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called, and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses." God is telling us: "Do not let anything that is in this package go.

Hold on to it. Eternal life is yours. Prosperity is yours. Divine health is yours, and anything in this supernatural package belongs to you." How do you lay hold of your inheritance in Christ Jesus? You say this simple phrase as part of your daily meditation: "I refuse to accept sickness, poverty, and any of the thirty curses of the law. In the name of Jesus, sickness and poverty be gone." This is the good fight of faith.

Do not accept defeat or any curse of the law, but instead lay hold to any blessing brought to you by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ by saying: "I have the life of Christ in me. I am prosperous in the name of Jesus. In the name of Jesus, I cannot be defeated." While you are speaking like that, you are fighting the good fight of faith. When your mind becomes one with your heart (the storeroom of God's word), the first condition of faith is satisfied.

Of course, faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, as we are told in Hebrews 11:1. Through our faith, we give life in our mind to things we hope for — in other words, with our faith we produce pictures of God's Word in our mind. Faith first gives life and substance in the spiritual realm to the things you hope for. This means that faith also produces eternal life, and we have already found out in this chapter that eternal life comes from the knowledge of Christ and love for Jesus Christ. Therefore eternal life, love for Christ Jesus, and knowledge of Christ are the products of faith — they are the dimensions of faith.

Our confession is the second condition of faith, as it is written in Romans 10:9 10: ". . . that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead you will be saved. For with the heart one believes to righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made to salvation." (Our confession, or declaration, of faith is handled in detail in Chapters Four and Five.)To be able to activate your faith and its power from the Holy Spirit in you, the only requirement is to be aware of who is in you and behind you: Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

When you have faith, your focus turns away from earthly things and you act upon God's Word so that your thoughts, speech, attitudes, and deeds fit your divine nature with the help of the Holy Spirit who dwells in you and God's Word, which grows in you to strengthen and energize your spirit. The consciousness of who is in us and behind us increases our love for Jesus and puts God's Word first in all our activities. And the cycle continues until our love for Jesus fills up all our heart and soul or becomes perfect, leaving no place for the devil in our life. At that moment we become a superman, a champion, and unshakable. Because we must reach this level of faith before we can become one with Christ, it is no wonder that Jesus said, in Mark 12:30 and Luke 10:27: "And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength." With a definition of the inner man in mind, this first

commandment of God simply means "You shall love the LORD your God with all your inner man or with all your spirit." Do you see how much our spirit (our inner man) matters in the eyes of God and Jesus?

When our faith reaches the fourth dimension love for Jesus and our love for Jesus becomes perfect, nothing is impossible, and we can, therefore, do all things through Christ who strengthens us (as we are told in Philippians 4:13). Our faith's growth is a key issue which must be handled very well.

One last thing to say on the subject of our union with Jesus Christ. Jesus declares in John 6:47 58: "'Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life. I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.' The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying. 'How can this man give us His flesh to eat?' Then Jesus said to them, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father,

so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. This is the bread which came down from heaven not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever."

Jesus puts the knowledge of Him or our love for Him at the same level as the Christian ceremony commemorating the Last Supper, in which bread and wine are consecrated and consumed. Believers in Christ Jesus share bread and wine in the Eucharist as a sign of their unity with each other and with Jesus. Have you got the picture? Jesus declares in John 17:3 that our knowledge of the only true God and Jesus gives us eternal life. Here, He is saying that taking the Eucharist produces eternal life in us. Jesus also declares in John 14:23 that our love for Him causes God the Father and Himself to come and make Their headquarters in us, bringing eternal life. Why? Because Jesus specifically declares, in John 6:56: "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him." And, as we know, "abides in Me and I in him" equates to eternal life, as it is revealed in John 15:5.

So in the mind of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Eucharist, together with our knowledge of Christ Jesus and our love for Jesus refer to the same reality. Eternal life is then the key factor behind our productivity and our unfailing victory over any circumstance of life. Therefore, you perfectly know Christ Jesus or have a genuine love for Him when you start sharing bread and wine in the Eucharist every day (if it is possible in your church) as Catholics do. There does

not need to be growth to have abundant life, you only need to become aware of the eternal life the Eucharist brings you and remain focused on Christ Jesus during Mass.

Now tell me, if God is with you, who can be against you? Romans 8:31 39 says: "What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is He who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also raised, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: 'For Your sake we are killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.' Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." When Jesus comes and dwells in us, He gives us His life and makes us more than conquerors, because God has not given us a spirit of fear or cowardice, but a spirit of power and of love and a sound mind (as we learn in 2 Timothy 1:7). When Jesus comes with His Father to dwell in us, They bring to

our spirit power, love, and a sound mind. This means that if we love Jesus we automatically get power and a sound mind filled with intelligence and revelation knowledge. Do you see the power that comes from our identification with Christ Jesus?

We have eight ways to cause God to identify Jesus with us, so that we might receive eternal life:

1. By listening to and accepting God's Word in our heart, as we are told in Revelation 3:21: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me;"
2. By knowing Jesus through our daily meditation on God's Word (John 17:3);
3. By loving Jesus with all our mind, heart, and will (Luke 10:27 and John 14:23);
4. By taking the Eucharist (John 6:56);
5. By confessing Jesus as our Lord and Savior (Romans 10:9 10);
6. By our union with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6:1 11);
7. By confessing God's Word to bring to life everything we say (2 Corinthians 4:13, Proverbs 4:13, John 6:63, and John 14:10); and
8. By thinking of or picturing God's Word with our mind to give life to everything we declare (Mark 11:23, Proverbs 23:7, and John 14:10)

These eight ways cause God the Father to grant us eternal life, which is the very sign of our identification

with Christ Jesus. Our identification with Christ Jesus means we have the same thoughts, beliefs, speech, and actions or deeds as Jesus. Do not forget that your speech is the product of your beliefs (2 Corinthians 4:13) and the power of your speech — the efficiency of your deeds or actions — is the product of your thoughts (Mark 11:23). Moreover, your thoughts turn into your beliefs when your thoughts become true in your sight. Therefore, what matters in all things is your thoughts. So use Philippians 4:6–7 ("Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus") to change your mind and get the peace of God and then all things will be possible to you through Christ who strengthens us. As you keep meditating on God's Word, loving Jesus, taking the Eucharist, confessing God's Word about yourself and Jesus, or picturing God's Word with your mind, your mind will be renewed, and then you will begin to think like God and talk like God and anything you say will come to pass.

Remember that our union with Christ was defined by Jesus in John 14:10 when He declared: "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works." So we are in union with Christ when, through our confession, we declare the same things

as Christ and perform the same works as He does. In other words, we must be united with Christ — or Christ must be in us — to say and do the same things as Christ, as it is written in 1 John 5:11–12: "And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son of God has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life." If Jesus Christ dwells in you through the Holy Spirit or God's Word, then you have — and produce — eternal life because you have the same thoughts, speech, and deeds as Christ. Do not forget, God's Word is spirit and eternal life as Jesus declared in John 6:63, therefore, by speaking or confessing God's Word, you give life to anything you say.

Moreover, your thinking determines who you are, as we are told in Proverbs 23:7 ("For as he thinks in his heart, so is he"). Are you a mere human being or a child of God with divine life and nature — an invincible, superhuman being, a champion?

(Near the end of this book, in Chapter Thirty-two, there is a "user's guide" full of Jesus's words concerning any situation you might find yourself in in your life. That part of the book takes an inventory of all areas of your life and gives Jesus's solutions to fix the problem. In a nutshell, you will learn — in practical terms — how to live in any area of your life. You will need to study and meditate on these tips so that when you face a problem; then you will be able to go straight to the point which deals with your case and speak Jesus's words about your specific situation. Your speech, in

line with Jesus's words, will bring into being what you want and what you want to change — in other words, the fruit God has already made available to you or the corresponding fruit of God's Word.)

What conclusions can we make from the seven chapters you have already read about the fundamentals of this book — and living by faith in the kingdom of God in the kingdom of Heaven?

Here is faith's life cycle:

1. Meditation on God's Word over a period of time leads to lasting changes of our mind toward Jesus and God.
2. Our change of mind to focus on God produces our love for Jesus.
3. At the same time, a lasting change of mind toward Jesus or God also produces peace of mind.
4. Our love for Jesus causes us to do God's Word and to follow Jesus's Commandments effortlessly.
5. Doing God's Word gives rise to a better understanding of it.
6. And, finally, by doing as God asks, we meditate on God's Word.

This life cycle of faith continues until we leave this world to meet our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

You can use the following references to help you study and review these six principles of faith's life cycle:

- Deuteronomy 17:17 20, Joshua 1:8, and Lamentations 3:17 26 are references to the principle

of meditation on God's Word that produces our change of mind towards God.

- Jeremiah 31:10 12 and Matthew 12:41 contain the principle that causes the change of mind towards the goodness of the Lord or Jesus.
- Hosea 10:12 13 (in both the New King James and New Living Translation Bibles) and Deuteronomy 30:6 are references to the principle explaining that changing our mind towards Jesus and God gives birth to our love for Jesus.
- Psalm 51:8, Psalm 119:111, Psalm 119:14 16, and Psalm 119:49 50 refer to the principle that meditation on God's Word gives birth to joy and hope.
- Matthew 14:28 31 explains the principle that doubt gives birth to fear.
- 1 John 4:18, along with Matthew 14:28 31, are references of the principle of love that causes the union of our heart and mind by casting away any doubt and unbelief.
- Isaiah 26:3 (in both the New King James and New Living Translation Bibles) and Lamentations 3:17 26 are references to the principle that a lasting change of our mind towards Jesus and God brings forth the peace of God.
- John 14:23 holds the principle that love for Jesus causes us to do God's Word.
- 1 Chronicles 22:12 and Psalm 119:34 refer to the principle that wisdom and understanding cause us to keep God's Word.
- Psalm 111:10 and Psalm 119:100 are references of

the principle that doing God's Word gives rise to a better understanding of God's Word.

- Psalm 119:99, Proverbs 2:1 6, and Psalm 49:3 all refer to the principle that meditation on God's Word brings about a better understanding of God's Word.
- John 12:40 and Proverbs 1:23 explain that changing our mind towards Jesus and God is what gives birth to an understanding of God's Word.
- Psalm 40:8 tells us that it is doing God's Word that gives birth to our delight or joy.
- Psalm 119:14 16 and Psalm 119:92 are references to the principle that meditation on God's Word produces our delight or joy.
- Proverbs 18:2 holds a reference to the principle that an understanding of God's Word brings forth our delight.
- Psalm 19:8 is a reference to the principle that it is God's Word that makes the heart rejoice.
- 1 Corinthians 13:6 makes reference to the principle that God's Word or God's truth makes our heart rejoice.
- Luke 7:41 43 holds the reference to the principle that forgiveness gives birth to love for Christ.
- John 17:3 is a reference to the principle that knowledge of God the Father and Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior gives birth to our eternal and abundant life in Christ.
- John 15:5 refers to the principle that the life of Jesus in us gives birth to our productivity.

8. The Urge to Repent, or an Urgent Demand for Repentance

Before we start this chapter, I have a piece of advice to give you: You will understand and eventually be persuaded by reading this book, but you must begin to practice what it teaches *now* so that you do not lose anything. Any time you come across a passage of the Bible in this book, first ask in the name of Jesus that you might understand the truth hidden in it. Secondly, read it aloud in order to store it in your heart and also in order to picture it with your mind. Thirdly, do what it tells you to do practice what it teaches when you find yourself in a situation that compels you to put into practice the truth discovered in what you have read so that you can go through this trial successfully as a champion (after all, no defeat or failure is allowed) following the example of Jesus our Lord and Savior. Your place in this process was foretold, as is reported in 1 Peter 2:21–25: "For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: 'Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth'; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him

who judges righteously; who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness by whose stripes you were healed. For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls."

God calls all people to repent, as it is written in Acts 17:30 (from the New Living Translation, Second Edition): "God overlooked people's ignorance about these things in earlier times, but now He commands everyone everywhere to repent of their sins and turn to Him." Before Jesus came, John the Baptist preached that all the people of Israel needed to repent of their sins and turn to God and be baptized. Jesus Himself also called people to repent at the beginning of His ministry, saying, in Mark 1:15: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel."

Therefore there is nothing that can be done for us unless we repent from our sins and change our mind by turning to God and thereby prevent calamity from coming upon us, as God warned all Judah and Jerusalem in Jeremiah 18:11: "Now therefore, speak to the men of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, 'Thus says the LORD: "Behold, I am fashioning a disaster and devising a plan against you. Return now every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good."'" Have you noticed that God Himself also balanced the need of repentance against disaster and calamity? This means that if we overlook

the warning of both God and Jesus we are at risk of dying in our sins in a disaster, as Jesus said in John 8:24: "Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins." You can only believe in Jesus if you have previously repented, changing your mind towards God, according to what Jesus said in Mark 1:15.

This scripture tells us we have to change our mind towards God, first, so that we can then believe in the gospel. This means that unless we change our mind towards God we cannot have a genuine belief in the gospel, the Good News of Jesus Christ. The Bible says, in John 1:14, that Jesus is the Word of God: "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." So Jesus is the same as the Good News and the Word of God. Therefore, believing in the gospel means believing in Jesus. Substituting in this definition of believing in Jesus, John 8:24 would become: "Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe in the gospel, you will die in your sins."

Why are God and Jesus so concerned about our repentance? Jesus answers this question in Luke 13:1 5: "There were present at that season some who told Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Jesus answered and said to them, 'Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, no; but unless you

repent you will all likewise perish. Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all other men who dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish."

Jesus gave us two accounts about other people who suffered calamities and were killed. Jesus balances calamity against repentance showing that calamity is the fate of sinners, no matter their degree of sins, as it is written in Proverbs 6:12–15: "A worthless person, a wicked man, Walks with a perverse mouth; He winks with his eyes, He shuffles his feet, He points with his fingers; Perversity is in his heart, He devises evil continually, He sows discord. Therefore his calamity shall come suddenly; Suddenly he shall be broken without remedy." Do you see why Jesus connected calamity and repentance? The one who repents and becomes a believer is no longer under the curse of the law but is, instead, under the blessing of God, as it is written in Proverbs 3:33: "The curse of the LORD is on the house of the wicked, But He blesses the habitation of the just." This is why wisdom tells mankind in Proverbs 24:21–22 to fear the LORD and not associate with rebels or wicked people because disaster will hit them suddenly: "My son, fear the LORD and the king; Do not associate with those given to change; For their calamity will rise suddenly, And who knows the ruin those two can bring?"

Remember that a calamity or a disaster is an unexpected event, such as a very bad accident, a flood, or a

fire that kills a lot of people or causes a lot of damage. This means that calamity or disaster does not give you time to repent. On the other hand, if you are sick, you may or may not have the opportunity to repent before you die. Right now is the best time to repent not some time in the future. I beg you to do it now before you go any further in this book for your own sake and the salvation of your soul. So pray to repent and receive Jesus into your life as your Lord and Savior:

"Dear Father, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Lord Jesus, I believe You are the Son of God. Father, I thank You that Jesus died for me. I believe that when Jesus died, I died with Him; when He was buried, I was buried with Him; and when He was raised up from the dead, I was raised up together with Him. I confess that I have broken Your laws. Forgive my sins. I receive Your pardon now. Lord Jesus, I receive You now as my personal Lord and Savior. Lord Jesus, come into my life. Give me a new mind and heart with new desires and will. And by Your spirit, give me the power to live a life that is pleasing to You. Thank you for forgiving me as You promised. From this moment on, I belong to You only. Thank you for the gift of eternal life. Amen!"

You are now a born-again Christian. Read on!

Let us look at the definition of repentance according to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in Luke 15:1 7: "Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him. And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, 'This Man receives sinners and eats with them.' So He spoke this parable to them,

saying: 'What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, "Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!" I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.'" Does this help you to understand the importance of repentance?

As Pastor Joseph Prince stated in one of his sermons, in the mind of Jesus repentance is our consent to accept Jesus as our Savior, to accept that we are lost and we need to be found, to be loved by Jesus and so let Him find us, lay us on His shoulders, and carry us with His arms of strength and so bring joy in heaven. Our repentance means we constantly focus our attention on Jesus Christ. It is our responsibility to play this part in our destiny. And, if we do this, Jesus will satisfy all of our needs, whatever they are, But why should you stir up your heart and to repent or change your mind towards God?

The main reason has been given to us in the past by God and in Jesus's Bible days by Jesus Himself. Let us begin by what God told us in Ezekiel 34:1 31:

> And the word of the Lord came to me saying, "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord

GOD to the shepherd: "Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool; you slaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the flock. The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought what was lost; but with force and cruelty you have ruled them. So they were scattered because there was no shepherd; and they became food for all the beasts of the field when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and on every high hill; yes, my flock was scattered over the whole face of the earth, and no one was seeking or searching for them."

'Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: "As I live," says the Lord God, "surely because My flock became a prey, and My flock became food for every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, nor did My shepherds search for My flock, but the shepherds fed themselves and did not feed My flock" therefore, O shepherds, hear the word of the LORD! Thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will require My flock at their hand; I will cause them to cease feeding the sheep, and the shepherds shall feed themselves no more; for I will deliver My flock from their mouths, that they may no longer be food for them."

'For thus says the Lord GOD: "Indeed I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so I will seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land; I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, in the valleys and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them in good pasture, and their fold shall be on the high mountains of Israel. I will feed My flock, and I will make them lie down," says the Lord God. "I will seek what was lost and bring back what was driven away, bind up the broken and strengthen what was sick; but I will destroy the fat and the strong, and feed them in judgment."

'And as for you, O My flock, thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I shall judge between sheep and sheep, between rams and goats. Is it too little for you to have eaten up the good pasture, that you must tread down with your feet the residue of your pasture and to have drunk of the clear waters, that you must foul the residue with your feet? And as for My flock, they eat what you have trampled with your feet, and they drink what you have fouled with your feet."

'Therefore thus says the Lord GOD to them: "Behold, I Myself will judge between the fat and

the lean sheep. Because you have pushed with side and shoulder, butted all the weak ones with your horns, and scattered them abroad, therefore I will save My flock, and they shall no longer be a prey; and I will judge between sheep and sheep. I will establish one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them My servant David. He shall feed them and be their shepherd. And I, the LORD, will be their God, and My servant David a prince among them; I, the LORD, have spoken.

"I will make a covenant of peace with them, and cause wild beasts to cease from the land; and they will dwell safely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods. I will make them and the places all around My hill a blessing; and I will cause showers to come down in their season; there shall be showers of blessing. Then the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase. They shall be safe in their land; and they shall know that I am the LORD, when I have broken the bands of their yoke and delivered them from the hand of those who enslaved them. And they shall no longer be a prey for the nations, nor shall beasts of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and no one shall make them afraid. I will raise up for them a garden of renown, and they shall no longer be consumed with hunger in the land, nor bear the shame of the Gentiles any more. Thus they shall know that I, the LORD their God, am with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are My people," says the Lord GOD.

> "'You are My flock, the flock of My pasture; you are men, and I am your God,' says the Lord GOD."'

Do you see what a good shepherd is in God's mind? A good shepherd, according to God, is the one who feeds the needy, strengthens the weak, heals those who were sick, binds up the broken, brings back those who were driven away, and seeks those who were lost and rules over them with authority and wisdom. God's will is that anyone who lives on earth finds food when he is hungry, obtains clear water when he is thirsty, gets strength when he is weak, is healed when he is sick, is brought back to Him by the preaching of the good shepherd when he is driven away, and is sought when he is lost.

As far as Jesus is concerned, it matters more to focus on lost people than people who are righteous and do not need help from God. Therefore every sinner every lost person is very important in the sight of God, as Jesus stressed in Luke 15:8 10 (which is called the parable of the lost coin): "Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a light, sweep the house, and seek diligently until she finds it? And when she has found it, she calls her friends and neighbors together, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I lost!' Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

This scripture shows that God's angels rejoice when even one sinner repents and returns to God. If you are

a sinner, do you know that you are of great value in the sight of God and Jesus and that your repentance's value is so great that it cannot be estimated? Your value is greater than that of the whole world, as Jesus Himself declares in Matthew 16:24 28: "Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each one according to his works. Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."

In this passage, Jesus balances the gain of the whole world against the loss of one soul, emphasizing that the repentance of one soul is more valuable than the whole world. Therefore, if you repent, you give joy to God's angels and, in return, receive grace, glory, and salvation from God.

Now let us read the most beautiful parable told by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This parable is the one which changed my life forever when I was nine years old, and it has had a huge impact on my life. It is the parable about the prodigal son, found in Luke 15:11 32:

> Then He said: "A certain man had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father,

give me the portion of goods that falls to me.' So he divided to them his livelihood. And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living. But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land and he began to be in want. Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything.

"But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of you hired servants."'

"And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

"But the father said to his servants, 'Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and his alive

again; he was lost and is found.' And they began to be merry.

"Now his older son was in the field. And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and because he has received him safe and sound, your father has killed the fatted calf.'

"But he was angry and would not go in. therefore his father came out and pleaded with him. So he answered and said to his father, 'Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat that I might make merry with my friends. But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots; you killed the fatted calf for him.' "And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. It was right that you should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.'"

This parable is the best illustration of the priceless value of the repentance of a sinner in the sight of God and Jesus. The prodigal son represents any sinner who lived in the past, who lives today, or who will live in the future. The older son is the image of people who are righteous or think that they are righteous before God.

This shows that God is always waiting for the return of the sinner home to God's kingdom by turning away from his sins, changing his mind to focus on God, and making the decision to believe in Jesus and follow Him forever. For God, as sinners we are not away from His heart in spite of our sins. He remains focused, waiting for our return as did the father in the story of the prodigal son. If the father (God) saw him (all of us) when he was still far away it means the father (God) used to look at the horizon awaiting the return of his son.

God's love for us is reiterated in Romans 5:8: "But God demonstrates His own love towards us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Tell me now what the price of the soul of the sinner is if Christ died to save his soul. Think of it. Can you assess the value of Jesus's death? This means that the repentance of any sinner is priceless in the sight of God and Jesus.

The action of repentance does not cease after our entry into the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God begins on earth. When you become a genuine born-again Christian you enter into the kingdom of God. This is why Jesus said in John 15:19: "If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you." In heaven, we see God face to face, we cannot sin, and our access to heaven is forever.

During our lifetime on earth, repentance is a powerful tool to keep our faith from failing as our Lord

and Savior teaches us in Luke 22:31–34: "And the Lord said, 'Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.' But he said to Him, 'Lord, I am ready to go with You, both in prison and to death.' Then He said, 'I tell you, Peter, the cock will not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me.'" Can you see that as far as Jesus is concerned, what matters is our faith? No matter what comes our way in life, if our faith does not fail – even if we stumble – we will never be defeated by Satan. Jesus specifically says that failure can be overcome when He says: "and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren." Jesus is saying that when you repent, He not only helps you, but also strengthens your brethren.

What does all of this mean to us? Jesus is teaching us that repentance is the medicine which prevents our faith from failing. As far as Jesus is concerned, sin is no longer a problem since we have a solution: our repentance or changing our mind by picturing only God's thoughts or God's Word in our heart. Do you see the power of our thoughts? Our thoughts have the power to maintain our faith and to bring everything we say to life. As for Jesus, our faith fails if we backslide in our heart, turn our back to God by returning to our own thoughts instead of God's thoughts, and stay in that condition until we die with this sinful nature.

In the Old Testament, repentance had the same effect and King David's life is the best illustration of the power of repentance, but Jesus came to earth to reveal the ultimate importance of repentance. Repentance is a choice; we must choose the spiritual way of living by faith instead of the physical way of living.

9. The Two Ways of Believing or Getting Faith

We will begin this chapter with the two ways of believing, which were revealed by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In the wonderful scriptures that follow, Jesus teaches us the two ways of believing or getting faith. Let us read Matthew 21:23–32: "Now when He came into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people confronted Him as He was teaching, and said, 'By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority?' But Jesus answered and said to them, 'I also will ask you one thing, which if you tell Me, I likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things: The baptism of John—where was it from? From heaven or from men?' And they reasoned among themselves, saying, 'If we say, "From heaven," He will say to us, "Why then did you not believe him?" 'But if we say, "From men," we fear the multitude, for all count John as a prophet.' So they answered Jesus and said, 'We do not know.' And He said to them, 'Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.'

"'But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, "Son, go and work today in the vineyard." He answered and said, "I will

not," but afterwards he regretted it and went. Then he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said, "I go, sir," but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of the father?' They said to him, 'The first.' Jesus said to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you the tax collectors and prostitutes enter the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him; but tax collectors and prostitutes believed him; and when you saw it, you did not believe him.'"

Look again at the final sentence in that passage. As we know, the Bible says faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God (Romans 10:17). But hearing is not the only way of getting faith. In the verse from Matthew, Jesus specifies, ". . . when you saw it, you did not believe . . . ." This means that we can not only come to our belief by hearing, but also by seeing the wonders and miracles performed by God.

Now let us talk about the two sons. In this parable, the vineyard represents the kingdom of heaven and the man who has two sons refers to God. The first son, who first refused to join the kingdom of heaven, represents the outcasts (like tax collectors and prostitutes), who later repent and turn to God. The second son represents the self styled righteous who accept the idea of the kingdom of God, but then do nothing and do not do what Jesus tells them to do.

Jesus's message is this: It is not sufficient to use your faith as a cover-up, what matters is doing what the Word of God tells us to do. God is telling us that

we have a role to play. You must pay attention to what you hear and how you listen — and also to what you see and how you see in order to believe His Word or the wonders performed throughout the Bible or by His representatives on earth (such as pastors, priests, and believers in Christ). After you take care of your responsibility, then God will give you enough understanding that you can move on to step two — which is to repent or to focus your mind towards God.

The prophet Isaiah also revealed these two kinds of getting faith or believing in Isaiah 6:9–10: "And He said, 'Go, and tell this people: "Keep on hearing, but do not understand; Keep on seeing, but do not perceive." Make the heart of the people dull, And the ears heavy, And shut their eyes; Lest they see with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart, And return and be healed.'"

This means that nobody can believe without at first understanding the Word of God or receiving a revelation from the Word of God. This is what Isaiah is telling us by using the two words "understand" and "perceive." Unless our spiritual ears [the sixth spiritual sense as we described earlier in this book] comprehend the Word of God, or our spiritual eyes picture the revelation knowledge brought to us by seeing wonders or miracles performed by God or men of God working in the mighty name of Jesus, nobody can believe. In the Bible, there is another illustration of this second way of believing, which concerns the disciples of Jesus. We find it in John 2:1–11: "On the

third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding. And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, 'They have no wine.' Jesus said to her, 'Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come.' His mother said to the servants, 'Whatever He says to you, do it.' Now there were set there six water-pots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece. Jesus said to them, 'Fill the water-pots with water.' And they filled them up to the brim. And He said to them, 'Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast.' And they took it. When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom. And he said to him, 'Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the inferior; but you have kept the good wine until now.' This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him."

The disciples of Jesus believed in Him when they *saw* the miracle of the water changed into wine at the wedding of Cana. Therefore, both our ears and our eyes are powerful instruments of our body, and are intended for use in paying attention to God's Word and focusing on God's signs or miracles in order to cause our heart to believe in Jesus. This means that our

ears by paying attention to God's Word can cause God to give us understanding; likewise our eyes by focusing on God's miracles can allow us to perceive God's Kingdom and the spirit realm through these signs.

But, in the mind of Jesus, believing God's Word is better than believing in signs and wonders. Jesus deals with this issue in John 4:43–54: "Now after the two days He departed from there and went to Galilee. For Jesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country. So when He came to Galilee, the Galileans received Him, having seen all the things He did in Jerusalem at the feast; for they also had gone to the feast. So Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee where He had made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and implored Him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. Then Jesus said to him, 'Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe.' The nobleman said to Him, 'Sir, come down before my child dies!' Jesus said to him, 'Go your way; your son lives.' So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went his way. And as he was now going down, his servants met him and told him, saying, 'Your son lives!' Then he inquired of them the hour when he got better. And they said to him, 'Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.' So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, 'Your son

lives.' And he himself believed, and his whole household. This again is the second sign that Jesus did when he had come out of Judea in Galilee."

At Jesus's words, "Go your way, your son lives," the nobleman changed his mind, and did not insist any longer that Jesus go with him to Capernaum to heal his son. On the contrary, he believed the word of Jesus and went back to Capernaum, learning along the way that his son was alive and well.

Do you see the power of God's Word? Distance is no barrier for it. Therefore, in the mind of Jesus, believing God's Word is better than believing in signs and wonders. Why? Because God's Word is spirit, while signs and miracles are physical realities and we know physical realities proceed from spiritual realities. This means that spiritual realities are greater than physical things. But the pre-eminence of believing the Word of God in comparison to believing in signs and wonder was given by Jesus in John 20:24 29: "But Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said to him, 'We have seen the Lord.' But he said to them, 'Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.' And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them, Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, 'Peace to you!' Then He said to Thomas, 'Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into

My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.' And Thomas answered and said to Him, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him, 'Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Jesus wants us to believe more in unseen realities than physical realities. And God's Word is an unseen reality, since it is spirit and life according to John 6:63: "It is the Spirit who gives life, the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life." For Thomas, physical realities were more important than spiritual realities. So Jesus took advantage of this behavior to teach us that believing in the Word of God is better than believing in signs and wonders performed by God. Jesus wants us to believe in Him and His gospel and not seek signs as the principles of our belief.

10. The Two Temples of God: How to Bring an Atmosphere of Miracles into These Temples

Jesus is the one who reveals the two kinds of temples in John 2:13–25. But before we deal with this point, let us start with the well-known temple in Matthew 21:12–17: "Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold doves. And he said to them, 'It is written, "My house shall be called a house of prayer," but you have made it a "den of thieves."' Then the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them. But when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying out in the temple and saying, 'Hosanna to the son of David!' they were indignant and said to him, 'Do you hear what these are saying?' And Jesus said to them, 'Yes. Have you never read, "Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants you have perfected praise"?' Then He left them and went out of the city to Bethany, and He lodged there."

Let us read the report of the Apostle John about the cleansing of the temple in John 2:13–25: "Now

the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers doing business. When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned the tables. And He said to those who sold doves, 'Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!' Then His disciples remembered that it was written, 'Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up.' So the Jews answered and said to Him, 'What sign do You show us, since You do these things?' Jesus answered and said to them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' Then the Jews said, 'It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it in three days?' But He was speaking of the temple of His body. Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said. Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name when they saw the signs which He did. But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men, and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man."

It is obvious from this passage that, as far as Jesus is concerned, His body is a temple of God. But what is the purpose of a temple of God?

When King Solomon had finished all the work on his temple, he brought the ark of the covenant into it. It is written in 2 Chronicles 5:13–14: ". . . indeed it came to pass, when the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD, and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music and praised the LORD, saying: 'For He is good, For His mercy endures forever,' that the house was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house of God." This means that bringing the ark into the temple, lifting up our voices with instruments, and giving thanks to God turned the temple into the dwelling place of God.

Furthermore, Jesus said in John 14:23: ". . . If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him." This means that loving God will cause God and Jesus to make our body Their dwelling place – a temple of God. No wonder there is no difference for Jesus between the temple of God made of stones where the ark abides and the body of man where God and Jesus dwell. But I want you to pay careful attention to the two temples. What causes God to manifest Himself is not the presence of the ark or the presence of God's Word. God manifests Himself when people become one by singing, praising and thanking God, lifting up their voices with instruments

of music and saying: "For He is good, For His mercy endures forever," or when a believer loves God in the case of mankind. Why? Jesus reveals in Matthew 18:30 and John 14:23 the two principles that bring the presence of God into our midst and into our heart.

Matthew 18:20 says: "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them." And John 14:23 declares, ". . . If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him." Thus, unity in the name of Jesus and a love for Jesus are the two principles that bring God's presence to us. This means that, in the sight of God, love in the heart of a human being equates to lifting our voices as if we were one person in the temple of God saying: "For He is good, For His mercy endures forever." By this, Jesus shows us the new way of worship in the kingdom of God in spirit and truth as it is written in John 4:23 24: "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is a Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

Thus, worshiping God in spirit and in truth has the ability to train our spirit in the things of God by bringing to us the presence of God, or by activating the power of God in us. No more animal sacrifices are necessary. Jesus, the perfect sacrifice of God, put an end to animal sacrifices which were the shadow of the perfect sacrifice: the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ.

To worship in spirit and in truth means to pray by speaking in tongues and with understanding of God's Word. Do not forget that "truth" refers to the Word of God. The Scriptures say, in 1 Corinthians 14:14: "For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful. What is the result then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding." Can we pray in spirit and communicate with God if our spirit lives in darkness, or if we lack God's Word in our heart?

No, this is not possible, first, because only God's Word, treasured in our heart, gives light to our spirit, as it is written in Psalm 119:130: "The entrance of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple." Secondly, without the light brought by the Good News our spirit will remain blind and unable to find good things in our heart to exchange with God during our speaking in tongues. In both solutions given by Jesus in John 4:23–24: "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." In order to receive God's peace and cease to worry about this life, we must begin with our belief in God's Word being treasured in our heart. It is important to keep watch over our heart to allow only truths — from outside or from our own mind — which are in line with God's Word to come in, as it is written in Proverbs 4:23 (New Living

Translation, Second Edition): "Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life."

Thinking back to Jesus in the temple, this means that driving out folks who were trading in the temple is like cleansing the human heart of evil thoughts since our heart is a temple of God. How do we cleanse our heart? It is simple. Jesus our Lord and Savior has given us the answer in John 15:3, saying: "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you." So listening to Jesus's teachings is the key point of cleansing our heart from impurities.

We also learned in Chapter Seven that our love for Jesus cleanses us from all sins. This means that in our journey of life, we are continually and constantly cleansed by our love for Jesus, by treasuring God's Word in our heart, or by meditating on God's Word or our love for Jesus. What is the purpose of God's Word? Here is the answer given in John 2:22: "Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said." Remember God said in Deuteronomy 18:18 22: "'I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. And it shall be *that* whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require *it* of him. But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods,

that prophet shall die.' And if you say in your heart, 'How shall we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?' when a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that *is* the thing which the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him." Jesus's disciples remembered the Word of Jesus and when they saw the signs that were consistent with God's Word, they believed in Him. Deuteronomy 18:18-22 encapsulates the principles that give the foundation upon which we base our faith in Jesus. The purpose of God's Word, or Jesus's Word, is to remind us of all truths that exist on earth and in heaven. Therefore, we have to use Jesus's sayings or God's Word to verify the truthfulness of anything we face in this world. If we find they are the same, we store the corresponding truth from God in our heart, believe in it, and act upon it. The bottom line is that just as we must sing in one accord in the physical temple of God to bring the atmosphere of miracles into it to heal people and deliver them from their bondage, likewise unless we have love for Jesus we cannot exercise the power of God in us in spite of the presence of the Holy Spirit in us.

11. The Image of God Versus Natural Man's Image

God expresses Himself, first of all, with His Word — also called "wisdom" in the Old Testament and Jesus in the New Testament; and, secondly, through the Holy Spirit by making things come into being. Why does He do this?

Proverbs 8:35–36 declares: "For whoever finds Me finds life, and obtains favor from the Lord; But he who sins against Me wrongs his own soul; All those who hate Me love death."

1 John 5:12 states: "He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life."

These two verses say the same thing; they talk about the same truth, pointing out that Jesus is wisdom and also that wisdom produces life. Jesus Himself declared this same truth when He said, in John 17:3: "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent." Do you understand that knowing Jesus is the same as getting eternal life, the life and nature of God — just as getting wisdom produces eternal life in you?

Moreover, in Proverbs 8:22–31, we read: "'The LORD possessed me at the beginning of His way, before His

works of old. I have been established from everlasting, From the beginning, before there was ever an earth. When there were no depths I was brought forth, When there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, Before the hills, I was brought forth; While as yet He had not made the earth or the fields, Or the primeval dust of the world. When He prepared the heavens, I was there, When He drew a circle on the face of the deep, When He established the clouds above, When He strengthened the fountains of the deep, When He assigned to the sea its limit, So that the waters would not transgress His command, When He marked out the foundations of the earth, Then I was beside Him, as a master craftsman; And I was daily His delight, Rejoicing always before Him. Rejoicing in His inhabited world, And my delight was with the sons of men."

It is also written in John 1:1 18: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light which gives light to every man who comes into the world. He was in the

world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. John bore witness of Him and cried out saying, 'This was He of whom I said, "He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me."' And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him."

We can deduce from the verses above that Jesus is wisdom, God's architect, and the life and light of men; and that Jesus gives whoever believes in Him or receives Him the right to become children of God that is the righteousness of God. So Jesus is the new way God the Father has settled upon to make us the righteousness of God.

Let us bring to mind the history of creation to see the purpose of God's Word. It is written in Genesis 1:1–3: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. Then

God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day. Then God said, 'Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.' Thus God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day. Then God said, 'Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear'; and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, 'Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth'; and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. So the evening and the morning were the third day." (And, as we know, the process goes on until the seventh day.)

Notice that three figures are recurrent in this account: God Himself, His Spirit, and His Word. The Bible says that God created the heavens and the earth. The Scriptures also state that the Spirit of God was

hovering over the face of the waters. Finally, God's Word produced in the physical realm whatever He said. This means that physical materials are within God's Word. Anytime God spoke a word, what He intended came to pass. Moreover, Jesus declares in John 4:24: "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth;" and, in John 6:63, that God's Word is spirit: "It is the Spirit who gives life, the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit and they are life."

God, who is spirit, created the heavens and the earth, and the Words of God which are spirits produced in the physical realm whatever they talked about. This means that material things all physical material and the physical world come from the spirit realm of God, His spirit, or His Word. Anything we see with our optical eyes and scientific instruments originates from God's Word. What I want you to notice is that God's Word when it is in your mouth has the same ability to produce physical material when you ask anything in the name of Jesus. It is written in John 14:12 14: "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it." This literally means that we get whatever we ask for in the name of Jesus, but Jesus imposes one condition: you must believe in Him.

In Chapter Eight, however, we learned that we cannot truly believe in Jesus or the gospel unless we first repent and focus our mind on God, as we are told to do in Mark 1:15: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel." This tells us that we have to change our mind first and then we will believe in the gospel. And, on the flip side, this means that if we do not turn our mind towards God we cannot have a genuine belief in the gospel. In addition, remember what Jesus declares in Mark 11:23 24: "For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will come to pass, he will have whatever he says. Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them." In other words, we must not only believe, but also have no doubt in our mind, otherwise our belief will have no effect.

We learned in Chapter Two, as we discussed having a spirit of faith, that our mind must only focus on God's Word, and be turned into God's Mind, for us to have a genuine faith and thereby act powerfully like God.

A human being expresses himself by his words (through his mouth), his looks (in his eyes), his deeds (made by his arms or his feet), and by his attitude (the expressions of his face or body). Anyone can notice the similarity between God's expressions and a human being's expressions. God and a human being express

themselves in the same way. The main difference is that God expresses His Word with power — power that gives life — and with unfailing love, and His Word is always true and always comes true without fail. On the other hand, a human being's words have no living power but only possess the power to point his life in the wrong direction (toward death), his words also have no unfailing love, are not always true, and hold the ups and downs of his nature. In both the Old and New Testament, human beings' words get living power, love, and truth whenever they speak God's Word and have faith in God or Jesus. This means that a human being must know God's Word in order to quote or profess it. That knowledge causes him to treasure God's Word before he is able to use it. A human being's heart is his safe deposit box where he treasures God's Words and draws them out when the occasion or opportunity occurs and their use is necessary.

We can deduce, then, that the greatest law of God states: Everyone plans his life with his words, in the same way God frames the world by His Word. This is as it is written in Hebrews 11:3 ("By Faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible"); Proverbs 4:23 (New Living Translation Bible, Second Edition) ("Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life"); and Proverbs 18:21 ("Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit"). Do you see, in these three scriptures, that the

Word of God has the power to frame worlds and to bring into existence things which do not exist? In the same way, God's Word, when it is treasured in your heart and then confessed by your mouth, has the same power to frame your world and send it in the right direction. But if your speech is not in line with God's Word, any evil your words carry will return to you.

Paul the Apostle said, in 2 Timothy 3:16 17: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work." This means that all scriptures have been given to you to have a great life a perfect and balanced life. What do you want? Do you want to be wise by choosing a great life, or to be stupid and foolish by following your own thoughts, desires, and feelings? Do you want to focus your mind only on God's Word so that your mind causes you to have genuine faith and powerful speech allowing you to live a God-kind of life, or do you want to focus on man's words and death?

Whatever you choose, you will eat the fruit of your choice good fruit if you choose the way of righteousness, or bad fruit if you choose the way of wickedness, selfishness, and your own opinions about the life of this world. In other words, do you want to remain a slave of your thoughts, desires, and emotions, or to be free from them? In John 8:31 36, Jesus reveals the reality of freedom and slavery of sin: "Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, 'If you abide in My

word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.' They answered Him, 'We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, "You will be made free"?' Jesus answered them, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.'"

God has already said that trusting in your own ways of doing things — like trusting your own thoughts, desires, and emotions — is sin. And once you sin in this way then you become a slave to your thoughts, desires, and emotions, as Jesus has just said. Only Jesus can give you freedom from the bondage of sin. Only God's Word or Jesus can tell you the measure of what is good and evil and make you free from the bondage of your own thoughts, feelings, and desires.

Without God's Word or Jesus, you are not able to know what is good and — unconsciously or consciously — you will follow what is wicked or evil and, thus, be unable to come out from under your slavery to sin. You need Jesus or the Word of God to take control over you so that your thoughts and words will start to line up with God's Word and thus frame your world and let you live the perfect and balanced life God has in store for you. Remember that your life is the reflection of your communication, and your communication is the reflection of the content of your heart and what your mind focuses on. If God's

Word is not in your heart, your communication will be filled with your own thoughts and lead you to sin, as Jesus said in Matthew 12:35–37: "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the Day of Judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned." So you must choose to treasure God's Word in your heart and then focus your mind on the Word of God to give hope to your spirit and joy to your heart. With this, your communication will be filled with God's Word and give you the life God has already planned for you. Without this, you will have to live a life full of struggle, fear, worry, troubles, addictions, and calamities.

If you wish to live the life God has planned for you, you have only one choice to make. You must treasure Jesus and God's Word in your heart, and change your mind to focus on God. This will bring to you the same images as God's Word creates, allowing you to perfect your communication so that it only carries words which are in line with God's Word. This is the way of righteousness, where your speech is based on the good beliefs stored in your heart and pictured by your mind, and not on the falsehoods stored in your heart due to your own thoughts, feelings, and desires. But remember that the issue is not your speech or speaking, since what you say is the result of what you put in

your heart and what your mind is focusing on. What matters most is what you treasure in your heart and what your mind is focusing on. Why? Because what we believe and focus on controls our life. If you believe in something, and your mind focuses on it, that very thing runs your life.

Beware of your desires, otherwise they will become your gods, as Philippians 3:18–19 (New Living Translation Bible, Second Edition) says: "For I have told you often before, and I say it again with tears in my eyes, that there are many whose conduct shows they are really enemies of the cross of Christ. They are headed for destruction. Their god is their appetite, they brag about shameful things, and they think only about life here on earth." Obviously, going after your own desires or appetites and following your own thoughts will lead you to destruction or into troubles.

Can you see that God and Jesus have already given you all you need to live a wonderful life? They have played their part. It is now your responsibility to make up your mind and choose the way of righteousness — the way of Jesus — instead of the way of wickedness, which follows your own opinions and desires. Whether you have made the good choice and chosen Jesus, the way of righteousness; or have chosen to continue to follow your own opinions and desires, keep reading because I am convinced that this book will change your life forever. As you read, you will start to fill your heart with God's Word and your mind will reflect the

same pictures of God's Word which are stored in your heart, so that they can give hope to your spirit and energy to your will.

When your spirit receives God's Word, your spirit will send the picture of God's testimonies to your mind, which allow your spirit to get hope. Therefore, this hope will give enough strength to your will for you to take control over your own thoughts, feelings, and deeds, as it is written in Lamentations 3:17 26: "You have moved my soul far from peace; I have forgotten prosperity. And I said, 'My strength and my hope Have perished from the LORD.' Remember my affliction and roaming, The wormwood and the gall. My soul still remembers And sinks within me. This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope. Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. 'The LORD is my portion,' says my soul, 'Therefore I hope in Him!' The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, To the soul who seeks Him. It is good that one should hope and wait quietly For the salvation of the LORD." The one who should be in control of your life is your God. I have already explained in previous chapters (Chapters One through Three) that Lamentations 3:17 26 shows us that our focus determines our life. If we focus on God we rejoice, but if we focus on our affliction we are depressed. Rejoicing is living, but depression is dying.

Who is in control of your life right now? Is it God or Jesus or God's Word? Or is it your appetite,

emotions, or thoughts? Whatever your decision is, read on and your profitable life will be obvious to you and others.

There is one last thing you must know before you start your journey. From Genesis to Revelation, God the Father, Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior, and the Holy Spirit are the same. They are the same in the Old Testament and in the New Testament. They are the same today, tomorrow, until Judgment Day, and afterwards. Nothing will change. What was true in the Old Testament remains true in the New Testament, and it remains true today and forever.

In the Old Testament, God the Father reveals His truth, which is His unfailing love to grant human beings everlasting life. He also tells us His way to achieve His purpose is to give us the gift of righteousness, so that we might do His will and not lose access to the eternal life He has predestined for us through our unfailing faith in Him.

When our ancestor Adam failed to keep the eternal life God had given him, God started to teach His people the two main requirements human beings must satisfy to have access to eternal life and keep it forever: faith in God or Jesus, and the gift of righteousness. God used Abraham to show us that we need to be a seed of Abraham (and, thus, a seed of faith) to satisfy the first condition.

The testimony of Moses about the Ten Commandments and all their statutes was aimed to teach us what righteousness is and the fact that righteousness

cannot be attained by our own effort but only if we commit ourselves to God and follow His will. Then God chose David to put into practice the behavior God wants us to have: to trust in Him to receive the gift of righteousness, and when we happen to sin to repent with a contrite heart and change our mind towards God, so that God will again grant us His righteousness, as He did for King David. He does all this for us so that we might receive eternal life and keep it.

Thus, Abraham showed us our pattern of faith; Moses and the Ten Commandments showed us the path to righteousness and what God wants us to do; and King David gave us the means to attain the gift of righteousness.

Then Jesus came to earth in the New Testament as the perfect model of faith, the perfect model of a true and real definition of righteousness which is grace and truth and the perfect model of righteousness, itself. After His suffering, death and resurrection, and ascension, Jesus Christ sent the Holy Spirit to remind us of God's Word, which should be treasured in our heart and can help our spirit to do the will of Jesus or God and cause us to become righteousness so that we can keep our eternal life. Jesus Christ Himself expresses this wonderful truth in Matthew 5:17 20, saying: "'Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from

the law till all is fulfilled. Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven."

Jesus Christ came to fulfill what was written in the law and foretold by the prophets, not to change the smallest detail of God's Law. We must beware of teaching God's people that Jesus came to earth to establish new commandments different from those which were in place in the Old Testament. Instead, He came to unveil the law so that God's people would have a perfect understanding of the Will of God, as He said in John 14:6 ("Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me'"). Jesus meant that He is the righteousness, the light, and eternal life. He came to grant us His righteousness, to give us the best possible understanding of God's Word, and, finally, to give us everlasting life the God-kind of life.

Do not forget that God said clearly, in Isaiah 54:17, that our righteousness originates from Him: "No weapon formed against you shall prosper, And every tongue which rises against you in judgment You shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, And their righteousness is from Me, Says the LORD." Therefore there is no contradiction between

the Old and the New Testament about the definition of righteousness according to God, Moses, King David, Isaiah the prophet, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

12. What is the Purpose of Our Obedience to God's Law and Judgments?

If you are wondering why we must be obedient to God's law and judgments, here is God's answer, as it was given in Exodus 19:5 6: "Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel."

In this wonderful, beautiful scripture, "obey My voice" could be replaced with "listen to My voice," while "keep My covenant" could be replaced with "obey or put into practice My covenant." Taking into account the substitutions above, Exodus 19:5 6 becomes: "Now therefore, if you will indeed listen to My voice and obey or put into practice My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel."

Let us break down those verses to separate the different steps we must take.

First of all, God needs our attention; this is represented by the phrase "Listen to My voice." God wants us to be humble so that we can pay attention to His Word, study it, understand it, and then accept as true the Word of God we have heard. This means that humility is the virtue required by anyone who desires to pass from darkness to light — or from ignorance or foolishness into revelation knowledge or truth. Do not forget, it is written in Proverbs 3:34: "Surely He scorns the scornful, But gives grace to the humble;" and 1 Peter 5:5: ". . . God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."

Secondly God needs our obedience; this is found in the phrase "obey My covenant." Why does God need our obedience? Jesus explains this key issue in John 14:21, saying: "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him." By loving Jesus — by keeping His Commandments — we cause Him to come and live in us. Can you think of any gift of God which is greater than receiving Christ in you? Paul the Apostle states the same truth when he declares in Colossians 1:26–27: ". . . the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." As far as Jesus is concerned, keeping the Law of God or the Word of Jesus is the perfect way to manifest our love

for God or Jesus. Do you also see that Jesus declares clearly that there is a need for us to prove our obedience (and love) to God or Jesus?

Let us consider the speech God made before He gave to Moses and His people the covenant (the Ten Commandments) as it is written in our expanded version of Exodus 19:5–6: "Now therefore, if you will indeed listen to My voice and obey or put into practice My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel." Can you see that before God exalts any person (or any nation) as a true worshiper who is holy and stands apart from sin and evil, that man must humble himself and prove his obedience to God? This is what King David did.

But Jesus came down from Heaven many years after King David to show to all mankind the perfect pattern of humility and obedience that leads to glory, as described in that passage from Exodus. We are reminded to be like Jesus in Philippians 2:5–11: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a servant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name

which is above every name, that at that name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

This passage declares that Jesus's name was exalted above any other name because He humbled Himself and became obedient to God to the point of death. So the life of Jesus on earth shows clearly that humility and obedience to God's Word are the two key factors that cause God to give us the crown of glory promised by Him. Remember that Jesus did not come to earth to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets but to accomplish their purpose.

In brief, Jesus came to earth to give us an excellent path that we must follow in order to receive the crown of glory promised by God through our humility and obedience to His Word. Since Jesus declares in Revelation 22:16 that He is the offspring of King David ("I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star."), let us look again at stories of King David's life to learn what is the content of humility and obedience. 1 Samuel 17:12–54 will help up to grasp this concept:

> Now David was the son of that Ephrathite of Bethlehem Judah, whose name was Jesse, and who had eight sons. And the man was old, advanced in years, in the days of Saul. The three oldest sons of Jesse had gone to follow Saul to the battle. The

names of his three sons who went to the battle were Eliab the first born, next to him Abinadab, and the third Shammah. David was the youngest. And the three oldest followed Saul. But David occasionally went and returned from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Bethlehem.

And the Philistine drew near and presented himself forty days, morning and evening.

Then Jesse said to his son David, "Take now for your brothers an ephah of this dried grain and these ten loaves, and run to your brothers at the camp. And carry these ten cheeses to the captain of their thousand, and see how your brothers fare, and bring back news of them." Now Saul and they and all the men of Israel were in the Valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines.

So David rose early in the morning, left the sheep with a keeper, and took the things and went as Jesse had commanded him. And he came to the camp as the army was going out to the fight and shouting for the battle. For Israel and the Philistines had drawn up in battle array, army against army. And David left his supplies in the hand of the supply keeper, ran to the army, and came and greeted his brothers. Then as he talked with them, there was the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, coming up from the armies of the Philistines; and he spoke according to the same words. So David heard them. And all

the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him and were dreadfully afraid. So the men of Israel said, "Have you seen this man who has come up? Surely he has come up to defy Israel; and it shall be that the man who kills him the king will enrich with great riches, will give him his daughter, and give his father's house exemption in Israel."

Then David spoke to the men who stood by him, saying, "What shall be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine that should defy the armies of the living God?"

And the people answered him in this manner, saying, "So shall it be done for the man who kills him."

Now Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men; and Eliab's anger aroused against David, and he said, "Why did you come down here? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your pride and the insolence of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle."

And David said, "What have I done now? Is there not a cause?" Then he turned from him towards another and said the same thing; and these people answered him as the first ones did.

Now when the words which David spoke were heard, they reported them to Saul; and he sent

for him. Then David said to Saul, "Let no man's heart fail because of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine."

And Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth."

But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep his father's sheep, and when a lion or a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock, I went out after it and struck it, and delivered the lamb from its mouth; and when it arose against me, I caught it by its beard, and struck and killed it. Your servant has killed both lion and bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be one of them, seeing he has defied the armies of the living God." Moreover David said, "The LORD, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine."

And Saul said to David, "Go, and the LORD be with you!"

So Saul clothed David with his armor, and he put a bronze helmet on his head; he also clothed him with a coat of mail. And David fastened his sword to his armor, and he tried to walk, for he had not tested them. And David said to Saul, "I cannot walk with these, for I have not tested them." So David took them off.

Then he took his staff in his hand; and he chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag, in a pouch which he had, and his sling was in his hand. And he drew near to the Philistine. So the Philistine came, and began drawing near David, and the man who bore the shield went before him. And when the Philistine looked about and saw David, he disdained him; for he was but a youth, ruddy and good-looking. So the Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. And the Philistine said to David, "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!"

Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword, with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you. And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. Then all this assembly shall know that the LORD does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the LORD's, and He will give you into our hands."

And it was so, when the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David, that David hastened

> and ran towards the army to meet the Philistine. Then David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone; and he slung it and struck the Philistine in his forehead, so that the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the earth. So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, and struck the Philistine and killed him. But there was no sword in the hand of David. Therefore David ran and stood over the Philistine, took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him, and cut off his head with it.
>
> And when the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled. Now the men of Israel and Judah arose and shouted, and pursued the Philistines as far as the entrance of the valley and to the gates of Ekron. And the wounded of the Philistines fell along the road to Shaaraim, even as far as Gath and Ekron. Then the children of Israel returned from chasing the Philistines, and they plundered their tents. And David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem, but he put his armor in his tent.

Let us now study some of the character traits of David, which are displayed in this account. Before the story we have just read happened, David had already lived in Saul's house and served him as his armor bearer. From time to time, David asked permission to go back to Bethlehem, and to take care of his father's sheep, as it is written in 1 Samuel 17:15. He did not boast about living in the palace or say that he was too

important to take care of the sheep. Instead, he was very humble.

One day, his father called him and sent him to see his elder brothers who were with King Saul at war, as it says in 1 Samuel 17:17 18. But did David leave his sheep without assurance of someone taking care of them? No! Instead, 1 Samuel 17:20 says: "So David rose early in the morning, left the sheep with a keeper, and took the things and went as Jesse had commanded him."

This shows us that David was not only humble, but also a careful man, who paid great attention to details. David got to the army encampment just as the Israelite army was leaving for the battlefield, so he left his things and hurried out to greet his brothers. Again, we are told that David took the time to leave his things in the hands of someone else before going on his way.

On the field of battle, David heard Goliath's voice, and while the others fled, David inquired about the reward for the one who would kill Goliath without expressing any fear. Where did this confidence or conviction come from? The answer lies in David's question: "For who is this uncircumcised Philistine that should defy the armies of the living God?" Why was he so confident? Because David activated his faith by bringing to mind God's truth found in Deuteronomy 33:29 ("Happy are you, O Israel! Who is like you, a people saved by the LORD, The shield of your help And the sword of your majesty! Your enemies shall submit to you, And you shall tread down their high

places."), and by exclaiming: "For who is this uncircumcised Philistine that should defy the armies of the living God?" Because he knew that God would keep the promise He made in Deuteronomy, deep in his heart David knew that victory would be on his side if he took up the challenge.

Then David was brought into the presence of Saul who, describing Goliath's physical weapons and his training in the matter of war, tried to make David doubt his own beliefs. But David said that his weapons were not physical weapons but spiritual weapons. He explained to Saul that the Lord had already saved him from both lions and bears. So his faith was not only based on the fact that God's Word is true but his own knowledge that his obedience to God's Word had already led him to believe that you can put your trust in it. Therefore, David knew there was no way to fail. This confidence in God and His Word this trust in God is refined through obedience to God's Word. Obedience to God's Word casts away any doubt, unbelief, and fear from our mind and heart. David's obedience allowed him to be unafraid to face Goliath in 1 Samuel 17:32.

Obedience to God's Word led David to the point where there was not a shadow of a doubt, fear, or unbelief in his mind. In other words, he had total confidence in God and the truth His Word conveys.

When faith attains this level, it is called the "Audacity of Faith" or the "Faith of the Champion." This type of obedience to God's Word aims to make you a champion in every area of life. This means that you

become a champion in any area of life because you have gotten to know the revelation knowledge of that specific field of life. Here is the main characteristic of a champion in any area of life: the champion has the full knowledge of the truth (or the law) that governs that field; he expresses no fear, doubt, or unbelief in his speech and actions; and he always prevails over whoever fights against him in that area of life. Peter explained the six areas of life we have to become the champion of apart from faith in 2 Peter 1:5 11 (New Living Translation, Second Edition), saying, "In view of all this, make every effort to respond to God's promises. Supplement your faith with a generous provision of moral excellence, and moral excellence with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with patient endurance, and patient endurance with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love for everyone. The more you grow like this, the more productive and useful you will be in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But those who fail to develop in this way are short-sighted or blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their old sins. So, dear brothers and sisters, work hard to prove that you really are among those God has called and chosen. Do these things and you will never fall away. Then God will give you a grand entrance into the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

Can you see that it is not sufficient to know that God's Word is true or to believe in Jesus? Our knowledge of

God's Word — our love of Jesus — must be proved in six areas: moral excellence, self-control, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love in order to make our faith grow into the faith of the champion. Only this kind of faith, which is rooted in God's Word or Jesus's love, will last — and nothing in the world can challenge it and win.

Our success in these six areas causes God and Jesus to make Their headquarters in both our heart — by granting us the full knowledge of God's Word and the full knowledge of Jesus — and in our spirit, by bringing us the power of the Holy Spirit at its highest level. Only at that very moment can we start to become fruitful, as Peter has said and as Jesus Himself revealed in John 15:1–8 when He told us the parable of the vine and the branches.

When we, the branches, start bearing fruit by obeying God's Word or by loving Jesus, then God prunes (or purifies) us. Bearing fruit (gaining victory) causes God to decrease our levels of fear, doubt, and unbelief — and you cannot become a champion until these three have been completely removed from your heart and mind. Our purification increases our confidence and causes us to bear much fruit.

At every stage of our spiritual growth, God tests us to check our love for Him. The objective of our obedience to God's Word is to allow God to grant us the spiritual gifts of God's blessings and grace. Notice that practicing obedience and service gives us a better understanding of the Word of God and increases

our belief, as it is written in Psalm 111:10: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever." Do you see that our obedience to God increases our understanding of His Word, helping us to go from belief to conviction? Obedience to God's Word is the principal factor of a good understanding of what God wants for us — it activates and empowers our faith. Obedience to God's Word acts on our faith as fire refines gold and silver and increases our confidence and trust in God and Jesus.

Humility is the starting point for our understanding of the Word of God, but obedience perfects that understanding of the Good News of Jesus and God. This means that the purpose of humility is to help us to catch a glimpse of revelation knowledge, while obedience aims to give us full knowledge of God's Word. If we want to increase our understanding of any truth found in the Bible we must observe a time of service or obedience. Therefore, until a man activates his faith by acting upon his beliefs he will never get to have a good understanding of that belief. If he succeeds in acting upon his belief, then this better understanding will stir him to act according to the belief — which will become a conviction after he starts taking any corresponding actions and then gains supremacy over fear, doubt, and unbelief. Because what we believe controls our life, afterwards he will effortlessly put this conviction into practice. Thus, unless you succeed in activating your faith for a specific purpose found in

the Bible, what you want to see in the physical realm will never come to pass and you will remain unfruitful.

Notice that obeying the Word of God not only gives us a better understanding of God's Word but it also causes us to experience true happiness, as is written in Luke 11:27–28: "And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to him, 'Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed You!' But He said, 'More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!'" Can you see that in the eyes of Jesus those who hear the Word of God and put it into practice are blessed? This means that if you hear God's Word and put it to work it will bring you happiness, and a sense of peace or freedom from anxiety or pain.

The greatest importance of obeying God's Word is this: until you do well and speak sweet and pleasant words by obeying what the Bible says, you will never be a fountain of life as God promised. To see what is meant by being a fountain of life, let us begin with John 4:1–26:

> Therefore, when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John (though Jesus Himself did not baptize, but His disciples), He left Judea and departed again to Galilee. But He needed to go through Samaria.
>
> So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave

to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.

Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.

Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."

The woman said to Him, "Sir, you have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do you get that living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?"

Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.'

The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw."

> Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here."
>
> The woman answered and said, "I have no husband."
>
> Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,' for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you speak truly."
>
> The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship."
>
> Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."
>
> The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things."
>
> Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He."

When Jesus says "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I

shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life," it is His most powerful revelation. In this parable, the water He refers to stands for God's Word. But notice that Jesus specifies that anyone who drinks the water He will give us (God's Word) will become a fountain of water. This means that there is a time factor. Notice that Jesus said "Whoever drinks of this water" (present tense) "will thirst again," (future tense) "but whoever drinks of the water" (present tense) "that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life" (future tense). Jesus wants you to ingest God's Word every day so that one day your heart may be filled to the brim with it and God's Word will start to overflow from your heart to feed every fiber of your being, and then come out of you to feed those who come in contact with you, as it is written in Proverbs 13:14 (Amplified Bible): "The teaching of the wise is a fountain of life, that one may avoid the snares of death."

This same reality was foretold by God himself in Isaiah 58:1 15:

"Cry aloud, spare not;
Lift up your voice like a trumpet;
Tell My people their transgression,
And the house of Jacob their sins.
Yet they seek Me daily,
And delight to know My ways,

As a nation that did righteousness,
And did not forsake the ordinance of their God.
They ask of Me the ordinances of justice;
They take delight in approaching God.
'Why have we fasted,' they say, 'and You have not seen?
Why have we afflicted our souls, and You take no notice?'

"In fact, in the day of your fast you find pleasure,
And exploit all your laborers.
Indeed you fast for strife and debate,
And to strike with the fist of wickedness.
You will not fast as you do this day,
To make your voice heard on high.
Is it a fast that I have chosen,
A day for a man to afflict his soul?
Is it to bow down his head like a bulrush,
And to spread out sackcloth and ashes?
Would you call this a fast,
And an acceptable day to the Lord?

"Is this not the fast that I have chosen:
To loose the bonds of wickedness,
To undo the heavy burdens,
To let the oppressed go free,
And that you break every yoke?
Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
And that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out;
When you see the naked, that you cover him,
And not hide yourself from your own flesh?

Then your light shall break forth like the morning,
Your healing shall spring forth speedily,
And your righteousness shall go before you;
The glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.
Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;
You shall cry, and He will say, 'Here I am.'

"If you take away the yoke from your midst,
The pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness,
If you extend your soul to the hungry
And satisfy the afflicted soul,
Then your light shall dawn in the darkness,
And your darkness shall be as the noonday.
The Lord will guide you continually,
And satisfy your soul in drought,
And strengthen your bones;
You shall be like a watered garden,
And like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail.
Those from among you
Shall build the old waste places;
You shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
And you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach,
The Restorer of Streets to Dwell In.

"If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath,
From doing your pleasure on My holy day,
And call the Sabbath a delight,
The holy day of the Lord honorable,
And shall honor Him, not doing your own ways,

Nor finding your own pleasure,
Nor speaking your own words,
Then you shall delight yourself in the Lord;
And I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth,
And feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father.
The mouth of the Lord has spoken."

Do you see what God expects from you — that He wants to cause you to become a fountain of life? His answer is in the above passage, and He explains that until you really love Jesus, you will never be a fountain of life as God promised.

Revelation 3:15–22 gives a clear explanation of how this works: "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, will I spew you out of my mouth. Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' — and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked — I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with

Me. To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on my throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. He, who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

Can you see that if you listen to Jesus and accept God's Word, Jesus will enter into your heart to guide you, give you direction, strengthen you, and grant you wisdom and inspiration? You must simply overcome to receive power and authority, and to sit with Christ on His throne and reign in life on earth. But how do you overcome? By obeying God's Word no matter the situation or circumstances you find yourself in.

13. We Live under Grace, the Time of Merciful God

John the Baptist sent his disciples to ask Jesus if He was Christ, the Messiah, as we read, here: "When John the Baptist sent some of his disciples to Jesus to determine whether He was Christ, the Messiah." When John did this, Jesus made use of this question to reveal that we are now living under grace, the time of Merciful God not in the time of judgment, which will come at the end of this age, on the day of the second coming of Jesus Christ.

Let us look at this account, which is found in Matthew 11:1 19:

> Now it came to pass, when Jesus finished commanding His twelve disciples, that He departed from there to teach and to preach in their cities.
>
> And when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples and said to Him, "Are you the Coming One, or do we look for another?"
>
> Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things which you can hear and see:

> The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me."
>
> As they departed, Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. For this is he of whom it is written:
>
> > 'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face,
> > Who will prepare Your way before You.'

"Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if you are willing to receive it, he is Elijah who is to come. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

"But to what shall I liken this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to their companions, and saying:

> 'We played the flute for you,

> And you did not dance;
> We mourned to you,
> And you did not lament.'
>
> For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon.'
>
> The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' But wisdom is justified by her children."

When we read this passage from Matthew, we wonder: Why did John the Baptist need clarification from Jesus to be sure He was the Christ? To understand, let us first see what was in his mind (in Matthew 3:1–12) and then what God says in Isaiah 29:17–24 about the coming of Jesus Christ.

Beginning with Matthew 3:1–12: "In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!' For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying: "the voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the LORD, Make His paths straight.'" And John himself was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, 'Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the

wrath to come? Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not think to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our father." For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. And even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into His barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.'"

Do you see that as far as John the Baptist is concerned, Jesus's role is to baptize those who repent with the Holy Spirit and to baptize those who do not with the fire of judgment? John the Baptist focused specifically on those who refused to repent — even the Pharisees and the Sadducees. But Jesus focuses on God's grace — the unfailing love of God that causes Jesus to meet all the needs of His people by healing them — and truth — the gospel preached to the poor or humble in order to allow them to enter in the Kingdom of God — as He said in Matthew 11:4–6: ". . . 'Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me.'"

Let us now go to Isaiah 29:17 24 to see what God told Isaiah to prophesy:

Is it not yet a very little while
Till Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field,
And the fruitful field be esteemed as a forest?
In that day the deaf shall hear the words of the book,
And the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness.
The humble also shall increase their joy in the Lord,
And the poor among men shall rejoice
In the Holy One of Israel.
For the terrible one is brought to nothing,
The scornful one is consumed,
And all who watch for iniquity are cut off
Who make a man an offender by a word,
And lay a snare for him who reproves in the gate,
And turn aside the just by empty words.
Therefore thus says the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob:

"Jacob shall not now be ashamed,
Nor shall his face now grow pale;
But when he sees his children,
The work of My hands, in his midst,
They will hallow My name,
And hallow the Holy One of Jacob,
And fear the God of Israel.
These also who erred in spirit will come to understanding,
And those who complained will learn doctrine."

Have you noticed that on the same day that the deaf shall hear, the blind shall see, the humble shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor shall rejoice, that those who watch for iniquity will be cut off? Do you understand now why John the Baptist was not wrong to ask Jesus if He was the Coming One?

Jesus perceived the reason for John the Baptist's misunderstanding and advised him to focus on the Good News brought to people who suffered due to a lack of revelation knowledge, on the divine healing received by folks who were suffering or bound by any kind of sickness and on those who were grieved — but not on judgment, which will come with His second coming. Jesus made it clear that John's mission was the same as His, even though John the Baptist stressed a judgment, while Jesus emphasized grace and salvation brought by God's Word. Later, during His encounter with Nicodemus, Jesus made the distinction between a merciful God and judgment crystal clear when He declared, in John 3:17–18: "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

God's justice, we are told, requires death for sinners. It is written in Ezekiel 18:20: "The soul who sins shall die." But from the first coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ until the time of His second coming — which is the time of judgment — we live under

the grace of God in the time of the merciful God. It is written in Deuteronomy 4:31: ". . . (for the LORD God is a merciful God), He will not forsake you nor destroy you, nor forget the covenant of your fathers which He swore to them."

God sent His Son Jesus Christ to earth to save mankind, as it is foretold by Isaiah the prophet in Isaiah 61:1–3: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for a spirit of heaviness, That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified."

Isaiah 35:5–6 also says, "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert." All these prophesies were fulfilled during the lifetime of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. And Jesus Himself testified that what Isaiah prophesied in Isaiah 61:1–2 was about Him, in Luke 4:16–21: "So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as the custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day,

and stood up to read. And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: 'The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the LORD has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent me to heal the broken-hearted. To preach deliverance to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed, To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.' Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, 'Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.'"

So there is no room for unbelief. Anybody who seeks truth has all the evidence to make him fully persuaded that Jesus is really the Son of God sent by His Father to favor us while we were still sinners, as Romans 5:8 says, "But God demonstrates His own love towards us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Because Christ already died for us, you may wonder, "Is it possible to be removed from the grace of God?" Once you are a true born-again believer, unless you backslide in your heart and return to your old life, it is practically impossible to lose the grace of God, as Jesus said in John 14:21–23: "'He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.' Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, 'Lord, how is it that You will

manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?' Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.'" This means that our love for Jesus causes Him and His Father to make us their headquarters.

Moreover, Proverbs 10:12 says: "Hatred stirs up strife, But love covers all sins." This means that if we keep meditating on God's Word, and so retain our love for Jesus in us, there is no way to lose the grace and unfailing love of God. And if we sometimes happen to sin, but not deliberately, God will be merciful and cover all our sins, as Jesus Himself said in John 17:17–19 (New Living Translation Bible, Second Edition): "Make them holy by Your truth; teach them Your word, which is truth. Just as You sent Me into the world, I am sending them into the world. And I give Myself as a holy sacrifice for them so they can be made holy by Your truth." Furthermore, Proverbs 17:26 states: "Also, to punish the righteous is not good, Nor to strike princes for their uprightness." Can you see that the Bible specifically says it is not good to punish a righteous man because the gift of wisdom granted to him (the righteous one) by God will show him what to do in order to get out of his sin?

Notice also that Jesus declares, in Matthew 11:11: "Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he;" and in John 3:5: "Most assuredly, I

say to you unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God." Do you see that Jesus has revealed in Matthew 11:11 that anyone who is born again is greater than John the Baptist and, therefore, greater than all the prophets of God who lived in the Old Testament since John the Baptist is greater than all of them? Therefore, being born again means to live under God's grace and He gives us an eternal life which surpasses anything man can imagine.

God points out this wonderful reality in Jeremiah 31:33 34: "But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more." And the Holy Spirit, inspiring the author of Hebrews, makes him write in Hebrews 10:1 39:

> For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purged, would have had no more consciousness of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. For it is not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

Therefore, when He came into the world, He said:

> "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire.
> But a body you have prepared for Me.
> In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin
> You had no pleasure.
> Then I said, 'Behold, I have come
> In the volume of the book it is written of Me
> To do Your will, O God.'"

Previously saying, "Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them" (which are offered according to the law), then he said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God." He takes away the first that He may establish the second. By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.

But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before,

"This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will

write them," then He adds, "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin.

Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and having a high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and

insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine; I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The LORD will judge His people." It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

But recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings: partly while you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while you became companions of those who were so treated; for you had compassion on me in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods, knowing that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven. Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise:

"For yet a little while,
And He who coming will come and will not tarry.
Now the just shall live by faith;
But if anyone draws back,
My soul has no pleasure in him."

But we are not those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.

Can you see that there is only one requirement to remain under the grace of God after being born again? This condition is stated in Hebrews 10:26: "For if we

sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins." This condition clearly declares that we are not to sin willfully or deliberately, for this would nullify the sacrifice of the blood of Jesus.

Jesus, by shedding His blood, has made us perfect and causes God to forgive our sins, as it is written in Hebrews 10:14: "For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified;" and in Hebrews 10:17: "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." Do you see the condition of the born-again, genuine believer of Jesus Christ? All we have to do is to repent of our sins and turn to God by believing in Jesus and confessing Jesus as our Lord and Savior and, from that moment on, to never sin deliberately. And Jesus, God, and the Holy Spirit will play their parts by giving us the unfailing love, favor, and gifts of grace and the truth of God's Word for us to live by.

14. The Second Definition of Grace (The Working Power of Christ in Us)

The first definition of grace is God's unmerited (in other words "unearned" or "undeserved") favor or spiritual blessing.

It is not surprising that Jesus has given us another definition of grace in 2 Corinthians 12:7–10: "And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong."

From these scriptures we learn that grace can also mean the strength or power of Christ — or the working power of Christ.

Another portion of the Scriptures gives a clue to this key factor of grace in Acts 20:32, saying: "And now,

brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified." If you replace the word grace with our second definition, which is given above, then Acts 20:32 becomes: "And now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His working power, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified." Can you see, then, that God's Word produces grace or working power in us? This is also why Ephesians 4:29 says: "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearer." This means that good words edify and impart grace — divine strength or power — to the hearer. This also means that "grace" stands for edification — the building up of a person.

Remember that a man is a spirit living in a body, so the edification of a man really concerns his spirit — man's spirit is built up by good words. According to *Babylon English*, "edification" means "the improvement of somebody's mind or character." The mind is a part of the soul of man — which is a part of the spirit of man. Taking into account this definition of edification, Ephesians 4:29 could become: "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary building up of man's spirit, that it may impart grace, the working power of Christ, to the hearer."

Another passage deals with the same truth. We find it in Hebrews 13:7–9: "Remember those who rule over

you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct. Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines. For it is good that the heart be established by grace, not with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them."

We all know that human beings needs two kinds of food: food stored in our belly to feed our body, and God's Word treasured in our heart to feed our spirit. So Hebrews is saying it is good that our heart be made strong by the working power of God in us brought by His Word. Paul the Apostle testified concerning the working power of God in us when he declared, in Ephesians 3:6 7: ". . . that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel, of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power." Peter, a disciple of Christ, prayed to God for the believers, so that they would keep focusing on God's working power, which will have the final say in spite of their suffering: "But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you" (1 Peter 5:10).

Since the Word of God is the main factor for delivering the grace or working power of God to us, we've got to digest more and more of God's Word and His message to increase His grace and working power in

us, as it is written in Acts 19:20: "So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed." This is why Peter commends believers to grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in 2 Peter 3:17–18: "You therefore, beloved, since you know these things beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen."

Can you see that there is a law stating that anything that has the power to grow can only grow if the cause which produces it grows? We know that the principal factor of our grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is Himself, through the Word of God. Therefore, digesting more and more of the Word of God through meditation and worship will increase the working power of God in us, as well as our knowledge and love for Jesus.

You may wonder how God's grace works in us. The answer is given in Proverbs 6:20–24: "My son, keep your father's command, And do not forsake the law of your mother. Bind them continually upon your heart; Tie them around your neck. When you roam, they will lead you; When you sleep, they will keep you; And when you awake, they will speak with you. For the commandment is a lamp, And the law a light; Reproofs of instruction are the way of life, To keep him from the evil woman, From the flattering tongue of a seductress."

Can you see that the Word of God, bound or treasured in our heart, guides us when we go astray and also regulates our life? This means that the grace of God in us guides us in the same way that the Holy Spirit does. It is not surprising to find that God's Word plays the same role in our spirit as the Holy Spirit does, since we have already discussed some aspects of this truth in Chapter Six. Therefore, until God's Word grows in us and attains its full maturity, the grace of God helps us to go through the tribulations and worries of this life with a peaceful and merry heart.

But the working power of God starts to grow in us only if we continue to focus our attention on God's Word, but ceases to grow and can even stop working at the very moment we take our focus away from the Word of God, as it is written in Luke 8:11–14: "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no roots, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. And the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, bring no fruit to maturity."

Can you see that the seed is the Word of God and our heart is the soil? As a seed needs good ground to grow, God's Word can only grow in a good and noble heart. In the same way that the seed of any plant takes

time to reach its full maturity, God's Word needs time to produce good results. Meanwhile, the Word of God continues to grow if we water it through our daily meditation on it, prayer in tongues, and understanding and profession of His Words about our life and Jesus. Since the process of maturity takes time, only believers who are patient will reap the fruit of God's Word, as it is written in Luke 8:15: "But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience."

Jesus is more explicit when He declares, in Matthew 13:31–32: "Another parable He put forth to them, saying: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, which indeed is the least of all the seeds; but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches';" and, as we have read in Mark 4:26–29: "And He said, 'The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground, and should sleep by night and rise by day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he himself does not know how. For the earth yields crops by itself: first the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head. But when the grain ripens, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.'"

Do you see how Jesus declares, in Matthew 13:31–32 and in Mark 4:26–29, that a seed from God's Word in our heart has in itself the ability to grow without our knowing? He who sows the seed is the Son of Man

(Jesus). The seed is the Word of God. The field refers to the one who hears the Word of God. The birds are people in need. The expectations of a man who humbles himself before God, giving attention to His Words, listening to Him, not taking his eyes from His Words but keeping them in the midst of his heart, and having faith, hope, and patience will definitely come true. He will either harvest his crops with a sickle or become a helper for others. When his faith is grown he will become greater than the authorities of this world so that people in need can come to him for help, as it is written in Matthew 13:32: ". . . but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches."

This is the same thing that God revealed in Ezekiel 17:22 24: "Thus says the Lord God: 'I will take also one of the highest branches of the high cedar and set it out. I will crop off from the topmost of its young twigs a tender one, and will plant it on a high and prominent mountain. On the mountain height of Israel I will plant it; and it will bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a majestic cedar. Under it will dwell birds of every sort; in the shadow of its branches they will dwell. And all the trees of the field shall know that I, the LORD, have brought down the high tree and exalted the low tree, dried up the green tree and made the dry tree flourish; I, the LORD, have spoken and have done it." In this passage, "mountain" refers to authority, while "trees" stands for the people

of this world, "field" means the world itself, "birds" are people in need, and the "tender twig" is a son of the kingdom of God.

Notice that the root is the part of a plant that grows under the ground and absorbs water and minerals that it sends to the rest of the plant. Likewise, God's Word needs to take deep root in our hearts. Therefore, if a believer does not put into practice Jesus's teachings he will fail to water his roots and the lack of water and minerals will weaken God's grace so that His working power in him will not have enough strength to stand against temptations or tribulations when they come.

As far as Jesus is concerned, until we activate our faith by obeying His teachings, there is no way for God's Word to take deep root in our heart. It is not sufficient to hear what he says, you must understand His teachings. Better understanding is related to taking corresponding actions in line with your beliefs, as it is written in Psalm 111:10: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever." Thus, doing God's Word is the principal factor of good understanding, and activates our faith. This means that if we want to increase our understanding of any truth found in the Bible, we must act upon it. Therefore, until a man activates his faith by acting upon his beliefs he will never get a good understanding of this belief. Thus unless you succeed in activating your faith for a specific purpose or truth of the Bible; what you want to see in the physical

realm will never comes to pass, and you will remain unfruitful.

The working power of God grows in us if four conditions are fulfilled:

- First of all, we get to have understanding of God's Word.
- Secondly, we must put Jesus's teachings into practice to have a better understanding of the Word of God. Exercising our faith or obeying God's Word will allow revelation knowledge to take deep root in our heart.
- Thirdly, we need to change our focus from the cares, riches, and pleasures of this life to instead meditate on God's Word and worship and maintain our focus there.
- Fourthly, we have to be patient to wait for the harvest, which will not fail to come true.

Unless we succeed in satisfying these four conditions, the working power of God will be destroyed in us.

According to the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary "incarnation" means the act of God coming to earth in human form as Jesus did; in other words, God coming to earth in the body of a man. Because God and His Word are one, treasuring God's Word in your heart not only brings God into you, it is also incarnation.*

Jesus said in John 6:63 that it is the Spirit who gives life, and that His words were spirit. But God is also Spirit, and Jesus declares that God's Word is both spirit and life. This means that digesting God's Word brings His spirit and life into you to give you

the nature and character of God. Therefore, treasuring God's Word in you through meditation, worship, and obeying God's Word brings you God's grace and trains your spirit in godly things.

But you must beware of your tongue, which can break the working power of God in you, as Peter declared while citing King David (Psalm 34:12 16) in 1 Peter 3:10 12 (New Living Translation, Second Edition): "For the Scriptures say, 'If you want to enjoy life and see many happy days, keep your tongue from speaking evil and your lips from telling lies. Turn away from evil and do good. Search for peace, and work to maintain it. The eyes of the Lord watch over those who do right, and his ears are open to their prayers. But the Lord turns his face against those who do evil.'"

How can we keep our tongue from speaking evil and our lips from telling lies? God explains this in Joshua 1:8, saying: "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success." God is telling you to meditate on His Word day and night in order to teach your mouth to function well and to say the right things. He is telling you the function of your mouth. No matter what you're experiencing or feeling, or seeing you should not change what you're saying and instead only say what God says. In fact, no matter what your circumstances are, do not change what you're saying, be consistent by speaking only

God's Word. Meditation helps you to treasure God's Word in your heart, which in turn causes your mouth to speak rightly. In fact, the function of your mouth is twofold. First of all, your mouth's function is to activate the anointing or power of God that dwells in you, and secondly to create the course of our life. You do both by speaking in tongues, meditating on God's Word, and speaking in consent of the Word of God.

This same reality has been emphasized by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in Matthew 12:34 37: "Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

You must choose to treasure God's Word and Jesus in your heart so that your communication will be filled with His Word and frame for you the great, perfect, and balanced life God has planned for you. Unless you store God's Word or Jesus in your heart, there is no way to fulfill the wonderful life God has predestined for you, instead you will have to live a life full of struggle, fear, worry, troubles, addictions, and calamities. You have only one choice to make: treasure Jesus or God's Word in order to perfect your communication so that it only carries words which are

in line with God's Word. If you cease to speak good things, our Lord and Savior Himself says that by your words you will be condemned. But, if you keep saying good things, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ says that by your words you will be justified. Beware of your speech; it is the only thing which possesses the ability to break the grace of God in us. That's why God commands us, in Joshua 1:8, to speak only God's Word.

The point is this: as children of God, we walk by faith and not by sight. If we walk in faith, then anything we see, any situation we find ourselves in, anything we feel, think, or hear which is not in line with God's Word is not going to dictate our profession or our belief because our speech or profession is strongly related to our believing.

Victory or failure is the product of our beliefs. So if you fail in any area of your life, examine your beliefs which are not in line with the Word of God and change them to align with God's truth concerning this area of life and you will experience victory again. Why? Because what we believe controls our life. If you embrace the truth of God about the field of life where you desire victory in and put into practice what God says about it, you will no longer find failure in that domain of life and will once again experience victory.

Victory and failure are not mysterious. If you act according to God's way, you will only experience victories. If you act according to your own way, you will experience both ups and downs and the process will end with defeat.

15. The Right Function of the Parts of Man's Body

The right functions of the man's body, such as our mouth and lips, heart, eyes, hands, head, soul, and ears are given in Psalm 141:1–10:

Lord, I cry out to You;
Make haste to me!
Give ear to my voice when I cry out to You.
Let my prayer be set before You as incense,
The lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.

Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth;
Keep watch over the door of my lips.
Do not incline my heart to any evil thing,
To practice wicked works
With men who work iniquity;
And do not let me eat of their delicacies.

Let the righteous strike me;
It shall be a kindness.
And let him rebuke me;
It shall be as excellent oil;
Let my head not refuse it.

For still my prayer is against the deeds of the wicked.
Their judges are overthrown by the sides of the cliff,

And they hear my words, for they are sweet.
Our bones are scattered at the mouth of the grave,
As when one plows and breaks up the earth.

But my eyes are upon You, O GOD the Lord;
In You I take refuge;
Do not leave my soul destitute.
Keep me from the snares they have laid for me,
And from the traps of the workers of iniquity.
Let the wicked fall into their own nets,
While I escape safely.

In this wonderful Psalm from King David, we are taught the right function of the main faculties of every human being.

- Our mouth's function is to speak sweet words and be guarded by God or God's Word. This means that we are only allowed to speak what is in line with God's Word.
- Our hand's function is to be lifted up as the evening sacrifice when we worship God.
- Our heart's function is not to incline to any evil thing or take part in acts of wickedness but to incline to God's Word only.
- Our head's or mind's function is not to refuse the reproof of the righteous which is medicine to our whole body and soul.
- Our eyes' function is to look upon God or focus on God's Word and only picture God's Word in the midst of adversity or trouble.
- Our soul's function is to receive His food (God's Word) and the other things necessary for our

spiritual life. This simply means that we are compelled to feed our spirit by treasuring God's Word in our heart.

- Our ears' function is to hear sweet words, coming from God.
- Our body's function is to endure punishment and correction without complaining so as to overcome bad feelings such as anger and fear so that our spiritual being gets deeply rooted in our heart and stands against any tribulation of life.

How can we get our limbs to assume their right functions? Jesus's answer is found in Matthew 13:33: "Another parable He spoke to them: 'The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened.'" "Leaven" is literally a substance, such as yeast, that is added to bread before it is cooked to make it rise. In this passage, "leaven" means God's Word or the power of God, "a woman" represents the believer, and "hid in three measures of meal" means that it was treasured in the heart of the believer. The phrase "till it was all leavened" signifies that the heart of the believer will be filled to the brim with God's Word.

God's Word starts to move in us through God's penetrating influence moving over the whole body of the believer:

- the mind becomes filled with good thoughts;
- the heart holds positive beliefs;
- our feelings become joy, peace, love for God and one another, meekness, and so on;

- the mouth speaks of the goodness and trustworthiness of God as it creates our future;
- our body practices patience and self control; as,
- our eyes focus on Jesus and God's word instead of our circumstances and our lust for this world.

16. The Foundation of God's Judgment

The foundation of God's judgment is given in Proverbs 24:11 12: "Deliver those who are drawn toward death, And hold back those stumbling to the slaughter. If you say, 'Surely I did not know this,' Does not He who weighs the hearts consider it? He who keeps your soul, does He not know it? And will He not render to each man according to his deeds?"

God judges mankind according to our deeds by comparing them with what is in our hearts. If what is in your heart is different from your deed, it is sin in the eyes of God it does not matter whether what is in your heart is good or bad. God does not like fake people or hypocrites He wants people to display what is in their heart.

If what is in your heart is good and you act accordingly, your actions please God. If what is in your heart is good, but you act contrary to what is in your heart, it is sin in the eyes of God. If what is in your heart is evil, and you act accordingly, it is also sin in the eyes of God but the weight of this sin is less than the weight of a sin caused by acting contrary to the good things you have in your heart (provided that the sin caused by acting according to the evil in your heart is due

to ignorance). Regarding sin, Jesus declares in Luke 12:47–48: "And that servant who knew his master's will and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many blows. But he who did not know, yet committed things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more."

What matters in God's sight is what is in your heart. Your heart is the reference point for God's judgment. In the same way that a believer uses the Scriptures to check what is good or evil, God uses our heart to evaluate the quality of our actions.

The next chapter will help you to understand why God bases His judgment on the state of our heart.

17. The Lamp or Light of the Body: Its Definition and How it Works

Jesus declares in Matthew 6:22 23: "The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!" Let us begin by looking at the role of the eye given by God in Deuteronomy 15:9, and then by Jesus in Matthew 20:1 16.

Deuteronomy 15:9 says: "Beware lest there be a wicked thought in your heart, saying, 'The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand,' and your eye be evil against your poor brother and you give him nothing, and he cries out to the Lord against you, and it become sin among you." As we saw previously in this book, God defines eye as "spirit" and "a wicked thought in our heart" is the very thing that defiles our spirit or causes it to become evil. Therefore the phrase "evil eye" means a spirit who has evil thoughts in his heart or his mind.

Let us now see what our Lord Jesus says about an evil eye in Matthew 20:1 16:

"For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his

vineyard. Now when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard and whatever is right I will give you.' And they went. Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle, and said to them, 'Why have you been standing idle all day?' They said to him, 'Because no one hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right you will receive.

"So when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, 'Call the laborers and give them their wages, beginning with the last to the first.' And when those came who were hired about the eleventh hour, they each received a denarius. But when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; and they likewise each received a denarius. And when they had received it, they murmured against the landowner, saying, 'These last men have worked only one hour, and you made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the heat of the day.' But he answered one of them and said, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? Take what is yours and go your way. I wish to give to this last man the same as to you. Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or is your eye evil because I am good?' So the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen."

Again, Jesus has the same definition of evil eye as the one given by God, that is "a spirit who devises evil thoughts in his heart or mind." At the end of the day, we can now conclude that "light" stands for a spirit who is enlightened by good thoughts in his heart, while "darkness" means a spirit who is darkened by evil thoughts. So Jesus emphasizes the issue: our destiny is determined by the nature of the thought we have in our heart.

Any evil thought in our mind puts our whole being (spirit and body) into darkness. Therefore, we must take extreme measures to avoid any evil thought in our mind. Proverbs 23:7 says, "For as he thinks in his heart, so is he." Our thoughts are very important and vital. Do not forget that your real you is the spirit who lives in your body. So Proverbs 23:7 tells us that every human being is identified by the thoughts he has in his heart and mind, meaning that what he (or his spirit) thinks in his mind will determine his heart's beliefs, his mouth's speech, his body's feelings, his eyes' focus, and even his feet's path.

Why is this so? Because an evil thought can put his whole being in darkness, causing his mouth to only speak bad things, his eyes to only focus on evil things, his feelings to only be negative, his feet to only go where evil people go, his ears to only pay attention to bad things, and his mind to only be filled with evil thoughts. On the contrary, if a man has only good thoughts in his mind, his heart and eyes will focus only on right things, his ears will only pay attention

to right things, his feelings will only be good, and his mouth will only speak pleasant words.

Jesus takes advantage of His criticism of religious leaders (the teachers of the law and the Pharisees) to reveal a wonderful and striking truth in Matthew 23:26: "Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also." Do you see this sovereign declaration of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? If we cleanse our mind and heart from evil thoughts, bad intentions, and bad feelings, then our speech, our thoughts, the focus of our eyes, the attention of our ears, and our attitudes and deeds will automatically be in line with God's Word. Is this not wonderful? All you have to do is to cleanse your heart and mind with God's Word. So if you want to make a change in your life, you must be aware that the change only takes place from inside out from your heart and mind and then spreads throughout your whole being.

Your mind is the most important part, so beware of what you think. Fill your mind with thoughts of life, and your faith will always remain alive. Remember that Jesus declares in John 6:63: "It is the Spirit who gives life, the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life." So if you use God's Word to fill your mind with thoughts of life, then faith will overtake you and keep you constantly under the grace of God.

Remember that it is written in Hebrews 11:6: "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he

who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." From this, we can deduce that our spirit is the lamp of our body, but our mind is the portion of our spirit that determines whether that lamp is turned on or off.

18. The Book of Life

Let us consider what Revelation 21:27 tells us about the kingdom of God which is to come: "But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life."

Can you see that nothing impure no liars will be allowed to enter the New Jerusalem? The very thing which causes God to blot out our names in the Book of Life is our mouth when it is used to tell lies. The key factor that keeps our name in the Book of Life is ceasing to tell lies. Only people whose names are written in the Book of Life will have the right to be citizens of the New Jerusalem. So it matters to have our names written in the Book of Life and keep them there until the Day of Judgment.

This is why the Bible declares in James 3:2: "For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body." Proverbs 12:22 also says: "Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, but those who deal truthfully are His delight." In Matthew 12:27, we find this great revelation directly from Jesus Christ: "For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

Jesus also declares, in John 8:44: "You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it." Remember that God's Word, on the other hand, is truth, as Jesus declares in John 17:17: "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth." Thus, speaking lies ties you to the devil because your words contradict the Word of God. For those who believe in Jesus, only one thing can cause God to blot out our name from His Book of Life: our mouth. So it matters to speak only in line with God's Word in order to prevent God from removing our names and, instead, to produce life when we speak.

It is important to know how what leads God to blot out people's names from His Book of Life. Deuteronomy 29:1–20 gives us a clue:

> These are the words of the covenant which the Lord commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the covenant which He made with them in Horeb.
>
> Now Moses called all Israel and said to them: "You have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land—the great trials which your eyes have seen, the signs, and those great wonders. Yet the Lord has not given you a heart

to perceive and eyes to see and ears to hear, to this very day. And I have led you forty years in the wilderness. Your clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandals have not worn out on your feet. You have not eaten bread, nor have you drunk wine or similar drink, that you may know that I am the Lord your God. And when you came to this place, Sihon king of Heshbon and Og king of Bashan came out against us to battle, and we conquered them. We took their land and gave it as an inheritance to the Reubenites, to the Gadites, and to half the tribe of Manasseh. Therefore keep the words of this covenant, and do them, that you may prosper in all that you do.

"All of you stand today before the Lord your God: your leaders and your tribes and your elders and your officers, all the men of Israel, your little ones and your wives also the stranger who is in your camp, from the one who cuts your wood to the one who draws your water that you may enter into covenant with the Lord your God, and into His oath, which the Lord your God makes with you today, that He may establish you today as a people for Himself, and that He may be God to you, just as He has spoken to you, and just as He has sworn to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

"I make this covenant and this oath, not with you alone, but with him who stands here with us today before the Lord our God, as well as with

> him who is not here with us today (for you know that we dwelt in the land of Egypt and that we came through the nations which you passed by, and you saw their abominations and their idols which were among them wood and stone and silver and gold); so that there may not be among you man or woman or family or tribe, whose heart turns away today from the Lord our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations, and that there may not be among you a root bearing bitterness or wormwood; and so it may not happen, when he hears the words of this curse, that he blesses himself in his heart, saying, 'I shall have peace, even though I follow the dictates of my heart' as though the drunkard could be included with the sober.
>
> "The Lord would not spare him; for then the anger of the Lord and His jealousy would burn against that man, and every curse that is written in this book would settle on him, and the Lord would blot out his name from under heaven."

Can you see this? Only the man who trusts in himself, instead of doing what God says, will have his name blotted out from the Book of Life. When you trust in yourselves, you deceive yourselves by having evil thoughts, as the man in that story did. He thought that even though he sinned, he would have peace but trusting in yourself is the same thing as having evil thoughts or telling lies, as far as God is concerned. Evil thoughts will cause you to tell lies, as it is written

in Hosea 10:13: "You have plowed wickedness, You have reaped iniquity. You have eaten the fruit of lies, Because you trusted in your own way, In the multitude of your mighty men."

This is why we find the same teaching from Deuteronomy, above, in Proverbs 28:26: "He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, But whoever walks wisely will be delivered." We find the same truth in Exodus 32:32–33: "'Yet now, if you forgive their sin— but if not, I pray, blot me out of your book which you have written.' And the LORD said to Moses, 'Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book.'"

Psalm 20:1–9 tells us the right things to do in order to get the assurance of God's saving work:

May the LORD answer you in the day of trouble;
May the name of the God of Jacob defend you;
May He send you help from the sanctuary,
And strengthen you out of Zion;
May He remember all your offerings,
And accept your burnt sacrifice.
May He grant you according to your heart's desire,
And fulfill all your purpose.
We will rejoice in your salvation,
And in the name of our God we will set up our banners!
May the LORD fulfill all your petitions.
Now I know that the LORD saves His anointed;
He will answer him from His holy heaven
With the saving strength of His right hand.
Some trust in chariots,

And some in horses;
But we will remember the name of the LORD our God.
They have bowed down and fallen;
But we have risen and stand upright.
Save, LORD!
May the King answer us when we call."

Do you see that remembering to use the name of our Lord and Savior is far better than trusting in our own understanding? It is written in Proverbs 3:5 7: "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and depart from evil;" and in Proverbs 11:28: "He who trusts in his riches will fall, But the righteous will flourish like foliage."

What do all of these things tell us? Truth comes from trusting God's Word or the name of Jesus but lies, falsity, and deceit reside in trusting in your own understanding, your own riches, or weapons.

In the next chapter, we will deal in depth with the subject of justification (being made righteous by God) or righteousness.

19. Righteousness

Righteousness is truly a key word in the Bible. Manage to grasp the importance of this word and its full meaning will greatly help you to experience genuine fellowship with Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior, God our Father in heaven, and the Holy Spirit who gave us birth in the realm of the Spirit and lives in us forever.

Our study of righteousness will start with Hosea 10:12–13: "Sow for yourselves righteousness; Reap in mercy; Break up your fallow ground, For it is time to seek the LORD, till He comes and rains righteousness on you. You have plowed wickedness, You have reaped iniquity. You have eaten the fruit of lies, Because you trusted in your own way, In the multitude of your mighty men." To "sow righteousness" means to seek the Lord and trust in God's way to do things, or to love Jesus and do good to others. If you do this, then you will reap the gift of righteousness. But to "sow in wickedness" signifies that you put your trust in your own way of doing things or seek your own selfish answers, which can only yield more iniquity.

You may wonder how we can seek the Lord. God answers this question in Isaiah 55:1–2: "Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And who have no

money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come; buy wine and milk Without money and without price. Why do you spend money for what is not bread, And your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen diligently to Me, and eat what is good. And let your soul delight itself in abundance." Do you see now that anyone who is thirsty for living water (wisdom, understanding, faith, hope, the love for Jesus, and counsel and fear of God) for his soul and is hungry for food (God's Word) for his heart, is being told by God that the needs of his soul and heart are available for free? All the man in need has to do is to listen to God, and then pay attention to God's Word and accept it. From then on, his soul and his heart will be satisfied.

Jesus declares the same truth in Matthew 5:6, saying: "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled." This hunger and thirst for righteousness are our strong desire to eat God's Word and treasure it in our heart and to receive hope, faith, wisdom, understanding, counsel, love for Jesus, fear of God, and the Holy Spirit in our heart and be satisfied through their power.

King David said in Psalm 40:8 10: "I delight to do Your will, O my God, and Your law is within my heart. I have proclaimed the good news of righteousness in the great congregation; Indeed, I do not restrain my lips, O LORD, You Yourself know. I have not hidden Your righteousness within my heart; I have declared Your faithfulness and Your salvation; I have not concealed Your lovingkindness and Your truth From the

great assembly." The purpose of the spiritual gift of righteousness is to cause us to speak and act with perseverance in agreement with the divine law God's Word.

Follow me and you will learn an even more powerful truth of this world, as revealed by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in John 14:23 when Jesus said: ". . . If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him." Righteousness is the ability granted to us by God that causes us to do right. And Jesus lets us know in John 14:23 that we can only do right if we love Him. Therefore, Jesus reveals that true righteousness comes from our love for Christ that causes us to do His will or follow His Word.

It is written in John 3:3 5: "Jesus answered and said to him, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' Nicodemus said to him, 'How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?' Jesus answered, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.'" In this passage, to be "born of the Spirit" means to become righteous for no one can stand before God unless he is righteous. Since entering into the kingdom of God gives you the right to stand before Him, then you need to receive the gift of righteousness to do this. And this gift of righteousness comes from being born again.

But what does "righteousness" really mean? Let us look to Jesus for a better understanding of this word. It is written in Matthew 16:24–26: "Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?'"

Can you see that, as far as Jesus is concerned, righteousness is losing your natural life for His sake? Jesus is telling us that if you think that going after the riches of this world and managing to possess them can save your life, then you are wrong and you will lose your life. This is explained further in Zephaniah 1:18: "Neither their silver nor their gold Shall be able to deliver them In the day of the LORD's wrath; But the whole land shall be devoured By the fire of His jealousy, For He will make speedy riddance Of all those who dwell in the land." But if you cease to worry about the riches of this world, although you lose your natural life, you gain the riches of the world to come. Meanwhile, if you earnestly seek the kingdom of heaven, you will save your life and God will also grant you what you need to live in this world, as Jesus said in Matthew 6:33: "But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."

God Himself defines the true meaning of righteousness in Jeremiah 23:5–6: "Behold, the days are coming,

says the LORD, That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." Can you see that God Himself declares that the name "Jesus" means "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS"? God named Jesus "our righteousness." So Jesus is the principle of our righteousness before God.

Now, let us listen to Jesus. He defines the principle of our righteousness in John 15:5, the parable of the vine and the branches, saying that He is our Life. In other words, He is our righteousness and without Him we cannot bear fruit we cannot produce or work righteousness. This means that righteousness and eternal life are intimately related. If you want to know what righteousness is you have to look to Jesus, to seek Him, to believe in Him, to follow Him by imitating Him, and by doing what He tells you to do. It is written in John 14:21 23: "'He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him. Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, 'Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?' Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.'" Do you see that treasuring God's Word in your heart and keeping

it is proof that you love Jesus? Because your love of Jesus causes God and Jesus to abide in you, your love for Christ is not only your gift of righteousness but it is also your eternal life.

Our love for Jesus causes Him to also love us, and grants us the gift of righteousness, which brings the presence of God our Father and Jesus our Lord and Savior, to us through the Holy Spirit and God's Word. In fact, in Chapter Six we discussed the fact that the presence of God and Jesus and the working power of God are brought to us by both God's Word and the Holy Spirit. Proverbs 29:14 declares: "The king who judges the poor with truth, His throne will be established forever." And Proverbs 25:5 says: "Take away the wicked from before the king, And his throne will be established in righteousness." If we look at these two passages, we can see that "in righteousness" also means "with truth," or "without wickedness." This is consistent with what Jesus said about Himself when He declared in John 14:6: "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." In other words Jesus is saying: "I am the way, the *righteousness*, and the life." But "righteousness" and "life" refer to the same reality, as Jesus Himself declares in John 17:3: "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent." If we look closely, then, we can see that when Jesus says "I am the way," it means that He wants us to follow Him, and that He will grant us righteousness that includes everlasting life.

Do you now understand the great revelation hidden in the definition of righteousness given above? Righteousness means truth, life, and love for Christ. Therefore, telling lies is by nature in opposition to righteousness. This is why the continued telling of lies has the power to break our righteousness, as it is written in Psalm 101:7: "He who tells lies shall not continue in my presence."

Let us go back to John 3:3–5, where Jesus answered Nicodemus and said to him, "'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' Nicodemus said to Him, 'How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?' Jesus answered, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.'"

In this passage, to be "born of the Spirit" means the same thing as to "become righteous." And no one can stand before God unless he is righteous. So, since entering into the kingdom of God gives us the right to stand before God, therefore we need to receive the gift of righteousness to enjoy this outcome. And God Almighty declares, in Psalm 101:7: "He who tells lies shall not continue in my presence."

God is telling us that we will lose His presence if we tell lies, and since righteousness allows us to stand before God then telling lies creates the absence of God in our life. Sin produces death, as it is written in Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin is death; but the

gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord." In other words, to keep your gift of righteousness and eternal life, you must stop telling lies and sinning.

It is not surprising that telling lies has the power to break our righteousness since righteousness is truth, as it is written in Proverbs 29:14: "The king who judges the poor with truth, His throne will be established forever;" and in Proverbs 25:5 says: "Take away the wicked from before the king, And his throne will be established in righteousness." So "in righteousness" means with the love of Christ in your spirit. Colossians 3:8 10 also shows us that lying does not fit with the image of God or God's righteousness: "But now you must also put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him."

The image of God is in us, so we might start practicing spiritual things and staying in them. Remember that Romans 10:9 10 says ". . . that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes to righteousness and with the mouth confession is made to salvation." According to the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* "belief" means "a strong feeling that something or somebody exists or is true;" therefore, when the Bible says, "For with the heart one believes to righteousness,"

it is really saying, "For with the heart one finds out the truth." Finally, knowing the truth brings us more eternal life or life in abundance as Jesus declares in John 10:10: "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." John 17:3 also tells us: "And this is eternal life that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent." Our belief in Jesus causes God to grant us the righteousness of Jesus and, because we function with the spirit of faith, our speech is the product of our beliefs. If you continue to speak lies, that means you no longer believe in Jesus.

If you find that you are no longer in favor with Christ, all you have to do is to ask God for forgiveness and maintain your relationship with Him according to 1 John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The Bible says in Jeremiah 2:19: "'Your own wickedness will correct you. And your backslidings will reprove you. Know therefore and see that it is an evil and bitter thing That you have forsaken the LORD your God, and the fear of Me is not in you,' Says the Lord God of hosts." The Lord Jesus also showed as the prophet Jeremiah that backsliding was a terrible offense in Luke 12:47–48: "And that servant who knew his master's will and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many blows. But he who did not know, yet committed things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For

everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more."

Can you see that the believer who backslides or ceases to love Jesus Christ will be beaten with more blows than a non-believer who sins, because the believer who backslides should have known better? Therefore, backsliding is a terrible sin. I imagine that God must find it reprehensible that one who knew His grace and loving forgiveness could walk away from it and return to a life of sin (and continual lying is the very manifestation of sin). It is no wonder that Jesus commanded the man who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years to stop sinning otherwise something worse would happen to him, as it is written in John 5:14: "Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, 'See, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you.'" Jesus also declares, in Matthew 12:37: "By your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned." This means that our mouth is our tool to cause God to bring upon us Jesus's righteousness, which means that we are compelled to tell the truth of God's Word at any time, everywhere, and to follow God's Word no matter what happens around us no matter what we see, no matter what we feel, and no matter what we hear.

Let us compare two passages on this topic. Proverbs 12:28 decrees: "In the way of righteousness is life. And in its pathway there is no death." At the same time,

Jesus said, in John 3:36: "He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides in him." What can we see? "In the way of righteousness is life" reveals the same reality as "He who believes in the Son has everlasting life." This means that "the way of righteousness" (or "the way of truth") means the same thing as "believing in Jesus, the Son of God." Because we know that the word "believe" means to feel certain that something is true or that somebody is telling you the truth, it is not surprising to find that the way of righteousness means the same thing as the way of truth and believing in Jesus.

Take notice that the result of following the way of righteousness gives life in the same way that believing in Jesus grants us everlasting life. Therefore, righteousness is equal to Jesus Christ, as God revealed in Jeremiah 23:5 6: "'Behold, the days are coming,' says the LORD, 'That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." So Jesus Himself reveals in John 3:36 that He is our righteousness, and that believing in Him brings us the gift of righteousness — in other words, believing in Jesus brings Jesus Himself into our heart. Indeed, since a born-again Christian receives everlasting life by believing in Jesus, this means that God has given him the gift of

righteousness so that he can have everlasting life.

You may wonder: I have received the gift of righteousness, but what must I do to keep the righteousness of God? Is there a way to prevent myself from losing the gift of righteousness? The solution is found in Proverbs 16:6, which says: "In mercy and truth Atonement is provided for iniquity; And by fear of the LORD one departs from evil." We have already found out that truth is the same as righteousness or believing in or loving Christ. You cannot continue to love Christ and lose your righteousness. If you love Christ, automatically you will do right, and your righteousness will remain with you. Paul the Apostle says, in Acts 13:38–39: "Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through this Man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses." Can you see that truth means righteousness and believing in Jesus, while to be justified means "to be made righteous"? Therefore it is natural to receive the gift of righteousness when you believe in Jesus, since righteousness comes from believing in or loving Jesus.

So how can we get righteousness? The Bible gives the answer to this vital question in Romans 5:1, saying: "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." You cannot have righteousness before your faith works, because righteousness is the product of faith. You cannot be righteous on your own—this is

a common mistake people make — but you must let your faith make you righteous before God. This is the real and true wisdom. On a daily basis, we receive atonement for our iniquity through mercy (forgiveness of other people for their wrongs against us) and truth (righteousness and faith in Jesus). This means that unless we stop believing in Jesus — or stop loving Jesus and others — there is no way for us to lose our righteousness. Proverbs 10:12 specifies: "Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all sins." Therefore, we must love Jesus, obey God's Word, and constantly have this thought in our heart and mind: "I am an unworthy servant who has done his duty." If we do this, our righteousness will exceed the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees and give us access to God's Kingdom.

Do you see now what wickedness and righteousness are all about? Wickedness is going after your own thoughts, but righteousness is going after God's thoughts. Likewise, lying is going after your own thoughts, but telling the truth is going after God's thoughts. God grants us His righteousness — the righteousness of His Son Jesus Christ — to enable us to tell the truth of God's Word and to act upon it no matter the situation we find ourselves in. According to Romans 10:10, by believing in Jesus we are granted the righteousness of God, but by speaking we frame our salvation: "For with the heart one believes to righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made to salvation."

Now pay careful attention to what I am about to say. If you have been saved by confessing Jesus as your Lord and Savior when you were baptized with the Holy Spirit, do you think you will continue to keep your salvation if you cease to tell the truth of God's Word? The Word of God that you utter that causes God to grant you salvation must constantly be confessed in any area of your life if you wish to maintain your salvation. What do you think Jesus is saying when He declares, in John 14:6: "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me"? He is simply saying, "If you do as I do and only speak God's Word, you will have the God-kind of life which has no beginning and no end." Remember that Jesus declares, in John 8:28: ". . .When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself, but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things." Jesus only speaks when, where, and what God tells Him to say. So you must act like Jesus and only say what God says. If you want to know what God says about any situation you can find yourself in, then go to the Word of God the Holy Bible. At the same time, the purpose of the book which is in your hands is to help you to reach this vital goal of being able to live as Jesus lived, through guidelines that will help you to achieve this goal.

Scripture declares that Jesus is called "our righteousness." And Jesus Himself states that He is the way, the truth, and the life. Therefore righteousness can mean the same things as "the way, the truth, and

the life of Jesus Christ." This means that following Jesus's example by speaking only the truth of God's Word no matter what happens around us brings us the God-kind of life and maintains it in us, as it is written in Romans 8:1 2: "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death." This same reality is found in Psalm 15:1 2: "LORD, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill? He who walks uprightly, And works righteousness, And speaks the truth in his heart."

Only those who possess the God-kind of life are allowed to dwell in the holy hill. Therefore, these scriptures are saying that three conditions need to be met if you wish to live in the house of God: first, you must have the right intentions in your heart; second, you have to work righteousness, or follow or love Jesus; and, finally, you are compelled to speak the truth of God's Word, which is treasured in your heart.

Jesus also teaches us that as believers we do not deserve thanks for obeying God's Word or loving Christ. Obeying the Word of God is our duty. It is our role to play and the product of our love for Jesus Christ. Jesus declares, in Luke 17:7 10: "And which of you, having a servant plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come at once and sit down to eat'? But will he not rather say to him, 'Prepare something for my supper, and

gird yourself and serve me till I have eaten and drunk and afterwards you will eat and drink'? Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not. So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.'"

God has already done His part by granting us faith and His righteousness and is now waiting for our obedience to His Word to give us all the spiritual gifts and blessings we need to fulfill our destiny, as Jesus declares in John 14:23: ". . . If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him." This means that keeping God's Word causes God and Jesus to make Their headquarters in us. Remember that Romans 5:1 says: "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Our faith produces our righteousness — in other words, our faith causes us to love Jesus and to obey God's Word and Jesus's commandments. Therefore, Christ in us brings all the blessings of heaven and earth as the Bible declares in Colossians 1:27: ". . . Christ in you, the hope of glory." Glory, in this, also means "grace and truth" as it is written in John 1:14: "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

Therefore our responsibility is to love Jesus and obey God's Word — to have faith in Jesus. We must do

that without looking for thanks from God for completing our good deeds or actions. Such behavior has the advantage of keeping us from boasting about our deeds, speech, or thoughts, therefore our righteousness will be more than the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees (who always asked for praise) as Jesus said in Matthew 5:20. Can you see that the only way for a believer to have this level of righteousness is to love Jesus, obey God's Word, and have faith in Jesus, while constantly having one thought in mind: "I am an unworthy servant who has only done his duty"?

Another wonderful thing is that the people who wait on the Lord are those who trust in God and in Jesus. Therefore, this attitude corresponds to one of the beatitudes concerning a hunger and thirst for righteousness, as it is written in Matthew 5:6: "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled." Isaiah 40:30 31 states: "Even the youths shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall, But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint." To "wait on the Lord" means to put your trust in God or in Jesus, no matter what. Doing so will cause God to grant you the righteousness of Jesus. And since righteousness is the principal factor of life, it is no wonder that people who wait on God renew their strength and are filled.

Do not forget that, in Jeremiah 23:5 6, God said He will raise to David a branch of righteousness. Therefore,

if Jesus is a "branch of righteousness" that means that Jesus is a righteous descendant of King David and that King David was also the righteousness of God. This also explains why God said to King Saul (referring to David) in 1 Samuel 13:14: "But now your kingdom shall not continue. The LORD has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the LORD has commanded him to be commander over His people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you."

Thus let us read what it means to hunger and thirst for righteousness according to King David, who had the righteousness of God in the Old Testament, in Psalm 34:1–22:

I will bless the Lord at all times;
His praise shall continually be in my mouth.
My soul shall make its boast in the Lord;
The humble shall hear of it and be glad.
Oh, magnify the Lord with me,
And let us exalt His name together.

I sought the Lord, and He heard me,
And delivered me from all my fears.
They looked to Him and were radiant,
And their faces were not ashamed.
This poor man cried out, and the Lord heard him,
And saved him out of all his troubles.
The angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him,
And delivers them.

Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good;
Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!

Oh, fear the Lord, you His saints!
There is no want to those who fear Him.
The young lions lack and suffer hunger;
But those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good thing.

Come, you children, listen to me;
I will teach you the fear of the Lord.
Who is the man who desires life,
And loves many days, that he may see good?
Keep your tongue from evil,
And your lips from speaking deceit.
Depart from evil and do good;
Seek peace and pursue it.

The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,
And His ears are open to their cry.
The face of the Lord is against those who do evil,
To cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears,
And delivers them out of all their troubles.
The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart,
And saves such as have a contrite spirit.

Many are the afflictions of the righteous,
But the Lord delivers him out of them all.
He guards all his bones;
Not one of them is broken.
Evil shall slay the wicked,
And those who hate the righteous shall be condemned.
The Lord redeems the soul of His servants,
And none of those who trust in Him shall be condemned.

Let us start our analysis of this by looking at the definition of righteousness given by King David in the scriptures above and then deduce the definition of hunger and thirst for righteousness. In this passage, we can see that righteousness means:

- being humble,
- blessing the Lord at all times,
- continually speaking God's Word (keeping your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking guile or deceit),
- making you boast in Him,
- seeking God,
- having the fear of the Lord,
- departing from evil and doing good,
- seeking peace and pursuing it,
- having a broken heart and contrite spirit when you go astray,
- having many afflictions but waiting on God to be delivered, and, finally,
- trusting in God.

Let us compare these psalms to the beatitudes of the book of Matthew in the New Testament.

Being humble corresponds to the first beatitude, found in Matthew 5:3: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Blessing the LORD at all times, continually speaking God's Word, and boasting in God, are similar to the sixth beatitude, from Matthew 5:8: "Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God." Remember that

we speak according to the beliefs implanted in our heart, as it is written in 2 Corinthians 4:13: "But since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, 'I believed and therefore I spoke,' we also believe and therefore speak."

Seeking peace is equivalent to the seventh beatitude, in Matthew 5:9: "Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God."

Departing from evil and doing good is the same as what we are told in Matthew 5:7 and the fifth beatitude: "Blessed are the merciful, For they shall obtain mercy;" as well as the eighth beatitude found in Matthew 5:10: "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The New Living Translation version of the eighth beatitude states: "God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right; For the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs." Having a broken heart and contrite spirit is linked with the second beatitude, from Matthew 5:4: "Blessed are those who mourn, For they shall be comforted;" while having many afflictions but waiting on God to be delivered corresponds to the third beatitude in Matthew 5:5: "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth;" and the ninth beatitude in Matthew 5:11 12: "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you." (The ninth beatitude, which is the commentary of the third

also challenges us to remain cheerful in the midst of persecution, and we know that one of the characters of meekness is cheerfulness so the ninth beatitude is included in the third beatitude, as you will see later in Chapter Twenty-two.)

Finally, righteousness encapsulates seven beatitudes declared by Jesus Christ, as well as the fourth beatitude, found in Matthew 5:6: "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled." This means that the fourth beatitude is the central principle of the seven other beatitudes. Those other seven beatitudes represent the seven kinds of food our soul hungers and thirsts for.

But how can we satisfy our hunger and thirst for righteousness? The answer is in Psalm 34:8 10, which is derived from the scriptures above: "Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him! Oh, fear the LORD, you His saints! There is no want to those who fear Him. The young lions lack and suffer hunger; But those who seek the LORD shall not lack any good thing." Can you see that all we have to do is to taste and see that God is good by seeking God, fearing Him (or His law) and trusting in Him? If we do this, we will be blessed (receiving the gifts of the eight beatitudes), become saints (set apart and purified from all our sins), will have no want (all our needs will be satisfied), and will not lack any good things.

Through this, we have learned that there are two phases in the process of receiving grace or salvation.

The first phase is about the role we have to play all we have to do is to believe in Jesus. In other words, we must simply love or have faith in Jesus, or seek, fear, and trust in God. And then, at once, God will play His part by blessing us with all the blessings of His grace or salvation. This process is revealed in Hosea 10:12 13: "Sow for yourselves righteousness; Reap in mercy; Break up your fallow ground, For it is time to seek the LORD, Till He comes and rains righteousness on you. You have plowed wickedness, You have reaped iniquity. You have eaten the fruit of lies, Because you trusted in your own way, In the multitude of your mighty men." As we have learned, "to sow righteousness" means to seek the Lord and to trust in God's way, to love Jesus, and to do good to others. "To break your fallow ground" means to change your mind towards God, as we found out in Chapter One. Once you have done these things, you will reap the gift of righteousness love for Christ. But to plow wickedness would mean to trust in your own way to do things, which will result in a harvest of iniquity.

20. Pattern of Testimony

What is testimony? Testimony is evidence, statement under oath, or other proof that shows that something is true. In Deuteronomy 6:10–25, God instructed His children what they should do to live in the promised, fertile, and rich land for a long time. Apart from requiring their obedience to His commandments and statutes, He gave them a pattern of testimony to follow, which was used later by Apostle Paul, in Acts 13:13–41. This model of testimony is the best way to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to release the power, life, and spirit—and even the Holy Spirit—carried by the Word of God.

Let us look at Deuteronomy 6:10–25:

"So it shall be, when the LORD your God brings you into the land of which He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give you large and beautiful cities which you did not build, houses full of good things, which you did not fill, hewn-out wells which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant—when you have eaten and are full—then beware, lest you forget the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. You

shall fear the LORD your God and serve Him, and shall take oaths in His name. You shall not go after other gods, the gods of the peoples who are all around you (for the LORD your God is a jealous God among you), lest the anger of the LORD your God be aroused against you and destroy you from the face of the earth.

"You shall not tempt the LORD your God as you tempted Him in Massah. You shall diligently keep the commandments of the LORD, His testimonies, and His statutes which He has commanded you. And you shall do what is right and good in the sight of the Lord, that it may be well with you, and that you may go in and possess the good land of which the Lord swore to your fathers, to cast out all your enemies from before you, as the Lord has spoken.

"When your son asks you in time to come, saying, 'What is the meaning of the testimonies, the statutes, and the judgments which the LORD our God has commanded you?' then you shall say to your son: 'We were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, and the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand; and the LORD showed signs and wonders before our eyes, great and severe, against Egypt, Pharaoh, and all his household. Then He brought us out from there, that He might bring us in, to give us the land of which He swore to our fathers. And the LORD commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the LORD

> our God, for our good always, that He might preserve us alive, as it is this day. Then it will be righteousness for us, if we are careful to observe all these commandments before the LORD our God, as He has commanded us."

The pattern of testimony is given by God Himself in the final paragraph, above. Any testimony must begin in the time of the slavery of God's children in Egypt, then you must explain how God brought them out of Egypt (that means that you must stress the importance of the signs and wonders performed by God), next, you must speak of what happened in the wilderness, and, finally, how God gave them the land He had promised to their fathers.

Let us now see how Paul preached the gospel of Jesus Christ by using that pattern of testimony, in Acts 13:13–41:

> Now when Paul and his party set sail from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia; and John, departing from them, returned to Jerusalem. But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and sat down. And after the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent to them, saying, "Men and brethren, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say on."
>
> Then Paul stood up, and motioning with his hand said, "Men of Israel, and you who fear God,

listen: The God of this people Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an uplifted arm He brought them out of it. Now for a time of about forty years He put up with their ways in the wilderness. And when He had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, He distributed their land to them by allotment.

"After that He gave them judges for about four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet. And afterward they asked for a king; so God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years. And when He had removed him, He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.' From this man's seed, according to the promise, God raised up for Israel a Savior Jesus after John had first preached, before His coming, the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. And as John was finishing his course, he said, 'Who do you think I am? I am not He. But behold, there comes One after me, the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to loose.'

"Men and brethren, sons of the family of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, to you the word of this salvation has been sent. For those who dwell in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they did not know Him, nor even the voices of

the Prophets which are read every Sabbath, have fulfilled them in condemning Him. And though they found no cause for death in Him, they asked Pilate that He should be put to death. Now when they had fulfilled all that was written concerning Him, they took Him from the tree and laid Him in a tomb. But God raised Him from the dead. He was seen for many days by those who came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are His witnesses to the people. And we declare to you glad tidings that promise which was made to the fathers. God has fulfilled this for us their children, in that He has raised up Jesus. As it is also written in the second Psalm:

> 'You are My Son;
> Today I have begotten You.'

And of the fact that He raised Him from the dead, no more to return to corruption, He has spoken thus:

> 'I will give you the sure mercies of David.'

Therefore He also says in another Psalm:

> 'You will not allow Your Holy One to see corruption.'

For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell asleep, was buried with his fathers, and saw corruption; but He whom God raised up saw no corruption. Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through this Man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins; and by

> Him everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses. Beware therefore, lest what has been spoken in the prophets come upon you:
>
> > 'Behold, you despisers,
> > Marvel and perish;
> > For I work a work in your days,
> > A work which you will by no means believe,
> > Though one were to declare it to you.'"

Can you see that Paul followed the pattern given by God, then continued on by preaching about God's will? He also preached about God's strong desire to forgive the sins of those who repent and to justify those who believe in Jesus in other words, to give them the righteousness of God.

Paul's testimony about the purpose of God for our life is the best model of the pattern of testimony commanded by God the Father Himself. All of us must use this model to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ.

21. Meditation

Meditation is the most powerful tool God has given us in the Bible so that we can get power and be able to accomplish things the way God wants us to, so let's take some time to talk about it. Most of the time, people wonder about how to follow the Word of God. Many men of God say, "In the Old Testament, people had to obey the law, but in the New Testament the born-again Christian or anyone newly born in Christ has to act on the Word of God, not obey the word." It seems difficult for people to understand the difference between "obey the Word" and "take action on the Word of God," which makes it difficult to put this teaching about doing the word into practice.

Why is it so crucial to understand the phrase "act on the Word of God"? First of all, our purpose is to give anyone who desires to be a citizen of heaven or of the kingdom of God the medication he needs to be able to get access to and live in the kingdom of God. Second, Jesus said, in Luke 6:46–49, "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say? Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the

foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great." So it is obvious to anybody that those who cannot take action on the Word of God will stumble and fall down when tribulation or persecution comes. This means that they will not be able to fulfill the new life God has already given them. What a tragedy! That's why we deal with the theme of meditation so as to take away from us the fear of not being able to do the sayings of Jesus, and, at the same time, increase our boldness and confidence to fulfill our destiny through Jesus Christ our Lord, Savior, Light, Way, Truth, and Life.

Now let us answer the question "How can we act on the Word of God?" The answer is found in 1 Timothy 4:15. Luke 12:32 tells us : "Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Let us follow Pastor Chris Oyakhilome in his comment about Luke 12:32 and 1 Timothy 4:15 about meditation:

> You need that message (1 Timothy 4:15) that follows to soak into your being, to get into your bones, to hear it is good but it is not enough, your hear it, it gets into your spirit it is still not enough, it needs to come to your mental consciousness but it is not enough, until it permeates your very being,

permeates your body gets right in your bones into your marrow. Physical food can smell from your body after a long time of engagement with that kind of food, the Word of God is that way. " That's why 1 Timothy 4:15 said, "Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all." If you do this, definitely it will turn to your advantage. Your promotion will be shown. Continue until your advantage, your promotion, the result of your meditation on the word become obvious to others. They will definitely see the increase in your life. It cannot be hidden. The result will show. Psalm 68:1 ("Let God arise, Let His enemies be scattered; Let those also who hate Him flee before Him.") Who makes it happen? I don't care what people think of me. God does make a new creation who is subject to poverty, subject to Satan, sickness, diseases and death. 1 Corinthians 6:17 declares: "But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him." So anything I get involved in has to succeed. There is not failure in the things I touch. Proverbs 25:2 ("It is the glory of God to conceal the matter, But the glory of kings is to search out a matter.")

To find more information on meditation, we look to the book of Psalms, which shows us that our material for meditation consists of precepts, statutes, law, and the Word and works of God:

- Psalm 119:15: "I will meditate on Your precepts And contemplate Your ways."

- Psalm 119:48: "My hands also I will lift up to Your commandment, Which I love, And I will meditate on Your statutes."
- Psalm 119:97: "Oh, how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day."
- Psalm 119:99: "I have more understanding than all my teachers, for Your testimonies are my meditation."
- Psalm 119:148: "My eyes are awake through the night watches, that I may meditate on Your word."
- Psalm 143:5: "I remember the days of old; I meditate on all Your works; I muse on the work of Your hands."

No matter what we feel, see, or think; no matter what we experience; no matter our circumstances; no matter what challenges we face, we only have to say what God says.

Remember that there are three levels of meditation, as defined previously in Chapter Two. As you begin meditating on the Word, the first level is to think about it. Then you begin to mutter it, saying something like "Glory to Jesus, My Lord and Savior. I have the life of God in me. Sickness cannot stay in my body. Thank you, Jesus, for making my life and the life of my family beautiful." You fill your mind with God's Word. You fill your consciousness. You decide to do it. Your consciousness is so filled and you are so fully persuaded that you begin to roar. You cannot keep it inside any longer, as it is written in 2 Corinthians 4:13: "But since

we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, 'I believed and therefore I spoke,' we also believe and therefore speak." You cannot be quiet. As you keep meditating on God's Word, suddenly you start screaming aloud and giving glory to God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit because the Word has filled your consciousness and your heart. As you are still looking for yourself in God's Word, there is a transformation in your thinking and speech and then in your deeds.

In Psalm 5:1 3 King David's meditation also is spoken aloud, and not kept to himself: "Give ear to my words, O LORD, Consider my meditation. Give heed to the voice of my cry, My King and my God, for to You I will pray. My voice You shall hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning I will direct it to You, and I will look up."

Can you see that, in these cases, meditation means the same thing as speaking aloud? Moreover, any time the scriptures talk about reading something it means to read it aloud. A good example is given by Acts 8:27 30: ". . . And behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasury, and had come to Jerusalem to worship, was returning. And sitting in his chariot, he was reading Isaiah the prophet. Then the Spirit said to Philip, 'Go near and overtake this chariot.' So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, 'Do you understand what you are reading?'"

This Ethiopian man of authority was meditating as God commanded in Deuteronomy 17:18 20: "Also it

shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book, from the one before the priests, the Levites. And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left, and that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel." But it is more important to note that Philip heard the Ethiopian reading, so there is no doubt that he was reading aloud.

After we are instructed to meditate day and night, the next statement of Joshua 1:8 says: ". . . that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it." This means that if you keep on speaking only of God's Word and meditate on it day and night; it will cause you to act out Jesus's sayings accordingly. This is not new information, however, since Romans 10:17 declares that faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. So when we meditate by speaking aloud the Word of God feeds our spirit with hope and faith the necessary daily food of our spirit. We also know that when our spirit is provided with hope it produces strength and power in our will, as we have seen it is written in Lamentations 3:17 26 ("You have moved my soul far from peace; I have forgotten prosperity. And I said, 'My strength and my hope Have perished from the LORD.' Remember my affliction and roaming, The wormwood

and the gall. My soul still remembers And sinks within me. This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope. Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is your faithfulness. 'The LORD is my portion,' says my soul, 'Therefore I hope in Him!' The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, To the soul who seeks Him. It is good that one should hope and wait quietly For the salvation of the LORD").

God has already done His part by revealing His secret, therefore all we have to do is to play our part. It is our responsibility to meditate, so that this meditation will allow God to give us the power to do His Word and so make our way prosperous. This means that we must expose ourselves to God's Word by hearing it so that it fills our hearts to the brim and overflows. Then our feelings, deeds, thoughts, and speech will effortlessly fall in line with God's Word. But, in the beginning, we will have to strive in order to be able to speak only God's Word. After doing this for a period of time, the Word of God will penetrate into our very being our spiritual heart (the safe deposit box where any born-again Christian keeps and treasures God's Word), our mouth (which speaks His words), our eyes (which focus on Him), our mind (which thinks only His thoughts), our ears (which pay attention to Him), and our senses, bones, blood cells, brain, physical heart, and every fiber of our being.

Do you see now the power which comes from meditation on God's Word? It is also written in John 1:1 14,

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light which gives light to every man who comes into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." This means that Jesus is the Word of God and that the Word of God has existed since the beginning of the world. Therefore people who lived in the time of the Old Testament also had access to the Word of God Jesus.

We have just found out that we can, through meditation, feed our spiritual heart with the Word of God and then soak our spirit, mind, and body in it in order to do our tasks according to it. Now it's time to compare

what God said to Joshua in Joshua 1:8 with what Paul the Apostle wrote in Colossians 1:26–27. Remember that Joshua 1:8 says: "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success." Colossians 1:26–27 declares: ". . . the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."

Do you see that these two passages refer to the same truth? In Joshua 1:8, God promises His glory to anyone who exposes himself to God's Word (Jesus) so that Jesus can become part of him. Paul said the same thing when he said: "Christ in you, the hope of glory." This means that for all time the Word of God in our spiritual heart has been the key to fulfilling our real destiny on earth, and that the only way to achieve this purpose—which has not changed since the beginning of the world—is to meditate on God's Word in order to take Jesus in and act on His sayings.

Unless Jesus becomes a part of your being, you cannot be productive, bear fruit, or do His sayings, as Jesus Himself declares in John 15:5: "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." Do you understand that without Jesus in

you, you cannot do God's Word? This is the sovereign declaration of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. So God's Word *must* become your consciousness. It must always fill your mind in order to transform your beliefs concerning God into convictions, and then cause you to use great boldness of speech (2 Corinthians 3:12) and make you bold enough to do the right things (Philemon 1:8).

Here is another scripture that deals with the same issue, Jeremiah 17:7–8: "Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, And whose hope is the LORD. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, Which spreads out its roots by the river, And will not fear when heat comes; But her leaf will be green, And will not be anxious in the year of drought, Nor will cease from yielding fruit."

In this passage, the man—represented by a tree—who trusts in the Lord and whose hope is the Lord has his spirit focused on God's Word and sends the picture of God's Word to his mind so that his spirit gets hope that will cause his will to take control over his thoughts and actions so that he can treasure Jesus, the Word of God, in his heart. "Waters" and "river" refer to God's Word or Jesus, while being "planted by" those waters means to hear or to be exposed to the word—or to meditate on it. The "roots" in this story are a man's mind and spiritual heart. "Heat" and "drought" are metaphors for challenges, tribulations, or persecutions, while a "year of drought" refers to a long period of trouble. The "leaf" stands for joy

and peace, and to "be green" means to be manifested, while to "yield fruit" means to be prosperous.

If we substitute those words and phrases into the original, Jeremiah 17:7–8 becomes: "Blessed is the man whose spirit's focus is the LORD. For he shall be like a man meditating day and night on the Word of God or Jesus, Spreading out his mind and spiritual heart into the Word of God, And will not fear when tribulation comes; But his joy and peace will be manifested, And he will not be anxious when trouble comes, Nor will he cease from being prosperous and having good success."

When you meditate day and night, focusing on the Word of God, your trust and hope are in the Lord Jesus, so that you keep focusing on Jesus no matter what happens around you. Therefore, you will be productive in every area of your life (first in your spiritual life, and then in your physical life) no matter what happens to you.

Let us look at Isaiah 55:1–13:
"Ho! Everyone who thirsts,
Come to the waters;
And you who have no money,
Come, buy and eat.
Yes, come, buy wine and milk
Without money and without price.
Why do you spend money for what is not bread,
And your wages for what does not satisfy?
Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good,
And let your soul delight itself in abundance.

Incline your ear, and come to Me.
Hear, and your soul shall live;
And I will make an everlasting covenant with you
The sure mercies of David.
Indeed I have given him as a witness to the people,
A leader and commander for the people.
Surely you shall call a nation you do not know,
And nations who do not know you shall run to you,
Because of the Lord your God,
And the Holy One of Israel;
For He has glorified you."

Seek the Lord while He may be found,
Call upon Him while He is near.
Let the wicked forsake his way,
And the unrighteous man his thoughts;
Let him return to the Lord,
And He will have mercy on him;
And to our God,
For He will abundantly pardon.

"For My thoughts are not your thoughts,
Nor are your ways My ways," says the Lord.
"For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
So are My ways higher than your ways,
And My thoughts than your thoughts.

"For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven,
And do not return there,
But water the earth,
And make it bring forth and bud,
That it may give seed to the sower

And bread to the eater,
So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth;
It shall not return to Me void,
But it shall accomplish what I please,
And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

"For you shall go out with joy,
And be led out with peace;
The mountains and the hills
Shall break forth into singing before you,
And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.
Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress tree,
And instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree;
And it shall be to the Lord for a name,
For an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."

I want you to look at the final two stanzas of that scripture. Do you understand what God is saying to us while describing how His Word compares to the rain? Here is what God is saying: "Whatever My Word says will come to pass, no matter who utters My Word either Myself or a prophet or a believer in Christ Jesus." We know that Jesus is the Word of God and that He said this in John 6:63: "It is the Spirit who gives life, the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit and they are life." Since Jesus is the Word of God, and the words He said to His disciples are spirit and life, that means Jesus is life and spirit to those who receive His Word into their hearts.

Therefore, if you read out loud or speak God's Word during your meditation or prayer, the content of your meditation will come to pass. When you release the Word of God, it will always produce the results it was intended to. There is a great revelation in John 6:63: Jesus or God's Word is a life-giving spirit. In John 4:14, Jesus specifies, "But whoever drinks of the water that I give him will never thirst. But the water that I give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." This means that the Word of God becomes a fountain of eternal life and a fountain of spirit (or power) in the heart of any genuine believer, or any newborn or born-again Christian. Do you see the power of meditation? When you utter the Word of God, you speak the same words that created the universe and everything in the world responds to it.

The Bible declares in Ephesians 5:18 20: "And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The Amplified version of Ephesians 5:18 also specifies that we must always be filled with the Spirit when it states: "And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but ever be filled with the [Holy] Spirit." Here, as you can see even more plainly in the Amplified version, "Spirit" refers to the power or the anointing of the Holy Spirit because the Holy Spirit

comes to dwell in our heart with the power of God, as it is written in Acts 1:8: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you . . ."

The next question, then, is: How can we be filled with the Holy Spirit? The response is also in what we have just read, in Ephesians 5:19 20. This points out that the way to energize our spirit or activate the power of the Holy Spirit in us is through meditation and confession of God's Word by speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, and through always giving thanks for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the definition of meditation in the Bible, this is the Bible's way to energize the spirit of any human being. (I recommend that you read out to yourself Psalm 23 and Psalm 141 every morning and every night as an example of energizing your spirit. As far as I am concerned, listening to the spiritual song "He's Able" by Pastor Deitrick Haddon is another way of energizing my spirit every morning.)

In Mark 16:17, Jesus gives us the miraculous signs which will accompany those who believe in Him: "And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues." But our Lord and Savior does not explain the purpose of speaking in tongues. Fortunately, the Apostle Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, has given us the explanation in 1 Corinthians 14:4: "He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church." According to Babylon English "edify"

means "to educate morally or spiritually, provide moral guidance, strengthen, and improve." Substituting in this meaning, 1 Corinthians 14:4 becomes "He who speaks in a tongue educates himself morally and spiritually, but he who prophesies edifies the church."

This means that speaking in tongues is another way to energize our spirit so that our spirit can win any battle of life. Therefore, speaking in tongues is another kind of meditation another way of communicating directly with God, as it is written in 1 Corinthians 14:2: "For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries."

Now that we know how to do the Word of God through our daily meditation, let us begin our journey.

22. Definition of Meekness According to King David, as Displayed by Jesus

Here is the definition of meekness given in Psalm 37:1 11:

Do not fret because of evildoers,
Nor be envious of the workers of iniquity.
For they shall soon be cut down like the grass,
And wither as the green herb.

Trust in the Lord, and do good;
Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness.
Delight yourself also in the Lord,
And He shall give you the desires of your heart.

Commit your way to the Lord,
Trust also in Him,
And He shall bring it to pass.
He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light,
And your justice as the noonday.

Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him;
Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way,
Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.
Cease from anger, and forsake wrath;
Do not fret it only causes harm.

For evildoers shall be cut off;
But those who wait on the Lord,
They shall inherit the earth.
For yet a little while and the wicked shall be no more;
Indeed, you will look carefully for his place,
But it shall be no more.
But the meek shall inherit the earth,
And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

King David said, in Psalm 37:9: ". . . But those who wait on the LORD, They shall inherit the earth;" and in Psalm 37:11: "But the meek shall inherit the earth," meaning to be meek is to wait on the LORD. In fact, according to Merriam Webster's online dictionary (http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary) "meek" is defined as "enduring injury with patience and without resentment" therefore "to be meek" means "to have strength under control (patience and self-control). Numbers 12:3 (Amplified Version) tells us: "Now the man Moses was very meek (gentle, kind, and humble) *or* above all the men on the face of the earth." And we know that "kind" refers to someone who is gentle, good-hearted, benevolent; understanding, compassionate; caring about others; gentle, friendly, and generous. How can we be good-hearted without cheerfulness in our heart? Therefore, meekness encapsulates cheerfulness since we know that "to be in good heart" refers to having a happy and cheerful or merry heart. No wonder Proverbs 15:30 declares: "The

light of the eyes rejoices the heart, And a good report makes the bones healthy." Only those who are of merry heart can be kind with others because Proverbs 15:13 says: "A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance, But by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken;" Proverbs 15:15 adds: "All the days of the afflicted are evil, But he who is of a merry heart has a continual feast;" and finally Proverbs 17:22 states: "A merry heart does good, like medicine, But a broken spirit dries the bones." No matters what happens around him, the meek man does not lose his happiness, joy, patience and hope.

Therefore the meek are the ones who wait on the LORD and these are the seven principal characteristics of the meek:

- he delights himself in the LORD or in God's Word,
- he commits his way to God,
- he trusts in Him,
- he rests in the LORD,
- he patiently waits on Him,
- he is not worried about anything, and
- he has self-control.

Do you see the qualities of the meek? Cheerfulness, patience, resting in the LORD, committing his way to God; self-control, hope, and peace of mind belong to him. You need to have these attributes to be able to put into practice the wonderful declaration Jesus Christ made in John 16:33: "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the

world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." And 1 John 4:4 also states: "You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is the world."

Also notice that Psalm 37:11 declares: "But the meek shall inherit the earth, And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace;" and Jesus states in Matthew 5:5: "Blessed are the meek, For they shall inherit the earth." So King David and Jesus both made the same declaration, but while King David gave us the seven characters of the meek, Jesus simply displayed the seven characters of the meek in His own attitude. Therefore, any genuine believer, or follower, or imitator, or disciple of Jesus Christ is always to follow Christ's example.

When you become meek, you get the status of conqueror and inherit the earth you become a champion. This explains why the Bible says, in Revelation 3:21: "To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne." Can you see that Jesus gives the right to reign with Him on earth only to the born-again Christians who overcome, in other words, to those who are meek?

23. Requirements the Believer Must Satisfy to Be Heard by God when He Prays to God

The requirements we must satisfy to be heard by God when we pray are found in Psalm 66:16 19, Proverbs 15:29, Proverbs 28:29, John 9:31, James 4:3, Isaiah 59:2, Proverbs 12:5 and Proverbs 20:7.

Let us begin with Psalm 66:16 19: "Come and hear, all who fear God, And I will declare what He has done for my soul. I cried to Him with my mouth, and He was extolled with my tongue. If I regard iniquity in my heart, The LORD will not hear. But certainly God has heard me; He has attended to the voice of my prayer." Proverbs 15:29 adds: "The LORD is far from the wicked, But He hears the prayer of the righteous." Proverbs 28:9 is more specific, saying: "One who turns away his ear from hearing the law, Even his prayer is an abomination." John 9:31 declares: "Now we know that God does not hear the sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him." And James 4:3 says: "You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures." Isaiah 59:2 also states: "But your iniquities have separated you from God; and your

sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear."

Do you see the consistency of God's Word? To be heard by God one must be righteous; it means anyone who wants to be heard must do what the Word of God tells him to do. First of all, he must not regard iniquity in his heart, in other words, he has to be pure-hearted, as it is written in Proverbs 12:5: "The thoughts of the righteous are right, But the counsels of the wicked are deceitful;" and in Proverbs 20:7: "The righteous man walks in his integrity; His children are blessed after him."

Secondly, his faith must continue to make contact between him and God but we know, according to Romans 10:17, that faith comes by hearing (and hearing by the Word of God). So if a believer turns away his ear from the Word of God, that means he ceases to produce faith, which is the gift of God that carries our prayer to God. Faith is the channel between a believer and God or His Word and works in two ways in the same way that it carries God's Word into our heart to feed our spirit, it also carries our prayer to God. So when we cease to hear God's Word, we stop faith from existing and our prayer can no longer reach God.

Thirdly, James, the disciple of Jesus, declared that we do not receive gifts from God when we ask wrongly and wish to squander our gifts on pleasures. If we have a desire in our heart to use the object of our prayer for our own profit, it is the same as regarding iniquity in our heart (and we have learned, above, what this will do).

24. How to Deal with Fear, Unbelief, and Doubt

The issue with being able to commit to God is your understanding of the passage of the Scriptures which deals with your doubt, unbelief, or fear. Why? Because the Scriptures declare, in John 17:17: "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth," and when you realize that something is false this very thing ceases to be a belief.

According to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* a "belief" is a strong feeling that something or somebody exists or is true; or confidence that something or somebody is good or right. Since God's Word is truth, when God's Word contradicts a belief which you hold, then your belief can no longer exist.

Likewise, if you want to establish your conviction about something all you have to do is to find a passage of scripture which deals with this matter and study it. Once you have studied it long enough, your understanding will wipe away any doubt in your mind and a new belief will be established. If you want to remove something evil from your heart or mind something that causes unbelief, fear, or doubt all you have to do is to say to yourself, "It is not true," and then speak aloud: "It is not true."

If this does not solve your problem, then you can search for a passage of the Bible which proves the veracity of the opposite of what you are trying to remove your heart. Once you find it, the evil thought will be washed away from your heart.

If you still fail to delete it from your heart, then meditate on the new truth until there is no longer any doubt in your mind. If you fail to remove an evil thought, such as a fear, unbelief, or doubt from your heart and mind, you can turn to the most powerful weapon of the world given by God Himself: meditation (which can bring joy, peace, and prosperity, as discussed in Chapter Twenty-one). Notice, as well, that meditation is also a good cure for anxiety, fear, or worries. The simple decision to meditate can remove any evil thought from your heart and mind.

On the other hand, if you want to believe something, all you have to do is to find a passage of the Bible which confirms it and meditate on that until you become fully convinced of the truth the passage carries. The reason that this works is that belief is strongly bound to the truth. If you are convinced that something is true, it becomes a belief. We all know that the Bible is the Word of Truth, as Jesus says in John 14:6 ("I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me"), so meditating on something you find in the Bible will make it come true in your life.

In 2 Samuel 7:28, the great King David declared that the Scriptures are truth: "And now, O Lord GOD, You

are God, and Your words are true, and You have promised this goodness to Your servant." And, above all, our Lord and Savior Himself declares, in John 17:17: "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth."

Therefore the Bible is the reference and the storeroom of truth. You must use the Bible as a reference to measure the reality of anything which exists either in the physical world or in spiritual realm. Acting like this will allow you to cast away any fear, doubt, and unbelief as well as worry and anxiety.

25. How Can We Activate, Energize, and Exercise Our Faith?

Let us begin this chapter with a teaching from Jesus about how we must create our spiritual foundation, which is found in Matthew 7:24 27: "Therefore whoever hears these teachings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."

In His wonderful teaching, Jesus stresses the key issue of activating our faith. It is not sufficient to simply hear Jesus or God's Word, you must understand what He is saying. An even better understanding comes from taking corresponding actions, which are in line with our beliefs or understanding, as it is written in Psalm 111:10: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever."

Acting on God's Word is the principal factor in having a good understanding it is the best way to activate our faith. This means that if we want to increase our understanding of any truth found in the Bible we must act upon it. In other words, until a man activates his faith by acting upon his belief he will never get to have a good understanding of that belief.

But, once he does achieve a higher level of understanding, then this better understanding will stir him up to act effortlessly according to that belief, which will become a conviction after he starts taking any corresponding actions which are in line with it. Afterwards, he will be able to effortlessly put this conviction into practice.

However, unless you succeed in activating your faith for a specific purpose or truth of the Bible, what you want to see in the physical realm will never come to pass and you will remain unfruitful.

Let us look at how the process of the activation of faith works with two truths from the Bible. Philippians 4:6 7 tells us: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

Here is how the process of faith's activation works:

- First of all, your spirit must remind you that everything which is written in the Bible is true. (Since Philippians 4:6 7 comes from the Bible,

it is true — so you must treasure this scripture in your heart.)

- Secondly, once you move this into your heart, it will become your belief.
- Thirdly, you must activate your faith by confessing or speaking aloud the specific scripture whose fruit you wish to produce by saying, "Scripture says, in Philippians 4:6, to be anxious for nothing. I believe that this is true, so in the name of Jesus I am anxious for nothing. And from this moment on, I will think with my mind, speak with my mouth, feel with my body, and act according to this declaration."
- Fourthly, all you have to do is to start acting upon this belief or to put it into practice or do God's Word about this specific truth whose fruit you want in your life. The Scriptures show you how to reach this goal by telling you: "but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." By always giving thanks to God and confessing who you are in Christ — and who Christ is — you make your requests known to God and cause God the Father to grant you His peace. Do you understand that when your mind and heart are under the control of the peace of God, then doubt, fear, unbelief, worry, and anxiety disappear, and your faith becomes more alive?

- Fifthly, as Psalm 111:10 says, you will get a better understanding of your belief and this better understanding will turn your belief into a conviction.
- Sixthly, the next time you act according to this specific belief you will do it effortlessly. Unless you succeed in overcoming your anxiety, fear, doubt, and unbelief by acting upon it, you will remain a slave to it and your understanding the fact of believing God's truth by treasuring it in your heart will continue to be unfruitful. Only our profession and our corresponding actions, when they are in line with our beliefs, give us a good enough understanding of our belief to turn it into a conviction in order to energize our faith, and to make our faith more powerful. This conviction then catapults us into the realm of the Spirit God's spiritual realm making us possessors of the fruit of that truth once we have managed to grasp its full meaning. From that moment on, nobody can convince us that our conviction is false, and if a tribulation comes and the source of this trouble is related to our conviction, we will never fall.

This process can be used to deal with all of the main truths found in the Scriptures as medicine to overcome any situation, sickness, problem (anxiety, fear, doubt, unbelief), or circumstances of life.

To keep the peace our Lord Jesus Christ has given you, you can also use another beautiful scripture

spoken in John 16:33 before and when trouble comes: "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Let us look at this, going through the same steps we have just gone through, above:

- First of all, your spirit must bring to your mind that everything which is written in the Bible is true. (And, since John 16:33 comes from the Scriptures and, moreover, is the Word of Jesus, it is true.)
- Secondly, you must treasure this saying in your heart, so that it will become your belief.
- Thirdly you must activate your faith by confessing aloud this specific scripture to produce the fruit it carries, by saying: "Jesus says in John 16:33 that I must keep the peace He has already given me in spite of any tribulation I will have to face in my life, because He has overcome the world. I believe that it is true, so in His name I will keep the peace Jesus has given me and from this moment on, I will think with my mind, believe with my heart, speak with my mouth, feel with my body, and act according to this declaration."
- Fourthly, you have to start acting upon this belief, putting it into practice or doing God's Word as it pertains to this specific truth if you want to see its fruit in your life.
- Fifthly, as Psalm 111:10 says, you will get a better understanding of your belief and this better

understanding will turn your belief into a conviction.

- Sixthly, the next time you act according to this specific belief you will do it effortlessly. Unless you succeed in keeping the peace of God by acting upon it you will remain a slave of any tribulation which comes your way and your understanding the fact of believing God's truth by treasuring it in your heart will continue to be unfruitful. Only our profession and corresponding action in line with a belief can give us a good understanding of our belief and turn it into a conviction in order to activate or energize our faith. This conviction thus catapults us into the realm of the Spirit, making us possessors of the fruit of the truth once we have managed to grasp its full meaning. From that moment on, nobody will be able to convince us that our conviction is false and if a tribulation comes and the source of this trouble is related to our conviction, we will never fall.

As was described above, this process can be used as medicine to deal with all of the main truths found in the Scriptures, for you to overcome any situation, sickness, problem (anxiety, fear, doubt, unbelief), or circumstance of life. All you have to do is to shape your way of life around your strong conviction about keeping the peace Jesus has already given you despite the circumstances you find yourself in or the tribulation you are faced with.

We become deeply rooted in faith by activating and exercising our faith and, through this, sins such as fear, doubt, unbelief, worry, anxiety, and addiction have no more power over us. This is just as Jesus said in John 8:30 36: "As He spoke these words, many believed in Him. Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, 'If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.' They answered Him, 'We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can you say, "You will be made free"?' Jesus answered them, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.'"

Can you see that the knowledge of truth our understanding of God's Word is the principle of our freedom from sin? Therefore we must exercise our faith by meditating on God's Word or confessing God's Word in able to catch its meaning, and we must act upon it to get an even better understanding of God's Word. Remember that it is written in Psalm 111:10: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever." Indeed, in Joel 2:32, God reveals the power of our tongue when we call upon His name to receive His gifts or to be delivered from any bondage or sins: "And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the

LORD Shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, As the LORD has said, Among the remnant that the LORD calls."

Jesus also declares, in John 14:12–14: "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it." In this wonderful scripture, Jesus likens the phrase "believe in Him" to the phrase "ask in His name." He goes on to specify that He will give to the believer whatever he asks in His name. Jesus twice repeats the phrase "Ask anything in My name" to show that doing so produces, without fail, the intended purpose—and that this great law is sealed in heaven. The only requirement He puts on us is to believe in Him and then Jesus gives us authority to back what we ask in His name.

Do you see that by calling on the name of Jesus or asking in the name of Jesus we cause God to bring into being the salvation He has in store for us in the realm of the Spirit? This is according to what is written in John 16:23–24: "And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name he will give you. Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full."

Do you understand that we have two ways—two spiritual tools—to get our salvation and our freedom

from sin? The first spiritual tool is to get revelation knowledge, as Jesus said in John 8:31–32: "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." The second tool is to use the name of Jesus by calling on His name or asking for what we desire in His name.

The process of the activation of our faith combines these two tools. We need to know the truth to act upon it—and we act upon it by using the name of Jesus. The result, therefore, is that we will receive without fail the object of our desire or prayer—or our freedom or salvation. It is no wonder that the Apostle Paul—inspired by the Holy Spirit and revealing the truths hidden in Deuteronomy 30:11–14—declares, in Romans 10:9–10: ". . . that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." This means that our heart needs to know the truth to be able to store God's Words—but by confessing God's Word we activate our salvation and our faith.

26. Sixteen Key Points to Consider as You Read the Bible

The first "key" to reading the Bible is simply knowing the difference between wisdom and foolishness. In speaking of wisdom, Proverbs 1:7 says: "The fear of the Lord is a beginning of knowledge But fools despise wisdom and instruction;" and Psalm 111:10 adds: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever." So doing God's Word (which we know is the same as being righteous) is the principal factor of good understanding. This means that if we want to increase our understanding of any truth found in the Bible we must act upon it. In John 17:17, we find this definition of truth from Jesus: "Sanctify them by Your truth, your word is truth." In other words, truth is the Word of God wisdom.

God commands our heart to keep His commandments and to regulate our life with His Word. This is wisdom. But we learn from Proverbs 3:5 7 that it is foolishness to "lean on your own understanding" or to consider yourself "wise in your own eyes." If we let our life be regulated by knowledge treasured in our heart which is not in line with God's Word we are

expressing our own wisdom, which is foolishness in God's sight. This extraordinary revelation knowledge has been made crystal clear in John 7:15 18: "And the Jews marveled, saying, 'How does this man know letters, never having studied?' Jesus answered them and said, 'My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me. If anyone wants to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority. He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him."

Can you see that to seek the glory of God is to speak God's Word and to seek the truth? On the other hand, speaking in line with God's Word but seeking your own glory is speaking on your own authority speaking lies. As far as God is concerned, all He wants us to do is to seek Him. In the mind of God or Jesus, seeking Him, or speaking or confessing God's Word, is the same thing as believing Him. As Proverbs 28:5 says: "Evil men do not understand justice. But those who seek the LORD understand all." All we have to do with our free will is to make the decision to seek God. That is all and it is our part of responsibility. Once we do this, God will do His part by giving us the power to grasp all of the wisdom we need to fulfill the wonderful life He has in store for us.

The second key to reading the Bible is to realize that when a man is without revelation knowledge, it is like he has no heart. It is not good for a man to be without

revelation knowledge, because it leads him to sin, as Proverbs 19:2 declares: "Also it is not good for a soul to be without knowledge, And he sins who hastens with his feet." So the first factor of sin is to be without revelation knowledge, because this causes us to move too quickly and cause problems for ourselves.

The third key, partiality, is strongly related to an unclean heart. A definition of partiality is found in Job 34:19: "Yet He is not partial to princes, Nor does He regard the rich more than the poor; For they are all the work of His hands." So to be "partial" means to pay more regard to one person than to another. Indeed, God is not partial, as it is said in Deuteronomy 10:17: "For the LORD your God is God of gods and LORD of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality nor takes a bribe."

Deuteronomy 10:12–22 gives us instructions on how to practice our own impartiality: "And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and keep the commandments of the LORD and His statutes which I command you today for your good? Indeed heaven and the highest heavens belong to the LORD your God, also the earth with all that is in it. The LORD delighted only in your fathers, to love them; you above all peoples, as it is this day. Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer. For the LORD your God is God of gods and LORD of

lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality nor takes a bribe. He administers justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the stranger, giving him food and clothing. Therefore love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. You shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve Him, and to Him you shall hold fast, and take oaths in His name. He is your praise, and He is your God, who has done for you these great and awesome things which your eyes have seen. Your fathers went down to Egypt with seventy persons, and now the LORD your God has made you as the stars of heaven in multitude." Can you see that we have to circumcise our heart in other words, to change our mind towards God so that we no longer show partiality and so that we do not have a worldly mind?

The fourth key to reading the Bible is about redemption. Jesus is our redemption, as He stated in John 8:34 when he explained freedom from the slavery of sin. Because Jesus, His Word, and God's Word are one, Jesus was saying that God's Word has the power to makes us free from sin and if we are already slaves of sin He (or God's Word) is able to redeem us from the power of that sin. He who fears the Lord cannot be overtaken by sin, and even in a situation that is difficult and unpleasant, God will deliver him, as it is written in Proverbs 12:21: "No grave trouble will overtake the righteous, But the wicked shall be filled with evil;" and in Proverbs 24:16: "For a righteous man may fall seven times And rise again, But the wicked shall

fall by calamity." Jesus Christ came to redeem us from sin and save us from the power of evil as He declared in Mark 10:45: "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

Notice that in John 8:34 Jesus said: "Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed." This means that God's Word — Jesus — has the power to get us out of bondage, addiction, trouble, and so on if we are already in it — and even to prevent trouble and affliction from overtaking us. It also means that if we remain focused on our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, He will give us the power to overlook offenses, to hold back feelings such as anger, and to overcome impatience, fear, doubt, and unbelief — in other words, to be always and forever meek. As we learned in Chapter Twenty-two, Jesus gives the right to reign with Him on earth only to those born-again Christians who overcome and who are meek, as it is written in Revelation 3:21: "To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne."

Proverbs 23:29–30 cautions us by showing us the fruit of addiction: "Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has sounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? Those who linger long at the wine, Those who go in search of mixed wine." All of these afflictions illustrate the fruit of being addicted to alcohol, but this same list works for other kinds of addiction or bondage. So

if we come into the jurisdiction of Jesus by confessing Him as our Lord and Savior, Jesus will give us our deliverance, redemption, and freedom from sin if we call on His name or ask in His name for our deliverance. He can also give us understanding of His Word concerning our case, as was discussed in Chapter Twenty-five.

The fifth key deals with having evil thoughts in our heart. Zechariah 7:10 lets us know that to put others down is the same as having evil in our heart: "Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the alien or the poor. Let none of you plan evil in his heart against his brother." Having an evil thought in our heart also means closing the eyes of our heart to people in need around us, as it is written in Deuteronomy 15:7: "If there is among you a poor man of your brethren, within any of the gates in your land which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart nor shut your hand from your poor brother." To "harden our heart" means the same as to close the spiritual eyes of our heart. We must remember that our spiritual eyes are the same as our mind, and unless we change our mind towards God our heart will remain hard and God's Word will not grow in it.

If we harden our heart, it also means that we will keep God's Word from entering into our heart, as it is written in Psalm 95:7–11: "For He is our God, And we are the people of His pasture, And the sheep of His hand. Today, if you will hear His voice: 'Do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion, As in the day of trial

in the wilderness, When your fathers tested Me; They tried Me, though they saw My work. For forty years I was grieved with that generation, And said, "It is a people who go astray in their hearts, and they do not know My ways." So I swore in My wrath, "They shall not enter my rest."""

Can you see that a hardened heart causes people to go astray and prevents them from knowing God's Ways? The Scriptures declare that folks who were on the wrong path but have returned are people who have changed their minds toward God, according to what is written in 1 Peter 2:25: "For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls." We cannot continue to go astray once we change our mind toward God and return to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Going back to Psalm 95:7–11, we can understand that unless we change our mind toward God we cannot be soft-hearted. But only soft-hearted people are able to cause God to purify their hearts and then understand God's Word — and do God's Word — as it is written in Psalm 119:9–11: "How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh! Let me not wander from Your commandments! Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You."

If you forbid God's Word from entering into your heart, your heart will be filled only with your own thoughts, beliefs, and desires, which are not in line with God's Word and are wicked by nature. Since our

heart is the key factor of our personality, our speech, actions, thoughts, and feelings will reflect the wicked content of our heart. But if we allow God's Word to enter our heart, this has the power to purify our heart and give hope to our spirit and then our words, thoughts, feelings, and actions will become right and good like the content of our heart, which is filled with God's Word.

The sixth key handles the content of our speech on a daily basis, as Jesus revealed to us in John 7:16 18, saying: ". . . My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me. If anyone wants to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority. He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him." In this, we find out that we are not allowed to speak on our own authority, and that it is sin. Every word which comes out of our mouths must be in line with God's Word. Keeping this attitude at all times will preserve us, and no unrighteousness will be found in us, as Jesus declared in John 7:18: ". . . but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him." We have already found out that the first factor of sin is the lack of revelation knowledge. Now we have just discovered that the second factor of sin is selfishness. Speaking in your own authority is seeking yourself. And seeking yourself is the same as lying, because God's Word says in John 7:18 that seeking the

glory of God is true thus seeking yourself is wrong and, therefore, sin.

The seventh key is about vision. The Bible says, in Proverbs 29:18, that "Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; But happy is he who keeps the law." We know that a restraint is a rule, a fact, an idea, etc., that limits or controls what people can do in other words restraint is self control. This means that having an understanding of God's Word and guidance is the ultimate kind of restraint or self control for a human being.

Unless we truly understand God's Word, there is no way for us to control our own emotions and no way for the Word of God to take deep root in our heart so that our spirit can take control of our feelings. Since losing our temper causes us to sin, we are reminded again that a lack of revelation knowledge or God's guidance is one of the main factors of sin (as we found out above in the second key to reading the Bible).

The eighth key focuses on our fear. Proverbs 29:25 declares: "The fear of man brings a snare. But whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe." Can you see that our worldly fears are a trap? We are not allowed to have fear unless it is rightly directed. In Matthew 10:28, Jesus declares that there are two kinds of fears, one is right and the other is wrong: "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." This means that fearing God (or trusting in the Lord) is the right thing to do. Remember

that Proverbs 1:7 states that "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, But fools despise wisdom and instruction." This means that fear is a third factor of sin, following a lack of knowledge (the second key to reading the Bible) and selfishness (the sixth key).

The ninth key tells us about spiritual instruments that create physical realities. Proverbs 3:19 20 makes crystal clear the fact that wisdom, understanding, and knowledge are spiritual instruments of God which can create physical realities. If we do not want to be in bondage but want to be free to live the wonderful life God has already planned for us, we are under obligation to receive these gifts. Let us look at that passage from Proverbs: "The LORD by wisdom founded the earth; By understanding He established the heavens; By His knowledge the depths were broken up, And clouds drop down the dew." We learn, here, that any believer needs to get these virtues to change any circumstances around him that he does not want or even to create new physical realities.

Do you see the powers which back up these three powerful tools, which God desires to grant us? Only one requirement is needed: believing in Jesus by doing what He reveals to us in John 14:21 23: "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him. Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, 'Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?' Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me,

he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.'" This means that treasuring God's Word in our heart and keeping or doing as it requires us to (in other words, loving Jesus) causes God and Jesus to make our spirit their headquarters.

But as we have already learned in the previous chapters, God and Jesus have two ways to bring their presence to us. The first way is to give us the Holy Spirit. The second way is to build our spirit until it becomes mature, strong, powerful, energized, and fully grown and developed. God starts building our spirit when we accept His Word in our heart after changing our mind towards Him. In order to make this declaration crystal clear, Jesus went on and said about the Holy Spirit, in John 7:37 38: "On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'"

Jesus also said, concerning the Word of God, that it has the power to grow in us and become mature and fully developed, in Luke 8:11 15: "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. Now the ones that fell among

thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, bring no fruit to maturity. But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience." So Jesus, in John 14:21 23 and in John 7:37 38, specifies that our believing and our genuine love for Jesus Christ bring us the Holy Spirit.

In Luke 8:11 15, Jesus also teaches us that if we are soft hearted, the Word of God received in our heart will grow, become mature, and bear fruit if we are also patient or if we are meek. We know that God's Word is Spirit, as it is written in John 6:63. And we know that the fruits of the Spirit are wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, and the fear of the LORD, as it is written in Isaiah 11:2: "The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD." Our true love for Jesus Christ causes Jesus Christ and God the Father to make our spirit Their headquarters through the Holy Spirit and the Word of God sown in our heart once it has become mature and fully developed. Once this happens, the Holy Spirit or God's Word grants us these three marvelous gifts of God (wisdom, understanding, and knowledge) to change our world and our circumstances or to make the things we desire happen.

In the case of the Holy Spirit, as born-again Christians we can change our world and our circumstances

or to make the things we desire happen once we are baptized if we have a great love for Jesus Christ in our heart. But, in the case of the Word of God, once it is sown in our soft heart it needs time to grow and reach its full maturity. That is why Jesus specified that it will bear fruit "with patience" in Luke 11:15. This means that until we become meek and patient, we cannot bear fruit.

The tenth key is about grace. Jesus reveals to us the necessary condition we must fulfill to receive grace from God in Matthew 11:25, saying: "I thank you, Father, LORD of heaven and earth, because You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes." So the gifts of God belong to those who are humble, who are poor in spirit, and who are not wise and prudent in their own eyes but receive wisdom and insight from God. Proverbs 3:34 talks about this same truth, saying: "Surely He scorns the scornful, But gives grace to the humble." To emphasize the importance of this, notice that Peter and James, the disciples of Jesus Christ, both referred to Proverbs 3:34 (in 1 Peter 5:5 and in James 4:6), saying: "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

The eleventh key deals with the seven things that defile the heart and are abominations to God. Proverbs 6:16 19 states that "These six things the LORD hates, Yes, seven are in abomination to Him: A proud look, A lying tongue, Hands that shed innocent blood, A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that are swift

in running to evil, A false witness who speaks lies, And one who sows discord among brethren." Likewise, King David declared in Psalm 5:4 6: "For You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness, Nor shall evil dwell with You. The boastful shall not stand in Your sight; You hate all workers of iniquity. You shall destroy those who speak falsehood; The LORD abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man." When we compare these two passages, we see that King David repeated the same abominations to God as were listed in Proverbs.

Now let us look at what our Lord and Savior thinks about this same subject. We find the mind of our Master in Matthew 12:33 37: "Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit. Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the Day of Judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned." As far as Jesus is concerned, our mouth and our heart are strongly connected we speak lies because we devise lies in our heart. In the same way, we deceive people because we plan deceit in our heart. Jesus is more explicit in Mark 7:18 23, saying: ". . . 'Are you thus without understanding also?

Do you not perceive that whatever enters a man from outside cannot defile him, because it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and is eliminated, thus purifying all foods?' And He said, 'What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man."

Do you see that, for Jesus, not only is our mouth strongly connected to our heart but also to our mind, body, and our actions? The evil thoughts we have in our mind come from our heart. Any evil deeds we commit have previously been planned in our heart. We are foolish when we have not treasured God's Word in our heart so we cannot receive wisdom or the understanding of God's Word. Pride is a reflection of proud thoughts about ourselves that we have already put in our heart because we are really convinced we are better than others. Likewise, covetousness is the envy we have put in our heart. Finally, our mind, mouth, body, and actions in other words, our thoughts, speech, feelings, and deeds are strongly bound to our heart. So the content of our heart is what really matters in the Kingdom of God. If you want to change your attitude, your behavior, your thoughts, your deeds, your feelings, or your speech, all you have to do is to put good things God's Word into your heart.

No wonder Jesus declares in Matthew 5:21 3o (Good News Bible): "'You have heard that people were told in the past, "Do not commit murder; anyone who does will be brought to trial." But now I tell you: whoever is angry with his brother will be brought to trial, whoever calls his brother "You good-for-nothing!" will be brought before the Council, and if you call your brother a worthless fool you will be in danger of going to the fire of hell. So if you are about to offer your gift to God at the altar and there you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar, go at once and make peace with your brother, and then come back and offer your gift to God. If someone brings a lawsuit against you and takes you to court, settle the dispute with him while there is time, before you get to court. Once you are there, he will hand you over to the judge, who will hand you over to the police, and you will be put in jail. There you will stay, I tell you, until you pay the last penny of your fine. You have heard that it was said, "Do not commit adultery." But now I tell you: anyone who looks at a woman and wants to possess her is guilty of committing adultery with her in his heart. So if your right eye causes you to sin, take it out and throw it away! It is much better for you to lose a part of your body than to have your whole body thrown into hell. If your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away! It is much better to lose one of your limbs than for your whole body to go to hell.'"

Jesus revealed in this passage that the first manifestation of any murder we are about to commit is our anger. Do not forget that Jesus has already told us that we plan in our mind and then put in our heart the murder before we act upon it. Now He is telling us that we must restrain anger at all costs. Anger is a sign of an evil thought of murder in our mind and heart so we are under an obligation to stop it. Jesus said, in John 14:15: "If you love Me, keep My commandments." Because, as believers, Jesus is our Lord and Savior we must hold back our anger and, if we cannot do it by ourselves, we have to meditate on God's Word, which will help us to do it.

Another revelation Jesus made (in Matthew 5:27–30) is that looking with lust or desire at a woman is the same thing as committing adultery. Why? Because, according to Jesus, a belief or a thought formed in our heart and mind is the same thing as something happening in the physical realm. This is because a thought about adultery is created in the spiritual realm and we know that the spiritual realm is more real than the physical realm, since the spiritual realm gives birth to the physical realm. We should not be surprised at this, since believing creates truth (we cannot believe something we think is not true), so if we treasure a thought in our heart it means that we live by it. Therefore, we commit adultery by putting a thought of desire in our heart.

Jesus declares, in John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that

whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life;" and, in 1 John 4:7–18: "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. In this the love of God was manifested towards us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God and God in him. In this respect love has been made perfect among us, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love."

These statements mean that God is love. His infinite love caused Him to send His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to save us and give us eternal life. Now we have to fulfill our responsibility by treasuring God's Word

in our heart and keeping Jesus's commandments by loving Him in order to clean our heart as the Scriptures say in John 15:1 3: "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vine-dresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you." Remember that in Chapter Seven we discussed that only those who love Jesus can be made clean by the Word of God, and that is the truth which is repeated in John 15:1 3.

At the end of the day, we can deduce that God's responsibility to us is to provide us with salvation, but our responsibility is to take care of our heart by loving Jesus. But God will help us to take care of our heart, as it is written in Proverbs 4:23: "Keep your heart will all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life." We cannot succeed in keeping our heart through our own efforts; we need the help of God and the grace of God. But our responsibility is to expose ourselves to the Word of God on a daily basis through our daily meditation upon His Word so that it causes us to turn our mind toward Him and the spark of our love for Jesus and God will be kindled in our heart because our love for Jesus has the power to remove all impurities from it.

The twelfth key speaks of the anointing, which is the activation of the presence of God or the power of the Holy Spirit in us. Proverbs 6:20 24 illustrates this point: "My son, keep your father's command, And

do not forsake the law of your mother. Bind them continually upon your heart; Tie them around your neck. When you roam, they will lead you; When you sleep, they will keep you; And when you awake, they will speak with you. For the commandment is a lamp, And the law is light; Reproofs of instruction are the way of life, To keep you from the evil woman, From the flattering tongue of a seductress." Can you see that the Word of God, once it is treasured in your heart, is what leads you or guides you when you go astray, protects you when you sleep, speaks with you when you awake, and regulates your life? This means that God's Word, when it is stored in your heart, brings you the real presence of God and plays the role of the wonderful counselor.

The Holy Spirit is another comforter who comes to us when we prove our love of Jesus by keeping His commandments as He said in John 14:15 16: "If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever." But until we learn to love Jesus by keeping His commandments and activating the power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, we have only God's Word as counselor to be our light the one who regulates our life.

We can also feel the anointing by experiencing the healing power of God's Word, as it is written in Proverbs 4:20 22: "My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your eyes; Keep them in the midst of your heart; For they are life to those who find them, And

health to all their flesh." If we consider that "health to all their flesh" means that it is medicine to their body, then Proverbs 4:20 22 becomes: "My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your eyes; Keep them in the midst of your heart, For they are life to those who find them, And medicine to all their body." This is proof that when we listen to or meditate on God's Word, the Word of God brings us its working power, the anointing, or activates the power of God that heals our sickness and supplies us with anything we lack so that we can be fully equipped for our spiritual life in the kingdom of God.

The thirteenth key deals with those who are blessed. The wisdom of Christ declares, in Proverbs 8:32: "Now therefore, listen to me, my children, For blessed are those who keep my ways." Let us compare this to what Jesus Himself states in Luke 11:28: "Instead of that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!" These two statements express the same truth, which is that the only way to receive the blessing of God and be fruitful is to listen to God's Word and keep it. However, you must remember that it is not enough to simply hear God's Word; you must act upon it, otherwise you will not produce the fruit of the seed of the Word of God that was sown in your heart.

Psalm 111:10 shows us that doing God's Word is equivalent to having a good understanding of it: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His

commandments. His praise endures forever." Can you see that doing God's Word increases your understanding of it? In the same way that the seed of any plant needs rain to grow, likewise God's Word needs to be put into practice to increase your understanding of that specific portion of scripture and, therefore, cause your spirit to grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We know that the increase of your knowledge of Jesus Christ, God's Word, also increases your grace, peace, and eternal life from God, as it is written in 2 Peter 1:2 11: "Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these things is short-sighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your calling and election sure, for if you do

these things you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ;" and in John 17:3: "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."

These passages make it obvious that the increase of our knowledge in Jesus Christ not only brings us grace, peace, and eternal life from God but also adds to our faith virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love. Why is this so? Because without eternal life or the knowledge of Jesus, we cannot bear these fruits. Remember that Jesus Himself declares, in John 15:5: "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." We can only receive eternal life when we become one with Christ, as the branches of His vine. Once this happens, His wonderful life flow in us producing all of the gifts mentioned above.

When you listen to the gospel and understand it, at once God grants you faith. This is the first fruit of keeping God's Word by doing what God tells you to do and giving attention to His Word. When you play your part, God does His part by giving you faith in Jesus. Then, when you act upon your faith by changing your mind towards God and confessing Jesus as your Lord and Savior, immediately you receive the righteousness of God the second fruit of doing God's Word. This gift has great potential, and you must make yourself

aware of this power through meditation on God's Word, which will put your gift of righteousness into practice so that you can receive all the grace, peace, and eternal life of God, as well as virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love.

The fourteenth key covers the definition of mourning, which is given in Psalm 42:1–11:

As the deer pants for the water brooks,
So pants my soul for You, O God.
My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
When shall I come and appear before God?
My tears have been my food day and night,
While they continually say to me,
"Where is your God?"

When I remember these things,
I pour out my soul within me.
For I used to go with the multitude;
I went with them to the house of God,
With the voice of joy and praise,
With a multitude that kept a pilgrim feast.

Why are you cast down, O my soul?
And why are you disquieted within me?
Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him
For the help of His countenance.

O my God, my soul is cast down within me;
Therefore I will remember You from the land of the Jordan,
And from the heights of Hermon,
From the Hill Mizar.

Deep calls unto deep at the noise of Your waterfalls;
All Your waves and billows have gone over me.
The Lord will command His lovingkindness in the daytime,
And in the night His song shall be with me
A prayer to the God of my life.

I will say to God my Rock,
"Why have You forgotten me?
Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?"
As with a breaking of my bones,
My enemies reproach me,
While they say to me all day long,
"Where is your God?"

Why are you cast down, O my soul?
And why are you disquieted within me?
Hope in God;
For I shall yet praise Him,
The help of my countenance and my God.

Of course we know that mourning refers to the sadness, tears, despair, anxiety, and discouragement that you show and feel when you are in a bad condition. If you stay in that state, it is sin, but if you instead commit your way to God by hoping in Him and praying to Him for the help of His countenance, then you will do well and God will answer your prayer.

Can you see that unless you choose the way of meekness after your mourning, this mourning will not please God? But your mourning will be blessed if it leads you on the way of meekness, as Jesus specifies in Matthew 5:4: "Blessed are those who mourn, For they

shall be comforted;" and as it is written in Psalm 34:18: "The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, And saves such as have a contrite spirit." Anybody can have a broken heart, but the one who is blessed is he who has a contrite heart, is sorry for something bad that he has done, turns to God to ask for forgiveness of his sins, believes in Jesus, and confesses Him as his Lord and Savior. In fact, Proverbs 17:22 states: "A merry heart does good, like medicine, But the broken spirit dries the bones." Therefore, any genuine believer or disciple of Jesus Christ is obliged to be cheerful and meek no matter what conditions, situations, or circumstances he faces in life.

You may wonder what a believer must do to always remain cheerful. Meditating on God's Word (the Good News) brings you hope, life, joy, and gladness, as it is written in Psalm 51:8: "Make me to hear joy and gladness, That the bones which You have broken may rejoice;" Psalm 119:111: "Your testimonies I have taken as a heritage forever, For they are the rejoicing of my heart;" Psalm 119:14 16: "I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, As much as in all riches. I will meditate on Your precepts, and contemplate Your ways. I will delight myself in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word;" and Psalm 119:49 50: "Remember the word to Your servant, Upon which You have caused me to hope. This is my comfort in my affliction. For Your word has given me life."

The fifteenth key addresses the definition of the pure heart and the perverse heart given in Psalm

101:1 8: "I will sing of mercy and justice; To You, O LORD, I will sing praises. I will behave wisely in a perfect way. Oh, when will You come to me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart. I will set nothing wicked before my eyes; I hate the work of those who fall away; It shall not cling to me. A perverse heart shall depart from me; I will not know wickedness. Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor, Him I will destroy; The one who has a haughty look and a proud heart, Him I will not endure. My eyes shall be on the faithful of the land, That they may dwell with me; He who walks in a perfect way, He shall serve me. He who works deceit shall not dwell within my house; He who tells lies shall not continue in my presence. Early I will destroy all the wicked of the land, That I may cut off the evil-doers from the city of the LORD."

Do you see that the one who has a perverse heart is he who sets wicked things before his eyes so that his mind pictures wicked things, or falls away and forsakes his faith in Jesus Christ, secretly slanders his neighbor, is haughty and proud, has deceit in his heart, or tells lies? Remember that it is what comes from our heart that makes our heart unclean — such as evil desires in our heart, which cause our eyes to look at wicked things and make us turn away from God. It is evil thoughts in our mind and our heart which bring about slander. It is a thought in our mind, stored in our heart, that says, "We are better than others" and leads to haughtiness and pride. Deceit planned in our mind and put in our heart gives rise to deceit and lies.

Jesus describes this same truth in Mark 7:18 23: "So He said to them, 'Are you thus without understanding also? Do you not perceive that whatever enters a man from outside cannot defile him, because it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and is eliminated, thus purifying all foods?' And He said, 'What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man." Therefore a pure heart, which receives its truth from God, and not from man, does not treasure any iniquities.

The sixteenth key discusses the two kinds of fear the right fear and the wrong fear which are found in Psalm 112:1 10: "Blessed is the man who fears the LORD, Who delights greatly in His commandments. His descendants will be mighty on earth; the generation of the upright will be blessed. Wealth and riches will be in his house, And his righteousness endures forever. Unto the upright there arises light in the darkness; He is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous. A good man deals graciously and lends; He will guide his affairs with discretion. Surely he will never be shaken; The righteous will be in everlasting remembrance. He will not be afraid of evil tidings; His heart is steadfast, trusting in the LORD. His heart is established; He will not be afraid, Until he sees his desire upon his enemies. He has dispersed abroad, He

has given to the poor; His righteousness endures forever; His horn will be exalted with honor. The wicked will see it and be grieved; He will gnash his teeth and melt away; The desire of the wicked shall perish."

The first kind of fear — the right fear — is directed toward God and brings upon us the grace of God that casts out the second kind of fear, which is oriented toward earthly things. This wrong fear produces its fruit in our lives, as it is written in Proverbs 10:24: "The fear of the wicked will come upon him, and the desire of the righteous will be granted." This means that, apart from God, what we fear the most will come to pass in our life. We must focus our fear on God, otherwise we will punish ourselves with the object of our fear. If we choose to fear God, God will cause us to enter into a life full of grace, blessings, and eternal life. But if we choose to fear mankind and the things of this life, we will have a life full of calamities.

27. How Does the Kingdom of God Function?

In the Bible, the phrases "kingdom of heaven" and "kingdom of God" are used to talk about the same thing. (Only the gospel of Matthew uses the term "kingdom of heaven," while only once using the term "kingdom of God.") The fact that the two refer to the same idea is proven in Matthew 19:23–24: "Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.'" Can you see that the phrases "for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven" and "for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God" show that the kingdom of heaven is identical to the kingdom of God? Moreover, all of the other books of the Bible only use the term "kingdom of God."

The Bible says, in Romans 10:9–10: ". . . that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead you will be saved. For with the heart one believes to righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made to salvation." We have already found out in Chapter Nineteen that righteousness is the same as truth.

Moreover, Jesus says in John 17:17: "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth," meaning that God's Word is truth, so we must believe in the truth of God's Word.

In this wonderful scripture, the Apostle Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, revealed what is written in Deuteronomy 30:11–14: "For this commandment which I command you today, it is not too mysterious for you, nor is it far off. It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will ascend into heaven for us and bring it to us that we may hear and do it?' Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us that we may hear it and do it?' But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it."

Do you see that God is saying we do not need to go to heaven to know the truth, to know His way, or to know what to do because His Word — which is truth — has already been given to us? All we have to do is to treasure it in our heart and confess it to move our life in the right direction. Remember that God and His Word (Jesus) are one, and that God's Word is the power of God. So God is telling us to be aware of His power, which is within us since His Word — Jesus — dwells in our heart if we treasure God's Word in our heart. All we have to do is to activate the power of God in us by speaking God's Word and acting upon it.

Let us look at Romans 10:9–10 again: ". . . that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from

the dead you will be saved. For with the heart one believes to righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made to salvation." This scripture teaches us how God gives birth to us in His kingdom. To begin, we have to believe that God has raised Jesus from the dead, and then we must confess or speak this truth with our mouth this is the start of the process of our salvation. This means that we receive salvation when we believe in Jesus and declare this belief with our mouth. We are then born in the kingdom of God a newborn Christian in the Spirit, who needs to grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus. As a newborn, at first we do not know anything; we have to learn what we need to live well in the kingdom of God. Jesus, the Word of God, works in us and His saving power functions in us in four principal areas: wisdom from God, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Before we deal with these four areas of Jesus's influence, let us focus on the subject of salvation.

The angel of the Lord stood before shepherds living out in the fields in the country of Bethlehem and said to them: "Do not be afraid, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10 11). This means that Jesus is our salvation. Now what does salvation mean?

According to *New Living Translation Dictionary* and the Amplified Bible, "salvation" is a gift that comes from God. It is deliverance from the power and effects

of sin, danger, or difficulty by God's intervention or grace. Psalm 25:5 says, "Lead me in Your truth and teach me. For You are the God of my salvation; On You I wait all the day." So salvation includes wisdom. Remember that Jesus said in John 8:31 32: "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Can you see that Jesus, our salvation, teaches us God's Word so that we can know the truth which has the ability to make us free? Psalm 24:5 says, "He shall receive blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation." Again, this means salvation *includes* righteousness, as the Bible reminds us in Psalm 37:39: "But the salvation of the righteous is from the LORD; He is their strength in the time of trouble."

Can you see that God saves the righteous in times of adversity by strengthening them so that they can go through tribulations and trials without losing their temper, peace of mind, joy or love for Jesus? Psalm 51:14 states, "Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, The God of my salvation, And my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness." King David, in this verse, was asking God to deliver him from his guilt of shedding blood, because this guilt made him ritually unclean. Before the coming of Jesus Christ, our confession of our sins before God caused God to forgive this kind of guilt, as it is written in 2 Samuel 12:13 concerning King David: "Then David said to Nathan, 'I have sinned against the LORD.' And Nathan said

to David, 'The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die.'"

Not only can the guilt from bloodshed make a person unclean, but it can also make a land unclean, as it is written in Numbers 35:30–34: "Whoever kills a person, the murderer shall be put to death on the testimony of witnesses, but one witness is not sufficient testimony against a person for the death penalty. Moreover you shall take no ransom for the life of a murderer who is guilty of death. And you shall take no ransom for him who has fled to his city of refuge, that he may return to dwell in the land before the death of the priest. So you shall not pollute the land where you are; for blood defiles the land and no atonement can be made for the land for the blood that is shed on it, except by the blood of him who shed it. Therefore do not defile the land in which you inhabit, in the midst of which I dwell; for I the LORD dwell among the children of Israel." Can you see that God says that no atonement can be made for the one who has shed blood on the land? But Scripture declares that the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sins—not just some but all sins—as it is written in 1 John 1:7: "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sins." This means that, with Jesus, we are forgiven from all of our sins, including all their consequences, although, in the Old Testament, even though King David was forgiven for his sin of bloodshed, some consequences remained on his house.

Have you noticed, in looking at the case of King David, the power of our confession? Our own confession moves God, but if our confession is made in the name of Jesus, God's forgiveness is perfect or complete. This explains why 1 John 1:9 says: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Psalm 79:9 also says: "Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of Your name; and deliver us, and provide atonement for our sins, for Your name's sake!" Can you see that salvation also includes sanctification? This includes cleansing from guilt and sins, as we learned above in Psalm 51:14, and as in Numbers 35:33–34 ("So you shall not pollute the land where you are; for blood defiles the land and no atonement can be made for the land for the blood that is shed on it, except by the blood of him who shed it. Therefore do not defile the land in which you inhabit, in the midst of which I dwell; for I the LORD dwell among the children of Israel"). It is also written in 2 Thessalonians 2:13: "But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief of the truth." In Chapter Five, we found that salvation and redemption have the same results, but that redemption requires the payment of a price.

The Bible says, in Galatians 3:13, that Jesus has redeemed us from the curse of the law: "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become curse for us (for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who

hangs on the tree')." And, as we have already discussed, Deuteronomy 28:15 68 describes the thirty kinds of curses of the law, which are poverty, generational curses, curse wherever you go, weakness when you are faced with bad circumstances or a difficult situation, spoliation or being plundered, being a laughingstock for others, unproductiveness, decrease in glory, being the tail and not the head, being a borrower and not a lender, sickness, defeat or failure, fear, doubt, spiritual blindness, poor vision, weakness, being in need of all things, confusion or lack of wisdom, disaster or tragedy or misfortune, oppression, anxiety, hopelessness, despair, trusting in the riches and protections of this world, incurable diseases, madness, slavery or bondage, focusing on what you see, unknown disease which is not written in the book of the law, and, finally, destruction or death.

But Jesus brings us redemption, as it is written in Colossians 1:14: "In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins." Therefore, Jesus brings back to us all the grace and blessings of God which counteract the thirty curses of the law. Jesus is the solution for all of our needs. He is medicine for our body and the remedy for all of our problems. He is our joy, peace of mind, and fulfillment in this life.

Now that we understand salvation, let us look at wisdom, the first of the four principal areas where the power of Jesus works in us. The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 1:30-31 that Christ is the wisdom of God: "But in

Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God and righteousness and sanctification and redemption that, as it is written, 'He who glories let him glory in the LORD.'" 1 Corinthians 1:24 also tells us : ". . . but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." Proverbs 4:7 adds: "Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding." This tells us that the first day you become a Christian you are potentially equipped with the ability to be wise and to have understanding, but unless you study the Word of God through meditating on it you will not truly become wise and have understanding. Unless we know Jesus, we cannot function effectively in the Kingdom of God. The more we know the Scriptures, the more we know Jesus; the more we know Jesus, the more we have eternal life; and the more we have eternal life, the more God identifies us with Jesus. When this happens, His thoughts, beliefs, will, and feelings become our thoughts, beliefs, will, and feelings, so that we can live by them and share the speech and deeds of Christ Jesus. This knowledge of the thoughts, beliefs, will, and feelings of Christ is what is called the wisdom of God, and living by it is the righteousness of God.

Now let us have a look at righteousness. It is written (about Abraham), in Genesis 15:6: "And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness." So our belief in God (or Jesus) causes God to grant us the gift of righteousness and this gift help us

to keep God's statutes and judgments by the means of our meditation. This means that, when you believe in Jesus, you get the gift of righteousness — which is the potential power of God to do His will. But you will never exercise this power if you are not already equipped with the wisdom and understanding of God's Word. Any human being's life is regulated by the beliefs stored up in his heart. You may try to speak or behave contrary to what is in your heart and mind, but it will not last. Sooner or later people will discover your real personality and your real character — the real you. So it matters to study and meditate on God's Word to feed your heart and change your mind so that your righteousness (a gift from God) becomes effective in the sight of others — and in your own sight.

Therefore, the wisdom and understanding of God's Word are required before we can make the gift of righteousness effective in our life — and vice versa — as it is written in Psalm 111:10: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever." Can you see, now, that wisdom and understanding are the principal factors of righteousness, and effective righteousness is the key factor in having a better understanding of wisdom?

Now let us move on to the subject of sanctification. Sanctification contains two realities. First of all, sanctification means to be set apart by God. Secondly, Sanctification stands for being purified in your heart and mind from any evil thought or doubt (or unbelief

or fear) and all other unrighteousness. The Word of God, cleanses the believer's heart as Jesus Himself declares in John 15:3, saying, "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you."

At the very moment you believe in Jesus and confess Him as your Lord and Savior, you are set apart by Him and your heart enters into the process of sanctification through meditation on the Word of God and your increasing love for Jesus. (We will see, later in this book, that in the mind of Jesus a lack of understanding, fear, unbelief, doubt, worry about this life, anger, addiction, sorrow, and hatred are sins.)

After His resurrection, Jesus sent His disciples throughout the all world to preach to all nations in His name repentance and the remission of sins, beginning in Jerusalem (Luke 24:47). Before we make our declaration of faith, we must repent our sins and change our mind by feeding our mind with God's thoughts. That's why, before His death and resurrection, Jesus called people to repent, as it is written in Mark 1:14 15: "Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, saying, 'The time is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel.'" This means that, after hearing the gospel, we must repent for our sins and receive forgiveness of our sins. But repentance assumes that we have understood the message of salvation, which is brought to us by the preaching of the gospel.

This first degree of wisdom the understanding of the message of salvation is the milk of the

newborn Christian. Once we have this, we can make our declaration of faith (professing our belief in Jesus and confessing Him as our Lord and Savior) and the process of salvation can start. We start to grow by receiving the nourishment of the wisdom and understanding of God's Word through meditating on it and exercising our faith, which gives us more understanding of God's Word. This better understanding of God's Word causes us to delight in the Word of God and so improve our corresponding actions in line with God's Word that lead us to get an even better understanding of God's Word. And the cycle continues. Meditation on the Word of God as we have already learned purifies our heart from all sins, impurities, and worries about this life. This purification is what is known as the stage of sanctification. When we stop struggling with the sins and cares of this world, our heart is totally purified and is completely full of love for Jesus and, from that moment on, our communication with the Holy Spirit becomes more effective.

Finally, let us deal with the subject of redemption. Redemption is the end of our struggling with any lack of understanding, fear, doubt, unbelief, addiction, sorrow, hatred, and worry about this life through remaining focused on God's Word or Jesus, instead of looking at our worldly circumstances and thoughts. What are the different kinds of redemption Jesus brings to us?

First of all, Jesus redeems us from physical danger, as it is written in Matthew 8:25–26: "Then His disciples

came to Him and awoke Him, saying, 'Lord, save us! We are perishing.' But He said to them, 'Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?' Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm." Secondly, Jesus redeems us from our sins, as the angel of the Lord told Joseph, the husband of Mary the mother of Jesus, in Matthew 1:21: "And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins." This declaration of the angel of the Lord is clarified by our Lord Jesus Christ in John 8:34 36, when He says: "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a Son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed." This means that only Jesus has the power to redeem us from the troubles of this life. Can you see that the Word of God and our love for Jesus have the power to purify our heart, but unless Jesus has made us free from all kinds of bondage and sin, we will continue to experience them?

There is a considerable overlap between the four areas of the power of Jesus Christ in us. Wisdom (and an understanding of God's Word) is needed to start the process of salvation and to receive the gift of righteousness and maintain it and also for the sanctification of our heart. Complete sanctification depends on our definitive redemption. Our redemption takes time to attain its full maturity and to overcome the anger and impatience we feel when we see things

happen. When we continue to focus on God's Word through meditation (gaining wisdom) and keep on doing the Word of God by acting upon it (and receiving righteousness), this step corresponds to the activation of our faith, where we put our trust in Jesus and wait on Him to give us our final victory against the anger and impatience brought by tribulation, as it is written in John 16:33: "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." When we reach the stage of definitive self control and patience, it means we have received our total redemption. When we are redeemed, nothing will be lacking, as Jesus says in Revelation 3:20–21: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne." Thus, redemption requires wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification.

When we look at sanctification, the last of the four principal areas where the power of Jesus works in us, we must also look at complete sanctification. Complete sanctification means that only love dwells in our heart. That means that we have matured in the wisdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, that we have managed to get the gift of definitive redemption, and that our heart is totally and definitively purified from all sins. Remember that the Word of God is Jesus, so when we start

storing God's Word in our heart, we are treasuring Jesus in our heart. In other words, we have planted our vine, Jesus Christ. Therefore, when the Word of God in our heart reaches maturity, it starts to feed our whole being. It gives our mouth the right things to say, our mind the right things to think, our will the determination to do the will of God, our body the good things to act upon, and our spirit the energy to send the picture of God's Word to our mind so that our spirit can receive joy and hope which give strength to our will in order to take control over our thoughts, appetites, and feelings.

Once this happens, we can become productive or fruitful as Jesus states in John 15:1 8: "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be My disciples."

These beautiful passages reveal good news. First of all, when we start bearing fruit — by speaking pleasant words, by thinking right, by having strong determination to do the will of God, and by doing good things — then God prunes or purifies us and causes us to bear much fruit. Secondly, unless we bear much fruit, we cannot be Jesus's disciples.

At the end of the day, we can deduce that everything in the kingdom of God starts with our decision to repent and turn our mind towards God — a decision made by our free will, following the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. This repentance causes God to forgive all our sins. This first step toward the kingdom of God is made possible by our understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ that feeds our heart, changes our mind towards God, gives joy and hope to our spirit, and inspires our free will to make the decision to repent. Then, when we make our proclamation of faith, we receive the gift of righteousness and become a newborn Christian who needs to grow. If you remain in this infant stage and cease to feed your heart every day with God's Word, you will be unfruitful and God will take you away from Christ Jesus. But if you start meditating on God's Word on a daily basis, having His Word treasured in your heart will help you to grow and do His will.

In making your righteousness effective by doing His Word, you may have to face negative situations, but if you remain focused on God's Word instead of what you see, hear, feel or think with our own mind, you will

have the final victory in every battle you are involved in. Jesus says this in John 16:33: "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

This means that Jesus has already overcome for us any situation, circumstance, and tribulation. Believing this scripture — considering it to be true and putting it in your heart and picturing it with your mind — feeds your spirit with thoughts of your final victory in anything you will be involved in. This is the redemption Jesus has already given you, but unless you make your redemption effective in your life — by believing this truth — before you go through difficult trials, you will never receive your real redemption. Remember that, on your journey of life, your daily meditation on God's Word cleanses your heart from all impurities and sins. This is the stage of sanctification.

In conclusion, we see that wisdom alone cannot make us fruitful. We need to add righteousness to wisdom, but even wisdom and righteousness together cannot make us fruitful. To become fruitful, we need to add redemption to them. Therefore, when wisdom, righteousness, and redemption meet together in us, we reach the stage of perfect sanctification when the Word of God, or Jesus, cleanses our heart from all impurities and sins and we truly become fruitful through our love for Jesus.

28. The Tree of Life and the Four Key Factors of Sin According to Jesus Christ

About wisdom, Proverbs 3:18 says: "She is the tree of life to those who take hold of it, and happy are those who retain it." Remember that, in Genesis 2:8–9: "The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground the Lord God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." After the disobedience of man, Adam and Eve were sent out of the garden to keep them from taking the fruit from the tree that allows those who eat it to live forever, as it is written in Genesis 3:22–23: "Then the LORD said, 'Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also from the tree of life, and eat it, and live forever'—therefore the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken."

Do you see why, in the past, God forbade human beings from having access to the tree of life, but now

gives us access to the tree of life? The answer is above, in Genesis 3:22: the requirement to get access to the tree of life is to know only good, not both good and evil. In other words, you must have in your heart only good things and good intentions. Indeed, the tree of life produces only everlasting life, but the tree of knowledge of both good and evil produces only death. God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit are able to know both good and evil without being slaves of evil, but this is not possible for us. Only God can give us the power to redeem ourselves from the bondage of evil when we come to know evil.

Do you see now why God removes all our sins before He gives us eternal life? It is because we cannot have access to the tree of life without a pure heart. So when our free will earnestly desires to seek God, God then forgives all our sins so that we can have access to His tree of life, wisdom, or Jesus Christ. Taking in the Word of God every day will bring us the wisdom of God or Jesus, as Jesus reveals in John 4:13–14: "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." When you put God's Word in your heart, you drink the water given to you by Jesus and believe in Jesus. This means that "to treasure God's Word in your heart" and "to drink the water given by Jesus" both mean "to believe in Jesus." If you continue to store God's Word in your heart, you will one day become a

fountain of living water or a tree of life springing up into everlasting life.

Jesus goes further and clarifies His idea in John 6:63 when He declares: "It is the Spirit who gives life, the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit and they are life." If we keep meditating on God's Word, it has the power to cause us to do what it wants us to do. And, one day, the Word of God will grow and become mature in us, as it is written in 1 Peter 2:2: ". . . as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby;" in Luke 8:11, which says: ". . . The seed is the word of God;" in Matthew 13:31–32: "Another parable He put forth to them, saying: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, which indeed is the least of all the seeds: but when it is grown, it is greater than the herbs, and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches';" and in Psalm 92:12: "The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree, He shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon."

Can you see that when God's Word, which has been sown in our heart, grows and becomes mature, we are turned into helpers for others, in the same way that the Holy Spirit comes upon us when we are born again in order to help us? We know that God's Word is Spirit, as Jesus said in John 6:63. And we learn the fruits of the Spirit in Isaiah 11:2: "The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD."

Therefore the Word of God, in the same way the Holy Spirit does in our spirit, feeds our mouth with the right things to say; the Word of God also feeds our mind with the right things to think; God's Word feeds our eyes with the right things to look at and our ears to the right things to pay attention to; and, finally, the Word of God feeds our will, helping us to know the good decisions to take and strengthens our will to take control over our body, thoughts, and feelings.

Do you see that if you fail to hear the Holy Spirit, you have a second chance? If you treasure God's Word in your heart and let it grow in your heart, sooner or later the grown Word of God in you will perform the same works as the Holy Spirit would do in you. When this happens, you will start to clearly hear the Holy Spirit, so that your faith will become genuine since the Holy Spirit will bear witness to God's Word stored in your heart. This is as Jesus promised us in John 14:26: "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you."

After God has made us a tree of life, we will be compelled to produce life, not life and death. In the subsequent verses, Jesus teaches us the ultimate truth about our life: "For a good tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. For every tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather grapes from a bramble bush. A good man out of the good treasure of his

heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks" (Luke 6:43–45).

The manifestation of the working power of God in us is that our speech has no more idle, useless, or evil words. Only good things are allowed to come out of our mouth. Jesus, the tree of life, or the Holy Spirit cannot live with evil, and if we produce evil that means we have automatically lost Jesus and the Holy Spirit, and they will no longer live in us. In the same way that Adam was sent out of the Garden of Eden, we are also sent away from God when evil thoughts take place in our heart.

Keep these truths in your heart, your will, and your mind: Our heart is the Garden of Eden of God. When we become Christian, our mind becomes the custodian (or the angel) of God who guards this garden to prevent any evil thought from coming in so that our heart continues to produce everlasting life in us. The manifestation of this everlasting life in us is the good words which constantly come out of our mouth on a daily basis without ceasing, as it is written in Proverbs 6:20–23: "My son, keep your father's command, And do not forsake the law of your mother. Bind them continually upon your heart; Tie them around your neck. When you roam, they will lead you; When you sleep, they will keep you; And when you awake, they will speak with you. For the commandment is a lamp, And the law is light; Reproofs of instruction are the way of life."

Can you see that you are advised not to forsake the law God's Word? Remember that "forsake" means to renounce or stop doing something or leave something (especially something that you enjoy doing). So the phrase "do not forsake the law" could be said to mean "do not stop doing the Word of God in which you find delight." You must keep speaking good or kind words, words which give life to you and others, and which improve the moral or physical wellbeing of those who hear it. Your words must be good for the health, as we are told in Proverbs 15:4 ("A wholesome tongue is a tree of life, But perverseness in it breaks the spirit"). But, in order to produce these good words, we must feed our heart with the seed of life (God's Word), as it is written in Deuteronomy 8:3 (the wonderful passage of the Bible quoted by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in both Matthew 4:4 and Luke 4:4): "So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD."

Can you see that in this wonderful scripture Jesus is telling us that we are obliged to feed our soul by taking God's Word into our heart, in the same way we feed our body by eating bread? If we store God's Word in our heart, we will one day become a wellspring of living water which does not fail to flow, and our life will be regulated by God's Word, as it is written in Isaiah 58:11: "The LORD will guide you

continually, And satisfy your soul in drought, And strengthen your bones; You shall be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail." Jesus talks about this truth in John 7:38, saying: "He who believes in Me as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." Do you see the verb tenses in that passage? "Believes in Me" is in present tense, while "out of his heart will flow rivers of living water" is in the future tense. What does this mean? The answer is in John 14:21–23: "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him. Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, 'Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?' Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.'" Only our love for Jesus compels God and Jesus to make our heart Their house. But our love has to grow and when our love for Jesus reaches maturity, we become a river of living water. Another way to say this same truth is this: Acting upon the Word of God is the sign that we love Jesus, therefore a greater love for Jesus makes us more powerful since we will act effortlessly on the Word of God and therefore the power of God — the river of living water — will increase in us.

The condition we need to fulfill in order to become a tree of life — or a river of living water — is to

prove our love for our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ by having His commandments in our heart and keeping them; then Jesus will manifest Himself to us. This means that unless we prove our love for Jesus, there is no way for us to become a tree of life and produce good fruit.

When we come to really love our Lord Jesus, our everlasting life in Him becomes effective and what He said in John 10:28–30 applies to us: "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one." Being born again is not sufficient to keep Satan from snatching you from the hands of Jesus and God, any born-again Christian must also imitate ("follow") Jesus to compel Jesus and God to keep him in Their bosom and prevent anyone from snatching him away.

Until love for Jesus dwells in the heart of the new born-again Christian, a lack of understanding, or fear, selfishness, impatience, a lack of self-control, or worry about this life will remain a stumbling block, which can cause him to sin. (We will deal with these factors in Chapter Thirty-one.) Proverbs 16:22 deals with this revelation knowledge, saying: "Understanding is a well-spring of life to him who has it;" and Proverbs 4:20–23 says: "My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them

depart from your eyes; Keep them in the midst of your heart; For they are life to those who find them, And health to all their flesh. Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life."

29. Living by Faith or by Keeping God's Statutes and Judgments

Habakkuk 2:4 says: "Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his faith." On the other hand, God says in Leviticus 18:5: "You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does he shall live by them: I am the Lord."

In these passages, God declares two things. First of all, He states that the just shall live by faith; and, secondly, He states that the just shall live by keeping His statutes and judgments. Therefore, living by faith and living by keeping God's statutes and judgments are the same thing in the mind of God. As we know, faith is a gift given by God, while keeping His statutes and judgments comes from our own effort to become righteous. But how is it possible to live by the grace of God and at the same time live by our own effort? As it is written in Numbers 23:19: "God is not a man, that He should lie. . . ."

So our genuine faith will cause us to keep His statutes and judgments. Our righteousness, then, is the product of our faith and we cannot have righteousness before our faith works as it is written in Romans 5:1: "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with

God through our Lord Jesus Christ." In the same way, you cannot have peace with God (or any other gifts from God) before your faith works. Righteousness is the product of faith. You must not try to be righteous on your own — although this is a common mistake people make — but you must let your faith make you righteous before God. To confirm this, it is written in Genesis 15:6: "And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness." This shows that our faith causes God to grant us the gift of righteousness, and that keeping God's statutes and judgments eventually becomes effortless and easy to do.

The gift of righteousness might be cultivated by meditation on God's Word. (The chapter about meditation [Chapter Twenty-one] has already dealt with how to do the Word of God.) Notice also that according to Babylon English "to live by" means "to use as a basis for conducting one's life in a particular way, adhere to (beliefs, etc.)." This means that our life as a Christian must be regulated by our faith. Faith is the instrument the righteous uses to feed his spirit, to think with his mind, to talk with his mouth, to hear with his ears, to see with his eyes, to feel with his emotions, to act with his body — in other words, to live by.

In the next chapter, and beyond, we will look even more deeply into the subject of faith according to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, but in the meantime let us delve into some interesting attributes of faith.

Let us return to the book of Habakkuk, but this time let us look at Habakkuk 2:2–4: "Then the LORD

answered me and said: 'Write the vision And make it plain on tablets, That he may run who reads it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time; But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; Because it will surely come, it will not tarry. Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by faith.'" Can you see that this tells us that when our vision becomes clear, it controls us? God said: "Write the vision and make it plain on tablets" talking about what He showed to Habakkuk. So if we can write a vision, we can also see a vision from reading what the vision carries when it is put on tablets. Using our mind to picture God's vision carried by His Word is vital to really living by faith. For God this scripture deals with His vision or His Word at the same level, so if God declared: "That he may run who reads it," He is saying the vision which has become written scripture can run us, in other words, can control us. When we fail to picture God's vision brought by His Word, we have no understanding, therefore no faith. But if we succeed in seeing the pictures God wants us to see through His Word, then we get faith. This is the truth we discovered in the previous chapters about the vital function of our mind in the process of faith.

This means that our thought which is our vision has the power to control our life. It also means that, when we understand what we picture with our mind, this understanding becomes a belief. And, as we know, our belief runs our life. So it means we cannot live by

faith unless we change our thoughts or vision to focus on God.

But how do we get faith so that we can live by it? Romans 10:17 gives us the answer: "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Therefore, every day we must hear God's Word to feed our spirit with the food it needs so that it will not starve to death in the spiritual realm but will live, as it is written in Proverbs 4:4: "He also taught me, and said to me: 'Let your heart retain my words; Keep my commands, and live';" in Proverbs 7:2: "Keep my commands and live, And my law as the apple of your eye;" and in Proverbs 24:13 14: "My son, eat honey because it is good, And the honeycomb which is sweet to your taste; So shall the knowledge of wisdom be to your soul; If you have found it, there is a prospect, And your hope will not be cut off." No wonder the wisdom of God says in Proverbs 8:35: "Whoever finds me finds life, and obtains favor from the LORD." This means that without wisdom, understanding, and revelation knowledge in other words, without God's Word (Jesus Christ) our spirit is left completely destitute, without food and the other necessities for life, and dies.

Jesus spoke about this same reality when He answered the devil in Matthew 4:1 4: "Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterwards He was hungry. Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, 'If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.' But

He answered and said, 'It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God."'" In Matthew 4:4, Jesus clearly quotes what God had said in Deuteronomy 8:3 that man shall live by the Word of God.

Do you see a connection between this passage from Matthew and what God said in Habakkuk 2:4, when He said that the just or the righteous shall live by faith? Therefore living by faith and living by the Word of God are the same thing, since faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. Jesus and God are telling us that we must think, believe, talk, and act in other words, do everything in life in agreement with the Word of God, no matter what circumstances we find ourselves in. Jesus and God are also telling us that we must be aware of the presence of our spirit inside our body, and must feed our spirit with God's Word every day to produce the faith we need to live. But how do we do that?

This is the process: We hear the Word of God, and when we understand this Word, our understanding produces faith; faith is then the canal which conveys God's Word from our hearing into our heart to feed our spirit.

Now let us look in the Scriptures to show how this process takes place. Jesus Himself states in Luke 11:28: ". . . More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!" Can you see that as far as Jesus is concerned true faith is to hear the word of God and keep it? Matthew 13:18 23 declares: "Therefore

hear the parable of the sower: When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."

Have you noticed that only the one who hears and understands has true faith and can produce results? Thus, faith is produced by hearing God's Word and understanding this Word. The three other kinds of faith in the parable are actually false faith because of their lack of understanding, their lack of foundation, and their worry about this life. Therefore, four conditions must be met to have true or genuine faith:

1. We must hear God's Word.
2. We must understand God's Word to allow faith to be created in us.
3. The Word of God, carried by our faith, must take root in our heart and there must be no impatience

and anger, which have the power to uproot God's Word in our heart.

4. We must cease to worry about this life, so there must be no unbelief, fear, or doubt in our heart and mind when we focus on God's Word.

Only faith that is deeply rooted and founded on the rock of Jesus Christ never gives up, as it is written in Luke 6:46–48: "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say? Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock;" and in Ephesians 3:17–21: ". . . that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height— to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen." Can you see that we must be rooted and grounded in love— on the rock or in Jesus Christ?

Luke 6:46–48 states that the doers of God's Word are those who lay their foundations on the rock. John

14:23 specifies that those who love Jesus are those who are doers of God's Word. We can see that those who love Jesus are those who are rooted and grounded on Jesus Christ. But our foundation, which is based on the love of Christ, is the perfect foundation as it says in Ephesians 3:19. So, before our love for Christ is perfected we must root or set our foundation in Christ by being meek (as we learned in Chapter Twenty-Two) because meekness enables us to have self control and patience. We also learned that the one who is meek is the believer who is not worried about anything and who has the peace of God.

Let us remind ourselves of the seven qualities of the meek. The meek:

1. delights himself in the LORD or in God's Word,
2. commits his way to God,
3. trusts in Him,
4. rests in the LORD,
5. waits patiently for Him,
6. is not worried about anything, and
7. has self control (restrains his anger and forsake his wrath).

Once we have these qualities, then the Word of God will abide in us and produce the love of God and one another in our heart while, at the same time, increasing our faith.

Let us look again at Romans 10:17: "So then Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." As we have learned, this means that our meditation

has to be vocalized in order to feed our spirit through faith. We also know that our faith is created by our understanding of God's Word when we meditate as God recommends every believer to do in Joshua 1:8: "The Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. From then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success."

As we know, the purpose of meditation is to create faith and feed our spirit in order to enable us to do all of God's commandments as they are written in the Bible not some words or commands, but all of them. This means that if we forsake meditation, our faith will cease to exist, and our spirit will lack daily nourishment, and will starve to a spiritual death. At the end of the day, we can deduce that faith acts like the sap of a vine, which is why Jesus declares in John 15:1 8 that He is the vine and we are the branches, and that without Him to bring us our nourishment, we cannot thrive.

As sap carries food to all the branches of the vine, faith also carries God's Word to our heart to feed our spirit and brings eternal life to our heart, mind, will, and body. How? Jesus has faith in God, so His faith conveys the food of our spirit to us. But the connection between Jesus's faith and our spirit is made by our faith. So if we cease to produce faith, our spirit will be disconnected from Jesus. Thus the function of our faith is to make a connection between Jesus

and our spirit. We create contact between ourselves and Jesus by developing our faith through our daily and nightly meditation and prayer or worship and thanksgiving to God the Father in heaven.

Hebrews 12:2 declares: "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." Jesus is the author of our faith and also the one who causes it to grow and perfects it within us.

We must remember that every born-again Christian who has accepted Jesus has faith inside of him. Look at Romans 12:3: "For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith." Every believer has faith, but the "measure of faith" God gave us at our new birth is not enough for all the challenges of life. God expects us not only to have that initial amount of faith but to grow it to maturity and perfection.

As we have read, Jesus is the author and the perfector of our faith. He perfects it, helping the fruit to grow. Sickness is not the only challenge a believer has to face in life. As long as you live, there are challenges but God expects your faith to grow. For instance, if you do not have enough faith to deal with a headache or anger, how can you have enough faith to deal with cancer? Tough situations simply need more faith to fix them. You must develop your faith through small

challenges so that no matter the situation you face in life you will be able to deal with it. By exercising your faith, you will develop the virtue of meekness, and start gaining strength from God to help you to take control over anger, fear, worry, anxiety, doubt, and unbelief. You simply need to start by saying, "I have faith."

The reason you need your faith to be developed is because perfected faith will produce perfect results, not to mention that without faith you cannot please God (as we learn in Hebrews 11:6: "Without faith, it is impossible to please God."). With perfected faith, we can do perfected works. And there is no way to get God's attention without faith.

We cannot only *have* faith but we must live by faith. The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 5:7: "For we walk by faith, not by sight." This means that our lives function with faith, and this is the way we operate. So faith is incredibly important to us as believers.

When you look at the Scriptures, you can see that Jesus mentions different kinds of faith. And the Bible has four dimensions of faith that we are going to look at now. The purpose of this is to let you see the characteristics of each of them, so that you can find where you are and learn how to move yourself for the next level.

30. The Definition of Faith Given by Jesus Christ

In the preceding chapter, we addressed the general subject of faith, but now we are going to deal with it in detail. But why is it so important to come to the point of faith? There are two reasons.

First of all, it is important because of what the Word of God says. In fact, it's written in Habakkuk 2:4: "Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his faith." Moreover, John, the Apostle, said in John 1:12–14, "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Therefore, we know that faith is needed to become sons of God.

Secondly, many Christians in the world struggle with their faith, and fail to put it to work. We know that the just shall "live by faith." So we also know that faith is a key issue to deal with in the eyes of God. Why do many Christians fail to put their faith to work?

Even 90% of Christians do not truly know Jesus. This is why they fail to walk in absolute victory in every area of their lives. It's simple. Hebrews 11:1 gives us the definition of faith: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." This is a great definition of faith but it cannot help us to understand what faith really is or how to put it to work.

The purpose of this chapter is to find what faith is from Jesus's point of view and then give Christians and other people who are crushed by life a better understanding of faith and the way Jesus teaches us to put our faith to work. We have previously found that Jesus is the Word of God, so He has the right, the ability, and the power to give us the best understanding of every word spoken in the Bible. We also have discovered that Jesus is wisdom the wisdom of God. So every time we look for a definition of a word and do not find it in the gospel of Jesus Christ (the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John), we will then seek it in Proverbs, where Jesus spoke in the past through the wisdom God gave to Solomon. Eventually, if we do not find what we are looking for in the Good News of Jesus Christ or in Proverbs, then we will search for it in the epistles of Paul, or the writings of the disciples of Jesus (Peter, John, and James), through whom the Holy Spirit spoke.

So let us start. What did Jesus say about faith?

In Matthew 6:25 34, He said: "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put

on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."

Here in these verses, Jesus is telling us that worrying about this life is the same as expressing little faith. Further in Matthew (Matthew 8:5 10), we read: "Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, saying, 'Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented.' And Jesus said to him, 'I will come and heal him.' The centurion answered and said, 'Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a

word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, "Go," and he goes; and to another, "Come," and he comes; and to my servant, "Do this," and he does it.' When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!'"

In these later verses, Jesus tells us about the understanding of God's truths. We've already said that Jesus is the Word of God, and here the centurion confesses one of God's truths: Jesus's Word has power to heal. In this, Jesus is telling us that speaking God's truths — the revelation knowledge of God — is the same as expressing great faith. The words which come out of our mouths are the reflection of our great faith if they are in line with God's Word.

The Bible says, in Matthew 8:23–26, "Now when He got into a boat, His disciples followed Him. And suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. But He was asleep. Then His disciples came to Him and awoke Him saying, 'Lord, save us! We are perishing!' But He said to them, 'Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?' Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm."

In these verses, Jesus is telling us that being afraid is another way of expressing little faith. On the other hand, in Matthew 9:2, we find: "Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, 'Son, be of

good cheer; your sins are forgiven you.'" In this, Jesus is telling us that bringing a sick man to Him in order to be healed is expressing faith.

Matthew 9:20–22 says: "And suddenly, a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years came from behind and touched the hem of His garment. For she said to herself, 'If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made well.' But Jesus turned around, and when He saw her He said, 'Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well.' And the woman was made well from that hour." Here, Jesus tells us that belief and thinking about and acting upon the healing power of Jesus is expressing faith. This means that focusing on Jesus and on what He is able to do in our life, and then doing the corresponding action that is in line with our belief and thought when done together is faith.

The following story, found in Matthew 14:22–31 occurs just after the parable of the loaves and the fishes, and shows us that having doubt is the same as having a lack of faith. "Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away. And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on a mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening had come, He was alone there. But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary. Now in the fourth watch of the night, Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, 'It

is a ghost!' And they cried out for fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid.' And Peter answered Him and said, 'Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.' So He said, 'Come.' And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried out, saying, 'Lord, save me!' And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him. 'O you of little faith, why did you doubt?'"

Matthew 15:21 28 tells us that knowledge of God's truth is an expression of great faith, as long as the words which come out of our mouth are in line with God's Word: "Then Jesus went out from there and departed to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, 'Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed.' But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and urged Him, saying, 'Send her away, for she cries out after us.' But He answered and said, 'I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.' Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, 'Lord, help me!' But He answered and said, 'It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs.' And she said, 'True, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.' Then Jesus answered and said to her, 'O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire.' And her daughter

was healed from that very hour."

The Bible teaches us that a lack of understanding is an expression of little faith in Matthew 16:5–12: "And when His disciples had come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread. Then Jesus said to them, 'Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.' And they reasoned among themselves, saying, 'It is because we have taken no bread.' But Jesus, being aware of it, said to them, 'O you of little faith, why do you reason among yourselves because you have brought no bread? Do you not understand, or remember the five loaves of the five thousand and how many baskets you took up? Nor the seven loaves of the four thousand and how many large baskets you took up? How is it you do not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread? — but to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.' Then they understood that he did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees."

Other words of Jesus about faith are found in Matthew 17:14–21, which show us that if you have no faith, you are unable to make what you desire come to pass: "And when they had come to the multitude, a man came to Him, kneeling down to Him and saying, 'Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is epileptic and suffers severely; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water. So I brought him to your disciples, but they could not cure him.' Then Jesus answered and said, 'O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall

I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to Me.' And Jesus rebuked the demon, and he came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour. Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, 'Why could we not cast him out?' So Jesus said to them, 'Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, "Move from here to there," and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. However, this kind does not go except by prayer and fasting.'"

In the following verses (Matthew 21:18 22), Jesus shows us that being able to make nature obey our words is an expression of genuine faith: "Now in the morning, as He returned to the city, He was hungry. And seeing a fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it but leaves, and said to it, 'Let no fruit grow on you ever again.' And immediately the fig tree withered away. Now when the disciples saw it, they marveled, saying, 'How did the fig tree wither away so soon?' So Jesus answered and said to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, "Be removed and be cast into the sea," it will be done. And all things, whatever you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.'"

Let us now look at the words of Jesus about faith in Mark 4:35 41: "On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, 'Let us cross over to the other side.' Now when they had left the multitude, they took

Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him. And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, 'Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?' Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, 'Peace, be still!' And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. But He said to them, 'Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?' And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, 'Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!'" In these verses, Jesus teaches us that fear is an expression of having no faith or lacking faith. He also tells us that we have no faith if we are not able to face life's circumstances, which means that taking control over our circumstances is another way of expressing faith.

Let us now look at what Jesus says in Luke's gospel, starting with Luke 7:36–50:

> Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat. And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil. Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself,

saying, "This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner."

And Jesus answered and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you."

So he said, "Teacher, say it."

"There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?"

Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more."

And He said to him, "You have rightly judged." Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little."

Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."

> And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?"
>
> Then He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

In these verses, Jesus lets us know that love is an expression of faith — and the greater our love is the more faith we have. Why this sinful woman so loved Jesus is not clearly identified in Luke's report, but we can be sure that it was the result of the preaching of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. She received comfort in her heart and hope in her spirit that she could be forgiven. Her actions showed her gratitude to Jesus for the joy and peace she had received after she had heard the message of Jesus.

One day, according to Luke 17:5–6: ". . . the apostles said to Jesus, 'Increase our faith.' So the Lord said, 'If you had faith as a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, "Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea," and it would have obeyed you.'" In this awesome verse, Jesus teaches us that what matters is that we practice our faith, the amount of faith which has been given to us is sufficient for any task — all we need to do is to exercise ourselves by putting our faith to work.

Luke 17:11–19 says: "Now it happened as He went to Jerusalem that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood

afar off. And they lifted up their voices and said, 'Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!' So when He saw them, He said to them, 'Go, show yourselves to the priests.' And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. So Jesus answered and said, 'Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?' And He said to him, 'Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well.'" In these verses, we learn that giving thanks and glory to God or testifying about our healing is an expression of faith. And, even greater, the other lepers only got the outward cure, while the Samaritan alone got the spiritual blessing of divine health because of his testimony.

Jesus gives us, in Luke 18:1–8, one of the most profound teachings on the subject of faith: "Then He spoke a parable to them to this end, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart, saying: 'There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, "Get justice for me from my adversary." And he would not for a while; but afterwards he said within himself, "Though I do not fear God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me."' Then the Lord said, 'Hear what the unjust judge said. And

shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?'" Through this passage, Jesus tells us that constant prayer and never giving up or losing heart is an expression of faith. We must remember that this is an important issue of faith, for if we do not keep up our faith it will die.

Jesus also made reference to faith in Luke 18:35–43, teaching us that our determination in asking for God's mercy or Jesus's mercy is an expression of faith: "Then it happened, as He was coming near Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the road begging. And hearing a multitude passing by, he asked what it meant. So they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. And he cried out, saying, 'Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!' Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet; but he cried out all the more, 'Son of David, have mercy on me!' So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to Him. And when he had come near, He asked him, saying, 'What do you want me to do for you?' He said, 'Lord, that I may receive my sight.' Then Jesus said to him, 'Receive your sight; your faith has made you well.' And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God."

The last verses we are going to deal with at this time are from the book of John. John 20:24–29 teaches

us that putting our trust on unseen realities is really the genuine expression of faith: "Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said to him, 'We have seen the Lord.' So he said to them, 'Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.' And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, 'Peace to you!' Then He said to Thomas, 'Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.' And Thomas answered and said to Him, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him, 'Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

The Amplified Bible says, in this same verse: "But Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples kept telling him, We have seen the Lord! But he said to them, Unless I see in His hands the marks made by the nails and put my finger into the nail prints, and put my hand into His side, I will never believe [it]. Eight days later His disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Jesus came, though they were behind closed doors, and stood among them and said, Peace to you! Then He said to Thomas, Reach out your finger here, and see My hands; and put out

your hand and place [it] in My side. Do not be faithless and incredulous, but [stop your unbelief and] believe! Thomas answered Him, My Lord and My God! Jesus said to him, Because you have seen Me, Thomas, do you now believe (trust, have faith)? Blessed and happy and to be envied are those who have never seen Me and yet have believed and adhered to and trusted and relied on Me." In these verses we find that believing in what is unseen is what Jesus the Son of God and the gospels talk about. Believing in these unseen realities is genuine faith.

Before we look at the exact definition of faith according to Jesus, let us remind ourselves of the different characteristics of faith found in the gospels of Jesus Christ:

- In John 20:24 29, Jesus teaches us that putting our trust on unseen realities is really the genuine expression of faith.
- In Luke 18:35 43, Jesus teaches us that our determination to ask God's mercy or Jesus's mercy is an expression of faith.
- In Luke 18:1 8, Jesus tells us that constant prayer and never losing heart is an expression of faith.
- In Luke 17:11 19, Jesus teaches us that giving thanks or glory to God or testifying about our healing is an expression of faith.
- In an awesome verse, Luke 17:6, Jesus teaches that what matters is practicing our faith by doing the Word and putting our faith to work.

- In Luke 7:36 50, Jesus lets us know that love is an expression of faith and the more we love the greater our faith becomes.
- In Mark 4:35 41, Jesus teaches us that fear is an expression of having no faith or lacking faith, and that taking control over our circumstances is faith.
- In Matthew 8:23 26, Jesus tells us that having fear is the same as expressing little faith.
- In Matthew 14:22 31, Jesus tells us that showing doubt is worse than expressing little faith.
- In Matthew 21:18 22, Jesus shows us that being able to make nature obey our words is an act of genuine faith.
- In Matthew 17:14 21, Jesus tells us that not being able to heal illnesses is the same as expressing unbelief or being faithless.
- In Matthew 9:2, Jesus tells us that bringing our illnesses to Him in order to be healed is expressing faith.
- In Matthew 16:5 12, Jesus teaches us that a lack of understanding is an expression of little faith.
- In Matthew 15:21 28, Jesus tells us that having knowledge of God's truths is an expression of great faith, and that, when the words which come out of our mouth are in line with God's Word, they reflect great faith.
- In Matthew 8:6 10, Jesus tells us that speaking God's truths is the same as expressing great faith.
- In Matthew 9:20 22, Jesus tells us that believing in his healing power and acting upon it is expressing faith.

- In Matthew 6:25–34, Jesus tells us that worrying about this life is expressing little faith.

In this list, only one event is presented by two different authors, giving two different reports about faith's characteristic. This is the story of how Jesus calmed the waters around the boat that He and His disciples were in, which is found in both Matthew 8:23–26 and Mark 4:35–41. Let us look again at those two accounts.

"Now when He got into a boat, His disciples followed Him. And suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. But He was asleep. Then His disciples came to Him and awoke Him saying, 'Lord, save us! We are perishing!' But He said to them, 'Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?' Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm." (Matthew 8:23–26)

"On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, 'Let us cross over to the other side.' Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him. And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, 'Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?' Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, 'Peace, be still!' And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. But He said to them, 'Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?' And they feared exceedingly, and said

to one another, 'Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!'" (Mark 4:35–41)

Anybody can see that, although they are writing about the same event, Matthew says that Jesus declared fear is "little faith" but Mark tells us that Jesus stated that fear is "no faith." This seems to say that, as far as Jesus is concerned, having little faith is the same thing as having no faith. This is why Jesus commended people for exhibiting great faith when they revealed God's truths, but did not laud those who showed up with only little faith.

Now we can come to the point of this chapter. As far as Jesus is concerned, here is the definition of faith:

Faith is the expression of:

a. our understanding of God's Word (Matthew 15:21–28; Matthew 8:6–10; Matthew 16:5–12);
b. showing no fear, no anxiety, and no doubt when we have to deal with the challenges of this life (Mark 4:35–41; Matthew 8:23–26; Matthew 14:22–31);
c. giving priority to the kingdom of God instead of worrying about this life (Matthew 6:25–34);
d. our love for Jesus, because the more we love, the greater our faith becomes (Luke 7:36–50);
e. giving thanks to God and Jesus, or testifying about our healing (Luke 17:11–19);
f. putting our trust on unseen realities, including what is said about Jesus and the gospel (John 20:24–29);
g. our determination to ask for mercy from God or Jesus (Luke 18:35–43);

h. constant prayer and never giving up or losing heart (Luke 18:1–8);
i. practicing doing the Word, because although the amount of faith we were given was sufficient to start with, we must put it to work (Luke 17:6);
j. being able to make nature obey our command (Matthew 21:18–22; Mark 4:35–41);
k. being able to heal any kind of sickness (Matthew 17:14–21);
l. bringing the sick and afflicted to Jesus in order to be healed (Matthew 9:2); and
m. believing in Jesus's healing power and acting upon it (Matthew 9:20–22).

Let us ponder this description of faith as we look at Matthew 5:3–12:

> And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him. Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying:
>
> "Blessed are the poor in spirit,
> For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
> Blessed are those who mourn,
> For they shall be comforted.
> Blessed are the meek,
> For they shall inherit the earth.
> Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
> For they shall be filled.
> Blessed are the merciful,
> For they shall obtain mercy.

> Blessed are the pure in heart,
> For they shall see God.
> Blessed are the peacemakers,
> For they shall be called sons of God.
> Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,
> For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
> "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

Now look carefully at Matthew 5:3 ("Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.") and point A of Christ's definition of faith (our understanding or knowledge of God's Word). Proverbs 11:2 says: "When pride comes, then comes shame; But with the humble is wisdom." If you are humble before God or consider yourself unlearned, this means that you are willing to increase your knowledge about the kingdom of heaven and also express your reverence to God, as it is written in Proverbs 15:33: "The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom, and before honor is humility."

When you express your need for wisdom and understanding, God's kingdom or the kingdom of heaven becomes yours. So the first beatitude describes one of the characteristics of faith. Notice that to be poor in spirit means to lack God's Word and be willing to believe and learn like a child, as Jesus said in Matthew

18:1–5: "At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, 'Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?' And Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me." In Matthew 11:25, Jesus also makes reference to this, saying: ". . . I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes."

In Matthew 5:4, the second beatitude, Jesus said: "Blessed are those who mourn, For they shall be comforted." Let us consider the meaning of "mourn." It means to feel sad because something no longer exists, or is no longer the same. The points of the definition of faith, above, that make reference to this are point G (our determination to ask for the mercy of God or Jesus), point H (our constant prayer and never giving up), point L (bringing the sick to Jesus to be healed), and point M (believing in Jesus's healing power and acting upon it). These different points show us that our needs, lack of health, hopeless situations, and desires are always satisfied by Jesus when we commit them to Him. When you lack something and you put your trust in Jesus to receive what you need, you will be rewarded. In other words, those who mourn will be

comforted. So the second beatitude represents four characteristics of the nature of faith. It is no wonder, then, that the wisdom of God declares the same teaching in many proverbs, such as:

- Proverbs 29:25 ("The fear of man brings a snare, But whoever trusts in the Lord shall be safe."),
- Proverbs 10:27 ("The fear of the Lord prolongs days, But the years of the wicked will be shortened."),
- Proverbs 13:13 ("He who despises the word will be destroyed, But he who fears the commandment will be rewarded."),
- Proverbs 14:26 ("In the fear of the Lord there is strong confidence, And His children will have a place of refuge."),
- Proverbs 14:27 ("The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, To turn one away from the snares of death."),
- Proverbs 15:16 ("Better is a little with fear of the Lord, Than great treasure with trouble."),
- Proverbs 16:6 ("In mercy and truth Atonement is provided for iniquity; And by the fear of the Lord one departs from evil."),
- Proverbs 23:17 ("Do not let your heart envy sinners, But be zealous in the fear of the Lord all the day."), and
- Proverbs 28:14 ("Happy is the man who is always reverent, But he who hardens his heart will fall into calamity.").

Jesus Himself declared, at the beginning of His ministry, that He is the answer for any lack or need, as it

is written in Luke 4:16–21: "So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: 'The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed, To preach the acceptable year of the LORD.' Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, 'Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.'"

In his report, Luke stopped his quoting of Isaiah 61 in the middle of verse two, but if we continue to the end of verse two, this is what we get: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, Because the Lord has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn." Do you see that Jesus is also the solution for those who mourn, as it is written in Isaiah 61:2: ". . .To comfort all who mourn"? This is also why Psalm 119:50 declares: "This is my comfort in my affliction, For Your word has given me life." Do

not forget that Jesus and God's Word, are one. So, if you put your trust in Jesus to be comforted when you mourn, doing so is one way of expressing your faith.

It's written in Matthew 5:5 (the third beatitude): "Blessed are the meek, For they shall inherit the earth." Point B of faith's definition — a characteristic of faith — deals with showing no fear, no anxiety, and no doubt when we face the challenges of this life. This means that we must take control over the circumstances of our life through self-control and patience, which are aspects of meekness. Let us see what the Amplified Bible says about this verse: "Blessed (happy, blithesome, joyous, spiritually prosperous — with life-joy and satisfaction in God's favor and salvation, regardless of their outward conditions) are the meek (the mild, patient, long-suffering), for they shall inherit the earth!" Again, we can observe that Matthew 5:5 says the same thing as point B. Why does it do this? We know from Chapter Twenty-two that meekness means strength under control, and having the power to endure whatever comes with a good temper. People who are meek overcome the world, as Jesus said in John 16:33: "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world;" and as it is written in Psalm 37:11: "But the meek shall inherit the earth, And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." Again, the third beatitude is one of the characteristics of faith.

Let us go now to Matthew 5:6 (the fourth beatitude), "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled." Before we proceed any further, let us look again at the definition of righteousness. Righteousness is God's way to make people right before Him. Jesus emphasizes the key point of righteousness in Matthew 6:33, saying, "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." In the Old Testament, God gave us two ways to become righteous. The first way was to believe in God, for God gives blessings to believers for their righteousness, as it is written in Genesis 15:1–6: "After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, 'Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward.' But Abram said, 'Lord GOD, what will You give me, seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?' Then Abram said, 'Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed one born in my house is my heir!' And behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, 'This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your body shall be your heir.' Then He brought him outside and said, 'Look now towards heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.' And He said to him, 'So shall your descendants be.' And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness."

The second way to be righteous is to observe all the commandments, as it is written in Deuteronomy 6:25 ("Then it will be righteousness for us, if we are

careful to observe all these commandments before the LORD our God, as He has commanded us"). But God declared, in Isaiah 54:17, that our righteousness originates from Him: "'No weapon formed against you shall prosper, And every tongue which rises against you in judgment You shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, And their righteousness is from Me,' Says the LORD." This means that whatever we do in order to be righteous — either by believing in Him or by observing His commandments — our righteousness will be a gift from Him. This is also why King David said, in Psalm 32:1–2: "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit."

In the New Testament, however, Jesus Christ endorses the first way to make people righteous (by believing God), but adds something new, which we find in Matthew 12:37: "For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned." This means that by our words we will also be made righteous. But do not forget that Jesus already stated in Matthew 6:33: "But seek first the kingdom of heaven and His righteousness and all these things shall be added to you." Mark 1:14–15 also declares: "Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.'"

Can you see that unless you repent and believe in the gospel of Jesus Christ you cannot enter the kingdom of God? This means that we must first believe in Jesus and after that the good words which come out of our mouths will compel Jesus to ask God to make us righteous. This righteousness will remain with us until we pronounce idle or evil words. What this means is that a genuine believer is not allowed to speak idle, empty, or evil words, but must always glorify God. King David declared this intent in Psalm 34:1: "I will bless the LORD at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth."

When we look at all of this, we can see that righteousness is the same in the Old Testament, in the New Testament at the time of Jesus, in the New Testament at the time of the Holy Spirit, and forever until the second coming of Jesus Christ. Jesus has made the concept of righteousness clear for all believers.

It is the awesome task of God to make us righteous, but we also have a role to play. It is our responsibility to maintain the gift of righteousness given to us by God by speaking only good things. And God has already given us the effortless way to speak only good things in Proverbs 4:23, which says: "Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life." Proverbs 16:22 23 says: "Understanding is a wellspring of life to him who has it. . . . The heart of the wise teaches his mouth, And adds learning to his lips." When we compare point F (putting our trust on unseen realities) and point C (giving priority to the kingdom of

God instead of worrying about this life), above, with Matthew 5:6, the fourth beatitude ("Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled."), we see that they say the same thing. In Matthew, to "hunger and thirst for righteousness" means to look for and endorse God's way in order to make people right. When you listen to the preaching of the gospel and the desire for getting God's righteousness dawns in your heart, you develop a strong desire to become sons of God as Jesus is. Therefore, the fourth beatitude encapsulates two of the natures, or characteristics, of faith.

Jesus declares in Matthew 5:7 (the fifth beatitude): "Blessed are the merciful, For they shall obtain mercy." Let us begin by looking at the definition of merciful, which Jesus the Word of God has already given in Luke 6:27–36: "But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those you curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you. To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also. And from him who takes away your cloak, do not withhold your tunic either. Give to everyone who asks of you. And from him who takes away your goods do not ask them back. And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise. But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is

that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful." We learn from this that to be merciful means being ready to show people especially your enemies kindness and forgiveness.

Let me further explain what I am saying. In the scripture just above (Luke 6:27 36) Jesus advises us to be prompt to forgive people who hurt or wrong us, even if they are our enemies. He also tells us to be quick to show kindness to others. As a matter of fact, only forgiveness and kindness give you credit in the eyes of God. And, if you do this, Jesus says in Luke 6:35 that your reward will be great. Notice that being kind and forgiving also makes you a son of God.

Jesus gave us two parables to illustrate how important forgiveness and kindness are.

First of all, we have Luke 16:19 36, which talks about kindness: "There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted

up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.' But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.' Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.' Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.'"

Secondly, we are going to illustrate the case of forgiveness. We find it in Matthew 18:21 35, "Then Peter came to Him and said, 'Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?' Jesus said to him, 'I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven. Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. But as he was

not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made. The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt. But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!' So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' And he would not, but went and threw him in prison till he should pay the debt. So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved and came and told their master all that had been done. Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?' And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."

We must realize that to forgive also means "do not take revenge." Jesus said in Matthew 5:38 41, "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you

and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two." Jesus tells us, in John 13:34, that He has a new rule for us: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, you also love one another." Moreover, He specifies in Matthew 25:40 that our love for Him is expressed through our love of others: "And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me." Being kind and forgiving with others — even your enemies — is, thus, the same thing as expressing your love for Jesus. Point D of faith's definition deals with our love for Jesus, and the fact that the more we love, the greater our faith becomes. Therefore, the fifth beatitude is one of the natures or characteristics of faith.

The sixth beatitude says: "Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8). But what does it mean to be pure in heart? To be pure in heart means to have a heart which holds no evil thoughts or motives, and is full of love. As we have just reiterated above, point D of faith's definition deals with our love for Jesus, and the fact that, the more we love, the greater our faith becomes. So our faith increases with our love, and when our heart is full of love for Jesus we are pure-hearted — and then we are able to see God. In other words, being pure in heart turns you from an ordinary man into a genuine child of God. Once this happens, you carry the glory of God wherever you go, in everything you do or say. This

means that it is of extreme importance to be sincere, not hypocritical.

God said in Isaiah 55:8–11: "'For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,' says the LORD. 'For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, And do not return there, But water the earth, And make it bring forth and bud, That it may give seed to the sower And bread to the eater, So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it." Can you see that God is saying that His thoughts and His ways are far away from those of ordinary men, and that His word is powerful and does whatever He talks about? Jesus is the prototype, the perfect version of God's children. He has the same thoughts as God, the same ways, and the same Word of God. It is no wonder, then, that Jesus performed countless wonders and miracles on earth and moved many folks into faith by His pleasant Word.

The purpose of any believer is to be like Jesus, our model. To get the thoughts and ways of God, we can look to the Word of God in the scriptures. Then, to be able to have powerful speech we need to clean our heart and mind with daily meditation on God's Word and put it into practice, so that we can exercise the authority Jesus has already given us. This is described in Mark 16:15–18, "And He said to them, 'Go into all the

world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved, but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover;'" and in John 14:12 14: "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it." God has given to His children, those who believe in His Son Jesus Christ, a powerful weapon: the believer's mouth, for He promises to fulfill whatever he talks about.

Moreover, Jesus said in John 15:7: "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you." As we know, your desire is what you want and what you wish for, in other words, what you imagine. Jesus states in John 15:7 that your dream or vision will come to pass if you love Him. Why will this happen? Because if you treasure God's Word in your heart and keep it this is proof that you love Jesus and your love for Jesus causes God and Jesus to abide in you, and to become one with you. Remember, also, that Jesus said in John 14:23: ". . . If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word . . . ." So love for Jesus causes us to keep Jesus's commandments, and

keeping Jesus's commandments causes us to abide in Jesus, and when we abide in Jesus it brings the presence of God the Father and Jesus the Son to us, and into our spirit so that we can exercise without fail the power Jesus has already given us. This is, in essence, what Jesus is saying in John 15:7: The one condition we must meet if we have a strong desire to see what we long for come to pass in the physical world is that we must treasure God's Word and abide in Jesus by showing our love for Him.

Jesus also said something awesome in Matthew 24:12: "And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold." So Jesus is telling us that there is a strong link between our love for Him and our obedience of the law. In other words, if you cease to obey the law (or the Word of God), your love for Jesus decreases. In the following scripture, John 15:9–10, Jesus also links His love for us with our obedience to His commandments: "As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love." This passage makes it crystal clear that obedience to Jesus's commandments causes Jesus to love us. And because John 14:23 says, ". . . If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word . . . ," it really means that it is our love for Jesus that causes Him to love us. Therefore, we can derive that Jesus reciprocates our love for Him or our obedience to His commandments with His Love for us. Jesus further specifies, in John 14:21: "He who

has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. . . ."

Can you see that our obedience to God's Word is the sign of our love for Jesus and at the same time it produces Jesus's love for us? Likewise, if we increase our love for Jesus through our daily meditation on God's Word and worshiping God in spirit, truth, and thanksgiving, our increasing love for Jesus will cause us to do God's Word in a better way, and we will become even more obedient to God's Word. (This, then, is the easiest way to do the Word of God.)

At the same time, God's Word will cleanse our heart from all impurities, as Jesus states in John 15:3: "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you." This is why the wisdom of God declares, in Proverbs 17:3: "The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold, But the LORD tests the hearts." God and His Word are one, so the Word of God is "the furnace of our heart," and has the power to burn up our heart's impurities. Once this happens, we will only speak good things and so be able to fulfill our destiny and see God. Here are the impurities of our heart, as defined by Jesus in Mark 7:20–23: "And He said, 'What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man." It is written in Isaiah 41:10–16:

"'Fear not, for I am with you;
Be not dismayed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you,
Yes, I will help you,
I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.'

"Behold, all those who were incensed against you
Shall be ashamed and disgraced;
They shall be as nothing,
And those who strive with you shall perish.
You shall seek them and not find them
Those who contended with you.
Those who war against you
Shall be as nothing,
As a nonexistent thing.
For I, the Lord your God, will hold your right hand,
Saying to you, 'Fear not, I will help you.'

"Fear not, you worm Jacob,
You men of Israel!
I will help you," says the Lord
And your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.
"Behold, I will make you into a new threshing sledge with sharp teeth;
You shall thresh the mountains and beat them small,
And make the hills like chaff.
You shall winnow them, the wind shall carry them away,
And the whirlwind shall scatter them;
You shall rejoice in the Lord,
And glory in the Holy One of Israel."

Do you see now how powerful our speech can be if we let God's Word purify our heart?

As you can see, the sixth beatitude depicts the same realities as point D of faith's definition, which says that the more we love Jesus, the greater our faith becomes. Therefore, the sixth beatitude is one of the natures or characteristics of faith.

Now we will focus our attention on Matthew 5:9 (the seventh beatitude) which states: "Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God." Let us first look for the definition of peacemaker in Matthew 5:21 26 (Good News Bible) to acquaint ourselves with Jesus's definition of peacemaker: "You have heard that people were told in the past, 'Do not commit murder; anyone who does will be brought to trial.' But now I tell you: whoever is angry with his brother will be brought to trial, whoever calls his brother 'You good-for-nothing!' will be brought before the Council, and whoever call his brother a worthless fool will be in danger of going to the fire of hell. So if you are about to offer your gift to God at the altar and there you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar, go at once and make peace with your brother, and then come back and offer your gift to God. If someone brings a lawsuit against you and takes you to court, settle the dispute with him while there is time, before you get to court. Once you are there, he will hand you over to the police, and you will be put in jail. There you will stay, I tell you, until you pay the last penny of your fine."

In this, we find that a peacemaker holds back his anger and forgets what makes him angry by purifying his heart. He also forbids himself from insulting people and, if he has a dispute with somebody, he settles the matter at once.

See now what Isaiah says about the peacemaker in Isaiah 32:17: "The work of righteousness will be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever." This means that one of the characters of the righteous is that he works for peace. We already know that righteousness is part of keeping God's Word, as it is written in Deuteronomy 6:25 ("Then it will be righteousness for us, if we are careful to observe all these commandments before the LORD our God, as He has commanded us"). In John 14:21, Jesus declares that keeping His Word is a manifestation of our love for Him: "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is who he who loves Me. . . ." In this declaration, Jesus equates righteousness to love for Him. So if your heart is full of love for Jesus as well as love for God and others since Jesus is God and man you are righteous and work for peace. Therefore point D of faith's definition where we learn that our faith becomes greater when our love for Jesus grows shows that the seventh beatitude is also one of the natures or characteristics of faith.

Let us now have a look at the verses about persecution: "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they revile and persecute

you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you" (Matthew 5:10–12).

Let us compare these verses to Luke 6:46–49, "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say? Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great."

We can see that observing Jesus's sayings or exercising our faith causes believers to lay their foundation on faith so that they become unshakable when storm, persecution, or tribulation comes. Point B of faith's definition is about showing no fear, anxiety, or doubt when we have to deal with the challenges of this life. To this end, we need self-control and patience to take control over the circumstances of our life. Notice also that point I of faith's definition deals with the issue of putting the Word of God to work to help it expand. So the two verses about persecution are another way to express points B and I of faith's definition. Therefore, the eighth beatitude is also one of the natures or characteristics of faith.

As a matter of fact, when taken as a whole, we can see that the beatitudes are another way for Jesus to talk about faith.

Now that we understand the beatitudes, what does it mean when Jesus says that He is the way, the truth, and the life?

First of all, the way of Jesus has two pieces, Jesus has His part and we have also our own part we must fulfill. The first piece is the way God uses to make us righteous before Him by exchanging our sinful nature with the righteousness of God through our faith, believing what the gospel and the Holy Bible say about Jesus (this is point F of faith's definition). And then God can give us the nature of His Son, Jesus, so that we have the ability to be fruitful. At this point, we've got to play our part by acting on the other points of faith's definition and the beatitudes that deal with our duties or responsibilities, and how to put our faith to work. Do this, and you will be always fruitful because God will be pleased with you, according to Hebrews 11:6: "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him."

Let us look once more at the lessons the beatitudes give us in Matthew 5:3–12:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are those who mourn,
For they shall be comforted.
Blessed are the meek,

For they shall inherit the earth.
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
For they shall be filled.
Blessed are the merciful,
For they shall obtain mercy.
Blessed are the pure in heart,
For they shall see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers,
For they shall be called sons of God.
Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
"Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

Consider, also, what we learn in 2 Peter 1:9–10: "For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; . . ."

Remember we concluded in our study of righteousness in Chapter Nineteen that, finally, righteousness encapsulates eight beatitudes declared by Jesus Christ, as well as the fourth beatitude, found in Matthew 5:6:

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled." This means that the fourth beatitude is the central principle of the seven other beatitudes. Therefore since the eight beatitudes display all the characteristics of faith, we can deduce that righteousness is faith.

First of all, you must choose to listen to the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who came to earth to save all human beings and give them eternal life and His righteousness. For this purpose, and to accept this truth, you have to be poor in spirit. Only the man who is poor in spirit can enter in the kingdom of Heaven.

Secondly, you need to be conscious of your condition. If you have done everything you can to be happy but you have failed to get enduring peace, joy, and happiness, and you are mourning about your condition, you need help. So you must position yourself to listen to the preaching of the gospel, which has the power to make changes in your condition. When you listen to the Good News, you will be comforted, you will receive hope that Jesus will answer your prayer, heal you, and satisfy your needs.

Thirdly, this gospel tells you that you need to be meek to fulfill your destiny. In fact, you must be meek to overcome every adversity you will have to face in your new life. This means that you must be like Jesus gentle, patient, kind, and always acting with self control. The way to get this level of meekness is to practice it. For instance, if you put the following verse in your heart and believe in it, it will become your

confession during your meditation and, afterwards, will help you to become meek when you live by it. Jesus said, in John 16:33 (Amplified Version): ". . . In the world you have tribulation and trials and distress and frustration; but be of good cheer (take courage; be confident, certain; undaunted)! For I have overcome the world. (I have deprived it of power to harm you and have conquered it for you.)" This verse tells you that if you are meek you will overcome the world, and you will see victory in every challenge you face in life. Why? Because Jesus has already done this but only those who are meek see the victory in faith. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen (Hebrews 11:1). In fact, a meek person has his strength under control; he has the power to endure whatever comes with an even temper. This is why Jesus tells us to do as He says in order to see His promises fulfilled in our life.

Fourthly, listening to the preaching of the gospel and understanding Jesus Christ's message for your life (that He came to save your soul and give you eternal life and His righteousness) arouses the thirst and hunger for righteousness (love for Jesus) in you and so you decide to make Jesus your Lord and Savior. Ezekiel 18:20 says, in part: "The soul who sins shall die." But Jesus said, in John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." So for a newborn believer in Christ, Jesus saves his soul and gives him the gift of eternal

life. In Genesis 15:6, it is written of Abram: "And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to Him for righteousness." So this is a principle and law of God: Whoever believes in God gets the righteousness of God. The Bible says in Luke 1:6: "And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." So the priest Zacharias and his wife Elizabeth (the two referred two in the passage) were both righteous before God because they believed in God.

Fifthly, Jesus says in Matthew 6:12, "And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors." He also says, in Luke 6:35: "But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil." Remember that to be merciful means that you are ready to forgive people and show them kindness. So Matthew 6:12 and Luke 6:35 show us that whoever is merciful will obtain mercy from God.

Sixthly, Jesus says, in John 17:17: "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth." And Peter says, in Acts 15:9: ". . . and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith." As we have learned, "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). So, it's not surprising that God's Word purifies the heart of one who is born again in Jesus Christ. At this point, we can say that those who meditate day and night on God's Word can purify their hearts and will be able to see God.

Seventhly, it is written in James 3:18: "Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace." We have previously said that the gift of righteousness is given to those who believe in Christ. And James 3:18 declares that peacemakers sow the fruit of righteousness, which explains why, in Matthew 5:9, Jesus proclaimed: "Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God." We know, now, that this is because peacemakers create the seed of righteousness in the same way that our Lord Jesus Christ gives us the gift of righteousness when we believe in Him, as it is written in Proverbs 11:30: "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, And he who wins souls is wise."

Eighthly, Jesus said in John 15:20 21: "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will also keep yours. But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me." The Apostle Paul wrote, in 2 Corinthians 4:7 10: "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body." Jesus said in John 16:33 (Amplified Version): ". . . In the world you have tribulation and trials and

distress and frustration; but be of good cheer [take courage; be confident, certain, undaunted]! For I have overcome the world. [I have deprived it of power to harm you and have conquered it for you]." Jesus added, in Mark 13:13, "And you will be hated by all men for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end shall be saved." So what matters is not the persecution but the consciousness of your victory — no matter what challenge or tribulation or persecution you have to face.

Now that we know what faith is, we will deal with, in detail, how to really put our faith to work.

31. Solutions for Powerless Faith and the Four Dimensions of Faith

Glory to Jesus! Glory to the Father! Glory to the Holy Spirit! Jesus has given us all the solutions we need to make our faith work, and we will look at those solutions in the following pages. This chapter deals with Jesus's prescription for any kind of problems which prevent us from fulfilling the fullness of life Jesus came on earth to give us. (In the next chapter, we will go to the Word — the teachings of Jesus Christ — to find out the details of His prescriptions and specific medicines for any kind of sickness, problem, circumstance, or situation we will have to face in life.)

Jesus gave us the most profound teaching of the Scriptures on the subject of faith in Matthew 13:1–23:

> On the same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the sea. And great multitudes were gathered together to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.
>
> Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: "Behold, a sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them. Some fell on

stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?"

He answered and said to them, "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says:

'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand,
And seeing you will see and not perceive;
For the hearts of this people have grown dull.
Their ears are hard of hearing,
And their eyes they have closed,
Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears,
Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn,
So that I should heal them.'

> But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.
>
> "Therefore hear the parable of the sower: When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."

Let us examine these wonderful and beautiful sayings of Jesus, beginning with Matthew 13:19 ("When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside"). In the previous chapter, point A, we observed that one of the characteristics

of faith is our understanding of God's Word (Matthew 15:21 28, Matthew 8:6 10, and Matthew 16:5 12). So Jesus is teaching us, in Matthew 13:19, the first principle of faith: if we hear the Word of God and do not understand it, our faith cannot be created. And even our powerless faith or any small amount of faith we already had will be taken out of our heart, where words spoken by ourselves or others. the thoughts of our mind, and the information we acquire from outside comes to reside. Remember that our mind is the place where we reason about what is true or false, before our heart retains what is true and rejects what is false. What we decide is true becomes a belief and is treasured in our heart. So if we do not understand God's Word, our heart regards this as false and rejects it. Unless new information comes into our heart and makes us reconsider what we have decided, we will remain unconvinced by the former truth. Only that which we understand can stay in our heart. What we do not understand is snatched away by the devil.

Proverbs 4:23 (New Living Translation, Second Edition) states: "Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life." This means that our spirit (our mind, in this case) is under obligation to guard our heart, otherwise evil things will take root in our heart and defile our spirit, as we can read in Proverbs 23:7: "For as he thinks in his heart, so is he."

By keeping any evil from entering our heart, we remain pure hearted. This beautiful teaching from Proverbs 23:7 also tells us that our personality, our

attitude, our speech, our thoughts, and our appetite are all framed by the content of our heart, so we must take care of what enters it. If you want to make a positive change in your life you must keep your circumstances, troubles, fear, doubt, unbelief, worry, and so on from entering your heart by treasuring only God's Word in your heart.

We already know that until we understand a truth we cannot treasure it, so we need understanding to create a belief in our heart and, afterwards, this belief will compel us to activate our faith by speaking and acting upon it. This activation of our faith is called the spirit of faith and the corresponding actions with are in line with our belief. So we must remember that Jesus is teaching us, in Matthew 13:19, the first principle of faith: if we hear the Word of God and do not understand it, our faith is not created and even any powerless faith we already have will be taken away from our heart, so we need to understand God's Word to cause God to grant us faith.

Let us look more closely at Matthew 13:20 21: "But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles." Again in Chapter Thirty, in point B, we discussed that one of the characteristics of faith is showing no fear, no anxiety, and no doubt when we are facing the challenges of this life. To this end, we need self-control and

patience to take control over our life's circumstances (Mark 4:35–41, Matthew 8:23–26, Matthew 14:22–31, and Matthew 21:18–22). The Bible says, in Matthew 8:23–26: "Now when He got into a boat, His disciples followed Him. And suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. But He was asleep. Then His disciples came to Him and awoke Him saying, "Lord, save us! We are perishing!" But He said to them, "Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?" Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea. And there was a great calm." How could they think of perishing when the Lord was in the boat? Likewise, how can a born-again Christian perish, when the Lord Jesus is in the heart of the believer? After all, meekness gives you the power of control over the circumstances of your life.

Whenever fear comes in, it is a demonstration of little faith. Mark 5:35–36 says: "While He was still speaking, some came from the ruler of the synagogue's house who said, 'Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?' As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, He said to the ruler of the synagogue, 'Do not be afraid; only believe.'" These folks came to tell the man something he did not want to hear: that his daughter has died. So the moment Jesus heard this bad news, he told the man to have faith in a good outcome, meaning that it is never too late with God because He can give life to the dead. From this, we learn that no matter the situation, no matter the news, no matter what the doctor tells you, and no

matter what you experience in your body, you must never respond with fear or take action out of fear. All that matters is that you must believe.

Fear is a demonstration of little faith, and when you have only a little faith, that faith is unstable. When you have little faith, you find yourself confessing faith at one time and later or at the same time confessing your doubts. Doubt is a thief; it steals the blessings of God from you. Doubt begins a miracle, but does not allow it to come into being; doubt begins a dream, but does not complete it. Little faith begins the journey, but stops somewhere on the way. It doesn't produce the perfected result. A man of little faith starts out, but does not have the ability to carry on to the end of his journey. Matthew 14:22 31 deals with this critical point: "Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away. And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on a mountain by Himself to pray. And when evening had come, He was alone there. But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary. Now in the fourth watch of the night, Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, 'It is a ghost!' And they cried out for fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid.' And Peter answered Him and said, 'Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.' So He said, 'Come.' And when Peter had come

down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried out, saying, 'Lord, save me!' And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him: 'O you of little faith, why did you doubt?'"

Can you see that doubt is a principle factor of fear? Do not let fear come in. Stop the fear. Why? Because where there is fear, faith cannot operate. Faith cannot function in an atmosphere of fear. So turn fears aside. In the story above, Peter asked Jesus to command him to come towards Him, and Jesus said, "Come." Peter jumped out of the boat and went to Jesus, because faith acts on the Word of God. Faith never questions; it just acts. Faith does not say, "How will I do it? Is it possible?" Faith just jumps, as Peter did. If you ask a man how to respond to the Word of God, your decision is no longer based on faith. Faith does not ask questions. Faith only focuses on the Word of God.

Peter was walking on the water, but then he reconsidered his circumstances. He took his attention away from the Word of God and remembered what was happening around him. And, instantly, he began to sink. Can you see that fear, doubt, and unbelief are signs of lack of understanding of God's Word in the heart of the believer? In Matthew 13:20–21, Jesus is teaching us the second principle or key factor of faith: if you hear the Word of God and understand it, you will receive the faith you need to live a good life. But, if your faith has no root and no foundation, you will fall when you

are faced with difficult circumstances. The best foundation or root for you faith is to become patient and restrained this kind of foundation has the power of control over any circumstances of life and can put the peace of God in your mind.

In the second stage of faith, we understand God's Word, but we must activate our faith by confessing or speaking out in line with the Scriptures and by acting on God's Word exercising our faith in order to increase our understanding of God's Word. It is written in Psalm 111:10: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever;" and in Psalm 119:100: "I understand more than the ancients, Because I keep Your precepts." When we increase our understanding of God's Word, that better understanding perfects our meekness, and enables us to do God's Word effortlessly.

Only knowledge purified from doubt, fear, and unbelief has the power to take root in our heart and resist adversity, trouble, tribulation, fear, doubt, unbelief, and persecution when they come on our way. And the only way to grow a deep root of God's Word in our heart is to do His Word by putting it into practice over a period of time. Exercising our faith in God's Word increases our understanding of God's truth, as it is written in Psalm 111:10 ("The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever") and at the same time gives us little

victory after little victory in that area of life or truth. What "area of life" am I referring to? The area of life you struggle with or every truth taught by the Bible about any field or area of your life. It may be an exam, poverty, sickness, basket-ball, and so on. Every verse of the Bible talks about a specific area of our life.

These little victories stir us up to persevere. And, step by step, these little victories and better understanding of God's truth will produce in us a tremendous confidence in God in the area of life or truth they refer to. Once this happens, no one can convince us that the law of God in that area of life is false, because we will have tested it and placed our trust in it, and have put it to work, experienced it, seen the result promised by the living God. We will have become a champion in that field of life or area of God's truth.

To be a champion means that nobody is able to challenge you in that area of life and prevail over you. The Bible declares, in 2 Peter 1:5 11, that there are seven areas of life where we can become champions: moral excellence, knowledge of Jesus, self-control, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love. Let us look at this passage (New Living Translation, Second Edition): "In view of all this, make every effort to respond to God's promises. Supplement your faith with a generous provision of moral excellence, and moral excellence with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with patient endurance, and patient endurance with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love

for everyone. The more you grow like this, the more productive and useful you will be in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But those who fail to develop in this way are shortsighted or blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their old sins. So, dear brothers and sisters, work hard to prove that you really are among those God has called and chosen. Do these things, and you will never fall away. Then God will give you a grand entrance into the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

Can you see that the revelation of God's Word or truth is not sufficient to make our faith become unshakable? We have to exercise our faith and put it to work in these seven areas of life to gain supremacy over fear, doubt and unbelief, impatience, and lack of self-control in order to become a champion in these seven areas. The first time we heard God's Word concerning a specific field of life, we got revelation knowledge. Exercising our faith obeying or doing God's Word refines this revelation knowledge. Continuing to exercise our faith by obeying or doing God's Word turns our faith into the faith of a champion. When we become a champion, our revelation knowledge concerning the six areas of life apart from love takes deep root in our heart, and we are able to stand firm against any adversity in life. Let's take one example to illustrate how we can put God's Word into practice.

Philippians 4:6 7 declares: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." How does the process of exercising your obedience to God's Word work? First of all, your spirit must remind your heart that everything which is written in the Bible is true. And, since Philippians 4:6 7 comes from the Scriptures, therefore it is true and so you must treasure it in your heart so that it becomes your belief.

Secondly, you must activate your faith by confessing or speaking aloud this specific scripture to produce the fruit it carries by saying: "The Bible says, in Philippians 4:6, to be anxious for nothing. I believe that it is true, so in the name of Jesus I am anxious for nothing. And from this moment on, I will think with my mind, speak with my mouth, feel with my body, and act according to this declaration."

Thirdly, when something that might cause anxiety comes your way, you must refuse to think of it but instead start focusing on God's Word through meditation and worshiping in spirit and understanding. This attitude will produce the peace of God in you your first victory. If you continue in this way when this type of event happens again, you will gain little victories that will show you that God's Word is true and, therefore, give you total confidence in God and His truth.

Finally, all you have to do is be sure that your way of life conforms with your strong conviction about being anxious for nothing

You must remember that, unless you succeed in overcoming your anxiety, fear, doubt, impatience, and

unbelief you will remain a slave to them, and your understanding will continue to be unfruitful, because you will not truly believe in your heart. Your faith will not be effective. Weak faith comes from not using the Word of God or practicing your faith. If you use the faith that you have, it will begin to grow, as it is written in Matthew 17:20: ". . . for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you."

You must simply use what you have, and put your faith to work. Do not go to the doctor for everything, but instead use your faith. Romans 4:19 tells us that Abraham did not doubt when God told him that he would have many descendants, even though he was old: "And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb." Abraham's faith was strong, so he simply believed what he had been told. Weak faith, before it takes a step, considers the situation. It considers its body. Weak faith cannot produce results. Think of faith as a muscle you must exercise. Some of you have weak muscles because of the condition you are in. You have muscles, but they have become weak because you no longer use them. Your faith also becomes weak when you do not use it.

One time, the Apostles came to Jesus and asked Him to increase their faith, but instead He gave them this beautiful answer in Luke 17:6: ". . . 'If you have

faith as a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, "Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea," and it would have obeyed you.'" In other words, he told them to use the faith they had. Jesus is saying to all of us "Put your faith to work, use your faith, and it will begin to produce results." You already have faith, so you must use it. No matter how small you think your faith is, plant it, and it will begin to grow. When you exercise your faith by making a declaration in line with God's Word, you plant your seed of faith and nothing shall be impossible for you, as it is written in Matthew 17:20 and Luke 17:6, above.

Can you see that no matter what your mountain is cancer, HIV, blocked fallopian tubes, a tumor, high blood pressure, sickle cell anemia, diabetes, arthritis, paralysis, kidney failure, heart failure, respiratory failure, and so on you must simply speak to it to change it? Jesus told his disciples to speak to the mountain to cause it to move. So speak to your mountain or preach the Word of God to that mountain. Jesus said if you have faith the size of a grain of mustard, if you speak to your situation (or sickness, disease, poverty, addiction, fear, or doubt) and tell it to go, it will go. Jesus said that nothing shall be impossible unto you. So preach the Word of God to yourself by telling the mountain of sickness to leave your body. Once you have faith, you can change anything in your life because God has granted faith to each of us as it is written in Romans 12:3: "For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is

among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith."

Every believer has faith. But the measure of faith God gave us when we were reborn is not enough for all of life's challenges. God expects you not only to keep that faith, but to help it to grow to maturity. You are responsible for helping your faith grow, develop, and come to perfection. Let us look at an example of this: if you feel a headache, instead of hurrying to take a pain killer, you should use your faith. If you cannot use your faith to handle a headache, how will you handle cancer? You must learn to use your faith, and not run to doctors for everything. This is the only way that your faith will grow.

Jesus, Himself, tells you that if you have faith, then you should use it. We put down deep roots by exercising our faith, so that sins such as fear, doubt, unbelief, impatience, and lack of self-control will no longer have power over us, as we read in John 8:30 36: "As he spoke these words, many believed in Him. Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, 'If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.' They answered Him, 'We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, "You will be made free"?' Jesus answered them, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides

forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed."

And you must not forget the teaching of Jesus about our foundation, found in Matthew 7:24 27: "Therefore whoever hears these teachings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."

In this wonderful teaching Jesus stresses the key issue of activating or exercising our faith. As far as Jesus is concerned, until we activate our faith by putting into practice His teachings, there is no way for God's Word to take deep root in our heart. It is not sufficient to hear His words, you must also understand His sayings. But a better understanding is strongly related to your behavior, and comes from taking corresponding actions, which are in line with your beliefs, as it is written in Psalm 111:10: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever;" and in Psalm 119:100: "I understand more than the ancients, Because I keep Your precepts." Doing God's Word is the principal factor of good understanding; in order words, it increases or

activates our faith. Therefore, until a man activates his faith by acting upon his beliefs he will never get to have a good understanding of his beliefs. If he does exercise his faith, it will give him a better understanding of God's Truth and then this better understanding will stir him to act according to this belief — which has become a conviction — and he will put this into practice effortlessly. Thus, unless you succeed in activating your faith in line with a specific purpose or truth of the Bible, what you want to see take place in the physical realm will never come to pass. Your desires will remain unfruitful.

Fear, doubt and unbelief, anger, and impatience are the signs that God's Word has not taken root in the heart of the believer. And Jesus teaches us the second principle of faith in Matthew 13:20–21, telling us that if you hear the Word of God and understand it, you get the faith you need to live a good life. But if you have no root or foundation, or if you consider your earthly condition or focus on your situation instead of God's Word — if you do not exercise your faith by putting it to work — you will fall when tribulation or frustration comes. To avoid this, you need to help God's Word take root in your heart by acting upon it. Obedience to God's Word and doing the Word of God will give you a better understanding of God's Word and the outstanding faith of a champion.

Let us look at Matthew 13:22: "Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches

choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful." In point C in the preceding chapter, we pointed out that one of the characteristics of faith is giving priority to the kingdom of God and putting God's Word first, instead of worrying about this life (Matthew 6:25–34). Jesus is teaching us the third principle of faith in Matthew 13:22: if you hear the Word of God and understand it, you will receive the faith you need to live a good, fruitful life. But if your first concern is to focus on this world instead of changing your focus towards God (through meditation and worship in spirit and understanding), your life will remain unfruitful.

Let us read the words of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to have a better understanding of this truth and to know how to deal with it. We find His teaching about the cares of this life and His solution in Matthew 6:25–34: "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much

more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."

Can you see that the things Jesus talked about are the natural things we are concerned about (food, clothing, and shelter)? But He said when we become worried our soul becomes overwhelmed by our concern, and as we have learned worry is the manifestation of little faith. Worrying about this life cannot solve our problems, but the solutions to the problems of our daily life come through seeking the kingdom of God and His righteousness. Let us look again at His righteousness. God Himself has already told us how to receive His effective righteousness in Joshua 1:8, saying: "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success." If we look very closely at this, we can see that the process that leads anybody to the way of success and a balanced and prosperous life has four phases.

First of all, God says: "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth." In this, God is telling

you the function of your mouth. No matter what you're experiencing, feeling, or seeing, and no matter what your circumstances are, you must not change what you're saying. Instead, you must only say what God says. You must remain consistent, speaking only God's Word. Why does God ask us to speak only His Word? The answer is simple. Romans 10:9 10 declares: ". . . that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes to righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made to salvation." John 1:1,14 states that Jesus is the Word of God: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God . . . And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." So, as we have discussed, Jesus is the Word of God. Romans 10:10 says: " . . . believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." So if believing that God raised Jesus from the dead is a principle of our salvation, it means the fact that God raised Jesus from the dead is the truth, the vital truth of the Bible. The phrase "God raised Jesus from the dead" means "God's Word is truth." Putting these two substitutions into Romans 10:9 10, these verses become: ". . . that if you confess with your mouth the Word of God and believe in your heart that God's Word is truth, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes to righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made

to salvation." Do you see now that our salvation depends on our speaking what we believe with God's Word treasured in our heart? Therefore, speaking in consent with God's Word activates our salvation, while our belief in God's Word treasured in our heart makes us righteous before God.

Secondly, God declares: "but you shall meditate in it day and night." So we are compelled to think about and speak God's Word on a daily basis, as the second step to becoming successful in life.

Thirdly, God states: "that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it." This means that speaking constantly and consistently in agreement with God's Word, and meditating on it day and night, will cause us to observe God's Word, and will cause us to become righteous.

Finally, God professes: "For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success." Our success will only come true if we speak constantly and consistently in consent with God's Word, meditate on God's Word day and night, and are obedient to God's Word.

This means that there are three key factors necessary for creating a successful life: speaking constantly and consistently in consent with God's Word, meditating every day on God's Word, and being obedient to God's Word. All of these lead us to the fourth phase, which is our successful and prosperous life.

Remember that Jesus has given us two solutions to cast out worries or cares of this life: we must either

seek the kingdom of God, or live in His righteousness.

We have just dealt with the case of righteousness. Now it is time to address the issue of seeking the kingdom of God. When we seek the kingdom of God, we are seeking the realm of the Spirit. When we act in a godly manner, or with devotion, we are spending a lot of time or energy on God. Jesus is telling us to give priority to God or to put God's Word first in other words, to change our focus from the cares of the world to God and Jesus or God's Word. Focusing on God and His Word brings peace with no more worries to our spirit, as it is written of Him in Isaiah 26:3: "You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You." The Apostle Paul deals with this same truth when he declares in Philippians 4:6 7: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

Do you understand that by our profession we cause God to change our thoughts and beliefs into His thoughts and beliefs through the peace of Jesus Christ? This is what the phrase "the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" means. By confessing God's Word with thanksgiving, we cause God the Father to guard the thoughts in our mind and the beliefs in our heart through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We simply have to train our spirit

to become a champion, and to gain mastery over our worries or cares. The Bible declares in 1 Timothy 4:7–8: "But reject profane and old wives' fables, and exercise yourself toward godliness. For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come." This beautiful scripture tells how to have a wonderful life on earth — but also in heaven. And the way we get it is to put our spirit first by training it, and, when we do this, even our physical body will benefit from the growth of our spirit.

Now, how can we train our spirit to have a godly life? Here is another answer from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (John 4:23–24): "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." Thus worshiping God "in spirit and truth" has the ability to train our spirit in the ways of God. To worship in spirit and in truth means to pray by speaking in tongues and with understanding. (Do not forget that "truth" refers to the Word of God.) The Scriptures say, in 1 Corinthians 14:14–15: "For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful. What is the result then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding."

Can we pray in spirit and succeed in communicating with God if our spirit lives in darkness, or if we

lack God's Word in our heart? No! Why not? First of all because only God's Word, when it is treasured in our heart, gives light to our spirit as it is written in Psalm 119:130: "The entrance of Your words gives light; It gives understanding to the simple." Secondly, without the light brought by God's Word, our spirit would remain blind and unable to find good things in our heart to exchange with God (through the Holy Spirit) when we speak in tongues. In both of the solutions given by Jesus as ways for us to receive God's peace and cease to worry about this life, everything begins with treasuring our belief in God's Word in our heart. We must guard our heart to allow in only truths which are in line with God's Word, as it is written in Proverbs 4:23 (New Living Translation, Second Edition): "Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life." So we are reminded that Jesus is teaching us the third principle of faith in Matthew 13:22 (if you hear the Word of God and understand it, you will receive the faith you need to live a good, fruitful, and balanced life, but if your first concern is to treasure the riches of this world instead of focusing on Jesus through meditation and worship in spirit and understanding, you will become unfruitful).

Now we are going to see what Jesus says in Matthew 13:23: "But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty." Luke's account of this same teaching is given in Luke 8:15: "But the ones that

fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience." Can you see that the "good ground" is the same as the "noble and good heart," which has fine personal qualities that people admire, such as courage, honesty, and love for others?

This means that it is a man's responsibility for making his heart noble and good. How? Every man has to exercise his spirit through his obedience to God's Word. Once he does this, then the four conditions that cause his heart to be good ground will be fulfilled. First he must have an understanding of God's Word, next God's Word must take deep root in his heart, and thirdly he must put God's Word first in his life. The fourth condition is to love Jesus and one another.

We have already dealt with the first three conditions above. Remember that John 14:21–23 says: "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him. Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, 'Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?' Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.'" Can you see that love for Jesus is the principle of doing God's Word or bearing fruit, as it is written in John 15:5: "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears fruit; for without Me you can do nothing"? As a matter of fact, this last

condition is satisfied by point D of faith's definition: love. Before we look into the issue of love, notice that failure is caused by man. If you want to be fruitful, to be a victor, or to be a champion, it's up to you. You are the one who has to make the right choice. It is up to you to cultivate the soil of your heart. God has already played His part and waits for you to grant you what is already yours. Since it is the character of love which minds us, let us look at John 15:1–17, where Jesus teaches us about what we need to bear fruit: love.

Jesus says in John 15:1–17:

> "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.
>
> "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be My disciples.

> "As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.
>
> "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. You do not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name he may give you. These things I command you, that you love one another."

Let us look again at the remarkable declaration Jesus made in John 15:5: ". . . He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." This means that being fruitful is subject to one condition: you must abide in Jesus. In other words, you must love Jesus to get the power to bear fruit through Him. Jesus continues, and specifies in John 15:10 what condition we need to fulfill to abide in His love, when He tells us that we must keep His

commandments. So the condition we must satisfy to be fruitful is to keep Jesus's commandments. But Jesus states in John 14:21: "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me . . . ." Therefore, if we want to be fruitful we have to love Jesus.

The key question of what causes our love for Jesus remains unanswered. Fortunately, meditation on God's Word develops within us a close relationship with God, as it is written in Psalm 63:6 8: "When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the night watches. Because You have been my help, Therefore in the shadow of Your wings I will rejoice. My soul follows close behind You; Your right hand upholds me." In other words, our meditation causes us to love God and Jesus. This is also why Psalm 119:97 declares: "Oh, how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day." You must remember that "law" in this case stands for God's Word and Jesus is the Word of God so our love for the law and the Word of God is the same as our love for Jesus.

It is also written In Joshua 1:8: "This book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success." In this, God makes His meaning crystal clear. He says: "you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it." This means that meditation causes us to do the Word of God.

Jesus has already told us that those who keep His commandments are those who love Him (John 14:21: "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him"). This means that keeping God's Word is proof of our love for Christ, which matches with what Psalm 63:6 8 and Joshua 1:8 say when they declare that meditation causes us to love Jesus and to do His commandments.

As we have learned, meditation's purpose is to change our mind to focus on God and cause us to love Jesus. This is why the Scriptures say, in Deuteronomy 30:6: "And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live." We have already learned, in Chapter One and Chapter Two that if we circumcise our heart we change our mind to focus on God, and that this change of focus is the principle of our love for Jesus. This means that when we cease to worry about this life, and instead to keep our focus only on Jesus Christ or God's Word, our love of our Lord and Savior starts burning in our heart as fire.

Thus, Jesus is teaching us the fourth principle of faith in Matthew 13:23: if you love God and Jesus by keeping Jesus's commandments through meditation, then you will become fruitful. Notice that Jesus puts conditions on our love saying that we must not only love one another but also keep His other

commandments. Even though when Jesus talks about His commandment which tells us to love one another (John 15:12), "commandment" is singular ("This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you," you can see that "commandments" in this case is plural: "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love" (John 15:10).

In a nutshell, God's Word (Jesus) has the power to do in our life whatever He talks about. He is able to inspire any listener, and to give him the desire, confidence, or enthusiasm to do well. But our responsibility is to pay attention to God's Word and never give up. We must continue to expose ourselves to God's Word, no matter what happens around us. On our way to maturity in faith we must get over four obstacles: understanding God's Word; overcoming fear, doubt and unbelief, impatience, and a lack of self-control; overpowering our selfishness or longing for riches of this world; and, finally, learning to love Jesus. When these four conditions are satisfied, then we will begin to live a real, fruitful life with God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit in our fellowship with them.

From this analysis, we can deduce the four stages or dimensions of faith:

1. Understanding God's Word, so that faith can be created.
2. Creating deep roots for God's Word in our hearts, so that our faith stands firm when troubles come.

3. Putting God first instead of seeking the riches of this world, so that our hearts can treasure God's Word and become clean so that our mind and mouth will be filled only by God's Word.
4. Loving God and one another so that we increase our faith and become fruitful.

Let us now review the four stages of faith and give suggestions (according to Jesus) for achieving effectiveness at each stage.

The Four Stages of Faith and the Characteristic of Faith	
(1) Understanding of God's Word: faith is created	a) Our understanding or knowledge of God's Word (Matthew 15:21-28; Mathew 8:6-10; Matthew 16:5-12) b) Bringing a sick man to Jesus in order to be healed (Matthew 9:2)
(2) Getting deep root for God's Word in your heart or foundation, so that faith stands firm when troubles come.	a) Showing no fear, no anxiety, no impatience, and no doubt when we face the challenges of this life. To do this, we need self-control and patience to take control of our life's circumstances (Mark 4:35-41; Matthew 8:23-26; Matthew14:22-31) b) Our determination to ask for God's mercy or Jesus's mercy (Luke 18:35-43) c) Constant prayer and never giving up or losing heart (Luke 18:1-8) d) Practicing, doing the Word, what God or Jesus tells us to do. Jesus says the amount of faith He gives us is sufficient, now it's time to put it to work (Luke 17:6) e) Believe in Jesus and act upon that belief (Matthew 9:20-22)
(3) Putting God first instead of seeking the riches of this world allow your heart to treasure God's Word that has power to clean your heart so that your mind and your mouth will be filled only by God's word.	a) Giving priority to the kingdom of God or putting God's Word first instead of worrying about this life (Matthew 6:25-34) b) Putting our trust on unseen realities, what is said about Jesus the Son of God and the gospel (John 20:24-29)
(4) Love of God and one another increases your faith so that you can become fruitful.	a) Our love, the more we love, the greater our faith becomes (Luke 7:36-50) b) Giving thanks to God or Jesus or testifying about your healing (Luke 17:11-19) c) Being able to make nature obey our word as Jesus did (Matthew 21:18-22; Mark 4:35-41) d) Being able to heal any kind of sickness (Matthew 17:14-20)

32. The Four Stages of Faith and the Characteristics of Faith

1) A Solution for a Lack of Understanding

In the first stage of faith, we must first try to help those who have little or no faith at all — in other words, those who do not understand God's Word. To this end, let us read John 6:22–71:

> On the following day, when the people who were standing on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other boat there, except that one which His disciples had entered, and that Jesus had not entered the boat with His disciples, but His disciples had gone away alone — however, other boats came from Tiberias, near the place where they ate bread after the Lord had given thanks — when the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, nor His disciples, they also got into boats and came to Capernaum, seeking Jesus. And when they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, "Rabbi, when did You come here?"
>
> Jesus answered them and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. Do not labor for the food which perishes,

but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him."

Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?"

Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."

Therefore they said to Him, "What sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will You do? Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'"

Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

Then they said to Him, "Lord, give us this bread always."

And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe. All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. This is

the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

The Jews then complained about Him, because He said, "I am the bread which came down from heaven." And they said, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He says, 'I have come down from heaven'?"

Jesus therefore answered and said to them, "Do not murmur among yourselves. No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.' Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me. Not that anyone has seen the Father, except He who is from God; He has seen the Father. Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life. I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world."

The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, "How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?"

Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. This is the bread which came down from heaven not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever."

These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.

Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, "This is a hard saying; who can understand it?"

When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples complained about this, He said to them, "Does this offend you? What then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before? It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life. But there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the beginning who

> they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him. And He said, "Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father."
>
> From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?"
>
> But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."
>
> Jesus answered them, "Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?" He spoke of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, for it was he who would betray Him, being one of the twelve.

Let us consider the sickness (or curse of the law) we want to cure. Matthew 13:19 says: "When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside."

Now let us consider what Jesus's disciples who left Him said in John 6:60: "This is a hard saying; who can understand it?"

Jesus explained why these disciples were unable to understand His sayings, in John 6:63 64: "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life. But there are some of you who do not believe."

In this, we find the cure which Jesus gives us for those who are unable to understand God's Word. Jesus reveals to us in this that the key to understanding the Bible is to receive its teachings in the spiritual realm and not in the physical realm. The disciples who left Him thought that Jesus wanted to give them His physical body and blood, while Jesus was truly speaking of His Word that gives everlasting life to whoever welcomes it and believes in Him as the Son of God.

When Jesus said "eat My flesh," He meant that we should digest God's Word; and when He said "drink My blood," He meant that we should believe in Him as the Son of God who came to earth to shed His blood for the forgiveness of mankind's sin and to give us everlasting life. When we eat the flesh of Jesus and digest the Word of God, we truly put the Word of God in our heart. When we drink the blood of Jesus, we also act on the Word of God. But, as we know, acting on the Word of God demands sacrifice, which is symbolized by the shedding of the blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It should not be a surprise that "drink the blood of Jesus" can mean both to "act on the Word of God" and "believe in Jesus." After all, we found out earlier in this book that, in the mind of God and Jesus, holding a belief in your heart is the same as acting on God's Word. Digesting God's Word, doing God's Word, and believing in Jesus is what understanding God's Word is all about.

What matters in the sight of God and Jesus is what is in your heart. God does not see as human beings

see, as it is written in 1 Samuel 16:7: "But the LORD said to Samuel, 'Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him. For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." Psalm 111:10 goes on to say: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever."

Look at this excerpt from the passage from John we just read: "The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, "How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?" Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.'" (John 6:41 44). In that exchange, the Jews could only see Jesus's physical birth. They were unable to think about being given birth in the spiritual realm. But endorsing God's Word in the spiritual realm is really what understanding God's Word is all about. It's our responsibility to jump into the spiritual realm and then God will do His part, that is, He will give us understanding.

Let us now look at the best illustration of how we can get the understanding or wisdom of God. We find it in 1 Kings 3:5 13: "At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, 'Ask! What shall I give you?' And Solomon said: 'You have shown great mercy to Your servant David my father,

because he walked before You in truth, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with You; You have continued this great kindness for him, and You have given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. Now, O LORD my God, You have made Your servant king instead of my father David, but I am a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. And Your servant is in the midst of Your people whom You have chosen, a great people, too numerous to be numbered or counted. Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?' The speech pleased the LORD, that Solomon had asked this thing. Then God said to him, 'Because you have asked this thing, and have not asked long life for yourself, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have asked the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern justice, behold, I have done according to your words; see, I have given you a wise and understanding heart, so that there has not been anyone like you before you, nor shall any like you arise after you. And I have also given you what you have not asked; both riches and honor, so that there shall not be anyone like you among the kings all your days."

Can you see that, first of all, understanding stands for the ability to discern between good and evil; secondly, understanding is a gift from God; thirdly, God gives us understanding if we ask for it; and fourthly, understanding is the principle element of all other

blessings of God, such as wisdom, riches, and honor? Unless you understand God's Word, you will never experience faith, righteousness, grace, love, or anything else. An understanding of God's Word is your stepping stone that gives you access to all the provisions that God has in store for you.

Two other wonderful scriptures deal with this issue. Let us begin with Proverbs 4:1–9: "Hear my children, the instruction of a father, And give attention to know understanding; For I give you good doctrine: Do not forsake my law. When I was my father's son, Tender and the only one in the sight of my mother, He also taught me, and said to me: 'Let your heart retain my words; Keep my commands, and live. Get wisdom! Get understanding! Do not forget, nor turn away from the words of my mouth. Do not forsake her, and she will preserve you; Love her, and she will keep you. Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding. Exalt her, and she will promote you. She will bring you honor, when you embrace her. She will place on your head an ornament of grace; A crown of glory she will deliver to you."

Can you see that understanding enables your promotion, honor, grace, and glory? Understanding also produces all of the spiritual and physical riches of this world, as it is written in Proverbs 8:17–21: "I love those who love me, And those who seek me diligently will find me. Riches and honor are with me, Enduring riches and righteousness, My fruit is better than gold, yes, than fine gold, And my revenue than choice silver.

I traverse the way of righteousness, In the midst of the paths of justice. That I may cause those who love me to inherit wealth, That I may fill their treasuries."

Can you see that you must go after spiritual things, because spiritual things give birth to physical things? Wisdom and understanding create all of the physical and spiritual riches of this world; therefore you must earnestly seek understanding and wisdom.

2) A Solution for a Lack of Foundation or a Lack of a Deep Rooting of God's Word in Our Heart

Let us now focus our attention on finding a solution for those who understand, but have no root; those who fail to lay a foundation for their faith; and those who fail to develop deep roots for God's Word in their heart.

For this purpose, let us read what Jesus said in Luke 6:46–49: "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say? Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great."

And let us remember the illness (or curse of the law) we want to heal, which is found in Matthew

13:20–21: "But he who received the seed on the stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles."

Look at the medication our "Doctor Jesus" advises us to take: Do His sayings. The sayings of Jesus Christ the Son of God are the key to having roots or building a foundation for our redemption. They allow God's Word to take root deep in our heart and stand firm against whatever challenges we have to face in our life. If a believer does not put into practice Jesus's teachings, he will fail to water his roots and the lack of water and minerals will weaken God's grace and power so that it will not have enough strength to stand against temptations or tribulations when they come.

As far as Jesus is concerned, until we activate our faith by putting into practice His teachings, there is no way for God's Word to take deep root in our heart. It is not sufficient to hear the Word, you must also understand His sayings. But better understanding is connected to your behavior and comes from taking corresponding actions, which are in line with your beliefs or understanding. Psalm 111:10 adds: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever."

Putting God's Word into practice is the principal factor of having a good understanding and activating

our faith. This means that if we want to increase our understanding of any truth found in the Bible we must act upon it. And, conversely, until a man activates his faith by acting upon a belief he will never get to have a good understanding of that belief. Exercising his faith gives that man a better understanding of God's truth, and then this better understanding will stir him to act according to that belief, which has become a conviction. Once that belief becomes a conviction, the man will be able to put it into practice effortlessly. Thus, unless you succeed in putting your faith into practice; what you want to see in the physical realm will never come to pass. Your desire will remain unfruitful.

3) A Solution for the Cares or Worries of this Life

It is time to address the problem of the cares or worries of this life. Here is the problem we want to solve, which is found in Matthew 13:22: "Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful." So let us go to the Word of Jesus, our Lord and Savior and begin with Matthew 6:24,33: "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. . . . But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all things shall be added to you."

Pay careful attention to the medication found in Matthew 6:33: "But seek first the kingdom of God

and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." It's the same medication prescribed in Proverbs 8:17–21: "I love those who love me, And those who seek me diligently will find me. Riches and honor are with me, Enduring riches and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold, yes, than fine gold, And my revenue than choice silver. I traverse the way of righteousness, In the midst of the paths of justice, That I may cause those who love me to inherit wealth, That I may fill their treasuries."

You see, Jesus says it is pointless to worry about this life and to strive to get riches while, at the same time, trying to love God. The cares of this life will stifle the love of God in your heart and prevent you from getting the enduring riches and righteousness He offers you. The only way to be fruitful is Jesus's Way: to seek God or His Word first, and then all things will be given to you.

4) A Solution for a Lack of Love

To deal with this issue, we must first recall the problem, which is found in Matthew 13:23: "But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."

We have already said that we've got to satisfy four conditions to bear fruit. First of all, we must understand the Word of God; secondly, we must overcome fear, doubt, impatience, lack of self-control, and unbelief; and, thirdly, we must succeed in facing up to

our own selfishness or the love of riches of this world because the kingdom of God and its righteousness must take priority over worldly concerns. Finally, if all of those conditions are met, the love of God and one another will dawn in our heart and cause us to produce good fruit.

We have already found out in John 15:1 17 that a love for Jesus is one of the four primary principles for bearing fruit in any area of life. So if we wish to bear fruit in any area of our life, we have to use the three medications listed above (the medication for a lack of understanding; the medication for overcoming fear, doubt, impatience, lack of self-control, and unbelief; and the medication for overcoming the riches of this world) and add to them the medication for increasing our love for Jesus and one another. Remember that Jesus tells us that our love for Him can only be achieved by keeping His commandments not only His commandment to love one another, but His other commandments, as well.

Therefore, anyone can easily see that the medication for a lack of love is to build in ourselves a love for Jesus, as well as a combination of the three preceding medications:

1. The key to understanding God's Word is to receive it in the spiritual realm and not in the physical one: A Cure for People's Lack of Understanding of God's Word.
2. The key to having strong roots or to building a foundation for our redemption is to follow the

sayings of the Son of God and allow God's Word to take root deep in our heart so that we can stand firm against whatever challenges we will have to face in our life: A Cure for People's Lack of Foundation on the Rock or Lack of Deep Roots in Faith.

3. The key to overcoming the worries of the world is to seek instead the kingdom of God and His righteousness or to put God's Word first, and then all things shall come to you: A Cure to Stop People from Worrying about the Riches of this World, so that They Always Give Priority to the Kingdom of God and God's Word.
4. The key to combatting a lack of love is to love God or Jesus and one another by keeping Jesus's commandments: A Cure for People's Lack of Love, to Give Them the Love of God and One Another.

33. Medication for a Lack of Faith Given by Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

We know that the just man will live by faith (Habakkuk 2:4) if he wishes to be a genuine son of God. And we have learned that there are four stages or dimensions of our journey to true faith.

1. The first dimension is having an understanding of God's Word.
2. The second dimension is laying our foundation of faith or causing God's Word to take deep root in our heart.
3. The third dimension asks us to put the kingdom of God and God's Word first in our lives, instead of worrying about the riches and pleasures of this world.
4. The fourth dimension is having true love for Jesus, God, and one another.

Those who find themselves in the First Dimension can be referred to as "listeners." They are called "little children" in the New Testament and belong to the First Dimension. Those who are listeners and achieve understanding pass the First Dimension's examination and move on to the Second Dimension,

struggling with their faith or exercising their faith to grow deep roots for God's Word in their hearts or to build foundations for their redemption. Getting roots or building a foundation for our redemption corresponds to the stage in our faith where we fight to overcome our fear, doubt, unbelief, impatience, lack of self-control, anger, sorrow, addiction, and hatred by waiting and hoping that God will be victorious over these tribulations that prevent God's Word from being rooted in our heart. Those who are little children and grow the deep roots to overcome these circumstances pass the Second Dimension's examination and move to the Third Dimension. In the Third Dimension, they fight against the lust and pleasures of the world. This group is called "young men" in the New Testament.

Finally, when those who are young men are able to put God's kingdom or God's Word first in their lives and keep focusing on Jesus and look to the Word for answers no matter what happens in their lives they have passed the Third Dimension's examination and move into the Fourth Dimension. This group, called "fathers" in the New Testament, are those who have perfect love for Jesus in their hearts and no longer have fear in their hearts, as it is written in 1 John 4:18: "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love." Although the young men focus on Jesus, it is not until their love for Jesus becomes perfect that they get the status of fathers.

In our journey of faith from birth to maturity or perfection, we have to face four kinds of sickness, which correspond to the four classes of sins. The first is a lack of understanding that causes us to sin. The second sickness is caused by fear, doubt, and unbelief. The third sickness is a lack of focus on Jesus, while instead focusing on the pleasures of this world. The last kind is a lack of love for Jesus.

We can see that each of these things is caused by a lack of faith, and the Bible says, as it is written in Romans 14:23: "But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not eat from faith; for whatever is not from faith is sin." And we have already found out that a lack of understanding, doubt, fear and unbelief, worrying only about this life, selfishness, and a lack of love for Jesus are sins in the mind of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The previous chapter helped us to understand our four spiritual enemies. In this chapter, we will give you the medicine that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ has already provided to heal these four key factors of our "faith-sickness" or our sins: a lack of understanding; fear, doubt and unbelief; a lack of focus on Jesus or the love of this world; and a lack of love for Jesus.

Let us remember that Jesus is the Word of God, so any declarations made by men of God throughout the Bible concerning the truths of God are also Jesus's declarations. This means that anything Jesus says in the gospel — whether or not it was already said in the Old Testament — is His own. Therefore, we must look

closely at what Jesus said throughout the gospel and find out what we have to do in order to lay our foundation in faith or be rooted in Christ and so be able to stand firm in times of adversity. But not everything Jesus said in the gospel pertains to the Second Dimension of faith. So, after listing all of the sayings of Jesus from the gospel, we will have to separate out those which pertain to the First Dimension (getting an understanding of God's Word), those which pertain to the Third Dimension (learning to focus on Jesus and the kingdom of God, instead of worrying about the riches of this world), and those which belong to the Fourth Dimension (developing a perfect love for Jesus or God and one another). The remainder of his saying, then, will relate to the Second Dimension (laying our foundation of faith or causing it to take root in our heart).

The Word of God brings to life whatever it talks about, as it is written in Luke 8:11: "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God." The seed of anything has the ability to reproduce itself, if it is planted in good ground, as it is written in Luke 8:15: "But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience." God's Word contains countless seeds seeds containing healing, seeds of understanding and wisdom, seeds of love, seeds of patience, self-control, joy, and peace, etc. Therefore, if you listen to God's Word about healing and endorse it, this Word this specific seed will bring health to

your whole being, and this health will grow and be able to reproduce itself in you (or in others) through your words and your deeds. This is the same process that occurs when you listen to and accept God's Word about understanding, patience, self-control, and so on. The Bible says, in Proverbs 4:20–23: "My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your eyes; Keep them in the midst of your heart; For they are life to those who find them, And health to all their flesh. Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life."

From the scripture above, we can see that, as physical medications heal the body, so can the Word of God heal our flesh, bones, and blood from all manner of sickness and infirmity—or every one of the thirty curses of the law, because Christ has redeemed us from the curses of the law, as it is written in Galatians 3:13–14 ("Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us [for as it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree'], that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."). Do not forget that Jesus is the Word of God (as we are told in John 1:1–4). And remember, too, that Romans 10:17 declares that faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. In fact, the more you receive the Word of God and store it in your heart, the greater your faith becomes. And we know from 1 John 5:4 that faith is the victory

that overcomes the world. Therefore, you must get the Word of God into your heart. The seed of God's Word, once it is planted in your heart, will grow tremendously and quietly as you receive and accept the Word of God in your heart. This is as it is written in Matthew 13:33: "Another parable He spoke to them: 'The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened.'"

Let us illustrate how the gospel produces specific fruit from whatever it talks about. For an example of the gospel of healing fruit, we refer to Luke 18:40–43, which declares: "So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to Him. And when he had come near, He asked him, saying, 'What do you want me to do for you?' He said, 'Lord, that I may receive my sight.' Then Jesus said to him, 'Receive your sight; your faith has saved you.' And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God." The blind man believed in the gospel of healing, so he asked Jesus to give him his sight. Accordingly, Jesus spoke the gospel of healing ("Receive your sight; your faith has saved you") and the blind man received his sight. Therefore, the purpose of the seeds of the gospel of healing is to produce the fruit of a full recovery.

In the case of the gospel of the fruit of patience, we can look at Luke 8:11,15 that says: "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. . . . But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and

bear fruit with patience." Can you see that the man with a noble and good heart believes in the gospel of patience, so Jesus gives him the patience he needs to bear fruit? It is written in John 10:27 30: "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one." No one can snatch a man of noble and good heart out of the hand of Jesus, because that man will never lose patience with his circumstances, as it is written in Luke 8:15. The man who is convinced that God is trustworthy receives God's grace and is able to wait, no matter the situation he finds himself in or what he feels, sees, or hears. He knows that what he hopes for will come true, no matter how long it takes to come to pass, as it is written in Proverbs 24:14: "So shall the knowledge of wisdom be to your soul; If you have found it, there is a prospect And your hope will not be cut off." Your belief in the truthfulness of God's Word gives you such a hope that nothing can hinder you from waiting for God's answer, no matter how long it takes.

Concerning the gospel of the fruit of peace, we will use two scriptures to show how it brings forth peace. The first scripture is John 14:27, which states: "Peace, I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." The second scripture is John

16:33: "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." The second passage addresses both the fruit of peace and the fruit of patience. This means that anyone who believes in these two gospels will receive both the fruit of peace and the patience to wait until his desired victory manifests in the physical realm when he is faced with challenges.

Regarding the case of the gospel of the fruit of knowledge, let us quote John 17:14–17: "I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth." As we have discussed before, in this passage "truth" represents God's Word and revelation knowledge. Those who are not of the world, and who have received the Word of truth, are able to access revelation knowledge and this gospel gives it to them. Therefore, anyone who believes in the gospel of truth or knowledge treasures revelation knowledge in his heart. This belief, then, will cause him to put into practice God's Word, which has the ability to give him revelation knowledge, as we are told in Joshua 1:8: "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according

to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success."

In the matter of the case of the gospel of the fruits of love and joy, we can look at John 15:9–11: "As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full." Those who believe in the gospel of love and joy keep Jesus's commandments and, because they do this, the fruit of Jesus's love and the fruit of Jesus's joy show up in them.

To summarize what we have been discussing: if we, as children of God, turn the gospel of Jesus Christ into our confession, our word becomes powerful and our profession can be used as medicine to cure any curse of our life in this world—this is the first step. By putting God's Word into practice, we then increase our knowledge, which takes deep root in our heart so that we can become a champion in that area of life, and nothing or nobody can prevail over us—that is the second step. Proverbs 4:20–22 says that the Word of God is life to those who find it, and medicine for their flesh ("My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your eyes; Keep them in the midst of your heart; For they are life to those who find them, And health to all their flesh"). So, if God's Word is health to our body,

then it becomes medicine to our flesh as we meditate upon it constantly.

Let us now thoroughly examine Jesus's Word in the scriptures to search out the matter, for it is written in Proverbs 25:2: "It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, But the glory of kings is to search out a matter." Therefore, we will search out any problem a human being might face in his life. Then we will determine the medication, the prescription and the recommendations for use of that medication, which our Lord and Savior has already given us. (Remember that a "prescription" can be both a medicine and the recommendations for use of that medicine.) Then, if you find yourself in a difficult situation you will only have to apply the corresponding solution as a way to get out of the problem or deal with the situation.

1) A Cure for People's Lack of Understanding of God's Word

Prescription 1:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:3)

Description:

Be humble to receive understanding and the kingdom of God

Recommendations for use:

To be poor in spirit means to lack God's Word and behave like a child to be prompt to believe and willing to learn as Jesus said in Matthew 18:1 5: "At that

time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, 'Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?' Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me.'" In Matthew 11:25, He further comments: ". . . 'I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes.'"

Prescription 2:

"You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:13 16)

Description:

Be the salt and light of the world so that your Father in heaven will be glorified

Recommendations for use:

Colossians 4:6 says: "Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you

ought to answer each one;" while John 3:20 21 says: "For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God." Your speech and your deeds show what is within you your wisdom, or God's Word in your heart and your understanding of God's Word. In the passages, "salt" represents the believer who ought to have God's Word in his heart. And "light" is the believer who is supposed to have an understanding of God's Word. If you "lose your taste" then you have failed to treasure God's Word in your heart, or the cares and worries of this life have caused you to forget God's Word. When you cease to meditate on God's Word, your first priority is to focus on this life, and not on God's Word. Remember that Jesus says, in John 8:12: ". . . 'I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life." This means that your speech and your deeds can also move the people who listen to you or see your works and lead them to glorify the principle cause of your behavior: your Father in heaven. As Jesus said in John 15:8: "By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples."

Prescription 3:

"You have heard that people were told in the past, 'Do not commit murder; anyone who does will be brought to trial.' But now I tell you: whoever is angry

with his brother will be brought to trial, whoever calls his brother 'You good for nothing!' will be brought before the Council, and if you call your brother a worthless fool you will be in danger of going to the fire of hell. So if you are about to offer your gift to God at the altar and there you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar, go at once and make peace with your brother, and then come back and offer your gift to God. If someone brings a lawsuit against you and takes you to court, settle the dispute with him while there is time, before you get to court. Once you are there, you will be handed you to the judge, who will hand you over to the police, and you will be put in jail. There you will stay, I tell you, until you pay the last penny of your fine. You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' But now I tell you: anyone who looks at a woman and wants to possess her is guilty of committing adultery with her in his heart. So if your right eye causes you to sin, take it out and throw it away! It is much better for you to lose a part of your body than to have your whole body thrown into hell. If your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away! It is much better to lose one of your limbs than to have your whole body go to hell." Matthew 5:21 30 (Good News Bible)

Description:

Fill your heart with God's Word so your speech and actions will always be pleasant to others and you will receive a greater life

Recommendations for use:
Jesus reveals a great law to us in this passage: He tells us that what matters is what happens in our heart. He means that whatever proceeds from our mouth, what our eyes look at, what we think, or what our body does is not the issue because all of these come from our heart. In the law of Moses, the focus was on the consequences of our desires. Jesus, however, gives us a perfect law, which explains that we must look at the basis of our speech and deeds, so that we can change our evil actions, speech, and lustful looks. He advises us not to be angry at all, nor to use offensive language, nor to look with lust, nor to have disputes with others. If we are filled to the brim with God's Word, have a good understanding of it, and do what Jesus tells us to do, then we will fulfill the requirements of this law and have a greater life.

Jesus is even more explicit in Matthew 12:33 37: "Either make the tree good and its fruit good or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit. Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

The basis for what comes from our mouth is what is in our heart. It is the same with what comes from

any part of our body, including our thoughts and actions. The issue, then, is to guard our heart so that only what is in line with God's Word is allowed to enter, as Proverbs 4:23 says: "Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life." A human being's heart is his safe deposit box, where he treasures God's Words, and draws them out when the opportunity arises and the need for their use is necessary. If you do God's Word by studying and meditating on it on a daily basis, what issues from your mouth or your actions will always be good and pleasant to others.

Prescription 4:

"Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, saying 'Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented.' And Jesus said to him, 'I will come and heal him.' The centurion answered and said, 'Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, "Go," and he goes; and to another, "Come," and he comes; and to my servant, "Do this," and he does it.' When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel! And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There

will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' Then Jesus said to the centurion, 'Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you.' And his servant was healed that same hour." (Matthew 8:5 13)

Description:
Resorting to extreme measures to receive wisdom and understanding is the key to success in the kingdom of God

Recommendations for use:
There are two cases of faith in the gospel which Jesus described as "great faith." These are the centurion's faith we have just read about and the faith of the Canaanite woman. Let us look again at the example of the Canaanite woman reported in Matthew 15:21 28: "Then Jesus went out from there and departed to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, 'Have mercy on me, O Lord, son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed.' But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and urged Him, saying, 'Send her away, for she cries out after us.' But He answered and said, 'I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.' Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, 'Lord, help me!' But He answered and said, it is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs.' And she said, 'Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.' Then Jesus answered and said to her, 'O woman, great is your

faith! Let it be to you as you desire.' And her daughter was healed from that very hour."

What is the common thread between these two cases of great faith? Both deal with the knowledge and understanding of God's Word. When Jesus said, in Matthew 15:26: "It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs." The woman answered, using her great knowledge: "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table."

When Jesus said to the centurion, in Matthew 8:7: "I will come and heal him;" he answered (in Matthew 8:8 9): "'Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, "Go," and he goes; and to another, "Come," and he comes; and to my servant, "Do this," and he does it.'" This shows that the centurion had a great understanding of God's Word.

Now let us look at Proverbs 2:1 22, which clearly explains the principle of understanding and receiving revelation knowledge (italics added):

My son, *if you receive my words,*
And treasure my commands within you,
So that you incline your ear to wisdom,
And apply your heart to understanding;
Yes, if you cry out for discernment,
And lift up your voice for understanding,
If you seek her as silver,

And search for her as for hidden treasures;
Then you will understand the fear of the Lord,
And find the knowledge of God.
For the Lord gives wisdom;
From His mouth come knowledge and understanding;
He stores up sound wisdom for the upright;
He is a shield to those who walk uprightly;
He guards the paths of justice,
And preserves the way of His saints.
Then you will understand righteousness and justice,
Equity and every good path.

When wisdom enters your heart,
And knowledge is pleasant to your soul,
Discretion will preserve you;
Understanding will keep you,
To deliver you from the way of evil,
From the man who speaks perverse things,
From those who leave the paths of uprightness
To walk in the ways of darkness;
Who rejoice in doing evil,
And delight in the perversity of the wicked;
Whose ways are crooked,
And who are devious in their paths;
To deliver you from the immoral woman,
From the seductress who flatters with her words,
Who forsakes the companion of her youth,
And forgets the covenant of her God.
For her house leads down to death,
And her paths to the dead;
None who go to her return,
Nor do they regain the paths of life

So you may walk in the way of goodness,
And keep to the paths of righteousness.
For the upright will dwell in the land,
And the blameless will remain in it;
But the wicked will be cut off from the earth,
And the unfaithful will be uprooted from it.

Did you find the principle of understanding and knowledge within that passage? (It is in italics.) If not, here is this principle of understanding and revelation knowledge broken out for you:

1. Receive God's Word,
2. Treasure God's Word and accept it in your heart,
3. Listen to God's Word,
4. Pay attention to God's Word and meditate on it day and night,
5. Ask God to help you understand His Word,
6. Use your voice to plead for understanding,
7. Seek wisdom as you would look for hidden treasure, and
8. Once you have done these things, then you will receive the gift of wisdom, knowledge, and understanding from God.

So you see that it is not by chance that the Canaanite woman and the centurion were able to express their knowledge and understanding. This is why Jesus qualified their faith as "great faith." Notice also that understanding is the key to entering into God's kingdom. Without understanding, you cannot get faith; therefore you cannot access the kingdom of heaven.

The principle of understanding and knowledge plainly states we must ask God for understanding and discernment. It is God who gives understanding and revelation knowledge, which is why the Apostle John said in 1 John 5:20: "And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life." Isaiah prophesied, in Isaiah 53:11: ". . . By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities." This means that without knowledge of yourself and an understanding of God's Word and what you can do through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior there is no way to fulfill the wonderful life God has in store for you.

God himself underlines the great importance of knowledge in Hosea 4:6: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; Because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children."

So we must all resort to extreme measures to get wisdom and understanding, because this is the key to success in the kingdom of God, as we are told in Proverbs 4:7: "Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding."

Prescription 5:

"As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him,

'Follow me.' So he arose and followed Him. Now, it happened, as Jesus sat at the table in the house, that behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, 'Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?' But when Jesus heard that, He said to them, 'Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. But go and learn what this means: "I desire mercy and not sacrifice." For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.'" (Matthew 9:9–13)

"After these things He went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, 'Follow me.' So he left all, rose up, and followed Him. Then Levi gave Him a great feast in his own house. And there were a great number of tax collectors and others who sat down with them. And the scribes and the Pharisees complained against His disciples, saying, 'Why do You eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?' Jesus answered and said to them, 'Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.'" (Luke 5:27–32)

Description:

Come to Jesus with all your heart. In other words, love Jesus, repent for your sins and learn to know Jesus, because that is what God is all about and is the reason why Jesus came to earth

Recommendations for use:

Before we proceed any further, let us look at the phrase "I desire mercy and not sacrifice" found in Matthew. Hosea 6:1 6 helps us to better understand it: "Come, and let us return to the Lord; For He has torn, but He will heal us; He has stricken, but He will bind us up. After two days He will revive us; On the third day He will raise us up, That we may live in His sight. Let us know, Let us pursue the knowledge of the LORD. His going forth is established as the morning; He will come to us like the rain, Like the latter and former rain to the earth. O Ephraim, what shall I do to you? O Judah, what shall I do to you? For your faithfulness is like a morning cloud, And like the early dew it goes away. Therefore I have hewn them by the prophets, I have slain them by the words of My mouth; And your judgments are like light that goes forth. For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings."

In Matthew 9:13, Jesus reminds us of what God meant in Hosea 6:6: "For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings;" as well as in 1 Samuel 15:22: ". . . 'Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams.'" We see in these that knowledge of God is better than burnt offerings, and obeying God is better than sacrifice.

God's message is plain and clear: "Come to Me with all your heart and get to know Me. Love Me, repent

for your sins, do good to others, and show sympathy for people who are suffering." That is what God is all about. Jesus is teaching us that God is just and merciful, and because we are living in the time of our merciful God, we must act like Jesus. It is not the time of judgment yet. The time of judgment will come at the end of the age at the second coming of Jesus, so Jesus advises us not to judge others in Matthew 7:1–2: "Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the same measure you use, it will be measured back to you."

God is patient and is waiting for those who went astray to repent and return home. We are under the power of the merciful nature of God, but we must make up our mind at once and believe in Jesus to save our soul because we do not know the day of our death or the hour of the second coming of Jesus. Remember that the time of judgment is coming when God will reward us according to our deeds, speech, thoughts, and beliefs.

Prescription 6:

"While He spoke these things to them, behold, a ruler came and worshiped Him, saying, 'My daughter has just died, but come and lay Your hand on her and she will live.' So Jesus arose and followed him, and so did His disciples. And suddenly, a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years came from behind and touched the hem of His garment. For she said to herself, 'If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made

well.' But Jesus turned around, and when He saw her He said, 'Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well.' And the woman was made well from that hour. And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the flute players and the noisy crowd wailing, He said to them, 'Make room, for the girl is not dead, but sleeping.' And they ridiculed Him. But when the crowd was put outside, He went in and took Her by the hand, and the girl arose. And the report of this went out into all that land."(Matthew 9:18 26)

Description:

You are sick and have no faith in Jesus, but there is still a way to be healed through the laying on of hands by Jesus or a genuine believer

Recommendations for use:

It is written in Matthew 14:34 36: "When they had crossed over, they came to the land of Gennesaret. And when the men of that place recognized Him, they sent out into all that surrounding region, brought to Him all who were sick, and begged Him that they might only touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched it were made perfectly well." What is the reason of this healing without Jesus's Word? We find the answer in John 11:25 26, where Jesus said: ". . . I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, even though he dies, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die." John 4:13 14 says: ". . . Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him

will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." If what Jesus gives brings eternal life, therefore His body and His garments which are in contact with the eternal life also possess this life. Even the bones of Elijah brought a dead man to life, as it is reported in 2 Kings 13:20 21: "Then Elisha died, and they buried him. And the raiding bands from Moab invaded the land in the spring of the year. So it was, as they were burying a man, that suddenly they spied a band of raiders; and they put the man in the tomb of Elisha; and when the man was let down and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived and stood on his feet." Jesus also said: in John 14:6: "I am the way, the truth and the life." He is the life.

That means that Jesus's body, soul, spirit, and garments are all filled with eternal life, and that Jesus is a wellspring of everlasting life and resurrection. Anyone who touches Him or His garments (in the physical world) or believes in Him (on a spiritual level) gets eternal life if he lives, or is raised from the dead if he does not live. This means that when you physically touch Jesus or His garments or believe in Him on a spiritual level, everlasting life can come to you and heal all sicknesses in you.

Proverbs 14:27 says: "The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, To turn one away from the snares of death." This means that reverence to the Lord awakens in your heart a fountain of life which has the power to heal any deadly thing in your body, thoughts, feelings,

or even in your heart itself. Proverbs 16:22 says the same thing: "Understanding is a wellspring of life to him who has it. . . ."

Understanding and reverence to the Lord led the people in these stories to come to Jesus to receive the wellspring of life, which healed them from their diseases. Do not forget what Jesus told the Samaritan woman in John 4:13–14: ". . . Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."

Another wonderful thing is what Paul the Apostle told Timothy in 1 Timothy 4:14–16: "Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you." The practice of the laying on of hands is something special in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Let us look at Mark 6:1–6 to begin to understand the wonderful power it communicates: "Then He went out from there and came to His own country, and His disciples followed Him. And when the Sabbath had come, He began to teach in the synagogue. And many hearing Him were astonished, saying, 'Where did this Man get these things? And what wisdom is this which is given to Him, that such mighty works are performed by His

hands! Is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?' So they were offended at him. But Jesus said to them, 'A prophet is not without honor except in his own country, among his own relatives, and in his own house.' Now He could do no mighty work there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them. And He marveled because of their unbelief. Then He went about the villages in a circuit, teaching."

Can you see that, no matter what your faith is, the laying on hands is a means to communicate Jesus's life or a genuine believer's eternal life to a sick or dead body, in order to heal the body or raise it up? The same thing happened when Jesus went into the ruler's house and took his daughter, who was dead, by the hand, and the girl arose. The little girl was dead, so she could not have faith, but Jesus communicated to her His divine life by touching her and He raised her up.

On another occasion Jesus healed a deaf and mute man by putting His fingers in his ears, spitting, and touching his tongue. Why did He conduct Himself like this? Because the deaf and mute could not hear His Word and believe in Him. So Jesus needed to touch him to lay His hands on him to communicate to him His divine life. Here is the full account of the healing of the deaf and mute man from Mark 7:31 37: "Again, departing from the region of Tyre and Sidon, He came through the midst of the region of Decapolis to the Sea of Galilee. Then they brought to Him one

who was deaf and had an impediment in his speech, and they begged Him to put His hand on him. And He took him aside from the multitude, and put His fingers in his ears, and He spat and touched his tongue. Then, looking up to heaven, He sighed, and said to him, 'Ephphatha,' that is, 'Be opened.' Immediately his ears were opened, and the impediment of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke plainly. Then He commanded them that they should tell no one; but the more He commanded them, the more widely they proclaimed it. And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, 'He has done all things well. He makes both the deaf to hear and the mute to speak'"

Prescription 7:

"When Jesus departed from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying, 'Son of David, have mercy on us!' And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them, 'Do you believe that I am able to do this?' They said to Him, 'Yes, Lord.' Then He touched their eyes, saying, 'According to your faith let it be to you.' And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, saying, 'See that no one knows it.' But when they had departed, they spread the news about Him in all that country."(Matthew 9:27 31)

Description:

Believe in Jesus's healing power and you will at once be healed according to your faith

Recommendations for use:

Let us go to the Word of God to give us the process of believing. We find it in Jonah 3:1–10: "Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time, saying, 'Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach to it the message that I tell you.' So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, a three-day journey in extent. And Jonah began to enter the city on the first day's walk. Then he cried out and said, 'Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!' So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them. Then the word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, 'Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water. But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish?' Then God saw their works, that they turned from the evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it."

The process of believing takes place in four steps. First of all, the Word of God must be preached to you;

secondly, you must understand it; thirdly, your understanding will lead you to give up your wicked behavior and evil actions; and fourthly, you have to cry out to God to beg His mercy.

The two blind men, before asking Jesus's mercy had already heard about Jesus and His preaching, and having understood His Word, decided to turn from their evil ways and cried out to Jesus showing they believed in Him. Believing that Jesus can heal you is turning from your evil ways. "Evil way" here means you do not believe that Jesus is able to heal you. This is why the blind men answered yes when Jesus asked them if they believed in Him. Believing in Jesus is the key to accessing all that God has set aside for you: wisdom, understanding, honor, glory, joy, peace, love, healing, riches, and prosperity.

Prescription 8:

"As they went out, behold, they brought to Him a man, mute and demon-possessed. And when the demon was cast out, the mute spoke. And the multitudes marveled, saying 'It was never seen like this in Israel!' But the Pharisees said, 'He casts out demons by the ruler of the demons.'"(Matthew 9:32 34)

Description:

Casting out demons is a sign that the kingdom of God has come upon you

Recommendations for use:

Jesus, on many occasions, has shown us that demons are the origin of most sicknesses. It is the case in the

example above, as well. So casting out demons is a good way to heal people who are sick. But we all notice that the Pharisees said that Jesus cast "out demons by the ruler of the demons." Jesus answered them in Matthew 12:22–30: "Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and the mute man both spoke and saw. And the multitudes were amazed and said, 'Could this be the Son of David?' Now when the Pharisees heard it they said, 'This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons.' But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: 'Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house. He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.'"

In His response, Jesus revealed another greater truth when He said: "But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you." What does this mean? This means that we have been in the care of the kingdom of God since the first coming of Jesus Christ on earth because He came to

earth through and with the Spirit of God and cast out demons with God's Spirit, rather than with unclean spirits. Remember that God's Word is spirit, as Jesus Himself declares in John 6:63 ("It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life"). So Jesus cast out demons with His words and gives us the authority to cast out demons in His name, as it is written in Mark 16:17: "And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons . . . ." The gist of Jesus's teaching is that there is an ongoing fight between good and evil. Jesus cast out demons and indicated that the final defeat of evil promised for the world to come in the kingdom of God had been initiated before His sufferings, death, and resurrection.

Prescription 9:

"Whatever I tell you in the dark, speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, preach on the housetops. And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows." (Matthew 10:27–31)

Description:

Do not fear anything in the world, but only fear God, because He is the only one able to kill your body and your soul in hell

Recommendations for use:

Jesus teaches us that we must fear God, not the troubles of the world. Wisdom, the personified Word of God, also tells us of the importance of the fear of God, in Proverbs 1:7: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, But fools despise wisdom and instruction." Do you want to understand God's Word to receive revelation knowledge? It's very simple: Have fear of the Lord and revere Him.

Prescription 10:

"He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me. He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward. And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward."(Matthew 10:40 42)

Description:

Receive Jesus as the Son of God sent by His Father and receive the righteousness of Jesus

Recommendations for use:

What Jesus says here is striking! Let us look at 1 Kings 17:8 24 to understand all of what Jesus intends to teach us in Matthew 10:40 42:

> Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying,
> "Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon,

and dwell there. See, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you." So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, indeed a widow was there gathering sticks. And he called to her and said, "Please bring me a little water in a cup, that I may drink." And as she was going to get it, he called to her and said, "Please bring me a morsel of bread in your hand."

So she said, "As the Lord your God lives, I do not have bread, only a handful of flour in a bin, and a little oil in a jar; and see, I am gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die."

And Elijah said to her, "Do not fear; go and do as you have said, but make me a small cake from it first, and bring it to me; and afterward make some for yourself and your son. For thus says the Lord God of Israel: 'The bin of flour shall not be used up, nor shall the jar of oil run dry, until the day the Lord sends rain on the earth.'"

So she went away and did according to the word of Elijah; and she and he and her household ate for many days. The bin of flour was not used up, nor did the jar of oil run dry, according to the word of the Lord which He spoke by Elijah.

Now it happened after these things that the son of the woman who owned the house became sick. And his sickness was so serious that there was no breath left in him. So she said to Elijah, "What

> have I to do with you, O man of God? Have you come to me to bring my sin to remembrance, and to kill my son?"
>
> And he said to her, "Give me your son." So he took him out of her arms and carried him to the upper room where he was staying, and laid him on his own bed. Then he cried out to the Lord and said, "O Lord my God, have You also brought tragedy on the widow with whom I lodge, by killing her son?" And he stretched himself out on the child three times, and cried out to the Lord and said, "O Lord my God, I pray, let this child's soul come back to him." Then the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came back to him, and he revived.
>
> And Elijah took the child and brought him down from the upper room into the house, and gave him to his mother. And Elijah said, "See, your son lives!"
>
> Then the woman said to Elijah, "Now by this I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in your mouth is the truth."

We know that the widow of Zarephath received Elijah as a prophet of God because 1 Kings 17:15 says: "She went away and did according to the word of Elijah; and she and he and her household ate for many days." So she got the reward of the prophet, as is described in Matthew 10:41. In fact God rewards His prophet Elijah in 1 Kings 17:9, saying: "Arise, go to Zarephath,

which belongs to Sidon, and dwell there. See; I have commanded a widow there to provide for you."

What is striking in the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 10:40 42 is that the one we receive is the visitor we see with our physical eyes but if we receive the visitor and our spiritual eyes remain focused on the one who sent him, then we receive the reward of the visitor. And therefore, we receive the same reward as the visitor, promised by the one who sent him. The Amplified Bible says in Proverbs 29:18: "Where there is no vision [no redemptive revelation of God], the people perish; but he who keeps the law [of God, which includes that of man] blessed (happy, fortunate, and enviable) is he." Do you see now that Jesus revealed to us that when we receive someone and our spiritual eyes remain focused on Him who sent this visitor, we get the reward of the one who has been sent? Therefore, if we receive Jesus and our spiritual eyes remain focused on God, then we receive the reward of Jesus our Lord and Savior. No wonder we get the righteousness of Jesus when we believe in Him and receive Him in our heart.

Prescription 11:

> Now it came to pass, when Jesus finished commanding His twelve disciples, that He departed from there to teach and to preach in their cities.
>
> And when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples and

said to Him, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?"

Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me."

As they departed, Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. For this is he of whom it is written:

> 'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face,
> Who will prepare Your way before You.'

"Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if you are willing to receive it, he is Elijah who is to come. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

"But to what shall I liken this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to their companions, and saying:

'We played the flute for you,
And you did not dance;
We mourned to you,
And you did not lament.'

For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon.' The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' But wisdom is justified by her children."(Matthew 11:1 19)

Description:
Isaiah foretold what will happen in the first and second comings of Jesus Christ the first coming asked us to believe in Him, while the second will be a time of judgment therefore, focus on these teachings so that you might believe in Jesus and be saved

Recommendations for use:
When we read Matthew 11:1 19, we wonder: why did John the Baptist need confirmation from Jesus to be sure that He was the Christ? We see that Jesus answered John the Baptist by telling him to focus on the kingdom of heaven, and not on the judgment of people on earth. To understand why John the Baptist asked his question, let us first of all see what was in his mind, and then what God says in Isaiah 29:17 24 about the coming of Jesus Christ.

Let us consider what John the Baptist had in mind, as we learn in Matthew 3:1–12: "In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!' For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying: 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the LORD, Make his paths straight."' And John himself was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, 'Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not think to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our father." For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. And even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.'"

Do you see that, as far as John the Baptist is concerned, Jesus's role was to baptize those who repent with the Holy Spirit and those who do not with the fire of judgment? And John the Baptist focused specifically on those who refused to repent even the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

Let us now see what God told Isaiah to prophesy. We find the answer in Isaiah 29:17 24: "Is it not yet a very little while Till Lebanon shall be turned into fruitful field, And the fruitful field be esteemed as a forest? In that day the deaf shall hear the words of the book, And the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness. The humble also shall increase their joy in the LORD, And the poor among men shall rejoice In the Holy One of Israel. For the terrible one is brought to nothing, The scornful one is consumed, And all who watch for iniquity are cut off Who make a man an offender by a word, And lay a snare for him who reproves in the gate, And turn aside the just by empty words. Therefore thus says the LORD, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob: 'Jacob shall not now be ashamed, Nor shall his face now grow pale; But when he sees his children, The work of My hands, in his midst, They will hallow My name, And hallow the Holy One of Jacob, And fear the God of Israel. These also who erred in spirit will come to understanding, And those who complained will learn doctrine."

Indeed Isaiah prophesied concerning the works of Jesus Christ in His first coming and His second

coming. Have you noticed that the same day that the deaf shall hear, the blind shall see, the humble shall increase their joy, and the poor shall rejoice those who watch for iniquity will be cut off? It seems like Christ will come to establish His kingdom and, at the same time, judge the sinners.

Do you understand now why John the Baptist was not wrong to ask Jesus if He was the One coming? Jesus understood John's confusion and advised him to focus on the Good News brought to people who suffer for lack of knowledge, for any kind of sickness, and those who were sad but not on judgment, which would come at the time of His second coming. So John's mission was the same as Jesus's, even though he stressed a judgment, while Jesus emphasized salvation. Indeed God is just and merciful, but the expressions of God's justice require death for sin. It is written in Ezekiel 18:20: "The soul who sins shall die. . . ." But from the first coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ until the time of His second coming the time of judgment we live in the time of the merciful God. It is written in Deuteronomy 4:31: "(for the LORD your God is a merciful God), He will not forsake you nor destroy you, nor forget the covenant of your fathers which He swore to them."

The time of the merciful God corresponds to the time of God's patience, as Jesus described in Matthew 13:24–30 through the parable of the wheat and the tares: "Another parable He put forth to them, saying: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed

good seed in his field; but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?' But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."'"

Jesus Himself explained the parable of the tares in Matthew 13:38–43, saying: "The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. There the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to earth to save mankind, as it is foretold by Isaiah the prophet in

Isaiah 61:1–3: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for a spirit of heaviness, That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified." Isaiah 35:5–6 also said: "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, And streams in the desert."

All of these prophesies were fulfilled during the lifetime of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. So there is no room for unbelief, and anybody who seeks truth has all the evidence to fully persuade him that Jesus is really the Son of God sent to earth by His Father to favor us while we were still sinners and to turn us into the sons of the kingdom, as Romans 5:8 says: "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Prescription 12:

"Then He began to rebuke the cities in which most of His mighty works had been done, because they did not

repent: 'Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you.'"(Matthew 11:20–24)

Description:

See miracles performed in the mighty name of Jesus Christ and believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God

Recommendations for use:

Jesus revealed in Matthew 11:20–24 that the purpose of the mighty works of God or Himself is to lead all men to repentance. But be aware that nobody can act upon something he doesn't believe. So a man repents only if he believes in what he is told or what he sees. This means that, as far as Jesus is concerned, faith comes not only by hearing the gospel, but also by seeing His miracles. The prophet Isaiah said something awesome in Isaiah 53:1: "Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?" The Apostle John in John 12:37–41 (Amplified Bible) gives more details about Isaiah 53:1 and explains why people fail to believe in the mighty works of Jesus: "Even

though He had done so many miracles before them (right before their eyes), yet they still did not trust in Him and failed to believe in Him So that what Isaiah the prophet said was fulfilled: Lord, who has believed our report and our message? And to whom has the arm (the power) of the Lord been shown (unveiled and revealed)? Therefore they could not believe [they are unable to believe]. For Isaiah has also said, He has blinded their eyes and hardened and benumbed their [callous, degenerated] hearts [He has made their minds dull], to keep them from seeing with their eyes and understanding with their hearts and minds and repenting and turning to Me to heal them. Isaiah said this because he saw His glory and spoke of Him."

Can you see that if you exalt yourself, and believe in your own knowledge, God cannot give you the gift of understanding? God only operates in your heart if you humble yourself and are ready to accept His Word. If your mind understands His Word, then what you understand is true in your sight and becomes a belief, which is stored in your heart; therefore this revelation knowledge, when it is treasured in your heart, permeates your body, mouth, mind, and will. Remember that knowledge about the only true God and Jesus is eternal life, as it is written in John 17:3: "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent." Can you see that everything you know about Jesus the Word of God and God is turned into eternal life that permeates every fiber of your being, all the cells of your

blood, every bone of your body, and everything around you? This means that your life can give life to any dying thing in your heart or soul, or change any situation of your life that you do not like.

Prescription 13:

"At that time Jesus answered and said, 'I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.'" Matthew 11:25–27

Description:

Humble yourself, do not believe in your own knowledge, but open your heart to God and believe in Jesus to receive revelation knowledge

Recommendations for use:

God hides revelation knowledge from the learned and reveals it to the unlearned, and those who are willing to learn. The account of Pharaoh's dreams in Genesis 41:1–57 illustrates well what Jesus was saying in Matthew 11:25–27, so let us read it:

> Then it came to pass, at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh had a dream; and behold, he stood by the river. Suddenly there came up out of the river seven cows, fine looking and fat; and they

fed in the meadow. Then behold, seven other cows came up after them out of the river, ugly and gaunt, and stood by the other cows on the bank of the river. And the ugly and gaunt cows ate up the seven fine looking and fat cows. So Pharaoh awoke. He slept and dreamed a second time; and suddenly seven heads of grain came up on one stalk, plump and good. Then behold, seven thin heads, blighted by the east wind, sprang up after them. And the seven thin heads devoured the seven plump and full heads. So Pharaoh awoke, and indeed, it was a dream. Now it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was troubled, and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt and all its wise men. And Pharaoh told them his dreams, but there was no one who could interpret them for Pharaoh.

Then the chief butler spoke to Pharaoh, saying: "I remember my faults this day. When Pharaoh was angry with his servants, and put me in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, both me and the chief baker, we each had a dream in one night, he and I. Each of us dreamed according to the interpretation of his own dream. Now there was a young Hebrew man with us there, a servant of the captain of the guard. And we told him, and he interpreted our dreams for us; to each man he interpreted according to his own dream. And it came to pass, just as he interpreted for us, so it happened. He restored me to my office, and he hanged him."

Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him quickly out of the dungeon; and he shaved, changed his clothing, and came to Pharaoh. And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I have had a dream, and there is no one who can interpret it. But I have heard it said of you that you can understand a dream, to interpret it."

So Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, "It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace."

Then Pharaoh said to Joseph: "Behold, in my dream I stood on the bank of the river. Suddenly seven cows came up out of the river, fine looking and fat; and they fed in the meadow. Then behold, seven other cows came up after them, poor and very ugly and gaunt, such ugliness as I have never seen in all the land of Egypt. And the gaunt and ugly cows ate up the first seven, the fat cows. When they had eaten them up, no one would have known that they had eaten them, for they were just as ugly as at the beginning. So I awoke. Also I saw in my dream, and suddenly seven heads came up on one stalk, full and good. Then behold, seven heads, withered, thin, and blighted by the east wind, sprang up after them. And the thin heads devoured the seven good heads. So I told this to the magicians, but there was no one who could explain it to me."

Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, "The dreams of Pharaoh are one; God has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do: The seven good cows are seven

years, and the seven good heads are seven years; the dreams are one. And the seven thin and ugly cows which came up after them are seven years, and the seven empty heads blighted by the east wind are seven years of famine. This is the thing which I have spoken to Pharaoh. God has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do. Indeed seven years of great plenty will come throughout all the land of Egypt; but after them seven years of famine will arise, and all the plenty will be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine will deplete the land. So the plenty will not be known in the land because of the famine following, for it will be very severe. And the dream was repeated to Pharaoh twice because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass.

"Now therefore, let Pharaoh select a discerning and wise man, and set him over the land of Egypt. Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint officers over the land, to collect one-fifth of the produce of the land of Egypt in the seven plentiful years. And let them gather all the food of those good years that are coming, and store up grain under the authority of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities. Then that food shall be as a reserve for the land for the seven years of famine which shall be in the land of Egypt, that the land may not perish during the famine."

So the advice was good in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of all his servants. And Pharaoh said

to his servants, "Can we find such a one as this, a man in whom is the Spirit of God?"

Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Inasmuch as God has shown you all this, there is no one as discerning and wise as you. You shall be over my house, and all my people shall be ruled according to your word; only in regard to the throne will I be greater than you." And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt."

Then Pharaoh took his signet ring off his hand and put it on Joseph's hand; and he clothed him in garments of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck. And he had him ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried out before him, "Bow the knee!" So he set him over all the land of Egypt. Pharaoh also said to Joseph, "I am Pharaoh, and without your consent no man may lift his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt." And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnath-Paaneah. And he gave him as a wife Asenath, the daughter of Poti-Pherah priest of On. So Joseph went out over all the land of Egypt.

Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt. Now in the seven plentiful years the ground brought forth abundantly. So he gathered up all the food of the seven years which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in

the cities; he laid up in every city the food of the fields which surrounded them. Joseph gathered very much grain, as the sand of the sea, until he stopped counting, for it was immeasurable.

And to Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine came, whom Asenath, the daughter of Poti-Pherah priest of On, bore to him. Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh: "For God has made me forget all my toil and all my father's house." And the name of the second he called Ephraim: "For God has caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction."

Then the seven years of plenty which were in the land of Egypt ended, and the seven years of famine began to come, as Joseph had said. The famine was in all lands, but in all the land of Egypt there was bread. So when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread. Then Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, "Go to Joseph; whatever he says to you, do." The famine was over all the face of the earth, and Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold to the Egyptians. And the famine became severe in the land of Egypt. So all countries came to Joseph in Egypt to buy grain, because the famine was severe in all lands.

In the same way that Joseph did not rely on his own knowledge to interpret Pharaoh's dream instead relying on God's knowledge when you have a receptive

heart, you are able to receive God's revelation knowledge to treasure in your heart.

The same thing happened at the time of Jesus. His disciples who were openhearted stored up His sayings in their hearts, but the wise men in Israel (like Nicodemus) did not understand what Jesus told them, as we learn in John 3:1–21:

> There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."
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> Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."
>
> Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"
>
> Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

Nicodemus answered and said to Him, "How can these things be?"

Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things? Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness. If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

"He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his

deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."

Nicodemus was a teacher of Israel, yet he did not understand what was written in Ezekiel 36:24–28: "For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of the countries, and bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them. Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God." Is it not amazing that Nicodemus did not understood Ezekiel 36:25–27, which says the same things as Jesus said to Nicodemus? Anyone who is born again — he who believes in Jesus — is lifted up above others, cleansed by clean water, receives a new heart and a new spirit within him, and is caused by God to walk in accordance with His laws, keep His judgments, do them, and finally earn a place in the kingdom of God.

How was it possible that many wise men at the time of Jesus did not understand these things? Because only God gives understanding to those who are born from the Spirit. The role played by a born-again Christian — his true responsibility — is to humble himself and put his trust in Jesus. Once he does this, as he

keeps on listening, reading, and meditating on God's Word, God will give him wisdom and understanding.

Prescription 14:

> At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. And His disciples were hungry, and began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to Him, "Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath!"
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> But He said to them, "Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: how he entered the house of God and ate the showbread which was not lawful for him to eat, nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? Or have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless? Yet I say to you that in this place there is One greater than the temple. But if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."
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> Now when He had departed from there, He went into their synagogue. And behold, there was a man who had a withered hand. And they asked Him, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?" that they might accuse Him.
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> Then He said to them, "What man is there among you who has one sheep, and if it falls into a pit on

> the Sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift it out? Of how much more value is a man than a sheep? Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath." Then He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched it out, and it was restored as whole as the other. Then the Pharisees went out and plotted against Him, how they might destroy Him. (Matthew 12:1 14)

Description:

When you show your love for Jesus through meditation on God's Word, this creates your love for Jesus; your love for Jesus causes you to keep His commandments; and the combination of these actions will cause God and Jesus to make their home in your heart.

Recommendations for use:

The problem of the Pharisees was that they did not understand the Word of God, which says, "I desire mercy and not sacrifice." Jesus said in Mark 2:27: ". . . The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." Jesus teaches us in Matthew 12:12 that it is lawful to do good and be merciful on the Sabbath. This is what He means by "I desire mercy and not sacrifice."

Hosea 6:1 6 helps us to further understand the meaning of that saying: "Come, and let us return to the Lord; For He has torn, but He will heal us; He has stricken, but He will bind us up. After two days He will revive us; On the third day He will raise us up, That we may live in His sight. Let us know, Let us

pursue the knowledge of the LORD. His going forth is established as the morning; He will come to us like the rain, Like the latter and former rain to the earth. O Ephraim, what shall I do to you? O Judah, what shall I do to you? For your faithfulness is like a morning cloud, And like the early dew it goes away. Therefore I have hewn them by the prophets, I have slain them by the words of My mouth; And your judgments are like light that goes forth. For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings."

In Matthew 12:7, Jesus reminds us of what God said in Hosea 6:6. God's message is plain and clear: love is far more important than the law — and the new ways of mercy are more important than the old ways of sacrifice and offerings. In essence, Jesus is teaching us that love frees us from obeying the law, as the Bible says in Romans 13:10: "Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law."

The unsaved, however, are still subject to the laws of the Old Testament and the Mosaic Law — God's rigid laws of old. They're still subject to those laws, as it is written in 1 Timothy 1:9–11: ". . . the law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the ungodly and for sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed

God which was committed to my trust." So the sinner is still under the law, while the righteous man who follows the gospel is not.

Furthermore, Jesus Himself declares, in John 14:23: ". . . If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, . . ." Love is a far better characteristic than vengeance. God is love. Do you know how we know this? John 3:16 tells us "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life." The sovereign law of God declares in Ezekiel 18:20: "The soul who sins shall die." The same thing was told to Adam in Genesis 2:16 17: "And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, 'From every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat the fruit of it you shall surely die." But God so loves the world that He breaks His own law by giving eternal life to those who believe in Him, whether they sin or not.

At the same time, Jesus teaches us to love God and one another, showing that this point will help us to sin no more. Indeed, Jesus said in John 14:21 23: "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him. Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, 'Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?' Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will

love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.'" In other words, as we have learned, love for Jesus causes us to treasure God's Words and keep them in our heart.

Psalm 119:11 says: "Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You." This means that if I store up God's Word in my heart that causes me to do His commandments, and to keep them and not sin. So if you know the Word of God and treasure it in your heart, you will not sin against God. Why? Because the issue of sin ceases to be a problem when God's Word tells you the right decisions to make. God's Word, when it is stored in your heart, will put into your heart what is right and what is wrong, helping you to know the difference between good and evil. God's Word, when it is treasured in your heart will guide you and will give you strength, direction, wisdom, and inspiration. The Word of God will become your light, and meditation on God's Word helps you to develop a close relationship with God, as it is written in Psalm 63:6–8: "When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the night watches. Because You have been my help, Therefore in the shadow of Your wings I will rejoice. My soul follows close behind You; Your right hand upholds me."

Remember that, to receive Jesus and God in our hearts, first, we must meditate on God's Word day and night, as we learn from Joshua 1:8 and Psalm 119:97. Secondly, as we learn in Psalm 63:1–3, continual meditation causes us to love Jesus and God and store up

God's Word in our heart. Thirdly, our love for Jesus will cause us to treasure Jesus's commandments even more and to keep them, as we are told in John 14:21. Last of all, the love for Jesus and the observance of His commandments will cause God and Jesus to make their home in our hearts, as it is written in John 14:23.

Do you see the crucial factor of love? Love is a matter of great importance to any believer.

Prescription 15:

"Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw. And the multitudes were amazed and said, 'Could this be the Son of David?' Now when the Pharisees heard it they said, 'This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons.' But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: 'Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. Or else how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house. He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.'" (Matthew 12:22–30)

Description:

Cast out demons in the name of Jesus and enter God's kingdom

Recommendations for use:

In His response, Jesus reveals a greater truth. He says, "But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you." What does this mean? This means that we have been under the rule of the kingdom of God since the first coming of Jesus Christ because He came to earth through and with the spirit of God and cast out demons with God's spirit. Casting out demons is a sign that the kingdom of God has come upon us. Apart from that, Jesus established the kingdom of God before ascending to God's right hand, as it is described in Mark 16:14 18: "Later He appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table; and He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen. And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover." Jesus sends His disciples and any believer out into the world to bring the kingdom of God to whoever believes in the name of Jesus.

Prescription 16:

"Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him: but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come." (Matthew 12:31 32)

Description:

Never call the Holy Spirit unclean, and never assign the work of salvation to an unclean spirit, instead go to the Word of God to know the truth and protect yourself from eternal damnation

Recommendations for use:

It is not surprising that our Lord Jesus made this statement warning anyone who might speak out against the Holy Spirit. Why? We know that man is a spirit who dwells in a body. In Genesis 2:7 we are told: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being." And in Genesis 6:3 (Amplified Bible), God said: ". . . My Spirit shall not forever dwell and strive with man, for he also is flesh; but his days shall yet be 120 years." What does this mean? God shows us, here, that what He breathed into man's nostrils was His Spirit. How could man's spirit deny itself?

We are also told in Proverbs 20:27: "The spirit of a man is the lamp of the LORD, Searching all the

inner depths of his heart." So man has no excuse to overlook the Spirit of God. This means that every man must play his part: he has to use his spirit to discover the Spirit of God. Remember that Jesus says: ". . . but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come." To understand why Jesus made this declaration, let us look at Mark 3:28–30, which adds an important point to this statement: "'Assuredly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they may utter; but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is subject to eternal condemnation'—because they said, 'He has an unclean spirit.'" Do you see now that to call Jesus's Spirit an unclean spirit is an unforgivable thing to do? And assigning the work of salvation to an unclean spirit is the same as refusing the light of divine grace—and the forgiveness which comes along with it.

Prescription 17:

"Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered saying, 'Teacher, we want to see a sign from You.' But He answered and said to them, 'An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the earth. The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching

of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here."(Matthew 12:38 42)

Description:

You have two means to come to believe in Jesus: either listen and give attention to the gospel, or see or read the miracles performed by Jesus or the men of God in your lifetime the responsibility is yours

Recommendations for use:

Why did Jesus refuse to give a sign to the scribes and Pharisees? It is because of their unbelief. When the people of Nineveh heard the preaching of Jonah, they understood his word, believed in the Word of God, and acted upon it by repenting. When the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came to test him with hard questions. Let us read the account of the queen of Sheba's praise of Solomon in 1 Kings 10:2 10: "She came to Jerusalem with a very great retinue, with camels that bore spices, very much gold, and precious stones; and when she came to Solomon, she spoke with him about all that was in her heart. So Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing so difficult for the king that he could not explain it to her. And when the queen of Sheba had seen all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, the food on his table, the seating

of his servants, the service of his waiters and their apparel, his cupbearers, and his entryway by which he went up to the house of the LORD, there was no more spirit in her. Then she said to the king: 'It was a true report which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom. However I did not believe the words until I came and saw it with my own eyes; and indeed the half was not told me. Your wisdom and prosperity exceed the fame of which I heard. Happy are your men and happy are these servants, who stand continually before you and hear your wisdom! Blessed be the LORD your God, who delighted in you, setting you on the throne of Israel! Because the LORD has loved Israel forever, therefore He made you king, to do justice and righteousness.' Then she gave the king one hundred and twenty talents of gold, spices in great quantity, and precious stones. There never again came such abundance of spices as the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon."

Can you see what happened in this exchange? First of all, the queen of Sheba heard stories of the words and wisdom of King Solomon. She came from a distant land to meet him and saw with her own eyes what she had been told about. Thirdly, she saw and believed. On the other hand, the scribes and Pharisees heard of Jesus, came to Him, and saw the miracles He performed but they did not understand and did not believe in Him.

We must remember that there are two ways to believe in Jesus listen to His Word, or see His

miracles but the scribes and Pharisees failed to believe in Jesus even though they had access to both of these ways of forming beliefs. And, even though they had all they needed, they still asked Him for a sign, proving their unbelief. No wonder Jesus would not give them a sign.

Prescription 18:

"When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. Then he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when he comes, he finds it empty, swept, and put in order. Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. So shall it also be with this wicked generation." (Matthew 12:43 45)

Description:

When you have been healed or freed from the devil, with no more sin in your heart, you have to fill your heart with God's Word to prevent it from returning

Recommendations for use:

Throughout the gospel of Jesus Christ, any time unclean spirits are involved, they are related to diseases showing that they are the principle factors of sicknesses. Moreover, when Jesus or His disciples cast out the unclean spirits, the demon-possessed men and women were healed. In Matthew 12:44 45, Jesus explains: "Then he goes and takes with him seven other

spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first," but what does this mean? Jesus is warning us that, after we are healed, we must take the next step of faith we have to sin no more. If we return to sin, we allow the evil spirit, and other evil spirits, to come again into our heart and dwell in it, making our situation even worse than it had been.

To get a good picture of what that means, let us look at what happened when Jesus healed a man at the pool of Bethesda, as it was reported in John 5:1 15:

> After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had. Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, "Do you want to be made well?"
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> The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me."

> Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your bed and walk." And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked.
>
> And that day was the Sabbath. The Jews therefore said to him who was cured, "It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your bed."
>
> He answered them, "He who made me well said to me, 'Take up your bed and walk.'"
>
> Then they asked him, "Who is the Man who said to you, 'Take up your bed and walk'?" But the one who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, a multitude being in that place. Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, "See, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you."
>
> The man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.

In this passage, Jesus compares the suffering brought by sickness to the condition of the sinner and teaches us that the condition of a sinner is worse than that of anyone who is sick. In this, Jesus also warns us to avoid sinning. How? The Bible says, in Psalm 119:11: "Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You." So we must fill our heart with the Word of God, for when our heart is empty of God's Word, the devil can return to it and make our state worse than it was before.

Prescription 19:

"Another parable He put forth to them, saying: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; but while he slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. So the servants of the owner came and said to him, "Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?" He said to them, "An enemy has done this." The servants said to him, "Do you want us then to go and gather them up?" But he said, "No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, 'First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn.'"'" (Matthew 13:24–30)

Description:

God our Father is patient, but you must repent as soon as possible to take advantage of His patience because you don't know the day of your physical death

Recommendations for use:

Jesus explained the parable of the tares in Matthew 13:37–43: ". . . 'He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are

the angels. Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!'" Notice also that the farmer in the parable in Matthew 13:29 told his workers not to pull up the tares, so that they would not by accident also pull up the wheat. This shows that God is patient with human beings, as He said in Exodus 34:6 7: ". . . 'The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and fourth generation.'" By saying that God is longsuffering, this says that He is patient and gives sinners a chance to repent, which is why Jesus told His angels to wait until the harvest to decide who is worthy of Him and who is not. After all, at any time during a human being's life time, he could change his mind and believe in Jesus.

Prescription 20:

"Another parable He put forth to them, saying: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, which indeed is the

least of all the seeds; but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches.'" (Matthew 13:31–32)

"And He said, 'The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground, and should sleep by night and rise by day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he himself does not know how. For the earth yields crops by itself: first the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head. But when the grain ripens, he immediately puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.'" (Mark 4:26–29)

Description:

Treasure God's Word in your heart, and it will grow to make you a champion — superhuman and invincible

Recommendations for use:

The farmer who sows the seed in each parable is Jesus. The field and the ground are those who hear the Word of God — the mustard seed or the grain seed. The birds in the parable from Matthew are people in need.

He who humbles himself before God, giving attention to God's Words, listening to Him, not taking his eyes from His Words and keeping the words in the midst of his heart, through faith, hope and patience, will have his expectations come true. This is why Proverbs 10:28 says: "The hope of the righteous will be gladness, But the expectation of the wicked will perish."

The righteous will harvest crops with a sickle, or become a helper for others. When his faith is grown, he will become greater than the sons of the authorities of this world so that people in need will come to him for help. This is the same thing God revealed in Ezekiel 17:22–24: "Thus says the Lord God: 'I will take also one of the highest branches of the high cedar and set it out. I will crop off from the topmost of its young twigs a tender one, and will plant it on a high and prominent mountain. On the mountain height of Israel I will plant it; and it will bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a majestic cedar. Under it will dwell birds of every sort; in the shadow of its branches they will dwell. And all the trees of the field shall know that I, the LORD, have brought down the high tree and exalted the low tree, dried up the green tree and made the dry tree flourish; I, the LORD, have spoken and have done it." (Notice that in this passage, "mountain" refers to authority, "trees" stands for the people of this world, the "field" is the world, the "birds" are people in need, and the "tender twig" is a son of the kingdom of God.)

Prescription 21:

"Another parable He spoke to them: 'The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened." (Matthew 13:33)

Description:

Treasure God's Word in your heart so that it permeates all you see, feel, and do, because God's Word has

the power to create the same results Jesus achieved when He was on earth

Recommendations for use:

The "leaven" in this story refers to God's Word. When He said that the woman (a believer) put the leaven in three measures of meal, it means that she took the Word of God and treasured it in her heart until her entire being was filled with the Word. In other words, we can take a small amount of faith, and it will grow to fill us when we treasure it. Eventually, it will fill our mind (with good thoughts), our feelings (with feelings of joy, peace, love for God and one another, meekness, and so on), our mouth (with good, trustworthy, and pleasant speech), our deeds (with actions that glorify God), and our eyes (with the ability to focus on Jesus or God's Word, instead of the circumstances of this world). Can you see that God's Word carries the power of God that can produce transformations in your whole being? God's Word causes you to think like God, to speak like God, and to act like God so that you can obtain the same results Jesus achieved when He was on earth.

Prescription 22:

"All these things Jesus spoke to the multitude in parables; and without a parable He did not speak to them, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: 'I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.'" (Matthew 13:34–35)

Description:
Humble yourself before God so that you can understand Jesus's parables

Recommendations for use:
In Matthew 13:35, the Apostle Matthew quotes Psalm 78:2. Let us put this in context by reading Psalm 78:1 4: "Give ear, O my people, to my law; Incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old, Which we have heard and known, And our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, And His strength and His wonderful works that He has done." Jesus explained why He spoke in parables in Matthew 13:13 17: "Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing, they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. And in them, the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: 'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive; For the heart of this people has grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their heart and turn, So that I should heal them.' But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it." Jesus uses the

images in His parables to reveal things which have been hidden since the beginning of the world. Those who humble themselves before God will understand His parables and believe in Him, but those who exalt themselves have hardened their hearts and cannot understand the parables of Jesus.

Prescription 23:

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it." (Matthew 13:44–46)

Description:

Seek God's Word with all your heart or meditate upon it every day and God will grant you wisdom and understanding

Recommendations for use:

The same idea of getting and keeping what is precious is found in Proverbs 4:7 and Proverbs 2:1–14. Let us start with Proverbs 4:7, which says: "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting get understanding." (Note that "in all your getting" in this means the same as "in all you possess.") This may remain difficult to understand for some people, which is why the wisdom of God explains it more clearly in Proverbs 2:1–14:

My son, if you receive my words,
And treasure my commands within you,
So that you incline your ear to wisdom,
And apply your heart to understanding;
Yes, if you cry out for discernment,
And lift up your voice for understanding,
If you seek her as silver,
And search for her as for hidden treasures;
Then you will understand the fear of the Lord,
And find the knowledge of God.
For the Lord gives wisdom;
From His mouth come knowledge and understanding;
He stores up sound wisdom for the upright;
He is a shield to those who walk uprightly;
He guards the paths of justice,
And preserves the way of His saints.
Then you will understand righteousness and justice,
Equity and every good path.

When wisdom enters your heart,
And knowledge is pleasant to your soul,
Discretion will preserve you;
Understanding will keep you,
To deliver you from the way of evil,
From the man who speaks perverse things,
From those who leave the paths of uprightness
To walk in the ways of darkness;
Who rejoice in doing evil,
And delight in the perversity of the wicked;

Prescription 24:

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind, which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away." (Matthew 13:47–48)

Description:

Live by the riches of the Old Testament and the perfection brought by the New Testament and use them to teach others

Recommendations for use:

Jesus Himself explains the parable of the dragnet in Matthew 13:49–52: "'So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Jesus said to them, 'Have you understood all these things?' They said to Him, 'Yes, Lord.' Then He said to them, 'Therefore every scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old.'" As you can see, Jesus adds at the end of His explanation the need for every scribe to use both the riches of the Old Testament and the perfection of the New Testament—not only to teach others, but also to live their own lives by.

Prescription 25:

"When Jesus heard it, He departed from there by boat to a deserted place by Himself. But when the

multitudes heard it, they followed Him on foot from the cities. And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick. When it was evening, His disciples came to Him, saying, 'This is a deserted place, and the hour is already late. Send the multitudes away, that they may go into the villages and buy themselves food.' But Jesus said to them, 'They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.' And they said to Him, 'We have here only five loaves and two fishes.' He said, 'Bring them here to Me.' Then He commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass. And He took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave them to the multitudes. So they all ate and were filled, and they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments that remained. Now those who had eaten were about five thousand men, besides women and children." (Mathew 14:13–21)

Description:

Believe God's Word, provisions, and promises – which are spirit and life in the spiritual realm – and they will come to pass in the physical realm

Recommendations for use:

Let us compare Matthew 14:13–21 to 2 Kings 4:42–44: "Then a man come from Baal Shalisha, and brought the man of God bread of the firstfruits, twenty loaves of barley bread, and newly ripened grain in his knapsack. And he said, 'Give it to the people, that they may

eat.' But his servant said, 'What? Shall I set this before one hundred men?' He said again, 'Give it to the people, that they may eat; for thus says the LORD: "They shall eat and have some left over."' So he set it before them; and they ate and had some left over, according to the word of the LORD." Can you see that Jesus came to earth to accomplish the Word of God? He wanted us to understand that anything you believe according to the Word of God comes to pass. In this parable, the Word of God says "They shall eat and have some left over," and Jesus teaches us, in Matthew 14:13–21, to believe the Word of God and God's promises from the spiritual realm will come to pass in the physical realm.

Prescription 26:

"Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away. And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on a mountain by Himself to pray. And when evening had come, He was alone there. But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary. Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, 'It is a ghost!' And they cried out for fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid.' And Peter answered Him and said, 'Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the

water.' So He said, 'Come.' And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, 'Lord, save me!' And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, 'O you of little faith, why did you doubt?' And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, 'Truly you are the Son of God.'"(Matthew 14:22 33)

Description:

See God's miracles, pay attention to them, understand them and then act upon them by worshipping Jesus and confessing that He is the Son of the almighty God

Recommendations for use:

Psalm 107:23 32 also shows us what happened to Jesus's disciples when He came to them walking on the sea: "Those who go down to the sea in ships, Who do business on great waters, They see the works of the LORD And His wonders in the deep. For He commands and raises the stormy wind, Which lifts up the waves of the sea. They mount up to the heavens, They go down again to the depths; Their soul melts because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, And are at their wits' end. Then they cry out to the LORD in their trouble, And He brings them out of their distresses. He calms the storm, So that its waves are still. Then they are glad because they are quiet; So He guides them to their desired haven.

Oh, that men would give thanks to the LORD for His goodness, And for His wonderful works to the children of men! Let them exalt Him also in the assembly of the people, And praise Him in the assembly of the elders."

Can you see that Jesus is Master of nature and the circumstances of everyday life? He walked on the sea even though the wind was boisterous, He had no fear, and when He got into the boat the wind ceased. Those who were in the boat learned something from this miracle and came and worshiped Him, saying that He was truly the Son of God. Do you see again that faith does not come only by hearing God's Word, but also through seeing God's miracles, paying attention to them, understanding them, and then acting upon them by worshiping Jesus and confessing that He is the Son of God?

Prescription 27:

"When they had crossed over, they came to the land of Gennesaret. And when the men of that place recognized Him, they sent out into all that surrounding region, brought to Him all who were sick, and begged Him that they might only touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched it were made perfectly well." (Matthew 14:34–36)

Description:

Believe in Jesus or touch Him, His Anointed Disciple, or a genuine believer in Christ and receive everlasting life

Recommendations for use:

How was it possible to receive this healing without Jesus's Word? There are two reasons. The first is given in the Old Testament, in 2 Kings 13:20 21: "Then Elisha died, and they buried him. And the raiding bands from Moab invaded the land in the spring of the year. So it was, as they were burying a man, that suddenly they spied a band of raiders; and they put the man in the tomb of Elisha; and when the man was let down and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived and stood on his feet." Why was this man who was being buried raised up when his corpse touched Elisha's bones? Because Elisha was a powerful man of God during his lifetime. He performed many miracles and wonders. During his lifetime everything he said came to pass, and he raised the Shunammite's son by touching him. This means that he had the life of God in him he was the anointing of God. Let us see how he became anointed, by looking at 2 Kings 2:1 18:

> And it came to pass, when the Lord was about to take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal. Then Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here, please, for the Lord has sent me on to Bethel."
>
> But Elisha said, "As the Lord lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you!" So they went down to Bethel.
>
> Now the sons of the prophets who were at Bethel came out to Elisha, and said to him, "Do you know

that the Lord will take away your master from over you today?"

And he said, "Yes, I know; keep silent!"

Then Elijah said to him, "Elisha, stay here, please, for the Lord has sent me on to Jericho."

But he said, "As the Lord lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you!" So they came to Jericho.

Now the sons of the prophets who were at Jericho came to Elisha and said to him, "Do you know that the Lord will take away your master from over you today?"

So he answered, "Yes, I know; keep silent!"

Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here, please, for the Lord has sent me on to the Jordan."

But he said, "As the Lord lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you!" So the two of them went on. And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went and stood facing them at a distance, while the two of them stood by the Jordan. Now Elijah took his mantle, rolled it up, and struck the water; and it was divided this way and that, so that the two of them crossed over on dry ground.

And so it was, when they had crossed over, that Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask! What may I do for you, before I am taken away from you?"

Elisha said, "Please let a double portion of your spirit be upon me."

So he said, "You have asked a hard thing. Nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so for you; but if not, it shall not be so." Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire, and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

And Elisha saw it, and he cried out, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen!" So he saw him no more. And he took hold of his own clothes and tore them into two pieces. He also took up the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and went back and stood by the bank of the Jordan. Then he took the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and struck the water, and said, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" And when he also had struck the water, it was divided this way and that; and Elisha crossed over.

Now when the sons of the prophets who were from Jericho saw him, they said, "The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha." And they came to meet him, and bowed to the ground before him. Then they said to him, "Look now, there are fifty strong men with your servants. Please let them go and search for your master, lest perhaps the Spirit of the Lord has taken him up and cast him upon some mountain or into some valley."

And he said, "You shall not send anyone."

> But when they urged him till he was ashamed, he said, "Send them!" Therefore they sent fifty men, and they searched for three days but did not find him. And when they came back to him, for he had stayed in Jericho, he said to them, "Did I not say to you, 'Do not go'?"

Can you see that Elijah was so righteous before God that he was taken up to heaven without dying? Do you also see that his life force was imparted to his mantle, which continued to perform miracles after his ascending to heaven? Lastly, notice that Elisha asked to receive a double portion of Elijah's spirit, and he received it when he saw Elijah ascend into heaven. So Elisha, having received a double portion of Elijah's spirit according to God's law about inheritance, performed the same miracles of his master and after his own death his bones even awakened a dead man.

What does all of that mean? Proverbs 11:30 says: "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, . . .;" Proverbs 10:11 states: "The mouth of the righteous is a well of life, . . .;" Proverbs 16:22 declares, "Understanding is a wellspring of life. . .;" and Proverbs 3:7 8 says, "Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and depart from evil, It will be health to your flesh, And strength to your bones." This means that righteousness leads to spiritual life, as it is written in Proverbs 11:19 ("As righteousness leads to life . . ."). This life is not a life of the flesh, but it is the life of God eternal life. Therefore, it is easy to understand that when you are anointed and receive

the gift of righteousness, you receive God's kind of life, which has the ability to soak into your very being, your consciousness, your mouth, your bones, and even your garments. This is why Elijah's mantle continued to perform miracles after his ascent into heaven and Elisha's bones raised up a dead man.

We find the second reason that it is possible to receive healing without Jesus's own Word in John 11:25–26, where Jesus said: ". . . I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, even though he dies, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die." This means that all of Jesus's body, soul, and garments are filled with eternal life, and Jesus is a wellspring of everlasting life and resurrection. Anyone who touches him or his garments (in the physical realm) or believes in him (in the spiritual realm) gets eternal life. When you touch Jesus or His garment — or believe in Him — everlasting life is communicated to your heart, soul, and body, and that everlasting life heals all sicknesses.

Proverbs 14:27 says: "The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, To turn one away from the snares of death." This means that reverence for the Lord creates in your heart a fountain of life which has the power to heal any deadly thing in your body, thoughts, feelings, or even in your heart, itself. Proverbs 16:22 says the same thing: "Understanding is a wellspring of life to him who has it. . . ."

Understanding of and reverence for the Lord have led the people in Matthew 14:34–36 to come to Jesus

to receive His life, which has healed them from their diseases. Do not forget what Jesus told the Samaritan woman in John 4:13–14: ". . . 'Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.'"

Prescription 28:

"Jesus departed from there, skirted the Sea of Galilee, and went up on the mountain and sat down there. Then great multitudes came to Him having with them the lame, blind, mute, maimed, and many others; and they laid them down at Jesus' feet, and He healed them. So the multitude marveled when they saw the mute speaking, the maimed made whole, the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel." (Matthew 15:29–31)

Description:

Believe in the healing power of Jesus or God's Word and you will receive and keep your divine healing

Recommendations for use:

People's amazement at Jesus's healing power or the power of those who would afterwards do the same things Jesus had done was prophesied in Isaiah. Imagine what that must have been like, as you read Isaiah 55:1–13:

"Ho! Everyone who thirsts,
Come to the waters;

And you who have no money,
Come, buy and eat.
Yes, come, buy wine and milk
Without money and without price.
Why do you spend money for what is not bread,
And your wages for what does not satisfy?
Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good,
And let your soul delight itself in abundance.
Incline your ear, and come to Me.
Hear, and your soul shall live;
And I will make an everlasting covenant with you
The sure mercies of David.
Indeed I have given him as a witness to the people,
A leader and commander for the people.
Surely you shall call a nation you do not know,
And nations who do not know you shall run to you,
Because of the Lord your God,
And the Holy One of Israel;
For He has glorified you."

Seek the Lord while He may be found,
Call upon Him while He is near.
Let the wicked forsake his way,
And the unrighteous man his thoughts;
Let him return to the Lord,
And He will have mercy on him;
And to our God,
For He will abundantly pardon.

"For My thoughts are not your thoughts,
Nor are your ways My ways," says the Lord.

"For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
So are My ways higher than your ways,
And My thoughts than your thoughts.

"For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven,
And do not return there,
But water the earth,
And make it bring forth and bud,
That it may give seed to the sower
And bread to the eater,
So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth;
It shall not return to Me void,
But it shall accomplish what I please,
And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

"For you shall go out with joy,
And be led out with peace;
The mountains and the hills
Shall break forth into singing before you,
And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.
Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress tree,
And instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree;
And it shall be to the Lord for a name,
For an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."

Did you understand what you imagined to have happened in this passage? And did you also notice that there is no failure with Jesus that nobody who comes to receive healing goes away without

His healing? (Remember that, in the Scriptures, a field usually refers to the world, while hills and mountains refer to the authorities, and trees refer to people.) In his vision, Isaiah foresaw Jesus inviting people who suffered from any kind of diseases to come to him in order to receive healing. Isaiah also foresaw the wonder of the multitude in full view of Jesus's miracles, and the honor and the glory they would give to God.

Prescription 29:

"Now when His disciples had come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread. Then Jesus said to them, 'Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.' And they reasoned among themselves, saying, 'It is because we have taken no bread.' But Jesus, being aware of it, said to them, 'O you of little faith, why do you reason among yourselves because you have brought no bread? Do you not yet understand, or remember the five loaves of the five thousand and how many baskets you took up? Nor the seven loaves of the four thousand and how many large baskets you took up? How is it you do not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread? but to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.' Then they understood that He did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees." (Matthew 16:5 12)

Description:
Be aware of the doctrine of religious people, for they have the power to influence many people instead, hold on to God's Word

Recommendations for use:
Let us look at Leviticus 2:11 to see what was in the mind of Jesus when He talked about the leaven of Pharisees and Sadducees: "'No grain offering which you bring to the LORD shall be made with leaven, for you shall burn no leaven nor any honey in any offering to the LORD made by fire.'" This means that, as far as God is concerned, leaven is not holy, but is a symbol of corruption and evil. We all know the ability of leaven to leaven dough, and the way that it shows its penetrating influence and power over the whole dough. In the same way, the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees had the power to corrupt many people, which is why Jesus warned His disciples about it.

Prescription 30:

"When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, 'Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?' So they said, 'Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Simon Peter answered and said, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.' Jesus answered and said to him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood have not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say

to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.' Then He commanded His disciples that they should tell no one that He was Jesus the Christ." (Matthew 16:13 20)

Description:

Feed your spiritual heart with God's Word it is the only way to change your thoughts, speech, deeds, and feelings

Recommendations for use:

Matthew 16:13 20 reveals that there are two kinds of knowledge. The first kind of knowledge based on science or intellectual activity comes from our natural being. This is knowledge that is gained through the physical senses and our own minds. The second type of knowledge revelation knowledge comes from God. We only have access to revelation knowledge through our spirit and it is stored in our heart.

Jesus also shows us that there are two types of senses. There are ways to achieve knowledge of the natural world, such as our senses of smell, hearing, taste, sight, touch, the senses connected to our feelings (anger, joy, fear, depression, despair, love, sadness, hatred, sympathy, pride, resentment, reverence, hope, belief, disappointment, worship, etc.), the sense of thinking with our mind (thoughts which are not from

God or God's Word), and the sense of determination of our will (will or desires which are not from God or God's Word). We cannot relate to God with our "natural senses," because God is spirit. As our education refines our natural senses, our inner man can only discover spiritual senses through God's Word. So God's Word lives in our heart, from which it goes out into our blood, cells, tissues, bones, and physical heart to gain supremacy over us so that our words, feelings, thoughts, determination, and deeds come to be in line with God's Word. This is how the process works: I hear about something good or bad, or I see something good or bad, and it produces an emotion in my heart and immediately causes my heart to beat quickly and loudly. Then this feeling impacts my mind, my mouth, and my body and causes them to take action.

Before dealing further with our spiritual senses, it is important to realize that the term "heart" in the Scriptures almost always refers to the spiritual heart the spirit of man. This means that there are two hearts in every human being: his physical heart and the heart of his spirit. And, as we have said, there are also two kinds of senses physical and spiritual senses.

All the information a human being receives, first of all, feeds his heart. Secondly, the information stored in his heart is sent to his whole being and is manifest in his body's senses and actions, his mouth's speech, his will's decisions, and his mind's thoughts. Thirdly, he takes action according to his beliefs. (Only hypocrites take action different from their beliefs to

deceive people, which is why Jesus condemns the hypocrites.) Unless a man feeds his spiritual heart with God's Word, there is no way to change his mindset, feelings, speech, determination, and deeds. As far as Jesus is concerned, revelation knowledge is the most important thing in life, as it is written in John 17:3: "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent." We have already discussed how Jesus commended the centurion and the Canaanite woman for their great faith because of their knowledge and understanding of spiritual realities. Now, in the passage we have read above, Jesus praises Simon Peter for the revelation knowledge he got from God and makes him the foundation of His church. And, after His resurrection, Jesus specified His thoughts about the power of His disciples to grant others access to heaven, as it is written in John 20:23: "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." Do you see now the importance of revelation knowledge? Revelation knowledge is the most important treasure in life. No wonder the wisdom of God tells us, in Proverbs 4:7: "Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore get wisdom; And in all your getting, get understanding."

Prescription 31:

"Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; and He was transfigured before them.

His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, 'Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.' While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!' And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid. But Jesus came and touched them and said, 'Arise, and do not be afraid.' When they had lifted their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only. Now as they came down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, 'Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man is risen from the dead.' And His disciples asked Him, saying, 'Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?' Then Jesus answered and said to them, 'Indeed, Elijah is coming first and will restore all things. But I say to you that Elijah has come already, and they did not know him but did to him whatever they wished. Likewise the Son of Man is also about to suffer at their hands.' Then the disciples understood that He spoke to them of John the Baptist." (Matthew 17:1–13)

Description:

When you open your spiritual ears and listen to Him, Jesus will give you the power to do as He says

Recommendations for use:

In Matthew 17:1 13, Jesus appeared as the New Moses, which is in contrast to Exodus 24:9 18: "Then Moses went up, also Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and they saw the God of Israel. And there was under His feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and it was like the very heavens in its clarity. But on the nobles of the children of Israel He did not lay His hand. So they saw God, and they ate and drank. Then the LORD said to Moses, 'Come up to Me on the mountain and be there; and I will give you tablets of stone, and the law and commandments which I have written, that you may teach them.' So Moses arose with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up to the mountain of God. And he said to the elders, 'Wait here for us until we come back to you. Indeed, Aaron and Hur are with you. If any man has a difficulty, let him go to them.' Then Moses went up into the mountain, and a cloud covered the mountain. Now the glory of the LORD rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days. And on the seventh day He called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. The sight of the glory of the LORD was like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain in the eyes of the children of Israel. So Moses went into the midst of the cloud and went up into the mountain. And Moses was on the mountains forty days and forty nights."

On Mount Sinai, God gave to Moses the stone tablets containing His law and commandments, while

on the high mountain in Jordan God said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him." There is a very big difference between these two events. With Moses, we were told to obey the law and the commandments, but with Jesus we simply have to open our spiritual ears and listen to Him and Jesus will give us the power to do His sayings.

Prescription 32:

"At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, 'Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?' And Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me.'" (Matthew 18:1–5)

"Then little children were brought to Him that He might put His hands on them and pray, but the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven. And He laid His hands on them and departed from there.'" (Matthew 19:13–15)

Description:

All you must do to become a citizen of the kingdom of heaven is to humble yourself like a little child

Recommendations for use:
In these verses, Jesus gives us the only condition which is required for us to enter the kingdom of heaven: we must humble ourselves like little children. That means that we must make ourselves like little children and become trusting, lowly, loving, and ready to forgive people and show them kindness. Can you see now why it is important to give God's Word to children? After all, it's easy at that moment to win a soul for the kingdom of heaven. But it is not too late if you are an adult. All you have to do is to humble yourself to be like a little child.

Prescription 33:

> Now when they drew near Jerusalem, and came to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Loose them and bring them to Me. And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and immediately he will send them."
>
> All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying:
>
> "Tell the daughter of Zion,
> 'Behold, your King is coming to you,
> Lowly, and sitting on a donkey,
> A colt, the foal of a donkey.'"
>
> So the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them. They brought the donkey and the colt, laid

their clothes on them, and set Him on them. And a very great multitude spread their clothes on the road; others cut down branches from the trees and spread them on the road. Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying:

"Hosanna to the Son of David!
'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!'
Hosanna in the highest!"
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And when He had come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, "Who is this?"
So the multitudes said, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee."
(Matthew 21:1–11)

Description:
Meditate on God's Word so that your heart is filled to the brim and His Word soaks into every portion of your being

Recommendations for use:
John 12:16 added to what Matthew 21:1–11 reported, saying, "His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about Him and that they had done these things to Him." Do you see that this revelation is the most essential character of the gospel of Jesus Christ and who He really is? What is this revelation? It is this: Everything Jesus did, said,

thought or felt, was already written in the Scriptures. He did nothing which was not written in the Old Testament. He came to earth to fulfill the Scriptures, to do the Word of God in other words to be Himself, the Word of God. It is written in Zechariah 9:9: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey." This scripture revealed what Jesus would do when He entered in Jerusalem, and even foretold the multitudes crying out for Him.

Let us consider Psalm 118:24 29: "This is the day which the LORD has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it. Save now, I pray, O LORD; O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We have blessed you from the house of the LORD. God is the LORD, And He has given us light; Bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar. You are my God, and I will praise You; You are my God, I will exalt You. Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever."

Let us read now what God said about Jesus through the mouth of Moses in Deuteronomy 18:15 22: "The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear, according to all you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God,

nor let me see this great fire any more, lest I die.' And the LORD said to me: 'What they have spoken is good. I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of Him. But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of others gods, that prophet shall die.' And if you say in your heart, 'How shall we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?' when a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him."

Can you see that God said Jesus would speak all that He commanded Him to say? Where can you find the commands, thoughts, or words of God? Obviously we find it in the Scriptures. Think about the life of Jesus Christ of Nazareth carefully for a period of time and try to find one thing Jesus said or did which was not already written in the Scriptures. This scripture sums up the life of Jesus Christ on earth: he came to fulfill all that had been written about Him in the Scriptures.

Prescription 34:

Now when He came into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people confronted

Him as He was teaching, and said, "By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority?"

But Jesus answered and said to them, "I also will ask you one thing, which if you tell Me, I likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things: The baptism of John where was it from? From heaven or from men?"

And they reasoned among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' But if we say, 'From men,' we fear the multitude, for all count John as a prophet." So they answered Jesus and said, "We do not know."

And He said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.

"But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, 'Son, go, work today in my vineyard.' He answered and said, 'I will not,' but afterward he regretted it and went. Then he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said, 'I go, sir,' but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?"

They said to Him, "The first."

Jesus said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that tax collectors and harlots enter the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you in the way

> of righteousness, and you did not believe him; but tax collectors and harlots believed him; and when you saw it, you did not afterward relent and believe him. (Matthew 21:23–32)

Description:

Use your spiritual ears to understand the Word of God and your spiritual eyes to picture the revelation knowledge God has brought to you through His miracles and those of His representatives on earth

Recommendations for use:

We will begin with the two ways of believing, which have been revealed by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Let us look again at Matthew 21:32, which says: "For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him; but tax collectors and prostitutes believed him; and when you saw it, you did not believe him." Do you notice that although we have heard that faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God (Romans 10:17) it is not the only way of getting faith? Look again: Jesus specifies, "When you saw [that the tax collectors and prostitutes believed John], you did not believe." Do you understand that the second way of believing is by seeing the miracles performed by God?

The prophet Isaiah also revealed these two methods of getting faith or belief in Isaiah 6:9–10: ". . . 'Keep on hearing, but not understand; Keep on seeing, but not perceive. Make the heart of the people dull, And their ears heavy, And shut their eyes; Lest they see with

their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart, And return and be healed.'"

Can you see that nobody can believe without first understanding the Word of God or having revelation knowledge from the Word of God? This is what Isaiah is telling us. Unless our spiritual ears comprehend the Word of God, or our spiritual eyes picture the revelation knowledge brought by seeing miracles performed by God or men of God working in the name of Jesus, nobody can believe.

Now let us talk about the two sons in the parable, above. The vineyard represents the kingdom of heaven, and the man who has two sons represents God. The first son who at first refused to join the kingdom of heaven represent the outcasts (like tax collectors and prostitutes) who repent. The second son represents the self-styled righteous who at first agree to join the kingdom of God, but then do nothing. Jesus's message is this: It is not sufficient to say that you believe or to use your faith as a cover-up, what truly matters is doing what God tells you to do.

Prescription 35:

"The same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Him and asked Him, saying: 'Teacher, Moses said that if a man dies, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. Now there were with us seven brothers. The first died after he had married, and having no offspring, left his wife to his brother.

Likewise the second also, and the third, even to the seventh. And last of all the woman died also. Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife of the seven will she be? For they all had her.' Jesus answered and said to them, 'You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven. But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob"? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.' And when the multitudes heard this, they were astonished at His teaching." (Matthew 22:23–33)

"Then some of the Sadducees, who deny that there is a resurrection, came to Him and asked Him, saying: 'Teacher, Moses wrote to us that if a man's brother dies, having a wife, and he dies without children, his brother should take his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. Now there were seven brothers. And the first took a wife, and died without children. And the second took her as wife, and he died childless. Then the third took her, and in like manner the seven also; and they left no children, and died. Last of all the woman died also. Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife does she become? For all seven had her as wife.' And Jesus answered and said to them, 'The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage. But those who are counted worthy to attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are

given in marriage; nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection. But even Moses showed in the burning bush passage that the dead are raised, when he called the Lord "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." For He is not the God of the dead but of the living, for all live to Him.' Then some of the scribes answered and said, 'Teacher, You have spoken well.' But after that they dared not question Him any more." (Luke 20:27 40)

Description:

Believe in Jesus in order to become a son of God worthy of being raised from the dead

Recommendations for use:

Although the two passages are almost the same, the report in Luke 20:27 40 gives more details and helps us to better understand what our Lord and Savior intended to reveal about life after death. Let us see what Luke added: "Jesus answered and said to them, 'The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage. But those who are counted worthy to attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection. But even Moses showed in the burning bush passage that the dead are raised, when he called the Lord "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." For He is not the God of the dead but of the living, for all live to Him.'

Then some of the scribes answered and said, 'Teacher, you have spoken well.' But after that they dared not question Him any more."

There is a great revelation in Jesus's Word. He explains that those who are worthy to be raised from the dead become alive and are no longer dead because they are equal to the angels and are sons of God. An illustration of the fact that God's children are resurrected from the dead is found in Matthew 17:1–3: "Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves, and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him."

Do you know why it is important that Moses appeared to Jesus and His three disciples? If you haven't caught it yet, look at Deuteronomy 34:5–8: "So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD. And He buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth Peor; but no one knows his grave to this day. Moses was one hundred and twenty years old when he died. His eyes were not dim nor his natural vigor diminished. And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days. So the days of weeping and mourning for Moses ended." Do you understood now that Moses had died and was buried many years before Jesus was alive? How could Moses appear to Jesus if he was not raised from the dead? Likewise,

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have been resurrected, which is why God — the God of the living — introduced Himself to Moses in Exodus 3:6 as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: "Moreover He said, 'I am the God of your father — the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God."

Daniel 12:2 prophesied what will happen on the last day, saying: "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt." This revelation is confirmed by Jesus in John 5:24–30: "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life. Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth — those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation. I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me." Do you see now that God is not the God of the dead, who will share the same fate as their god

Satan? He is the God of the living those who hear Jesus's Word and believe in Him.

Prescription 36:

"While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, 'What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?' They said to Him, 'The Son of David.' He said to them, 'How then does David in the Spirit call Him "Lord," saying: "The LORD said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool'"? If David then calls Him "Lord," how is He his Son?' And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore." (Matthew 22:41 46)

Description:

Believe in Jesus as the Alpha and the Omega; He was the architect at the beginning of creation; He is the Word and wisdom of God; He is our Lord and Savior; and on the last day the day of judgment He will execute the judgment pronounced by God

Recommendations for use:

Jesus wants to teach us that He existed before He came on earth. He is not only the offspring of David, but He is also the Lord. King David saw in the spiritual realm the Lord at the right hand of God, and he declared in Psalm 110:1, "The LORD said to my Lord, 'Sit at my right, Till I make your enemies your footstool.'" Jesus Himself explained His relationship to God when questioned by the high priests in Matthew

26:63 64: "But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to Him, 'I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God!' Jesus said to him, 'It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.'"

Prescription 37:

"Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. Those who were foolish took their lamp and took no oil with them, but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight a cry was heard; 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!' Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.' And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. Afterwards the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.' Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming." (Matthew 25:1 13)

Description:

Keep meditating on God's Word in order to treasure it in your heart and so maintain your spirit until the day you leave this earth or the day of the second coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

Recommendations for use:

The bridegroom in this parable represents Jesus Christ. The ten virgins are believers, Christians, and those who have been born again. The lamps represent the spirit of the believers, while the oil represents the Word of God, and the vessels are the hearts of the believers. We know that the virgins are all believers, because they all have a great desire to meet and marry Jesus. The foolish virgins are the believers who fail to treasure the Word of God in their hearts, but the wise virgins are the believers who meditate day and night on the Word of God so that the Spirit of God remains alive during their lives and makes their spirits alive in their bodies even after their natural deaths. Midnight in the parable represents either the day of our death or the day of the second coming of Jesus Christ.

Through this story, Jesus cautions us to keep meditating on God's Word in order to treasure it in our heart and maintain our spirit until the day we either have to leave this earth or Jesus Christ comes again.

Prescription 38:

> On the next day, which followed the Day of Preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered together to Pilate, saying, "Sir, we remember, while

He was still alive, how that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise.' Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away, and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead.' So the last deception will be worse than the first."

Pilate said to them, "You have a guard; go your way, make it as secure as you know how." So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard.

Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men.

But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you."

So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word.

And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, "Rejoice!" So they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell My brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see Me."

Now while they were going, behold, some of the guard came into the city and reported to the chief priests all the things that had happened. When they had assembled with the elders and consulted together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers, saying, "Tell them, 'His disciples came at night and stole Him away while we slept.' And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will appease him and make you secure." So they took the money and did as they were instructed; and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them. When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted.

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen. (Matthew 27:62 28:20)

Description:

Thoroughly examine the Old Testament to truly understand that everything Jesus did during His lifetime was foretold, so that you can see that everything He did was to enable us to have His powers on earth and join in fellowship with God

Recommendations for use:

The Apostle John gives us more details in his report in John 20:1 23:

> Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. Then she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him."
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> Peter therefore went out, and the other disciple, and were going to the tomb. So they both ran together, and the other disciple outran Peter and came to the tomb first. And he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen cloths lying there; yet he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; and he saw the linen cloths lying there, and the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also; and he saw and believed. For as yet they did not know the Scripture, that He must

rise again from the dead. Then the disciples went away again to their own homes.

But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the tomb. And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. Then they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?"

She said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him."

Now when she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?"

She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, "Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away."

Jesus said to her, "Mary!"

She turned and said to Him, "Rabboni!" (which is to say, Teacher).

Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.'"

> Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things to her.
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> Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.
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> So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

Notice that Simon Peter, when he entered, looked to see the linen cloths were still in the tomb, and then the other disciple also "saw and believed." Remember that there are two ways to get faith: You can hear God's Word or see the miracles performed by Jesus or His representatives on earth.

Another wonderful revelation is made in John 20:9: "For as yet they did not know the Scripture that He must rise again from the dead." This is where we learn that the purpose of the Scriptures is to convince us of the truth of the Bible — that Jesus is the Son of God — so that we believe in Him and become, in turn, sons of God. Indeed, God said in Isaiah 55:8–11: "For My

thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,' says the LORD. 'For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, And do not return there, But water the earth, And make it bring forth and bud, That it may give seed to the sower And bread to the eater, So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it." This means that God's Word always comes to pass, all things He said about Jesus were fulfilled in the first coming of Jesus, or will come to pass in His second coming.

A genuine believer is one who thoroughly examines the Old Testament to find out what passages refer to Jesus and then checks in the New Testament to see that everything about Jesus has come to pass. In this way, his faith becomes so strong that any doubt in his heart is washed away. As far as Jesus is concerned, whoever seeks to know the truth about His first coming will come to find out that everything about Him which was written in the Old Testament was fulfilled during His lifetime. This includes His suffering (Isaiah 53:1–12), His resurrection (Psalms 16:1–11; 2:1–7) and the coming of the kingdom of heaven or God (Isaiah 29:18–19; 35:5–6; 61:1–3).

Let us look at what is foretold about the resurrection of Jesus Christ in Psalm 16:1–11: "Preserve me, O God, for in You I put my trust. O my soul, you have

said to the LORD, 'You are my Lord, My goodness is nothing apart from You.' And to the saints who are on the earth, 'They are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight.' Their sorrows shall be multiplied who has hastened after another god; Their drink offerings of blood I will not offer, Nor take up their names on my lips. O LORD, You are the portion of my inheritance and my cup; You maintain my lot. The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places; Yes, I have a good inheritance. I will bless the LORD who has given me counsel; My heart also instructs me in the night seasons. I have set the LORD always before me; Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore."

Here, what king David reported was about Jesus. In fact, the Bible says, in Acts 2:22–36, concerning Psalm 11:8-11:

> "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know—Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death,

because it was not possible that He should be held by it. For David says concerning Him:

> 'I foresaw the LORD always before my face,
>
> For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken.
>
> Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad;
>
> Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope.
>
> For You will not leave my soul in Hades,
>
> Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.
>
> You have made known to me the ways of life;
>
> You will make me full of joy in Your presence.'

"Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.

> "For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself:
>
> 'The LORD said to my Lord,
> "Sit at My right hand,
> Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."'
>
> "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."

Jesus is saying here that He is thankful and glad and He feels completely secure because God protects Him from the power of death. He has served God faithfully, in other words, He has done God's will and God will not abandon Him to the world of the dead. He is sure God will show Him the path that leads to life by raising Him up from the death. That is what God did.

Let us now remind ourselves of the new birth of Jesus, which is predicted by God in Psalm 2:1 12:

> Why do the nations rage,
> And the people plot a vain thing?
> The kings of the earth set themselves,
> And the rulers take counsel together,
> Against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying,
> "Let us break Their bonds in pieces
> And cast away Their cords from us."
> He who sits in the heavens shall laugh;
>
> The Lord shall hold them in derision.
> Then He shall speak to them in His wrath,
> And distress them in His deep displeasure:
> "Yet I have set My King
> On My holy hill of Zion."

"I will declare the decree:
The Lord has said to Me,
'You are My Son,
Today I have begotten You.
Ask of Me, and I will give You
The nations for Your inheritance,
And the ends of the earth for Your possession.
You shall break them with a rod of iron;
You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.'"

Now therefore, be wise, O kings;
Be instructed, you judges of the earth.
Serve the Lord with fear,
And rejoice with trembling.
Kiss the Son, lest He be angry,
And you perish in the way,
When His wrath is kindled but a little.
Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.

Again the Bible says, in Acts 4:23-28: "And being let go, they went to their own companions and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: 'Lord, You are God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them, who by the mouth of Your servant David have said: "Why did the nations rage, And the people plot vain things? The kings of the earth took their stand, And the rulers were gathered together Against the LORD and against His Christ." For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both

Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done."

Have you noticed that God says to Jesus, as it is written in Acts 13:33: "God has fulfilled this for us their children, in that He has raised up Jesus. As it is also written in the second Psalm: 'You are my Son, Today I have begotten you'"?

Jesus was already with the Father in the beginning, so this passage, which comes after the conspiracy of the authorities of Jerusalem at that time (see Psalm 2:1–3), clearly shows that this declaration of God was made when God raised Jesus up from the dead. This is why Apostle Paul uses Psalms 16 and 2 to reveal who Jesus really is, as well as the truth about His resurrection. Let us follow what he said in Acts 13:13–41:

> Now when Paul and his party set sail from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia; and John, departing from them, returned to Jerusalem. But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and sat down. And after the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent to them, saying, "Men and brethren, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say on."
>
> Then Paul stood up, and motioning with his hand said, "Men of Israel, and you who fear God,

listen: The God of this people Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an uplifted arm He brought them out of it. Now for a time of about forty years He put up with their ways in the wilderness. And when He had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, He distributed their land to them by allotment.

"After that He gave them judges for about four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet. And afterward they asked for a king; so God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years. And when He had removed him, He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.' From this man's seed, according to the promise, God raised up for Israel a Savior Jesus after John had first preached, before His coming, the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. And as John was finishing his course, he said, 'Who do you think I am? I am not He. But behold, there comes One after me, the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to loose.'

"Men and brethren, sons of the family of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, to you the word of this salvation has been sent. For those who dwell in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they did not know Him, nor even the voices of

the Prophets which are read every Sabbath, have fulfilled them in condemning Him. And though they found no cause for death in Him, they asked Pilate that He should be put to death. Now when they had fulfilled all that was written concerning Him, they took Him down from the tree and laid Him in a tomb. But God raised Him from the dead. He was seen for many days by those who came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are His witnesses to the people. And we declare to you glad tidings that promise which was made to the fathers. God has fulfilled this for us their children, in that He has raised up Jesus. As it is also written in the second Psalm:

'You are My Son,
Today I have begotten You.'

And that He raised Him from the dead, no more to return to corruption, He has spoken thus:

'I will give you the sure mercies of David.'

Therefore He also says in another Psalm:

'You will not allow Your Holy One to see corruption.'

"For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell asleep, was buried with his fathers, and saw corruption; but He whom God raised up saw no corruption. Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through this Man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him everyone who

believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses. Beware therefore, lest what has been spoken in the prophets come upon you:

'Behold, you despisers,
Marvel and perish!
For I work a work in your days,
A work which you will by no means believe,
Though one were to declare it to you.'"

After the resurrection of Jesus and the coming of the Holy Spirit, all the writers of the New Testament have reported countless testimonies about His promises to give the sure mercies of David (kindness, goodwill and compassion, and blessings) to His disciples and all believers. We know that Jesus is trustworthy, and that everything He promised will come to pass in our life all we have to do is to believe that He is really the Son of God and that He was sent to earth by His Father to give us full lives, forgive our sins, and fulfill the blessings he had promised us.

Last of all, Jesus said something remarkable in Mark 16:15 18: ". . . Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."

But what does this mean for us? Psalm 115:16 declares: "The heaven, even the heavens, are the LORD's; But the earth He has given to the children of men." This is why Jesus gives any believer the power and authority to be Satan's master (Mark 16:17: "In my name they will cast out demons"); gives believers the power to do healing works in Jesus's name (Mark 16:18: "they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover") and gives them a God-kind of life, meaning that no virus or other deadly thing can kill them (Mark 16:18: "they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them"). Finally, Jesus also gives us the power to have fellowship with Him and God and the Holy Spirit by speaking in new tongues (Mark 16:17: "they will speak with new tongues") and thereby energize or activate our spirit.

It is written in John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." So the first blessing of the believer is to have everlasting life the life of God or the God-kind of life. Therefore, it is not surprising that when a believer lays hands on the sick, they recover. The life God has given to the believer can be transferred by touching the sick, as it is written in John 7:38 ("He who believes in Me as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water").

Prescription 39:

"The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the Prophets: 'Behold, I send

My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.' 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight."' John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. And all the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem, went out to him and were baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair and with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, 'There comes One after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose. I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."(Mark 1:1 8)

Description:

Repent be baptized with the Holy Spirit to receive forgiveness for your sins, and believe in Jesus to be saved

Recommendations for use:

John the Baptist introduced himself as a forerunner of Jesus, as it is written in Isaiah 40:1 5; 9 11:

"Comfort, yes, comfort My people!"
Says your God.
"Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her,
That her warfare is ended,
That her iniquity is pardoned;
For she has received from the Lord's hand
Double for all her sins."

The voice of one crying in the wilderness:
"Prepare the way of the Lord;
Make straight in the desert
A highway for our God.
Every valley shall be exalted
And every mountain and hill brought low;
The crooked places shall be made straight
And the rough places smooth;
The glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
And all flesh shall see it together;
For the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

O Zion,
You who bring good tidings,
Get up into the high mountain;
O Jerusalem,
You who bring good tidings,
Lift up your voice with strength,
Lift it up, be not afraid;
Say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!"

Behold, the Lord God shall come with a strong hand,
And His arm shall rule for Him;
Behold, His reward is with Him,
And His work before Him.
He will feed His flock like a shepherd;
He will gather the lambs with His arm,
And carry them in His bosom,
And gently lead those who are with young.

Notice the two aspects of John's message. First of all, he spoke of repentance, baptism, and the forgiveness

of sins; and, secondly, he told of the coming of One more powerful than he, who would baptize the people in the Holy Spirit. Whoever is expecting a way out of a dim and unexciting existence must pay attention to these two important points which John the Baptist stressed and applies to himself.

Prescription 40:

"It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove. Then a voice came from heaven, 'You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'" (Mark 1:9–11)

Description:

Be baptized to receive the Holy Spirit

Recommendations for use:

Isaiah the Prophet foretold the descent of the Spirit of God upon Jesus in Isaiah 42:1–4: "Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One in whom My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles. He will not cry out, nor raise His voice, Nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench; He will bring forth justice for truth. He will not fail nor be discouraged, Till He has established justice in the earth; And the coastlands shall wait for His law." And John the Baptist

declared what he had witnessed, in John 1:32–34, saying: "... 'I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, "Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit." And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.'"

Prescription 41:

"Then they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath He entered the synagogue and taught. And they were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Now there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, saying, 'Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!' But Jesus rebuked him, saying, 'Be quiet, and come out of him!' And when the unclean spirit had convulsed him and cried out with a loud voice, he came out of him. Then they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, 'What is this? What new doctrine is this? For with authority He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him. And immediately His fame spread throughout all the region around Galilee." (Mark 1:21–28)

Description:

Believe in Jesus and meditate on His Word until it overflows from your heart and spills from your mouth

with the power to lead those who listen to you to believe in Jesus as you cast out devils in the mighty name of Jesus

Recommendations for use:

As we learned in Prescription 40, before Jesus began His ministry, God gave Him His Spirit, as it is written in Mark 1:9 11. God also foretold, in Deuteronomy 18:15 22, that He would put His Words into Jesus's mouth and what His Son spoke would come to pass: "The LORD your God will raise a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear, according to all you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, nor let me see this great fire any more, lest I die. And the LORD said to me: "What they have spoken is good. I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him. But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die." And if you say in your heart, "How shall we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?"

when a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken; the prophet

has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.'"

Two times, in Mark 1:22 ("And they were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes") and in Mark 1:27 (". . . 'What is this? What new doctrine is this? For with authority He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him'") people were impressed by the teaching of Jesus and His mighty deeds, because He spoke with authority when He taught or cast out unclean spirits. This means that the Word of Jesus has the power to influence people because of the knowledge His Word carries and its ability to make unclean spirits obey which is not surprising for anyone who is aware of the power of God's Word, which has the ability to turn unseen realities into physical realities.

We are all called, as believers, to speak like Jesus our speech must have the power to influence people who listen to our words in order to lead them to believe in Jesus, and our voice must also have the power to cast out devils. This is why Jesus gives His disciples the power to do works in His name in Mark 16:15 18 ("And He said to them, 'Go into the entire world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved, but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it

will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover'").

Prescription 42:

"Then He came to Bethsaida; and they brought a blind man to Him, and begged Him to touch him. So He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town. And when He had spat on his eyes and put His hands on him, He asked him if he saw anything. And he looked up and said, 'I see men like trees, walking.' Then He put His hands on his eyes again and made him look up. And he was restored and saw everyone clearly. Then He sent him away to his house, saying, 'Neither go into the town, nor tell anyone in the town.'" (Mark 8:22–26)

Description:

Understanding is a process, so you must keep listening to, meditating on, and contemplating God's Word so that Jesus will make your spiritual vision or understanding perfect

Recommendations for use:

Through this story of the blind man, Jesus wants to teach us the process of understanding and healing, which is not the same for everybody. In fact, understanding is your heart's sight – seeing with your spiritual eyes. Some are healed or understand as soon as they hear God's Word. Others need to persevere, listen, and listen again to the same message before they understand. This was the case of the blind man.

Jesus spat on his eyes and put His hands on them, but first the blind man regained only very little sight. So Jesus again put His hand on the man's eyes and this time his vision became perfect.

Our spiritual eyes (and our understanding of God's Word) work in the same way. If you do not understand something the first time you must keep listening to, meditating on, or contemplating God's Word so that Jesus can open your spiritual eyes as He opened the physical eyes of the blind man. We must remember to never give up, but instead to keep praying, as we are told in Luke 18:1: "Then He spoke a parable to them to this end, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart, . . ."

Prescription 43:

"Now they came to Jericho. And as He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great multitude, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the road begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, 'Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!' Then many warned him to be quiet; but he cried out all the more, 'Son of David, have mercy on me!' So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be called. Then they called the blind man, saying to him, 'Be of good cheer. Rise, He is calling you!' And throwing aside his garment, he rose and came to Jesus. And Jesus answered and said to him, 'What do you want Me to do for you?' The blind man said to Him, 'Rabboni that I may receive my sight.' Then Jesus said to

him, 'Go your way; your faith has made you well.' And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus on the road." (Mark 10:46–52)

Description:

Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved

Recommendations for use:

This dialogue between the blind Bartimaeus and Jesus is the model of the tool Jesus uses to test the faith and hope of those who come to Him. First of all, Bartimaeus took the initiative for calling Jesus "Son of David," showing that he expected Jesus to be the Christ, as it was foretold in 2 Samuel 7:12–17 when God made His covenant with David: "'When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever.' According to all these words and according to all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David." This means that, by calling Jesus the Son of David, Bartimaeus acknowledged Him as the Messiah and expressed his faith in Jesus.

Secondly, Jesus started out their conversation by testing Bartimaeus's hope concerning his healing, when He asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?" The answer Bartimaeus gave ("Rabboni that I may receive my sight") contains no doubt or unbelief, which shows that his hope is alive and that he has already seen his healing. Because Jesus perceived his faith and hope, he told the man, "Go your way; your faith has made you well," and immediately Bartimaeus received his sight and became a follower of Jesus.

At the end of the day we can observe that what Jesus calls faith is faith which is tied with hope. When there is faith without hope, or faith with doubt or unbelief, Jesus sees that as the same as having a lack of faith or no faith at all.

Prescription 44:

> There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years.
>
> So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.

And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense. Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, 'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,' and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

And Zacharias said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years."

And the angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings. But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time."

> And the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he lingered so long in the temple. But when he came out, he could not speak to them; and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple, for he beckoned to them and remained speechless.
>
> So it was, as soon as the days of his service were completed, that he departed to his own house. Now after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived; and she hid herself five months, saying, "Thus the Lord has dealt with me, in the days when He looked on me, to take away my reproach among people." (Luke 1:5–25)

Description:
Have faith with no doubt in Jesus and God's Word; picture in your mind what you hope for and God will bring your heart's desire into the physical realm

Recommendations for use:
It seems like Zacharias asked for a sign as Abraham did. So why was Zacharias punished and not Abraham? Let us look at the case of Abraham in Genesis 15:5–6: "Then He brought him outside and said, 'Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.' And He said to him, 'So shall your descendants be.' And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness." Can you see that God responded to the petition of Abraham, but the angel Gabriel did not? Why? The angel Gabriel gave the answer when he said that Zacharias *did*

not believe his words. The difference between the two cases lies in the fact that Zacharias was full of unbelief when he said "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years." Do you see now that he added, "For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years," which showed his doubts?

Jesus teaches us all that faith without hope is not faith. According to the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, hope is a belief that something you want will happen. But Zacharias's words* showed that he was not sure that he and his wife could have a child. He could not picture the birth of his son in his mind, which means that he had no hope and that his faith had died.

Apart from that, the angel Gabriel told us the kind of man John would be, saying that he would not be an ordinary man because he would be great in the sight of the Lord. In fact, Gabriel told Zacharias that John would be great and dedicated to a magnificent task in life: preparing his people to be fit for the Lord.

Prescription 45:

> Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!"

> But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."
>
> Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?"
>
> And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible."
>
> Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her. (Luke 1:26 38)

Description:

Our declaration of what God has said about us gives birth in our heart to whatever fruit God has already put in us

Recommendations for use:

This extraordinary dialogue between the Virgin Mary and the angel Gabriel began with an outstanding greeting: "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among the women!" This means that Mary was endowed with grace and was the first and best choice of God before all of the other women of the earth. After that, the angel Gabriel told her that she would conceive a son without receiving man's seed, for the Holy Spirit would come to her and God's power would rest upon her. For this reason, the Holy child would be called the Son of God. Aside from Jesus, any human being is, at the beginning, the seed of a man which is sown in the womb of a woman. Then the seed grows and, after about nine months, the woman gives birth to a new human being. This is the natural process of human reproduction. In the case of Jesus, however, things did not happen in that way. Instead, the angel Gabriel specified that the Holy Spirit would come upon Mary and gave her a spiritual seed from heaven. So we may wonder when the Holy Spirit came upon Mary.

Let us look to Jesus to get the answer to that mystery. In fact, Jesus said in Luke 8:11: ". . . The seed is the word of God." He also declared, in Luke 8:15: "But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience." Coming back to Mary and the angel Gabriel, we realize that the angel spoke God's message to Mary, and so he delivered to

Mary the seed of Jesus through his message. But, in order to bear fruit, that seed — the message from God brought by the angel Gabriel — needed to be accepted by Mary. This is what she did when she spoke these tremendous words: "Behold, the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word."

Thus, this beautiful dialogue between the angel Gabriel and the Virgin Mary about conception of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ reveals the beautiful secret of the kingdom of God: It is our declaration about what God has said concerning us (the seed He plants) which gives birth in our heart or spirit to whatever fruit He has put in that seed.

Prescription 46:

> Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord."

And Mary said:

"My soul magnifies the Lord,
And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.
For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant;
For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed.
For He who is mighty has done great things for me,
And holy is His name.
And His mercy is on those who fear Him
From generation to generation.
He has shown strength with His arm;
He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
He has put down the mighty from their thrones,
And exalted the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things,
And the rich He has sent away empty.
He has helped His servant Israel,
In remembrance of His mercy,
As He spoke to our fathers,
To Abraham and to his seed forever."

And Mary remained with her about three months, and returned to her house. (Luke 1:39–56)

Description:

Believe in Jesus Christ and your spirit will become a pump to force a spirit or life out of your spiritual heart so that it flows through your mouth, mind, senses, and body.

Recommendations for use:

Luke 1:39 56 describes the extraordinary encounter between Elizabeth and Mary. Have you noticed what Mary's word conveyed? Mary's words caused Elizabeth's baby to leap and filled Elizabeth with the Holy Spirit. Again, to fully understand what happens here, we must go to Jesus's Word. In John 6:63, Jesus said: "It is the Spirit who gives life, the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit and they are life." Since Mary accepted God's Word through the angel Gabriel, this means that the seed he brought her produced not only Jesus in her womb, but also life and spirit in her heart.

Jesus added, in John 7:38: "He who believes in Me as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water," meaning that the spirit of a believer of Jesus Christ become like a pump that can convey the spirit or life out of that believer's heart so that it flows from his mouth in his speech, his mind in his thoughts, his senses via his feelings, and his body though his actions and deeds. This is why, when Mary greeted Elizabeth, her greeting filled Elizabeth with the Holy Spirit, gave joy to her unborn child, and revealed the truth concerning the actual situation of Mary, causing her to sing her beautiful song of praise and thanksgiving.

Prescription 47:

> Now Elizabeth's full time came for her to be delivered, and she brought forth a son. When her

neighbors and relatives heard how the Lord had shown great mercy to her, they rejoiced with her.

So it was, on the eighth day, that they came to circumcise the child; and they would have called him by the name of his father, Zacharias. His mother answered and said, "No; he shall be called John."

But they said to her, "There is no one among your relatives who is called by this name." So they made signs to his father what he would have him called.

And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, saying, "His name is John." So they all marveled. Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, praising God. Then fear came on all who dwelt around them; and all these sayings were discussed throughout all the hill country of Judea. And all those who heard them kept them in their hearts, saying, "What kind of child will this be?" And the hand of the Lord was with him.

Now his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying:

"Blessed is the Lord God of Israel,
For He has visited and redeemed His people,
And has raised up a horn of salvation for us
In the house of His servant David,
As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets,

Who have been since the world began,
That we should be saved from our enemies
And from the hand of all who hate us,
To perform the mercy promised to our fathers
And to remember His holy covenant,
The oath which He swore to our father Abraham:
To grant us that we,
Being delivered from the hand of our enemies,
Might serve Him without fear,
In holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life.

"And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest;
For you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways,
To give knowledge of salvation to His people
By the remission of their sins,
Through the tender mercy of our God,
With which the Dayspring from on high has visited us;
To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death,
To guide our feet into the way of peace."

So the child grew and became strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his manifestation to Israel. (Luke 1:57–80)

Description:

The time for getting knowledge of salvation through the remission of sins has come, so believe in Jesus

and God will remove fear from your heart and grant you the holiness and righteousness to worship Him without fear

Recommendations for use:

Have you noticed something relevant in the prophecy of Zacharias? He declared that the time had come for God to fulfill what He promised to their fathers. In other words, he was speaking of the coming of the Messiah and Elijah who would come before him. Zacharias also specified that the time had come and God was about to allow us to serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness, all the days of our life after our deliverance from the hand of our enemies. Zacharias also prophesied that the Messiah would become our light to guide our steps into the path of peace. Let us look again at the passages Zacharias quoted in his prophecy. First of all, he quoted Psalm 111:9, which says: "He has sent redemption to His people; He has commanded His covenant forever; Holy and awesome is His name." Then he cited Psalm 106:10, declaring: "He saved them from the hand of him who hated them, And redeemed them from the hand of the enemy."

Zacharias talked about God's solemn oath to Abraham referred to in Genesis 22:15 18: "Then the Angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, and said: 'By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants

as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice." He continued and quoted some passages of Malachi 4:1 6:

"For behold, the day is coming,
Burning like an oven,
And all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble.
And the day which is coming shall burn them up,"
Says the Lord of hosts,
"That will leave them neither root nor branch.
But to you who fear My name
The Sun of Righteousness shall arise
With healing in His wings;
And you shall go out
And grow fat like stall-fed calves.
You shall trample the wicked,
For they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet
On the day that I do this,"
Says the Lord of hosts.

"Remember the Law of Moses, My servant,
Which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel,
With the statutes and judgments.
Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet
Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.
And he will turn

The hearts of the fathers to the children,
And the hearts of the children to their fathers,
Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse."

Zacharias also cited Isaiah 9:2, which says: "The people who walked in darkness Have seen a great light; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, Upon them a light has shined." Finally, he summarized Isaiah 40:1–5 by saying his son, John the Baptist, would give knowledge of salvation to his people through the remission of sins.

Prescription 48:

And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city.

Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their

flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger."

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

"Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us." And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.

And when eight days were completed for the circumcision of the Child, His name was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb.

Now when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord"), and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, "A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. So he came by the Spirit into the temple. And when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law, he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said:

"Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace,
According to Your word;
For my eyes have seen Your salvation
Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples,
A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles,
And the glory of Your people Israel."

> And Joseph and His mother marveled at those things which were spoken of Him. Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, "Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against (yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." (Luke 2:1 35)

Description:
Never speak against Jesus or say anything contrary to God's Word, instead, treasure Jesus's sayings and ponder them, and no matter what situation you are in you will find the way out

Recommendations for use:
There are three exciting revelations in this passage. Let us begin with the big revelation which is given us in these words: ". . . for a sign which will be spoken against . . . that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed" (Luke 2:34 35) Can you see that Simeon revealed in this one of the powerful principles of God's kingdom? Anyone who speaks against Jesus reveals his evil thoughts. In other words, speaking against Jesus is a sign which shows your true character especially if your outer character is far from the truth.

The second revelation is in these words: "But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart" (Luke 2:19). Can you see that this means that if we want to have a good life we must keep all things concerning Jesus in our heart and think deeply about them and live by them?

The third principle is revealed here: "And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn" (Luke 2:7). Can you see that the third revelation is this: No matter your situation , there is always a way out, do not worry, and you will find it and rejoice?

The fourth principle of the kingdom of heaven is revealed when the angel comes to the shepherds and reveals Christ's birth (Luke 2:10 14). In this, we learn that whatever situation you find yourself in you will, at the end, be celebrated by angels and people both near and far.

Prescription 49:

"When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened. And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, 'You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased." (Luke 3:21 22)

Description:

Believe in God's testimony about Jesus and treasure in your heart the knowledge that Jesus is the beloved Son of God who was anointed to ministry when He was on earth

Recommendations for use:

This is the testimony of God declaring that Jesus is His beloved Son. There is no need to doubt or argue this point.

Prescription 50:

"Now when it was day, He departed and went into a deserted place. And the crowd sought Him and came to Him, and tried to keep Him from leaving them; but He said to them, 'I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent.' And He was preaching in the synagogues of Galilee." (Luke 4:42–44)

Description:

Preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to gain souls, in the same way that the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ has brought you to the kingdom of God

Recommendations for use:

For what purpose was Jesus sent to earth? Jesus Himself gives the answer in Luke 4:43, saying: "I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent." This means that Jesus was sent to earth to preach the kingdom of God – the gospel or the Good News of the kingdom of God. Why is the preaching of the kingdom of God so important? Because preaching the kingdom of God is the starting point to achieving the salvation of mankind. It has power to inspire those who listen with humble hearts, and it produces faith and hope – which are essential for entering the kingdom of God – in the heart of its listeners. Without hope, nobody can see (in the spiritual realm) what is preached, and if you cannot see these things then it is impossible for you to believe or to have genuine faith. So the kingdom of God works after the following process:

1. Someone preaches about the kingdom of God.
2. Those who listen pay attention, in order to visualize what they are told.
3. Excited by what they see, the hope to live in the kingdom is created in the listeners.
4. The listeners' hope becomes belief, so faith is created.
5. The new believers, because they have faith, are allowed to enter into the kingdom of God they are born again.
6. The born-again Christians begin to grow in knowledge and continue worshiping God until their faith becomes mature.
7. They do exactly what Jesus tells them to do, with the help of the Holy Spirit and God's Word.

Prescription 51:

"Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, 'Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name.' And He said to them, 'I could see Satan falling down like lightning from heaven. Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that spirits are subject to you, but rejoice rather because your names are written in heaven.'" (Luke 10:17 20)

Description:

The only thing you need to bring your life to a successful conclusion is to have your name written in heaven or in the book of the living

Recommendations for use:
Jesus reveals to us in Luke 10:20 that what should matter to true believers is having our names written in heaven and not having spirits under our control. But if it does not matter if you are wicked or righteous to have your name written in heaven, then how could Jesus makes this declaration? Psalm 69:28 answers: "Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous." Can you see that only the righteous have their names written in the book of the living? In Matthew 22:31–32, Jesus answered why the names are written in the book of the living — not a book of the dead: "But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." This is why only the righteous have their names written in heaven or in the book of the living, as King David said in Psalm 69:28.

Prescription 52:
"There were present at that season some who told Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Jesus answered and said to them, 'Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish. Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all other

men who dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish." (Luke 13:1–5)

Description:

Repent to prevent calamity from coming upon you

Recommendations for use:

Jesus gave us two accounts about people who suffered from calamities and were killed, then balanced those tragedies against repentance. This shows that calamity is the fate of sinners, no matter their degree of sin, as it is written in Proverbs 6:12–15: "A worthless person, a wicked man, Walks with a perverse mouth; He winks with his eyes, He shuffles his feet, He points with his fingers; Perversity is in his heart, He devises evil continually, He sows discord. Therefore his calamity shall come suddenly; Suddenly he shall be broken without remedy." Do you see now why Jesus put calamity and repentance into the balance? The one who repents and has become a believer comes under the blessing of God as it is written in Proverbs 3:33: "The curse of the LORD is on the house of the wicked, But He blesses the habitation of the just." This is also the reason why the wisdom of God recommends, in Proverbs 24:21–22, that mankind fear the LORD and not associate with rebels or wicked people: "My son, fear the LORD and the king; Do not associate with those given to change; For their calamity will rise suddenly, And who knows the ruin those two can bring?" Therefore we must repent from our sins and to prevent calamity from coming upon us.

Prescription 53:

"So He told a parable to those who were invited, when He noted how they chose the best places, saying to them: 'When you are invited by anyone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in the best place, lest one more honorable than you be invited by him; and he who invited you and him come and say to you, "Give place to this man," and then you begin with shame to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit down in the lowest place, so that when he who invited you comes he may say to you, "Friend, go up higher." Then you will have glory in the presence of those who sit at the table with you. For whoever exalts himself will be abased, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.' Then He also said to him who invited Him, 'When you give a dinner or a supper, do not ask your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor your rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back, and you be repaid. But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just.'" (Luke 14:7–14)

"Do not exalt yourself in the presence of the king, And do not stand in the place of the great; For it is better that he says to you, 'Come up here,' Than that you should be put lower in the presence of the prince, Whom your eyes have seen." (Proverbs 25:6–7)

Description:

Humbling yourself is the best way to cause God to grant you His glory and His grace, and even His salvation

Recommendations for use:

When we compare the story in Proverbs to the story in Luke, we see that the king is the same as "he who has invited you." The caution to not stand in the place of the great, is the same as being told "do not sit down in the best place." And much of the rest is also the same, when looked at closely. Do you see that Jesus came to accomplish God's Word by His Words and His deeds, and Proverbs 25:6–7 and Luke 14:7–14 are two illustrations of Jesus's fulfillment of His complete identification as God's Word? So Jesus teaches us the importance of humility — the greatest factor that causes God to grant us His glory, His grace, and even His salvation (which comes through wisdom, understanding, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption).

Prescription 54:

> Then He said: "A certain man had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.' So he divided to them his livelihood. And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living. But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. Then he went and

joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything.

"But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants."'

"And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

"But the father said to his servants, 'Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' And they began to be merry.

"Now his older son was in the field. And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and because he has received him safe and sound, your father has killed the fatted calf.'

> "But he was angry and would not go in. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him. So he answered and said to his father, 'Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.'
>
> "And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.'" (Luke 15:11–32)

Description:

Even though you are a sinner you are of great value in the sight of God, and the value of your repentance cannot be estimated – if you repent, you will give joy to God's angels and receive grace, glory, and salvation from God

Recommendations for use:

This parable is the best illustration of the priceless nature of the repentance of a sinner in the sight of God and Jesus. In this account, the father represents God our Father, while the prodigal son represents any sinner who lived yesterday, who lives today, or will live in the future. The older son, then, is the representation of people who think that they are righteous before God. This story shows that although He loves

all believers God is always waiting for sinners to return home to God's kingdom by turning away from sin and making the decision to believe in Jesus and follow Him forever.

Prescription 55:

"Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: 'Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, "God, I thank you that I am not like other men extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess." And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" I tell you this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted." (Luke 18:9 14)

Description:

Humble yourself before God when you repent but even when you do this do not exalt yourself before God because you are obedient to His Word; instead, constantly hold one thought in your heart and mind: "I have done my duty"

Recommendations for use:

You may wonder: Why does the Pharisee, who is telling the truth about his obedience to God's Word,

go down condemned? This is Jesus's answer, found in Luke 17:7–10: "And which of you, having a servant plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come at once and sit down to eat'? But will he not rather say to him, 'Prepare something for my supper, and gird yourself and serve me till I have eaten and drunk, and afterward you will eat and drink'? Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not. So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.'"

Jesus teaches us that, as believers, we do not deserve thanks for obeying God's Word. Obeying the Word of God is our duty—it is our role to play. There is no reason to boast about our duty, especially since our righteousness originates from God. Repentance, we must remember, requires humility, so the tax collector was right to humble himself before God. Do you see that Jesus balances the condition we need to satisfy when we repent against the condition we have to fulfill when we obey to God's Word? He shows us that it is right to humble ourselves when we repent, but it is not right to exalt ourselves when we obey God's Word because we have merely done our duty as servant of God. No wonder the Bible says in Jeremiah 9:23–24 (Living Bible): "The Lord says: Let not the wise man bask in his wisdom, nor the mighty man in his might, nor the rich man in his riches. Let them boast in this alone: That they truly know me, and understand that

I am the Lord of justice and of righteousness whose love is steadfast; and that I love to be this way."

Prescription 56:

"Then Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature. So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, 'Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house.' So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully. But when they saw it, they all complained, saying, 'He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner.' Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, 'Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold.' And Jesus said to him, 'Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.'" (Luke 19:1–10)

Description:

Jesus came to earth to save your soul, therefore if you repent you will receive salvation

Recommendations for use:

Do you see what the kingdom of God is all about? When you repent of your sins and turn to God, you

receive salvation in the kingdom of God. Zacchaeus, the chief tax collector, joyfully declared his repentance, when he said, "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold." Can you see how Zacchaeus changed his focus from his affection for riches of this world to spiritual realities? As a result of this decision, Jesus proclaimed his salvation, in other words, the Kingdom of God literally came to his house.

But Jesus did not stop there. He emphasized that the purpose of His coming to earth was to seek out and save any lost sinners. Is it clear to you now that Jesus Christ came to earth for every sinner in mankind? Do you see now why the repentance of the sinner is priceless so valuable that its value cannot be estimated? Jesus came to earth, preached the gospel, healed the sick, suffered and died for sinners, and rose from the dead all so that he could give salvation to anyone who repents and turns to God.

Prescription 57:

"Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, saying, 'If you had known, even you, especially in this day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For the days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; they will not leave in you one stone

upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation." (Luke 19:41–44)

Description:

Ask God to give you understanding, so that you can always interpret the signs given to you by God's Word both when it is preached by pastors and when you meditate on it

Recommendations for use:

Can you see that Jesus wept upon Jerusalem because He foresaw the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70? Jesus clearly declared that this destruction would happen because the residents of Jerusalem failed to interpret the signs found in the Bible.

Prescription 58:

"Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest. And He said to them, 'The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called "benefactors." But not so among you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who leads as he who serves. For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves. But you are those who have continued with Me in My trials. And I bestow upon you a kingdom just as My Father bestowed one upon Me, that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and

sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Luke 22:24 30)

Description:

Serve others without complaining, being instead slow to anger, patient, joyful, and peaceful, and you will overcome any trial which you face in your life because service is a quality of leadership in the kingdom of heaven

Recommendations for use:

In this passage, Jesus balances the character of authority and leadership in the world against authority and leadership in the kingdom of God. In contrast with the power, authority, and leadership in the world that is exercised with force and power, authority and leadership in the kingdom of God is shown through service. Moreover, Jesus grants to any believer a kingdom, giving each believer the right to rule on earth provided that he has stayed with Jesus throughout his trials. Can you see that if you become a servant to others without complaining if you remain slow to anger, patient, joyful, and peaceful Jesus will make you victorious in any trial which comes to you, no matter how tough it is? This attitude of servitude will make you a champion in any area of life.

Prescription 59:

> Now this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?"

He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ."

And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?"

He said, "I am not."

"Are you the Prophet?"

And he answered, "No."

Then they said to him, "Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?"

He said: "I am

'The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

as the prophet Isaiah said."

Now those who were sent were from the Pharisees. And they asked him, saying, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"

John answered them, saying, "I baptize with water, but there stands One among you whom you do not know. It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose."

These things were done in Bethabara beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.' I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water."

And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God." (John 1:19–34)

Description:

Listen to the gospel and believe in Jesus as the Son of God, the prophet after Moses, the Messiah, the offspring of King David, and the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world

Recommendations for use:

Let us begin by bringing to mind Deuteronomy 18:15–19, which gives the characteristics of the prophet whom Israel was expecting: "The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear, according to all you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, nor let me see this great fire anymore, lest I die.' And the LORD said to me: 'What they have spoken is good. I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him.'"

Jesus many times declares that He did not come to do His will but the will of the One who sent Him. For instance, John 4:34 says: "Jesus said to them, 'My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work;'" John 6:38 declares: "For I have come down from heaven not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me;" and, finally, Matthew 26:39 specifies: "He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, 'O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.'"

The prophet whom, in the times of Moses, God promised to send to Israel would only say what God told Him to say. Jesus Himself confessed that this is what He was doing in John 15:15: "No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you." This means that Jesus is the prophet after Moses. If you are not yet convinced, then look at John 8:28: "Then Jesus said to them, 'When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself, but as My Father taught me, I speak these things." So Jesus only speaks the Word He receives from the teachings of His Father as God said He would do in Deuteronomy 18:18. Likewise, all believers are compelled to speak only God's Word, which they hear from the teaching of Pastors or Priests, from their own study and meditation on God's Word, or through their fellowship with the Holy Spirit

when they speak in tongues or during their worship or prayer.

Malachi 4:5–6 declares: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse." And Jesus testifies that John the Baptist is the "Elijah" who was sent before His coming in Matthew 11:14: "And if you are willing to receive it, he is Elijah who is to come." Therefore, as we read in the passages above, John the Baptist is Elijah who came to clear the way for the LORD's coming, and Jesus is the prophet after Moses — the Son of God who existed before the creation of heaven and earth, and the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

Prescription 60:

> Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!"
>
> The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, "What do you seek?"
>
> They said to Him, "Rabbi" (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), "where are You staying?"
>
> He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour).

One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus.

Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, "You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas" (which is translated, A Stone).

The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, "Follow Me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

And Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"

Philip said to him, "Come and see."

Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!"

Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?"

Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you."

Nathanael answered and said to Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!"

> Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these." And He said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." (John 1:35–51)

Description:

You must have a threefold attitude toward creating your beliefs in God: you must listen when someone speaks about God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit; take what you learn to your closest friends; and then verify that what you have heard matches with God's Word so that you can modify your beliefs and thoughts to better line up with God

Recommendations for use:

This account of the calling of Peter, Andrew, Philip, and Nathanael shows us the same three attitudes a genuine believer must have. First of all, a true believer must pay attention when someone talks about God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, or preaches the gospel. Secondly, the believer must, in turn, talk about what he has heard concerning God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, or God's Word to his very close friends to bring them to Jesus. Thirdly, if what he has heard is not consistent with his own thoughts and beliefs, the true believer must check to see that what he has heard is exactly what the Word of God had declared, and, if it is true, he must then endorse God's truth and change the

belief in his heart so that the thoughts in his mind might also be renewed.

Prescription 61:

"On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding. And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, 'They have no wine.' Jesus said to her, 'Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come.' His mother said to the servants, 'Whatever He says to you, do it.' Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece. Jesus said to them, 'Fill the waterpots with water.' And they filled them up to the brim. And He said to them, 'Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast.' And they took it. When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom. And he said to him, 'Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the inferior; but you have kept the good wine until now!' This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him."(John 2:1 11)

Description:

Pay careful attention to the miracles performed by Jesus through His representatives on earth because these are the second way God gives you to develop your belief in Jesus

Recommendations for use:

Can you see that the disciples of Jesus believed in Jesus when they saw the miracle of water changed into wine at the wedding in Cana? Therefore, we must use our ears and eyes to pay attention to God's Word and focus on God's wonders, signs, and miracles in order to cause our hearts to believe in Jesus. By paying attention to God's Word, our ears can cause God to give us understanding, while our two eyes by focusing on God's miracles can also cause God to make us perceive His kingdom or the spirit realm through His signs.

Prescription 62:

"After these things Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea, and there He remained with them and baptized. Now John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there. And they came and were baptized. For John had not yet been thrown into prison. Then there arose a dispute between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purification. And they came to John and said to him, 'Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have testified behold, He is baptizing, and all are coming to Him!' John answered and said,

'A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven. You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, "I am not the Christ," but, "I have been sent before Him." He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease. He who comes from above is above all; he who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all. And what He has seen and heard, that He testifies; and no one receives His testimony. He who has received His testimony has certified that God is true. For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the Spirit by measure. The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand. He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." (John 3:22 36)

Description:

After your repentance you must be baptized with water to be purified, and also be baptized with the Holy Spirit to receive Him so that He can guide you

Recommendations for use:

Do you see that Jesus (or, truly, His disciples) baptized in the same way John baptized, showing the importance of baptism with water? It is written in Matthew 3:11 (New Living Translation, Second Edition): "I baptize with water those who repent of their sins and turn

to God. But someone is coming soon who is greater than I am — so much greater that I'm not worthy even to be his slave and carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire." We have already learned that repentance is priceless; therefore baptism by water — which is intended for purifying the one who repents — is as priceless as repentance. When we are baptized with water, we choose to be completely separated from the world. But John balanced his baptism with water with the baptism of the Holy Spirit given by Jesus. This means that baptism with water is merely a shadow of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. John the Baptist shows that he is a humble man when he says that he is not even worthy to carry Christ's sandals. It is no surprise, then, that Jesus testifies to John the Baptist's greatness in Matthew 11:11: "Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

Prescription 63:

> Therefore, when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John (though Jesus Himself did not baptize, but His disciples), He left Judea and departed again to Galilee. But He needed to go through Samaria.
>
> So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there.

Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.

Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.

Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."

The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water? Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?"

Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."

The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw."

Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here."

The woman answered and said, "I have no husband."

Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,' for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly."

The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship."

Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things."

Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He." (John 4:1 26)

Description:
Do good things and speak only sweet and pleasant words; do not speak your own words but speak the

truth of God's Word so that God will make of you a fountain of life

Recommendations for use:

Jesus says in John 4:13 14: "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." This is a very powerful revelation, because "water" represents God's Word. But notice that Jesus specifies that the water (God's Word) He will give us will become in us a fountain of water. This means that there is a time factor. You must take in God's Word every day so that, one day, your heart will be filled to the brim with God's Word and then God's Word will start to overflow from your heart to feed your mind, mouth, eyes, ears, blood, and body, and then come out of you to feed others who come in contact with you. This is as it is written in Proverbs 13:14 (Amplified Bible): "The teaching of the wise is a fountain of life, that one may avoid the snares of death." This was also foretold by God Himself in Isaiah 58:1 14:

"Cry aloud, spare not;
Lift up your voice like a trumpet;
Tell My people their transgression,
And the house of Jacob their sins.
Yet they seek Me daily,
And delight to know My ways,
As a nation that did righteousness,
And did not forsake the ordinance of their God.

They ask of Me the ordinances of justice;
They take delight in approaching God.
'Why have we fasted,' they say, 'and You have not seen?
Why have we afflicted our souls, and You take no notice?'

"In fact, in the day of your fast you find pleasure,
And exploit all your laborers.
Indeed you fast for strife and debate,
And to strike with the fist of wickedness.
You will not fast as you do this day,
To make your voice heard on high.
Is it a fast that I have chosen,
A day for a man to afflict his soul?
Is it to bow down his head like a bulrush,
And to spread out sackcloth and ashes?
Would you call this a fast,
And an acceptable day to the Lord?

"Is this not the fast that I have chosen:
To loose the bonds of wickedness,
To undo the heavy burdens,
To let the oppressed go free,
And that you break every yoke?
Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
And that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out;
When you see the naked, that you cover him,
And not hide yourself from your own flesh?
Then your light shall break forth like the morning,
Your healing shall spring forth speedily,

And your righteousness shall go before you;
The glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.
Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;
You shall cry, and He will say, 'Here I am.'

"If you take away the yoke from your midst,
The pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness,
If you extend your soul to the hungry
And satisfy the afflicted soul,
Then your light shall dawn in the darkness,
And your darkness shall be as the noonday.
The Lord will guide you continually,
And satisfy your soul in drought,
And strengthen your bones;
You shall be like a watered garden,
And like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail.
Those from among you
Shall build the old waste places;
You shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
And you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach,
The Restorer of Streets to Dwell In.

"If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath,
From doing your pleasure on My holy day,
And call the Sabbath a delight,
The holy day of the Lord honorable,
And shall honor Him, not doing your own ways,
Nor finding your own pleasure,
Nor speaking your own words,
Then you shall delight yourself in the Lord;

> And I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth,
> And feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father.
> The mouth of the Lord has spoken."

Do you see what God expects from you? Isn't it to cause you to become a fountain of life? Until you do well and speak sweet and pleasant words not speaking lies or your own words but speaking the truth of God's Word by obeying God's Word you will never be a fountain of life as has God promised.

Prescription 64:

> And at this point His disciples came, and they marveled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why are You talking with her?"
>
> The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, "Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?" Then they went out of the city and came to Him.
>
> In the meantime His disciples urged Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat."
>
> But He said to them, "I have food to eat of which you do not know."
>
> Therefore the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought Him anything to eat?"

> Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work. Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. For in this the saying is true: 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors."
>
> And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all that I ever did." So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. And many more believed because of His own word.
>
> Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world." (John 4:27–42)

Description:
The Word of God is spirit and gives life in the kingdom of God to anyone who believes that Jesus is the Son of God, the Christ, the Messiah, the Savior of the World

Recommendations for use:
Can you see that the purpose of God's Word is to give birth to you in the kingdom of God by making you

believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Christ, the Messiah, and the Savior of the world? This is what happened to the Samaritan woman and the Samaritans who listened Jesus's words. Remember that God's Word is spirit, as Jesus declared in John 6:63: "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life." Jesus said the Spirit gives life, and because God's Word is spirit, therefore God's Word gives life.

Jesus also stated, in John 3:5 6: "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." So since God's Word, which is from the Holy Spirit, gives life, what is born from God's Word is spirit. And to be born of God's Word is to believe that Jesus is the Son of God, as it is written in 1 John 5:4 5: "For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?"

This all means that believing that Jesus is the Son of God, the Christ, the Messiah, and the Savior of the World as the Samaritan woman and the Samaritans of her village did is the best thing to do in our life on earth. Remember that the joy that came to the Samaritans in this story was was only a shadow of what comes from the baptism of the Holy Spirit, because Jesus has not yet been glorified and the day of Pentecost had not yet come.

Prescription 65:

"Now after the two days He departed from there and went to Galilee. For Jesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country. So when He came to Galilee, the Galileans received Him, having seen all the things He did in Jerusalem at the feast; for they also had gone to the feast. So Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee where He had made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and implored Him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. Then Jesus said to him, 'Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe.' The nobleman said to Him, 'Sir, come down before my child dies!' Jesus said to him, 'Go your way; your son lives.' So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went his way. And as he was now going down, his servants met him and told him, saying, 'Your son lives!' then he inquired of them the hour when he got better. And they said to him, 'Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.' So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, 'Your son lives.' And he himself believed, and his whole household. This again is the second sign that Jesus did when He had come out of Judea in Galilee." (John 4:43–54)

Description:

It is better to believe God's Word than to believe in miracles and signs because miracles and signs are

only in the physical realm, but God's Word is spirit, and since physical realities proceed from the spiritual realm what is spirit is greater than what is physical

Recommendations for use:

Do you see the power of God's Word? There is no distance barrier to its power. Therefore in the mind of Jesus, believing in God's Word is better than believing in signs and miracles, which can only be seen when you are close to them. Why? Because the Word of God is spirit, while signs and miracles are physical realities and we know that physical realities proceed from spiritual ones.

2) A Cure for People's Lack of Foundation on the Rock or Lack of Deep Roots in Faith

Prescription 1:

"Blessed are the meek, For they shall inherit the earth." (Matthew 5:5)

Description:

Commit your way to the Lord, cease from anger, wait patiently for the Lord, and delight in Him in order to receive the desires of your heart, the genuine and shining righteousness of God, and a deep root in faith.

Recommendations for use:

Let us begin by looking at the definition of meek, made by King David in Psalm 37:1 11:

Do not fret because of evildoers,
Nor be envious of the workers of iniquity.

For they shall soon be cut down like the grass,
And wither as the green herb.

Trust in the Lord, and do good;
Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness.
Delight yourself also in the Lord,
And He shall give you the desires of your heart.
Commit your way to the Lord,
Trust also in Him,
And He shall bring it to pass.
He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light,
And your justice as the noonday.

Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him;
Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way,
Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.
Cease from anger, and forsake wrath;
Do not fret it only causes harm.

For evildoers shall be cut off;
But those who wait on the Lord,
They shall inherit the earth.
For yet a little while and the wicked shall be no more;
Indeed, you will look carefully for his place,
But it shall be no more.
But the meek shall inherit the earth,
And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

We learn from this that the meek is the one who does not fret because of the prosperity or iniquity of the wicked man, because he trusts in the Lord and does good; dwells in the land and feeds on God's faithfulness; delights himself in the Lord; commits his way to the Lord; rests in the Lord; and waits patiently for Him. He ceases from anger and forsakes wrath, and eventually waits on the Lord. In this, you can see why the meek will inherit the earth. When you do what Jesus says about the meek, you put down deep roots in faith you stand firm and become unshakable when adversity, challenge, or tribulation comes. Have you noticed another wonderful thing? Read the Psalm again and pay attention to these words, "He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light, And your justice as the noonday" (Psalm 37:6). Do you see now that meekness causes the Lord to bring forth your righteousness? This is why the Bible declares, in Revelation 3:21: "To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne." Only those who are meek overcome, as it is written in Psalm 37:11 ("But the meek shall inherit the earth"). Therefore, unless you become meek, your righteousness cannot shine as God declares in Psalm 11:6.

Let us look again at the definition of righteousness as it appears in John 1:12–13: "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of

the will of man, but of God." So righteousness is God's way to make people right in His eyes through faith in Jesus Christ. However, when we believe in Christ and receive the righteousness of God, this righteousness is in us but does not shine and remains unfruitful unless we become meek by doing what Jesus said in Luke 6:46 49: "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say? Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great."

Ask yourself this question: Why does Jesus call us to be the doer of His sayings? He does this because only doing His Word causes God to bring forth our righteousness as the light (Psalm 37:6). This means that the righteousness God gives us when we are born again is hidden to others until we become meek, and then God makes it shine for other people to see.

Another awesome thing is written in Psalm 37:4: "Delight yourself also in the Lord, And He shall give you the desires of your heart." This means that if you want God to give you the desires of your heart, you must simply delight yourself in the Lord be meek.

That's all you have to do. So meekness is the foundation of our faith in Jesus Christ.

Prescription 2:

"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you." (Matthew 5:10 12)

Description:

You may be persecuted but faith will show you your victory so you must keep on praying, and never give up or lose heart

Recommendations for use:

Jesus said in John 15:20 21: "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me." The Apostle Paul also wrote, in 2 Corinthians 4:7 10: "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus,

that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body." Jesus said in John 16:33 (Amplified Version), ". . . In the world you have tribulation and trials and distress and frustration; but be of good cheer [take courage; be confident, certain; undaunted]! For I have overcome the world. [I have deprived it of power to harm you and have conquered it for you]." Jesus added, in Mark 13:13: "And you will be hated by all men for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end shall be saved." So what matters is not the persecution but the knowledge that you will be victorious over whatever challenge, tribulation, or persecution you have to face.

Jesus gave one of the most profound teachings on the subject of faith in Luke 18:1 8: "Then He spoke a parable to them to this end, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart, saying: 'There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, "Get justice for me from my adversary." And he would not for a while; but afterwards he said within himself, "Though I do not fear God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me."' Then the Lord said, 'Hear what the unjust judge said. And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?'" In

these verses, Jesus tells us that constant prayer and never giving up or losing heart is an expression of faith. This is an important issue of faith to deal with, because without it our faith dies, that is why Jesus wonders if He will find faith on earth when He comes back.

Prescription 3:

"Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:17–20)

Description:

Do good to others and be kind to them, for loving one another is the fulfilment of the law and the prophets

Recommendations for use:

Jesus explains what He means by "the Law and the Prophets" in Matthew 7:7–12: "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and

he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him! Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets."

This means that when Jesus refers to "the Law and the Prophets" He means "Do to others what you want them to do to you." The purpose of the Law and the Prophets is to do good to others and to be kind to them. This is the reason why Paul says in Romans 13:8–10: "Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,' 'You shall not covet,' and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law."

Prescription 4:

"Furthermore it has been said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.' But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery." (Matthew 5:31–32)

Description:

Never divorce or, if you are not married yet, pray that God will give you a wise wife

Recommendations for use:

You may wonder why Jesus forbids people from divorcing. Jesus gives more details in Mark 10:1–12: "Then He arose from there and came to the region of Judea by the other side of the Jordan. And the people gathered to Him again, and as He was accustomed, He taught them again. The Pharisees came and asked Him, 'Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?' testing Him. And He answered and said to them, 'What did Moses command you?' They said, 'Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce, and to dismiss her.' And Jesus answered and said to them, 'Because of the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. But from the beginning of the creation, God "made them male and female." "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh"; so then they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate it. In the house His disciples asked Him about the same matter. So He said to them, 'Whoever divorces his wife and marries another wife commits adultery against her. And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.'"

In fact, in Genesis 2:24, it's written: "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh." Remember

that Jesus is the Word of God and so when He quotes this in Mark 10:7 He affirms that the scripture is the truth, it cannot contradict itself. Therefore, if you want to grow deep roots in faith, you must be a doer of the Word and never divorce if you are married. And if you are not married, you should pray to God to give you a wise wife, for Proverbs 19:14 says: "Houses and riches are an inheritance from fathers, But a prudent wife is from the LORD."

Prescription 5:

"Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.' But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.' For whatever is more than these is from the evil one."(Matthew 5:33 37)

Description:

Never swear falsely, but only tell the truth with nothing added, because adding to it to prove that you are telling the truth is actually a sign that shows that there are lies and deceit coming out of your mouth

Recommendations for use:

What Jesus is saying does not need explanation: it is crystal clear. When you tell the truth, you have a clear

conscience, which means that there is no need to add anything to it. On the other hand, when you lie, and you have a guilty conscious, you are often obliged to add something else if you think your listener doesn't believe you. If you look around you at your own experiences and what you observe among people you talk with, you will see this fundamental truth: the liar always needs to reassure the one who listens to him. A wise man can recognize this behavior and use it to discover the lies which are coming out of the mouth of the one who speaks to him.

Prescription 6:

"Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the same measure you use, it will be measured back to you. And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye'; and look, a plank is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye. Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces." (Matthew 7:1 6)

Description:

Do not keep evil thoughts in your heart and do not judge or you will be judged even more harshly in return

Recommendations for use:

Jesus uses two sayings in Matthew 7:1 6 which need explanation ("Judge not, that you be not judged" and "with the same measure you use, it will be measured back to you"). Jesus Himself explains what He means in Luke 19:11 27:

> Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately. Therefore He said: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business till I come.' But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We will not have this man to reign over us.'
>
> "And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. Then came the first, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned ten minas.' And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.' And the second came, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned five minas.' Likewise he said to him, 'You also be over five cities.'

> "Then another came, saying, 'Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief. For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.' And he said to him, 'Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow. Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?'
>
> "And he said to those who stood by, 'Take the mina from him, and give it to him who has ten minas.' (But they said to him, 'Master, he has ten minas.') 'For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me.'"

Before we examine Jesus's Word, let us quote two of His other wonderful sayings found in Luke 8:18 and Mark 4:25. Luke 8:18 says: "Therefore take heed how you hear. For whoever has, to him more will be given; and whoever does not have, even what he seems to have will be taken from him." Mark 4:24 says, "Then He said to them, 'Take heed what you hear, with the same measure you use, it will be measured to you; and to you who hear, more will be given." Jesus is saying in Luke 8:18 and Mark 4:24 that what you hear and *how*

you hear matter. He also points out what you measure when you hear the Word of God: fear or faith.

Let us use what we have just learned to examine what Jesus teaches us in Luke 19:11–27. In this parable there are three "characters:" the nobleman, the ten servants, and the citizens who hated the nobleman. The nobleman, as we know, gives one mina to each of ten servants and tells each to do business with the money until he returns. Jesus then reported to us the behavior of three of the servants. The first and the second servant pay careful attention to their master's instructions, without any evil thoughts in their hearts, and do what he tells them to do and get good results. The first servant earns ten minas and the second earns five minas. And, when he hears this, their master commends them for their faithfulness. The third servant, however, does not pay attention to what his master says, and fear grabs his heart because of his evil thoughts about his master. (He has already judged his master to be a hard man, taking what is not his and reaping what he has not sown.) Because of this, when his master was speaking he measured fear from his evil thoughts, instead of faith. His evil thoughts put his whole body in darkness so his ears cannot hear, which is why he did not understand or heed his master's instruction: "Do business till I come."

When our Lord and Savior Jesus says, "Take heed how you hear," He means that you need to consider whether you hear in confidence or with evil thoughts. And when he says, "Take heed what you hear," He

means clearly that you will either hear the true message if you have no evil thoughts or you will hear false messages if you have evil thoughts.

Let us now talk about the citizens who hated the nobleman. These citizens had hatred in their hearts so their bodies were in darkness because of their hatred. This is why they went astray and sent messengers after him to say, "We do not want this man to be our king." This action led them to be put to death.

The lesson we must learn from these stories, then, is not to judge, and not to have evil thoughts about our neighbors, because if we do then the judgment we receive will be even worse.

Prescription 7:

"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him! Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets." (Matthew 7:7–12)

Description:

Do good to others and sow righteousness and you will be rewarded

Recommendations for use:

It is written in Mark 11:20–24: "Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. And Peter, remembering, said to Him, 'Rabbi, look! The fig tree which You cursed has withered away.' So Jesus answered and said to them, 'Have faith in God. For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, "Be removed and be cast into the sea," and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will come to pass, he will have whatever he says. Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.'" Through his story, Jesus is teaching us what the kingdom of God is all about.

In the spiritual realm — the realm of faith — there are two characters, God and human beings, and each of them has his role to play. God is faithful, dependable, and trustworthy, so that what He promises, He has already done — or will do. All He wants human beings to do is to ask of Jesus without any evil thoughts (fear, doubt, etc.) in their heart, but instead with total confidence. Jesus said in John 14:12–14: "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it." In this wonderful scripture, Jesus likens "believing in Him" to "asking in His name." Remember that, in Matthew 7:7–12 Jesus concludes by saying, "Therefore,

whatever you want men to do to you do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets." What does this mean? Jesus wants us to do good to our brothers, and to love others. Nobody wants bad things happen to him, so if you do good for your brothers, you will have good come back to you. The law Jesus reveals in this passage is the law of the sower: "Sow and you will reap;" as it says in Proverbs 11:18: ". . . But he who sows righteousness will have a sure reward."

Prescription 8:

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them." (Matthew 7:15 20)

Description:

By your actions others will know what is in your heart

Recommendations for use:

Jesus again used this analogy in Matthew 12:33 37: "Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit. Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the

abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

What is in our heart is hidden to others, but our speech, what our eyes focus on, the kind of feelings we have (fear or worries instead of joy and peace), where we have been, and people we keep company with reveal the true state of our heart. Our outward activities can show whether our heart is full of evil thoughts or full of love for God and others. Our words and deeds reveal who we really are, what is in our hearts, and the true character of our personality.

Prescription 9:

"'Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord," shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, and done in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?" And then I will declare to them, "I never knew you; depart from me, you who practice lawlessness!" Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came,

and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who ears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.' And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." (Matthew 7:21–29)

Description:

If you draw your heart near to God without any evil thoughts and do His Word, you will fulfill the will of God and you will abide forever in Him

Recommendations for use:

Jesus teaches us in Matthew 7:21–29 that what matters is doing the will of His Father or His sayings instead of performing miracles, casting out devils, and prophesying in His name. What is really the will of God? Let us look at the answer of the Lord in Isaiah 29:13: "Therefore the LORD said: 'Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths And honor Me with their lips, But have removed their hearts far from Me, And the fear toward Me is taught by commandment of men." Have you noticed that God says that His will is that we draw near Him with our hearts, and that this is the greatest revelation of God's Word? God does not like hypocrites, those who act contrary to what is in their hearts. But He loves those who have the spirit of faith,

who act on the Word of God stored in their hearts. (We dealt with this issue in many chapters from Chapters One through Twenty-nine.)

Proverbs 4:23 explains why this is true: "Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life." Apart from the case of hypocrisy, our speech, thoughts, deeds, and feelings are the exact reflections of the intents, desires, beliefs, or love stored in our hearts. So it is important to keep our heart full of God's Word without any evil thoughts or lust. This is why the Apostle John says in 1 John 2:15–17: "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever."

This means that what pertains to this world has no root, which is why it is "passing away," but that which belongs to God and does His will has deep roots, so it abides forever. John really repeated what Jesus had already declared in Matthew 7:24–27 when he preached the parable of the need for building your house on a strong foundation.

Prescription 10:

"When He had come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him. And behold, a leper came and worshiped Him, saying, 'Lord, if You are willing,

You can make me clean.' Then Jesus put out His hand and touched him, saying, 'I am willing; be cleansed.' And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus said to him, 'See that you tell no one; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.'" (Matthew 8:1 4)

Description:

Come to Jesus speaking words in line with God's Word and you will be healed from any kind of lack or sickness

Recommendations for use:

There is something interesting in the words of the leper. He said that if it was Jesus's will, then He could make him clean. And Jesus answered that it was His will and so the leper was cured, fulfilling a prophesy Isaiah made in the past, which Jesus came to earth to accomplish. But notice that the leper came to Jesus and confessed what God had already declared: "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean." The leper completed his duty by coming to Jesus and making a declaration which was in line with God's Word, so Jesus also fulfilled His role by healing him.

Jesus teaches us through this that God's Will is to heal human beings from all kinds of sickness or lack. It is written in Isaiah 61:1 2: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, Because the Lord has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are

bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, . . ."

In Isaiah 35:4–6, it is also written: "Say to those who are fearful-hearted, 'Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, With the recompense of God; He will come and save you.' Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, And streams in the desert."

In Matthew 11:4–6, proving what Isaiah prophesied, Jesus said the same things to those John the Baptist sent to Him: "Jesus answered and said to them, 'Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me.'"

What Isaiah prophesied in Isaiah 35:4–6 and Isaiah 61:1–2 is the will of God, which means that God's will is to save human beings from all kinds of lack, sickness, or curse of the law. This means that Jesus is the answer and the solution to any lack, affliction, sickness, or hopeless situation in the world.

Prescription 11:

"Now when Jesus had come into Peter's house, He saw his wife's mother lying sick with a fever. So He

touched her hand, and the fever left her. And she arose and served them." (Matthew 8:14–15)

Description:

Touch Jesus or believe in Him and you will receive His life, which will destroy any deadly thing in you

Recommendations for use:

In this case and many others, Jesus did not speak He only touched the sick person or the sick person touched Him, and the sick person was healed. Let us look again at two instances of these cures. The first event is reported in Matthew 9:18–26: "While he spoke these things to them, behold, a ruler came and worshiped Him, saying, 'My daughter has just died, but come and lay Your hand on her and she will live.' So Jesus arose and followed him, and so did His disciples. And suddenly, a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years came from behind and touched the hem of His garment; for she said to herself, 'If I may touch His garment, I shall be made well.' But Jesus turned around, and when He saw her He said, 'Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well.' And the woman was made well from that hour. When Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the flute players and the noisy crowd wailing, He said to them, 'Make room, for the girl is not dead, but sleeping.' And they ridiculed Him. But when the crowd was put outside, He went in and took her by the hand, and the girl arose. And the report of this went out into all that land."

The second event is reported in Matthew 14:34 36: "When they had crossed over, they came to the land of Gennesaret. And when the men of that place recognized Him, they sent out into all that surrounding region, brought to Him all who were sick, and begged Him that they might only touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched it were made perfectly well."

What is the reason of this healing without Jesus's Word? We find the answer in John 11:25 26, where Jesus said: ". . . 'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, even though he dies, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. . . .'" This means that all of Jesus's body, as well as His soul, spirit, and garments are filled with eternal life. In other words, Jesus is a wellspring of everlasting life and resurrection. So anyone who touches Him or His garments (in the physical realm) or believes in Him (in the spiritual realm) gets eternal life if he lives or if he is dead is raised up from the dead.

Proverbs 14:27 says: "The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, To turn one away from the snares of death." This means that reverence for the Lord opens in your heart a fountain of life, which has the power to heal any deadly thing in your body, your thoughts, your feelings, or even in your heart itself. Proverbs 16:22 says the same thing: "Understanding is a wellspring of life to him who has it. . . ."

Understanding and reverence for the Lord have led the people we have read about to come to Jesus to

receive the wellspring of life, which has healed them from their diseases. Do not forget what Jesus told the Samaritan woman in John 4:13–14: ". . . 'Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.'"

Prescription 12:

"When evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick, that it might fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: 'He Himself took our infirmities And bore our sicknesses.'" (Matthew 8:16–17)

Description:

If you have any kind of sickness, you should come to Jesus or believe in Him to receive healing by connecting to the divine power of God through your faith

Recommendations for use:

Do you notice that Jesus cast out the spirits with a word? However, the Apostle Matthew gave no details about what Jesus did to heal those who were sick. Fortunately, Luke gave more details about this situation in Luke 4:40–41: "When the sun was setting, all those who had any that were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them. And demons also came out of

many, crying out and saying, 'You are the Christ, the Son of God!' And He, rebuking them, did not allow them to speak, for they knew that He was the Christ." We see in this that, for those who are not demon-possessed, He simply lays hand on them, but in many others cases reported in the Scriptures He also speaks and they are healed, showing that Jesus has two means for healing people. If they are demon-possessed He speaks to cast out the evil spirits, but if they are not demon-possessed, He uses either of the two means: speaking or laying hands on them.

Matthew quoted the prophet Isaiah in Matthew 8:17 saying: "He Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses." This means that Jesus has taken our sicknesses, our infirmities, our pains, oppressions, and sufferings, and that if we believe in Jesus all of our diseases and any spiritual or physical lack can be made to vanish from our lives. We suffer as the result of our sins, as it is written in Psalm 107:17–20: "Fools because of their transgression, And because of their iniquities, were afflicted. Their soul abhorred all manner of food. And they drew near the gates of death. Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble. And He saved them out of their distresses. He sent His word and healed them, And delivered them from their destructions." This tells us that most sicknesses are caused by sins or evil spirits. But what is the connection between sin and evil spirits?

The Bible says, in 1 Samuel 16:14–16 (NIV): "Now the Spirit of the LORD had departed from Saul, and an

evil spirit from the LORD tormented him. Saul's attendants said to him, 'See, an evil spirit from God is tormenting you. Let our lord command his servants here to search for someone who can play the harp. He will play when the evil spirit from God comes upon you, and you will feel better." This means that, when we sin, the spirit of the Lord departs from us and an evil spirit comes in to take the place of the spirit of the Lord. This evil spirit torments us and causes our sickness, disease, or infirmity. This means that healing is identical to the casting out of demons. Therefore, the ministry of healing is one of the signs of the messianic era the time of salvation from the power of Satan and the time of God's kingdom on earth.

We can be totally free from pain, disease, and suffering if we release the power of our faith in Christ Jesus. The Word of God is the power of God. The power of God in His Word works for those who believe in Jesus. Do not forget that Jesus is the Word of God. Believing in Jesus means that you have faith in Him and, through your faith, you allow the divine healing power of God to flow inside you and heal you no matter what sickness you have.

Prescription 13:

"Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about Him, He gave a command to depart to the other side. Then a certain scribe came and said to Him, 'Teacher I will follow You wherever You go.' And Jesus said to him, 'Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but

the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.' Then another of His disciples said to Him, 'Lord, let me first go and bury my father.' But Jesus said to him, 'Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead.'" (Matthew 8:18–22)

Description:

Be aware of the difficulties you will have to face if you decide to follow Jesus, but make up your mind and follow Jesus by forgetting what is behind you and reaching for what is ahead

Recommendations for use:

We can find more details in Luke 9:57–62: "Now it happened as they journeyed on the road, that someone said to Him, 'Lord, I will follow You wherever You go.' And Jesus said to him, 'Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head." Then He said to another, 'Follow me.' But he said, 'Lord, let me first go and bury my Father.' Jesus said to him, 'Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of heaven.' And another also said, 'Lord, I will follow You, but let me first go and bid them farewell who are at my house.' But Jesus said to him, 'No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.'"

Jesus teaches us, here, that our love for Him must be greater than our desire for anything or anybody else if we wish to be worthy to be His disciples. Along with that, Jesus also said that we must be aware of the difficulties but accept them if we want to follow Him.

He said in Luke 14:26 27: "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple." To be worthy to follow Jesus, you must forget the things in your past and and reach for those things which are ahead no matter what challenges you might face.

Prescription 14:

"Now when He got into a boat, His disciples followed Him. And suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. But He was asleep. Then His disciples came to Him and awoke Him, saying, 'Lord, save us! We are perishing!' But He said to them, 'Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?' Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. So the men marveled saying, 'Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?'" (Matthew 8:23 27)

Description:

Fear not have faith in Jesus and you will be victorious in any circumstances or situations you face in your life

Recommendations for use:

Psalm 107:17 32 fully explains what happened in Matthew 8:23 27:

Fools, because of their transgression,
And because of their iniquities, were afflicted.

Their soul abhorred all manner of food,
And they drew near to the gates of death.
Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble,
And He saved them out of their distresses.
He sent His word and healed them,
And delivered them from their destructions.
Oh, that men would give thanks to the Lord for His goodness,
And for His wonderful works to the children of men!
Let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving,
And declare His works with rejoicing.

Those who go down to the sea in ships,
Who do business on great waters,
They see the works of the Lord,
And His wonders in the deep.
For He commands and raises the stormy wind,
Which lifts up the waves of the sea.
They mount up to the heavens,
They go down again to the depths;
Their soul melts because of trouble.
They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man,
And are at their wits' end.
Then they cry out to the Lord in their trouble,
And He brings them out of their distresses.
He calms the storm,
So that its waves are still.
Then they are glad because they are quiet;
So He guides them to their desired haven.
Oh, that men would give thanks to the Lord for His goodness,

> And for His wonderful works to the children of men!
> Let them exalt Him also in the assembly of the people,
> And praise Him in the company of the elders.

Why do people stagger like drunken men? Why are people at their wits' end, in confusion, fearful, and knowing not what to do? Why do they cry to the Lord? Psalm 107:17 gives this answer: "Fools, because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, were afflicted." Our Lord and Savior Jesus gives another answer, when He calls his disciples: "O you of little faith". But, is Jesus's answer really different from Psalm 107:17 32? No. In fact, Jesus's answer is more accurate. Jesus gives us the true reason for our fear: It is because we do not have enough faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, which causes us to go astray, to transgress God's Law, and commit sins. The result of these behaviors is fear, confusion, and as described in Psalm 107 staggering.

Jesus, in essence, is telling us to leave our childhood to become adults. Little children always cry to their father for help, but spiritual adults focus on Jesus and do not give up because they believe in His Word, and remember that He declared, in John 16:33: ". . . In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Spiritual adults will always win in any situation they have to face in life, as it is written in 1 John 5:4 5: "For whatever is born of

God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?".

Prescription 15:

"When He had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed men, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way. And suddenly they cried out, saying, 'What do we have to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?' Now a good way off from them there was a herd of many swine feeding. So the demons begged Him, saying, 'If you cast us out, permit us to go away into the herd of swine.' And He said to them, 'Go.' So when they had come out, they went into the herd of swine. And suddenly the whole herd of swine ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and perished in the water. Then those who kept them fled; and they went away into the city and told everything, including what had happened to the demon-possessed men. And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus. And when they saw Him, they begged Him to depart from their region." (Matthew 8:28 34)

Description:

Jesus has made us Satan's master by giving us the authority to cast out demons and heal ourselves and others in His name

Recommendations for use:

Let us look again at what the unclean spirit said in Matthew 8:29: ". . . 'What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?'" No wonder it is written, in James 2:19: "You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe and tremble." This means that both good spirits (the children of the Most High) and unclean spirits (the children of the devil) believe in Jesus, but the difference lies in the fact that children of God believe in faith, while children of the devil believe with fear.

Another important fact that is shown in this passage is that unclean spirits know Jesus as the Son of God. Every time an unclean spirit sees Jesus, it speaks to Him by calling Him by His name and asking Him the same question: Do you come to torment us? Let us remember another wonderful dialogue between Jesus and an unclean spirit, found in Mark 1:21–27: "Then they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath He entered the synagogue and taught. And they were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Now there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, saying, 'Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are the Holy One of God!' But Jesus rebuked him, saying, 'Be quiet, and come out of him!' And when the unclean spirit had convulsed him and cried out with a loud voice, he came out of him.

Then they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, 'What is this? What new doctrine is this? For with authority He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him.'"

But Jesus does not stop there He has also made us masters of demons (Mark 16:15 18: "And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved, but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover'"). We have been given the power and authority to drive out demons in Jesus's name.

Prescription 16:

"Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. Be aware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in the synagogues. You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you. Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise

up against parents and cause them to be put to death. And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved. When they persecute you in this city, flee to another. For assuredly, I say to you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes. A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more will they call those of his household! Therefore do not fear them. For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known." (Matthew 10:16 26)

Description:

Do not fear, for no matter what you see, what you hear, or what you feel, if you endure to the end you will be saved and be victorious over anything that comes against you

Recommendations for use:

Jesus is teaching us that our circumstances (what we can see, what we can hear, and what we can feel) have no power over us. He advises us to endure to the end and then we will be saved. That's all it is our part, our role to play. Jesus teaches us the same thing when He declares in John 16:33: ". . . In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." No wonder John the Apostle states in 1 John 4:4: "You are of God, little children, and have overcome

them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world."

Prescription 17:

"Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 10:32 33)

Description:

Confess Jesus before men by overcoming the world and Jesus will confess you before God

Recommendations for use:

What does Jesus mean by "whoever confesses Me before men"? We understand what this means when we examine His Word in Revelation 3:5: "He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels." This means that when He says "whoever confesses Me before men" our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ means those people who overcome the world by doing what He tells them to do in spite of their worldly tribulations, persecutions, and trials. Jesus said the same thing in Mark 13:13: "And you will be hated by all men for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end shall be saved." So we can be assured that those who endure to the end will be champions.

Prescription 18:

"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." (Matthew 11:28–30)

Description:

Believe in Jesus and receive genuine rest

Recommendations for use:

Can you see that Jesus is teaching us that His way is the best way because it does not cost much but gives genuine rest? King Solomon said the same thing about wisdom—another name for Jesus—in Proverbs 3:17–18: "Her ways are ways of pleasantness And all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her, And happy are all who retain her." No wonder Isaiah prophesied about Jesus the Son of God in Isaiah 61:1–3, saying: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified."

Good news and deliverance from any kind of bondage give joy and rest to all souls. This is one of the purposes of the coming of Jesus Christ to earth and we get it when we believe in Jesus Christ the Son of God. All we have to do is to take heed to the gospel (the Good News of Jesus Christ), believe His sayings, and do what He tells us to do. That's what the yoke of Jesus which is light and easy to bear is all about.

Prescription 19:

"Then the Pharisees went out and took counsel against Him, how they might destroy Him. But when Jesus knew it, He withdrew from there. And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them all. And He warned them not to make Him known, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: 'Behold! My servant whom I have chosen, My beloved in whom My soul is well pleased; I will put My Spirit upon Him, And He will declare justice to the Gentiles. He will not quarrel nor cry out, Nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets. A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench, Till He sends forth justice to victory. And in His name Gentiles will trust.'" (Matthew 12:14 21)

Description:

Never give up; persevere until you are victorious in the face of challenges

Recommendations for use:

Let us look at exactly what is written in Isaiah 42:1 4: "Behold! My servant whom I uphold, My Elect One

in whom My soul delights! I have My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles. He will not cry out, nor raise His voice, Nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench; He will bring forth justice for truth. He will not fail nor be discouraged, Till He has established justice in the earth; And the coastlands shall wait for His law." Can you see that with Jesus there can be neither failure nor discouragement?

Matthew 12:15 says that He healed everyone, meaning that Jesus never fails. Moreover, though Jesus knew the Pharisees intended to kill Him, He persevered in His preaching and healing people without giving up until He established true justice on earth. Jesus gives us this model to follow, challenging us to never give up, but instead to persevere until victory is ours when we are faced with challenges.

Prescription 20:

"Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit. Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified,

and by your words you will be condemned." (Matthew 12:33–37)

Description:
Fill your heart to the brim with God's Word and you will shape the course of your life and receive what your heart desires

Recommendations for use:
Matthew 12:33–37 can only be understood in context, and Luke 6:39–45 gives the real context. So let us look again at what Luke 6:39–45 says: "And He spoke a parable to them: 'Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch? A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher. And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not perceive the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, "Brother, let me remove the speck that is in your eye," when you yourself do not see the plank that is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck that is your brother's eye. For a good tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. For every tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather grapes from a bramble bush. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks."

In this, Jesus is dealing with the quality of our speech. Those who are inspired by God's Words treasured in

their hearts produce good things their words have light to guide others and the power to make change in people's behavior. But those who are inspired by the words of the world stored in their hearts are like one blind man guiding another. The same thing is true when those who are inspired by God's Word correct sinners: their language is credible because it comes from God. Proverbs 16:22 23 shows us how the connection between the heart and the mouth works: "Understanding is a wellspring of life to him who has it . . . The heart of the wise teaches his mouth, And adds learning to his lips." So the flow of living water (good speech) comes from a wise man a man who has great understanding. This is why Jesus said, in John 7:38: "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." Wisdom explains what Jesus is saying in Matthew 12:33 37, in Proverbs 4:20 23: "My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your eyes; Keep them in the midst of your heart; For they are life to those who find them, And health to all their flesh. Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life."

Proverbs 4:23, in the Amplified Version of the Bible declares: "Keep and guard your heart with all vigilance and above all that you guard, for out of it flow the springs of life." When we see that the New King James Versions says "issues of life," while the Amplified Bible says "springs of life," we realize that this passage is truly referring to the "sources of life." If we

substitute this phrase into Proverbs 4:23, it becomes "Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the sources of life."

What have you already learned about guarding what is in your heart? First of all, you must pay attention to the words you hear and listen to what is said. If it is God's Word, you will receive understanding or revelation knowledge, as well as faith and joy, peace, confidence, wellbeing, boldness, and so on. If it is not God's Word, you instead receive knowledge of this world, which brings with it fear, worry, sickness, and unbelief of God's Word, etc.

Secondly, you have to read God's Word or look upon His wonders. If it is God's Word as with hearing you will receive understanding or revelation knowledge, faith, joy, peace, confidence, wellbeing, boldness, and so on. If not, again, you would only receive knowledge of this world and all of the tribulations which come with it.

Thirdly, you must treasure in your heart what comes from outside and enters through your ears or your eyes.

Fourthly, your heart will feed your mouth with what to say, your eyes with what to watch or look at, your deeds with where you go and what you do, your mind with your thoughts, your body with either wellbeing or sickness, and your feelings with either positive or negative emotions.

Can you see that in this way anyone's life is shaped by what he hears and what he sees? Therefore, what you see and what you hear matter. If you want to do

well, have good thoughts, have good feelings, and speak true and pleasant words, then you must feed your heart with God's Word. No wonder we are told in Proverbs 10:14: "Wise people store up knowledge But the mouth of the foolish is near destruction." In fact, Jesus also said in Matthew 12:37: "For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned." Jesus is telling us, here, that our words cause God to justify us to give us our righteousness before Him. This is also why Proverbs 18:21 says: "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit."

Based on what we have found here, the issue is not trying to speak good words, for we know that are unable to do it by ourselves. The real issue is what is in our hearts, because the content of our hearts determines what comes out of our mouths. This is why, if we want to receive the gift of righteousness, we must guard our hearts with all diligence. After all, our heart will reproduce what it has received. If it has received good information, it will only reproduce good information, but if not it will reproduce bad information.

Prescription 21:

"Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'If anyone desires to come after Me let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a

man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to His works. Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom." (Matthew 16:24 28)

Description:

You should not not respond to your natural senses but to God's Word and your good spiritual senses, so you must dedicate your life to Jesus and receive Him as your Lord and Savior to become born again in the Spirit of God

Recommendations for use:

Jesus gives a more specific explanation of what He means when He says a man "loses his life" in John 12:24 25: "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless an ear of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much fruits. He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life." A human being has two kinds of life the first is natural and the second is spiritual. Everyone is born with a natural life. The natural life is the life which responds to the natural senses and is controlled by the worldly situations around it. A natural man reacts, speaks, thinks, decides, and does things according to his natural senses in response to his worldly circumstances. But remember that those who react only to the world are called Satan by Jesus.

We can see what Jesus told Simon Peter when he rebuked Him saying to him, "this shall not happen to you!" beginning in Matthew 16:21 22: "From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and raised again the third day. Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, 'Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!" (Can you see that Simon Peter was reacting to the circumstances of the natural world? As disciples of Jesus Christ we should only be moved by God's Word, not by what we see, feel, or hear if it contradicts God's Word.) Here is how Jesus responded to Simon Peter in Matthew 16:23: ". . . 'Get behind me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.'"

Jesus was telling Simon Peter and all of His followers that those who are driven by their natural senses are the sons of Satan, the devil. But those who are driven by good spiritual senses are sons of God. Therefore if you "deny yourself" or "lose your life" you truly lose your natural life and do not respond to your natural senses but, instead, to God's Word and your spiritual senses. How can you do this? By dedicating your life to Jesus or identifying yourself with Jesus through His suffering, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension into heaven at the right hand of God, and receiving him as your Lord and Savior. Once you do this then you become born again born from the Spirit of God.

Prescription 22:

"Now while they were staying in Galilee, Jesus said to them, 'The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him, and the third day He will be raised up.' And they were exceedingly sorrowful." (Matthew 17:22–23)

Description:

If you focus only on good thoughts, words, feelings, images, and motives—avoiding all evil ones—you will always be victorious, joyful, and at peace

Recommendations for use:

In these two verses Jesus teaches us that there are two kinds of thoughts. There are natural thoughts and spiritual thoughts. People who are not born again naturally focus on death, fear, and bad things, but those who are born again focus on the provisions, promises, hope, and good things of God and His Word. When Jesus predicted His death, His disciples only focused on His death, so they were exceedingly sorrowful. Jesus declared the infallible victory of the children of God in any challenges they face in John 16:33: "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." This means that, as far as the Son of God or any born-again Christian is concerned, the focus must be on the resurrection of Jesus, not on His death.

Our God is a living God who is connected only to good things, not deadly things. Therefore, we must

only allow good thoughts, good feelings, good words, good images, good decisions, and good intentions into our hearts. Wisdom says in Proverbs 4:23: "Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life." This means that you must "Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life" (Proverbs 4:23, New Living Translation Bible). Do you understand now why the disciples became sorrowful when they heard Jesus? It was because they were not focused on the good of the spiritual realm. From now on, make up your mind to only focus on God's Word that brings you faith and hope, and you will always be victorious, joyful, and at peace.

Prescription 23:

"They said to Him, 'Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and put her away?' He said to them, 'Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery. His disciples said to Him, 'If such is the case of the man with his wife, it is better not to marry.' But He said to them, 'All cannot accept this saying, but only those to whom it has been given: For there are eunuchs who were born thus from their mother's womb, and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who

have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He who is able to accept it, let him accept it.'" (Matthew 19:7–12)

Description:

Marry if you desire to marry, but do not marry if you want to stay single for the sake of the kingdom of God

Recommendations for use:

Jesus is teaching us that celibacy is not good for everyone, but only for those to whom God has given it. Because there are different reasons why men cannot marry, we should let those who have an understanding and acceptance of this teaching marry (and remain married) or choose celibacy, as they desire.

Prescription 24:

> Now Jesus, going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples aside on the road and said to them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death, and deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge and to crucify. And the third day He will rise again."
>
> Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Him with her sons, kneeling down and asking something from Him.
>
> And He said to her, "What do you wish?"

She said to Him, "Grant that these two sons of mine may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on the left, in Your kingdom."

But Jesus answered and said, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"

They said to Him, "We are able."

So He said to them, "You will indeed drink My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared by My Father."

And when the ten heard it, they were greatly displeased with the two brothers. But Jesus called them to Himself and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." (Matthew 20:17 28)

Description:
As a believer, your power, authority, and leadership hang on your service to others.

Recommendations for use:
In these verses, Jesus touches on four important topics: His suffering; His death; the condition we must fulfill to get glory in His kingdom; and the fact that the best example of greatness is service. Let us begin with the first topic: The meaning of "drink the cup." In Isaiah 51:17 23 (Good News Bible), God said: "Jerusalem, wake up! Rouse yourself and get up! You have drunk the cup of punishment that the LORD in His anger gave you to drink; you drank it down and it made you stagger. There is no one to lead you, no one among your people to take you by the hand. A double disaster has fallen on you: your land has been devastated by war, and your people have starved. There is no one to show sympathy. At the corner of every street your people collapse from weakness; they are like deer caught in the hunter's net. They have felt the force of God's anger. You suffering people of Jerusalem, you that stagger as though you were drunk, the LORD your God defends you and says, 'I am taking away the cup that I gave you in my anger. You will no longer have to drink the wine that makes you stagger. I will give it to those who oppressed you, to those who made you lie down in the streets and trampled on you as if you were dirt."

In Ezekiel 18:20, God says: "The soul who sins shall die. . . ." It is written in Ecclesiastes 7:20: "For there is not a just man on earth who does good And does not sin." Psalm 14:3 and Psalm 53:3 both say the same thing (". . . There is none who does good, No, not one."). No

wonder God has given His cup of punishment to all mankind, as is reported in Isaiah 51:17–23.

But there is something awesome in Matthew 20:17–28, where Jesus reveals that He is about to drink the cup, meaning that He was going to suffer and die. Baptism here refers to the way Jesus Christ and His disciples would die. So "baptism" and "drink the cup" refer to the same reality: the suffering and death of Jesus Christ. This is the meaning of baptism given by the Apostle Paul in Romans 6:3-4: "Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

How it this possible, since Apostle John declares in 1 John 3:5: "And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin"? 1 John 3:5 tells us that Jesus has no sin, so we are right to wonder why He has to die. But, in the same verse, we get the answer: because He came on earth to take away our sins. This is why Jesus also said in Matthew 20:28: "Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many," meaning that He came to earth to satisfy the law of God as a perfect sacrifice to take away our sins, save us, and give us eternal life. Can you see that even though the nature of authority and leadership on earth is to be served, in the kingdom of heaven service is the primary character of leadership?

Prescription 25:

"Now in the morning, as He returned to the city, He was hungry. And seeing a fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it but leaves, and said to it, 'Let no fruit grow on you ever again.' And immediately the fig tree withered away. And when the disciples saw it, they marveled, saying, 'How did the fig tree wither away so soon?' So Jesus answered and said to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, "Be removed and be cast into the sea," it will be done. And all things, whatever you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.'" (Matthew 21:18 22)

Description:

As a born-again Christian or a believer, picture with your spiritual eyes what you want and then ask in the name of Jesus, and your desire will come to pass

Recommendations for use:

In this passage, Jesus is teaching us what the kingdom of God is all about, and that in the spiritual realm the realm of faith there are two characters: God and human beings, and each of them has his role to play. God is faithful, dependable, and trustworthy, so that what He promises, He has already done or will do. All He wants human beings to do is to ask for what we want without any evil thought or doubt in our mind and with total confidence in Jesus, the Word of God. Once we ask correctly, what He says will definitely

come to pass. Remember that Jesus said: "And all things, whatever you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive." Jesus also said, in John 14:13–14: "And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it." What He is saying is that He will ensure that anything we ask for in His name is done. He wants us to know that He has enough power to back your demand with His authority.

You cannot separate a man from his name. If we hear that a man's name did something, it means that he did it. In the case of Jesus, His name causes things to happen. Moreover, Jesus declares in Mark 16:15–18: ". . . 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.'" By this declaration, Jesus Christ gives to any believer, any born-again Christian or any Christian, the power and authority to do miraculous works in His name.

The genuine believer in Jesus has no doubt in his mind and no fear in his heart because he has made his heart clean through the Word of God (John 15:3: "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you") and his mind has been renewed (Romans 12:2: "And do not be conformed to this world,

but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God") through everyday meditation, as God revealed to us in Joshua 1:8.

Jesus also revealed something else wonderful in His teaching: that faith without hope is not faith. He said in Matthew 21:22: "And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive." According to the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary,* "hope" is a belief that something you want will happen. So the phrase "believing, you will receive" in Matthew 21:22 really means "hoping, you will receive." On the other hand, if you doubt it is impossible for you to hope, because you cannot hope for something and doubt it at the same time.

For a better understanding of what we have just said, let us read the report of the fig tree in Mark 11:20–24: "Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. And Peter, remembering, said to Him, 'Rabbi, look! The fig tree which you cursed has withered away.' So Jesus answered and said to them, 'Have faith in God. For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, "Be removed and be cast into the sea," and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will come to pass, he will have whatever he says. Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.'"

Now let us compare the definition of hope we just read to what our Lord Jesus Christ says in Mark 11:23:

"whoever . . . believes that those things he says will come to pass." Do you see the difference? There is only one word which is not the same; Jesus uses the word "says," while the dictionary definition uses the word "want" but both refer to the same reality: the desire of your heart or what you picture with your mind, because what you say is what you want. Therefore, we can deduce that when Jesus says in Mark 11:23: "whoever . . . believes that those things he says will come to pass," He is referring to hope. But notice that Jesus begins speaking by saying in Mark 11:22: "Have faith in God" and goes on to say: "For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will come to pass, he will have whatever he says." This means that there is a special bond between faith in God and hope. Therefore, if you wish to have faith in God or in Jesus you have to picture with your spiritual eyes what He talks about, what His Word says, what you want, or what you say. Your God-kind of faith appears when you do this, allowing you to have no doubt or unbelief in your mind since it is impossible to picture with your spiritual eyes what you do not hope for. Can you see that you must have the same thoughts as God to be able to move mountains with your words? There is no doubt in God's mind when He speaks, therefore any declaration He makes will come to pass. So if you wish to speak with His name and use His power, you must also have no doubt.

Prescription 26:

"Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country. Now when vintage-time drew near, he sent his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit. And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did likewise to them. Then last of all he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.' So they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him.

"Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?"

They said to Him, "He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and lease his vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons."

Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures:

> 'The stone which the builders rejected
> Has become the chief cornerstone.
> This was the Lord's doing,
> And it is marvelous in our eyes'?

"Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing

> the fruits of it. And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder."
>
> Now when the chief priests and Pharisees heard His parables, they perceived that He was speaking of them. But when they sought to lay hands on Him, they feared the multitudes, because they took Him for a prophet. (Matthew 21:33–46)

Description:

On the day of judgment, will have to account for what you have done with the power given to you by Jesus, so be obedient to God's Word and be ready for that day

Recommendations for use:

In this parable, the vineyard is Israel (or Jerusalem, or the Promised Land). The vinedressers are the Jewish religious leaders (chief priests, elders of the people, and scribes). The servants are the prophets of the Old Testament. The son is Jesus Christ sent by the owner of the vineyard (God) to get his share of the fruits. And Jesus foretells His own death outside of Jerusalem when He tells of the vineyard owner's son being thrown out of the vineyard and killed.

The passage Jesus quoted was Psalm 118:22–23: "The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD's doing. It is marvelous in our eyes." What does that passage mean? First of all, the chief cornerstone is the Messiah, while the builders are the Jewish religious leaders of Israel. So Jesus is saying that religious leaders of Israel

rejected Jesus as the Messiah. He prophesied that the kingdom of God would be taken from Israel and given to the Gentiles — or any true believers, either Jew or not — when He said: ". . . the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it."

As a believer, you must realize that you have received power from Jesus during your lifetime on earth, and you will have to account for your deeds to God. You must be obedient to God's Word so that you will be ready and unafraid to tell of your life on the day of judgment, as the Bible says in 1 John 4:17: "Love has been perfected among us in this, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world."

Prescription 27:

"Then the Pharisees went and plotted how they might entangle Him in His talk. And they sent to Him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, 'Teacher, we know that You are true, and teach the way of God in truth; nor do You care about anyone, for You do not regard the person of men. Tell us, therefore, what do You think? Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?' But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, 'Why do you test Me, you hypocrites? Show Me the tax money.' So they brought Him a denarius. And He said to them, 'Whose image and inscription is this?' They said to Him, 'Caesar's.' And He said to them, 'Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God

the things that are God's.' When they had heard these words, they marveled, and left Him and went their way." (Matthew 22:15 22)

Description:

Speak only God's Word the word of truth and you will avoid the snares of your enemies

Recommendations for use:

Can you see that the Pharisees intended to trap Jesus using His own words? They tried to deceive Him by speaking kind words by calling Him "teacher" and praising him. But Proverbs 26:25 warns us about believing the flattery of our enemies, or of acquaintances, saying, "When he speaks kindly, do not believe him, For there are seven abominations in his heart."

The Pharisees sent their men with the Herodians so that the Herodians would later be able to testify against Jesus. If Jesus had said it was unlawful to pay taxes to Caesar, then He would have been arrested. But if, afraid of being arrested, He had said it was lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, He would have sinned against God. After all, God said in Joshua 1:8 that you must only tell the truth what God or His Word says and not say something God has not put in your heart. Jesus, however, perceived their hypocrisy and told them the truth: that we must give to the world what belongs in the world, but give to God what belongs to Him.

Prescription 28:

"Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, saying: 'The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do. For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments. They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, "Rabbi, Rabbi." But you, do not be called "Rabbi"; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren. Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ. But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted." (Matthew 23:1 12)

Description:

To receive the power to exercise total control on the earth through your speech, first be pure in heart and develop genuine fellowship with God

Recommendations for use:

Look at the description Jesus Christ gives of the behavior of the scribes and the Pharisees. He says

that "they say, and do not do," which is actually the characteristic of hypocrites — people who pretend to have moral standards or opinions that they do not actually have. (This means that you are a hypocrite if your outer man presents to the world words and attitudes which are not in your heart.) Good people always do things based on the content of their hearts. And we know that we speak according to our belief, as it is written in 2 Corinthians 4:13: "And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, 'I believed and therefore I spoke,' we also believe and therefore speak, . . ." This means that, if what you do is not consistent with your words, you are a hypocrite.

But why did Jesus treat the scribes and Pharisees like hypocrites? Let us allow Jesus's own words to tell us. In Matthew 23:13–36, Jesus said:

> "But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. Therefore you will receive greater condemnation.
>
> "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.

"Woe to you, blind guides, who say, 'Whoever swears by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is obliged to perform it.' Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that sanctifies the gold? And, 'Whoever swears by the altar, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gift that is on it, he is obliged to perform it.' Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that sanctifies the gift? Therefore he who swears by the altar, swears by it and by all things on it. He who swears by the temple, swears by it and by Him who dwells in it. And he who swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God and by Him who sits on it.

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also.

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed

appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous, and say, 'If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.'

"Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers' guilt. Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell? Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.

Do you see that Jesus takes advantage of this situation and reveals something astounding? He says, in Matthew 23:26: "Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them

may be clean also." This is a sovereign declaration of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, stating that if we cleanse our mind and heart from evil thoughts, bad motives or intentions, and bad feelings, as a result our speech, attitudes, and deeds will automatically be in line with God's Word. All we have to do is to cleanse our heart and renew our mind with God's Word. Then our speech, deeds, feelings, and focus will be in line with God's Word, and our speech will take on the same power God used to create the universe.

But why is Jesus so concerned by the hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees? Because He intends to teach that a lack of hypocrisy is one key to entering into the kingdom of heaven and permanently living in the kingdom.

Do you see why Jesus emphasizes the need to not be a hypocrite? As He said in Matthew 5:8: "Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God." In other words, being pure in heart turns you from an ordinary, natural man into a supernatural man who is a genuine child of God sharing God's intimacy. When this happens, you carry the glory of God wherever you go, in everything you do or say. This is why it is of extreme importance to be sincere, not hypocritical.

God said in Isaiah 55:8–11: "'For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,' says the LORD. 'For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, And do not return there, But water

the earth, And make it bring forth and bud, That it may give seed to the sower And bread to the eater, So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.'" Can you see that God is saying that His thoughts and His ways are far away from those of ordinary men and that His Word is powerful and does whatever He talks about? Jesus is the prototype, the perfect example of God's children; He has the same thoughts as God and the same manners, and speaks the same Word of God. No wonder Jesus performed countless wonders and miracles on earth and moved many folks into faith. This is the purpose of any believer: to be like Jesus.

To receive the thoughts and ways of God, we can use the Word of God in the Scriptures. To be able to have a powerful speech, we need to cleanse our heart through meditation on God's Word day and night and put it into practice. Once we do this we will be able to exercise the authority Jesus gives us when He sends His disciples into the world in Mark 16:15–18: "And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved, but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they

will recover.'" Moreover, Jesus said in John 15:7: "If you abide in Me, and My words

abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you." So, when he asks in the name of Jesus, a believer's word gets power and achieves whatever he says.

Notice that God has given a power weapon to His children, those who believe in His Son Jesus Christ: our mouth, which can fulfill whatever it talks about, as it is written in Isaiah 41:10 16:

"'. . . Fear not, for I am with you;
Be not dismayed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you,
Yes, I will help you,
I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.'

"Behold, all those who were incensed against you
Shall be ashamed and disgraced;
They shall be as nothing,
And those who strive with you shall perish.
You shall seek them and not find them
Those who contended with you.
Those who war against you
Shall be as nothing,
As a nonexistent thing.
For I, the Lord your God, will hold your right hand,
Saying to you, 'Fear not, I will help you.'

"Fear not, you worm Jacob,
You men of Israel!
I will help you," says the Lord
And your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

"Behold, I will make you into a new threshing sledge with sharp teeth;
You shall thresh the mountains and beat them small,
And make the hills like chaff.
You shall winnow them, the wind shall carry them away,
And the whirlwind shall scatter them;
You shall rejoice in the Lord,
And glory in the Holy One of Israel."

Prescription 29:

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate; for I say to you; you shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!'" (Matthew 23:37–39)

Description:

Stay away from innocent bloodshed and you will avoid the wrath of God

Recommendations for use:

For years, the people of Jerusalem specialized in killing the prophets God sent to her. Let us look at what God told Jeremiah to do when He sent him to the house of the king of Judah. The Bible declares, in Jeremiah 22:1–5: "Thus says the LORD: 'Go down to the house of the king of Judah, and speak this word, and

say, "Hear the word of the LORD, O king of Judah, you sit on the throne of David, you and your servants and your people who enter these gates! Thus says the LORD: 'Execute judgment and righteousness, and deliver the plundered out of the hand of the oppressor. Do not wrong and do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, or the widow, nor shed innocent blood in this place. For if you indeed do this thing, then shall enter the gates of this house, riding on horses and in chariots, accompanied by servants and people, kings who sit on the throne of David. But if you will not hear these words, I swear by myself,' says the LORD, 'that this house shall become a desolation.'"'" In this way, God warned the king of Judah and his house to heed His Word and obey, otherwise Jerusalem will become a desolate place.

Now let us look at what happened when Jeremiah went to deliver his message to those who came in to worship. We find it in Jeremiah 26:1–24:

> In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came from the Lord, saying, "Thus says the Lord: 'Stand in the court of the Lord's house, and speak to all the cities of Judah, which come to worship in the Lord's house, all the words that I command you to speak to them. Do not diminish a word. Perhaps everyone will listen and turn from his evil way, that I may relent concerning the calamity which I purpose to bring on them because of the evil of their doings.' And you shall say to them, 'Thus

says the Lord: "If you will not listen to Me, to walk in My law which I have set before you, to heed the words of My servants the prophets whom I sent to you, both rising up early and sending them (but you have not heeded), then I will make this house like Shiloh, and will make this city a curse to all the nations of the earth.'"'

So the priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of the Lord. Now it happened, when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that the Lord had commanded him to speak to all the people, that the priests and the prophets and all the people seized him, saying, "You will surely die! Why have you prophesied in the name of the Lord, saying, 'This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate, without an inhabitant'?" And all the people were gathered against Jeremiah in the house of the Lord.

When the princes of Judah heard these things, they came up from the king's house to the house of the Lord and sat down in the entry of the New Gate of the Lord's house. And the priests and the prophets spoke to the princes and all the people, saying, "This man deserves to die! For he has prophesied against this city, as you have heard with your ears."

Then Jeremiah spoke to all the princes and all the people, saying: "The Lord sent me to prophesy

against this house and against this city with all the words that you have heard. Now therefore, amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the Lord your God; then the Lord will relent concerning the doom that He has pronounced against you. As for me, here I am, in your hand; do with me as seems good and proper to you. But know for certain that if you put me to death, you will surely bring innocent blood on yourselves, on this city, and on its inhabitants; for truly the Lord has sent me to you to speak all these words in your hearing."

So the princes and all the people said to the priests and the prophets, "This man does not deserve to die. For he has spoken to us in the name of the Lord our God."

Then certain of the elders of the land rose up and spoke to all the assembly of the people, saying: "Micah of Moresheth prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and spoke to all the people of Judah, saying, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts:

"Zion shall be plowed like a field,
Jerusalem shall become heaps of ruins,
And the mountain of the temple
Like the bare hills of the forest."'

Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah ever put him to death? Did he not fear the Lord and seek the Lord's favor? And the Lord relented concerning the doom which He had pronounced

against them. But we are doing great evil against ourselves."

Now there was also a man who prophesied in the name of the Lord, Urijah the son of Shemaiah of Kirjath Jearim, who prophesied against this city and against this land according to all the words of Jeremiah. And when Jehoiakim the king, with all his mighty men and all the princes, heard his words, the king sought to put him to death; but when Urijah heard it, he was afraid and fled, and went to Egypt. Then Jehoiakim the king sent men to Egypt: Elnathan the son of Achbor, and other men who went with him to Egypt. And they brought Urijah from Egypt and brought him to Jehoiakim the king, who killed him with the sword and cast his dead body into the graves of the common people.

Nevertheless the hand of Ahikam the son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah, so that they should not give him into the hand of the people to put him to death.

God advised His people not to shed innocent blood in Jerusalem, otherwise the murder would bring doom upon the temple and the city of Jerusalem. Every time they broke this decree from God, the doom foretold by God was fulfilled and the temple and Jerusalem were left desolate. Indeed, Jesus prophesied the destruction of the temple in Matthew 24:1–2: "Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples

came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said to them, 'Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down.'" Jesus was simply telling His disciples what Jeremiah had already prophesied in the name of God in Jeremiah 22:5, when he said that the city would become a desolate place. At the same time, Jesus also prophesied the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem, which came true in AD 70 all of which could have been avoided if Jerusalem had avoided innocent bloodshed, as they had been warned.

Prescription 30:

"Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, 'Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming and of the end of the age?' And Jesus answered and said to them: 'Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, "I am the Christ," and will deceive many. And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one

another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all nations, and then the end will come.'" (Matthew 24:3–14)

Description:

When you are obedient to God's Word you will increase your love for Jesus, which will cause you to treasure His commandments and put them into practice

Recommendations for use:

When Jesus says "And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold," He is telling us that there is a bond between love and obedience to the law. In other words, if you cease to obey the law, your love decreases. Jesus also links His love for us with our obedience to His commandments in John 15:9–10: "As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love." Do you see now that obedience to Jesus's commandments causes Him to love us? This means that Jesus repays our obedience to His commandments with His Love for us, which is what it means when He says that we will abide in Him, as it is written in John 15:10.

Jesus further specifies that in His eyes, only those who keep His commandments love Him. It is obvious,

then, that our obedience of Jesus's commandments is the product of our love for Jesus Christ. Can you see that our obedience to God's Word is the sign of our love for Jesus and, at the same time, it produces Jesus's love for us? Likewise, our obedience to God's Word is proof of our love for Jesus. Therefore, if we increase our love for Jesus through our daily meditation on God's Word and worshiping God in spirit, truth, and thanksgiving, our increasing love will cause us to do God's Word and become more obedient to it.

Jesus also teaches us that in this world we will see persecution, calamity, war, and the suffering of the innocent, but we must be of good cheer because through our perseverance and patience we will secure our lives in heaven. Jesus says the same thing in John 16:33 (Amplified Version): ". . . In the world you have tribulation and trials and distress and frustration; but be of good cheer [take courage; be confident, certain, undaunted]! For I have overcome the world. [I have deprived it of power to harm you and have conquered it for you]."

This is an awesome message of hope for all believers at any time. No matter what we face on our journey we have, with this verse, our guarantee of victory. All we have to do is to play our part, remain calm, and not lose our temper, courage, or joy but focus on Jesus or on God's Word our hope of glory. Indeed, the Apostle Paul said in Colossians 1:27: ". . . Christ in you, the hope of glory." Jesus has told us we will have victory no matter what our circumstances are, no matter

the situation we find ourselves in, and so on, so we wait and we do what He tells us to do so that our love for Him increases in us, helps us, gives us enough strength to overcome any challenges in life.

Prescription 31:

"Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand), "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.

"Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it. For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you beforehand.

"Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; or 'Look, He is in the inner rooms!' do not believe it. For as the lightning

comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together.

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

"Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near at the doors! Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

"But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered

the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

"Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Matthew 24:15–51)

Description:

If you repent your sins, turn to God, and believe in Jesus to bring the kingdom of God within yourself

by treasuring His Word in your heart, then you will become a champion who will always prevail in any circumstance while boldly waiting for the second coming of Christ

Recommendations for use:
In this passage from Matthew, Jesus deals with the day of desolation of the Holy place and the day of His second coming, but He focuses on being watchful. So Jesus shows us that what matters is what we do before these days of tribulation happen. It is obvious to every man that there is no more likelihood that he will see the approach of the day of the second coming of Jesus Christ than he will foresee the day of his own death.

We also know that a dead man cannot pray to God. It is written in Isaiah 38:18 19: "For Sheol cannot thank You, Death cannot praise You; Those who go down to the pit cannot hope for Your truth. The living, the living man, he shall praise You, As I do this day; The father shall make known Your truth to the children." Do you remember that God said in Ezekiel 18:20 that the soul who sins shall die? So any sinner who dies in his sinful state will die not only physically but spiritually, giving him no eternal life so that he will not see God and Jesus His Lord and Savior. There is no way for a sinful man who dies to pray to God while in Sheol awaiting the second coming of Christ. On the other hand, born-again Christians who have received everlasting life during their lifetime will continue to live spiritually and to see God and our Lord and

Savior Jesus Christ, even though their body is dead. Any believer even after his death is able to praise God because his spirit remains alive. This is why Jesus, quoting what God the Father declared in Exodus 3:6, said in Matthew 22:32: "'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob' . . . God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." Thus God is the God of the believers, not the God of those who never repented during their lifetime and died in their sinful state. The key point in this is that you must make up your mind to become a genuine believer and do the sayings and commandments of Jesus Christ, no matter what challenges, circumstances, and situations you find yourself in. This faithful behavior and attitude will allow you to wait in peace, boldly and joyfully, for your possible death or the second coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, as it is written in 1 John 4:17: "Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so we are in this world."

About the coming of the kingdom of God, Jesus added in Luke 17:20 21: ". . . 'The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, "See here!" or "See there!" For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you." Can you see that Jesus declares that the kingdom of God is within us not "will be" but "is" inside us? This means that it is our responsibility to bring the kingdom of God into our heart by treasuring God's Word after our repentance. Why? Jesus tells us, in Matthew 4:17, to repent *because the kingdom of*

God is at hand, pointing out that our repentance is the first requirement to receiving the kingdom of God in us: "From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'"

In Luke 17:20–21, Jesus also specifies that the kingdom does not come to us "through observation" meaning that it is not physical, but spiritual. And, as we know, the Word of God is spirit, as Jesus states in John 6:63: "It is the Spirit who gives life, the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit and they are life." Therefore, after your repentance and your confession of Jesus as your Lord and Savior, you are able to start treasuring God's Word in your heart and, by doing this, bring the kingdom of God into your heart.

Prescription 32:

"Then Jesus said to them, 'All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: "I will strike the Shepherd, And the sheep of the flock will be scattered." But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee.' Peter answered and said to Him, 'Even if all are made to stumble because of you, I will never be made to stumble.' Jesus said to him, 'Assuredly, I say to you that this night, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.' Peter said to Him, 'Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!' And so said all the disciples." (Matthew 26:31–35)

"Now Peter sat outside in the courtyard. And a servant girl came to him, saying, 'You also were with Jesus

of Galilee.' But he denied it before them all, saying, 'I do not know what you are saying.' And when he had gone out to the gateway, another girl saw him and said to those who were there, 'This fellow also was with Jesus of Nazareth.' But again he denied with an oath, 'I do not know the Man!' And a little later those who stood by came to him and said to Peter, 'Surely you also are one of them, because your speech betrays you.' Then he began to curse and swear, saying, 'I do not know the Man!' Immediately a cock crowed. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus who had said to him, 'Before the cock crows, you will deny Me three times.' So he went out and wept bitterly." (Matthew 26:69–75)

Description:

Repent, for repentance is the remedy, which prevents your faith from failing

Recommendations for use:

Notice something humbling in the behavior of Peter: after denying Jesus three times, he wept bitterly when he was reminded of what Jesus had foretold about his denial. This is the right attitude to have when you become aware of your transgressions or sins against God.

That right attitude has been endorsed in the past by God Himself. Let us look at Isaiah 38:1–5 to see the evidence of the right attitude of Peter: "In those days Hezekiah was sick and near to death. And Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, went to him and said to

him, 'Thus says the LORD: "Set your house in order, for you shall die and not live."' Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall, and prayed to the Lord, and said, 'Remember now, O LORD, I pray, how I have walked before You in truth and with a loyal heart, and have done what is good in Your sight.' And Hezekiah wept bitterly. Then the word of the LORD came to Isaiah, saying, 'Go and say to Hezekiah, "So says the LORD, the God of David your father: 'I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; and I will add to your days fifteen years.'"'" Both King Hezekiah and Peter wept bitterly for they had contrite spirits.

Can you see that God is always moved with compassion by our prayer or our tears? This is why it is written in Isaiah 57:15: "For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: 'I dwell in the high and holy place, With him who has a contrite and humble spirit, To revive the spirit of the humble, And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.'"

Now let us look at the actions of Judas Iscariot, both when Jesus predicted his betrayal and then when he learned that Jesus had been condemned. First, let us go to Matthew 26:20–25, where Jesus predicted Judas Iscariot's betrayal: "When evening had come, He sat down with the twelve. Now as they were eating, He said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me.' And they were exceedingly sorrowful, and each of them began to say to Him, 'Lord, is it I?' He answered and said, 'He who dipped his hand with Me in the dish will betray Me. The Son of Man indeed goes as it

is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born.' Then Judas, who was betraying Him, answered and said, 'Rabbi, is it I?' He said to him, 'You have said it."

Next, let us read about the betrayal of Judas Iscariot in Matthew 26:47–56: "And while He was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, with a great multitude with swords and clubs, came from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now His betrayer had given them a sign, saying, 'Whomever I kiss, He is the One; seize Him.' Immediately he went up to Jesus and said, 'Greetings, Rabbi!' and kissed Him. And Jesus said to him, 'Friend, why have you come?' Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and took Him. And suddenly, one of those who were with Jesus stretched out his hand and drew his sword, struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear. But Jesus said to him, 'Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels? How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?' In that hour Jesus said to the multitudes, 'Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? I sat daily with you, teaching in the temple, and you did not seize Me. But all this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.' Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled."

Finally, let us look at Matthew 27:1–10 to see how Judas Iscariot reacted to the condemnation to death of Jesus: "When morning came, all the chief priests and elders of the people plotted against Jesus to put Him to death. And when they had bound Him, they led Him away and delivered Him to Pontius Pilate the governor. Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, 'I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.' And they said, 'What is that to us? You see to it!' Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself. But the chief priests took the silver pieces and said, 'It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, because they are the price of blood.' And they consulted together and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, 'And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the value of Him who was priced, whom they of the children of Israel priced, and gave them for the potter's field, as the LORD directed me.'"

Can you see the difference between the attitudes of Peter and Judas Iscariot? Peter became aware of his weakness, realizing that he had done something bad, and wept bitterly. On the other hand, while Judas Iscariot was also remorseful when he became aware of his weakness, instead of weeping and hoping for

forgiveness from Jesus (who taught him that man has to always forgive his fellow man), he went and hanged himself. His behavior showed that he had no hope in Jesus. This is the big difference between Peter and Judas Iscariot. Peter did not give up his hope and faith in Jesus, even though he had denied Him three times. Why? Because he knew that Jesus loved him and hoped that He would forgive him. Judas Iscariot, however, gave up because he did not pay attention to his Master's teachings and failed to treasure hope in Jesus in his heart.

Before we move on, the account of Peter's denial in the book of Luke adds something striking that must be emphasized. We find this account in Luke 22:31–34: "And the Lord said, 'Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.' But he said to Him, 'Lord, I am ready to go with you, both in prison and to death.' Then He said, 'I tell you, Peter, the cock will not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me.'"

Can you see, again, that as far as Jesus is concerned, what matters is our faith? No matter what comes across our path in our journey of life, if our faith does not fail—even though we may stumble—we will never be defeated by Satan. After all Jesus went on and said to Peter: ". . . and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren." Do you understand what Jesus is saying? Jesus is saying that after Peter repented, he

would strengthen the other disciples just as when you repent it strengthens your brethren. What does this mean to us? Jesus is teaching us that repentance is the remedy, which prevents our faith from failing. As far as Jesus is concerned, sin is not a problem since we have a solution: our repentance. Thus the Bible says, in 1 John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Prescription 33:

"Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, 'Sit here while I go and pray over there.' And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. Then He said to them, 'My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me.' He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, 'O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.' Then He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, 'What, could you not watch with Me one hour? Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.' Again, a second time He went away and prayed, saying, 'O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done.' And He came and found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy. So He left them, went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same

words. Then He came to His disciples and said to them, 'Are you still sleeping, and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand.'" (Matthew 26:36–46)

Description:

If you are watchful and keep strengthening your spirit with prayer then your spirit will, in turn, strengthen your body so that you will not be tempted by the devil

Recommendations for use:

Jesus teaches us a lot of things in His last prayers in Gethsemane. First of all, He tells us to keep watching and praying so that we will not fall into temptation, because these are our best weapons against temptation.

Secondly, Jesus reveals to us the core nature of our spirit and our flesh. Our spirit, by its nature, has the desire to do right, to be righteous, and to do what God commands us to do. But on the other hand our flesh is weak and powerless. So being alert and praying gives power to our spirit, which can then strengthen our flesh so that we can resist the devil and overcome him. This process works because our spirit is willing to be directed by God. However, Jesus also reveals to us that although our spirit is willing, it lacks the power to make any changes. Therefore our greatest flaw comes from our flesh being weak or unwilling. Luckily, here Jesus teaches us that the way to empower our spirit is to be watchful and never stop praying. This is a great revelation of Jesus Christ, and He not only tells us

what to do to overcome temptation but He puts it into practice, praying: "O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done."

But what is the will of God? We find it described in John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

In his report, Luke gives more details about what happened after Jesus Christ made His plea to His Father in Gethsemane, in Luke 22:43: "Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him." Can you see that His constant prayer caused God the Father to send an angel to give strength to His spirit which, in turn, strengthened His body and made it ready to fulfill His assignment?

Prescription 34:

"And those who had laid hold of Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled. But Peter followed Him at a distance to the high priest's courtyard. And he went in and sat with the servants to see the end. Now the chief priests, the elders, and all the council sought false testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, but found none. Even though many false witnesses came forward, they found none. But at last two false witnesses came forward and said, 'This fellow said, "I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days."' And the high priest arose and said to Him, 'Do you answer nothing? What is it these men testify against you?' But

Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to Him, 'I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God.' Jesus said to him, 'It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.' Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, 'He has spoken blasphemy! What further need do we have of witnesses? Look, now you have heard His blasphemy! What do you think?' They answered and said, 'He deserves death.' Then they spat in His face and beat Him; and others struck Him with the palms of their hands, saying, 'Prophesy to us, Christ! Who is the one who struck You?'" (Matthew 26:57 68)

Description:

Do not judge others, for there is no way to know who they really are from their outward actions only the Word of God, the Holy Spirit, and the wisdom of God can help you to learn the truth about others

Recommendations for use:

Did you notice that the high priest used the law of God to sentence Jesus to death? We find this law about blasphemy in Leviticus 24:16, which says: "And whoever blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall certainly stone him, the stranger as well as him who is born in the land. When he blasphemes the name of the LORD, he shall be put to death." At first glance, it seems the high priest was right to condemn Jesus

to death. But what evidence did he give in support of this? Did he give any proof to show that Jesus is not the Son of God? No. Do you see why God sent Jesus to earth? God sent His Son to earth to put an end to unrighteous judgment. It is written in Isaiah 11:1 4: "There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out his roots, The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. His delight is in the fear of the LORD, And He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, Nor decide by the hearing of His ears; But with righteousness He shall judge the poor, And decide with equity for the meek of the earth; He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked."

Do you see now what a righteous judgment is? A righteous judgment is not based on what you see or what you hear, but on the Word of God, on wisdom given to you by the Word of God, or by a revelation given to you by the Holy Spirit. The high priest in the story above based his sentence on the outer man of Jesus Christ and what he thought that Christ, the Son of God, must look like, so he failed to see the true character of Jesus. People make this common mistake in life, which is why Jesus advises us not to judge others in Matthew 7:1 6, saying, "Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will

be measured back to you. And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye'; and look, a plank is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye. Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces." Only the Word of God, the Holy Spirit, or the wisdom given by God can help us makes righteous judgments. The high priest could have avoided his great mistake if he had examined the Scriptures to find the truth.

Prescription 35:

> Now Jesus stood before the governor. And the governor asked Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?"
>
> Jesus said to him, "It is as you say." And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He answered nothing.
>
> Then Pilate said to Him, "Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?" But He answered him not one word, so that the governor marveled greatly.
>
> Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to releasing to the multitude one prisoner whom they wished. And at that time they had a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. Therefore, when they

had gathered together, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release to you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" For he knew that they had handed Him over because of envy.

While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, "Have nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him."

But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitudes that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. The governor answered and said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?"

They said, "Barabbas!"

Pilate said to them, "What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?"

They all said to him, "Let Him be crucified!"

Then the governor said, "Why, what evil has He done?"

But they cried out all the more, saying, "Let Him be crucified!"

When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather that a tumult was rising, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see to it."

And all the people answered and said, "His blood be on us and on our children."

Then he released Barabbas to them; and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered Him to be crucified.

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole garrison around Him. And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him. When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" Then they spat on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head. And when they had mocked Him, they took the robe off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified.

Now as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. Him they compelled to bear His cross. And when they had come to a place called Golgotha, that is to say, Place of a Skull, they gave Him sour wine mingled with gall to drink. But when He had tasted it, He would not drink.

Then they crucified Him, and divided His garments, casting lots, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet:

"They divided My garments among them,
And for My clothing they cast lots."

Sitting down, they kept watch over Him there. And they put up over His head the accusation written against Him:

THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Then two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and another on the left.

And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads and saying, "You who destroy the temple and build it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross."

Likewise the chief priests also, mocking with the scribes and elders, said, "He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He is the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, 'I am the Son of God.'"

Even the robbers who were crucified with Him reviled Him with the same thing.

Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

Some of those who stood there, when they heard that, said, "This Man is calling for Elijah!"

Immediately one of them ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine and put it on a reed, and offered it to Him to drink.

The rest said, "Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to save Him."

And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.

Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.

So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

And many women who followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to Him, were there looking on from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.

Now when evening had come, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be given to him.

> When Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb, and departed. And Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, sitting opposite the tomb. (Matthew 27:11 61)

Description:

Put your trust in Jesus, for He is our redeemer who delivers us from the troubles, infirmities, and pains of life, as well as our bonds of fear; He has borne all of these trials and died on the cross to deliver us and fulfill our lives

Recommendations for use:

Isaiah the prophet predicted the suffering or passion of Jesus Christ in Isaiah 53:1 12. Let us have a look at this wonderful prophecy:

> Who has believed our report?
> And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?
> For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant,
> And as a root out of dry ground.
> He has no form or comeliness;
> And when we see Him,
> There is no beauty that we should desire Him.
> He is despised and rejected by men,
> A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.
> And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him;
> He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

Surely He has borne our griefs
And carried our sorrows;
Yet we esteemed Him stricken,
Smitten by God, and afflicted.
But He was wounded for our transgressions,
He was bruised for our iniquities;
The chastisement for our peace was upon Him,
And by His stripes we are healed.
All we like sheep have gone astray;
We have turned, every one, to his own way;
And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed and He was afflicted,
Yet He opened not His mouth;
He was led as a lamb to the slaughter,
And as a sheep before its shearers is silent,
So He opened not His mouth.
He was taken from prison and from judgment,
And who will declare His generation?
For He was cut off from the land of the living;
For the transgressions of My people He was stricken.
And they made His grave with the wicked
But with the rich at His death,
Because He had done no violence,
Nor was any deceit in His mouth.

Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him;
He has put Him to grief.
When You make His soul an offering for sin,
He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days,
And the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand.

He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied.
By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many,
For He shall bear their iniquities.
Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great,
And He shall divide the spoil with the strong,
Because He poured out His soul unto death,
And He was numbered with the transgressors,
And He bore the sin of many,
And made intercession for the transgressors.

Apart from acknowledging that He was the Christ, Jesus answered nothing when pressed by the chief priests and elders, as Isaiah the prophet foretold. He also said nothing when pressed by Pilate who, though left with no evidence to support his ruling, sentenced Jesus to death, then took water and washed his hands before the multitude. Look at the report from Matthew 27:12 14 : "And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He answered nothing. Then Pilate said to Him, 'Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?' And He answered him not one word, so that the governor marveled greatly." The soldiers of the governor stripped Jesus's clothes and put a scarlet robe around Him. Then they made a crown out of thorny branches and placed it on His head, and put a stick in His right hand; then they knelt before Him and mocked Him. 'Long live the King of the Jews!' they said. They spat on Him, and took the

stick and Hit him over the head. When they had finished mocking Him, they took the robe off and put His own clothes back on Him. Then they led Him out to crucify Him."

Do you see how they treated an innocent man? Since Jesus was innocent, the punishment, affliction, bruises, and stripes He received He bore for the iniquities and transgressions of mankind. No wonder Isaiah said: "Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed."

Isaiah also prophesied that although Christ would die with the wicked He would be with the rich at His death (Isaiah 53:9). Indeed, when it happened, two robbers were crucified with him, and a rich man, Joseph from Arimathea, placed Jesus in his own tomb, which he had just recently dug out of solid rock.

Isaiah the prophet also predicted that Jesus was innocent, saying in Isaiah 53:9: ". . . Because He had done no violence, nor was any deceit in His mouth." In fact, the Apostle Peter said in 1 Peter 2:21 25: "For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow his steps: 'Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth'; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges

righteously; who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness by whose stripes you were healed. For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls." As we have seen, it is written in Isaiah 53:5: ". . . And by His stripes we are healed." Peter said, in 1 Peter 2:24: ". . . by whose stripes you *were* healed," since at the time Peter was speaking Jesus has already borne His stripes.

Do you see now that all things Jesus did, said, or experienced were already written in the Bible, the Word of God? For instance, Psalm 22:1, 7 8, 16 18, 22 23 prophesied many things which happened during Jesus's passion: "My God, my God, why have You forsaken me? . . . All those who see Me ridicule Me; They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, 'He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him; Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!' . . . For dogs have surrounded Me; the congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots . . . I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the congregation I will praise You. You who fear the LORD, praise Him! All you descendants of Jacob glorify Him. And fear Him, all you offspring of Israel!"

Let us now look at the correlating passages from Matthew 27:46, 27:27-31, 27:35, and 27:54 56, and compare them to these passages from Psalm 22 : ". . .

My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? . . . Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole garrison around Him. And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him. When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying 'Hail, King of the Jews!' Then they spat on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head. Then when they had mocked Him, they took the robe off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified . . . Then they crucified Him, and divided His garments, casting lots, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet: 'They divided My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots' . . . So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, 'Truly this was the Son of God!' And many women who followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to Him, were there looking on from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's sons."

Do you see the similarities between the verses in Psalm 22 and those in Matthew 27? No wonder Jesus, during His lifetime, always said He came to do God's will. Let us look at some scriptures which talk about this. John 4:34 says: "Jesus said to them, 'My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His

work.'" John 6:38 declares: "For I have come down from heaven not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me." Finally, Matthew 26:39 specifies: "He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, 'O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will."

Notice also that Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken Me?" Have you wondered why Jesus said these terrible words? Do not forget the sovereign decree of God in Ezekiel 18:20: "The soul who sins shall die. . . ." Death means that our spirit is separated from God. And we know that the LORD has laid on Jesus the iniquity of us all, therefore Jesus's spirit is also separated from God. Why? Because God is holy and cannot look at sins, so He turned His back on Jesus because at the time of His death Jesus had *become* sin. As is written in Isaiah 38:17 and Micah 7:19, God always casts sin away so that He does not look at it. Isaiah 38:17 says: "Indeed it was for my own peace That I had great bitterness; But You have lovingly delivered my soul from the pit of corruption, For You have cast all my sins behind Your back." It is also written in Micah 7:19: "He will again have compassion on us, And will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins Into the depths of the sea." Remember that God is God of the living; He cannot communicate or have a relationship with a sinner, so to bring a sinner into His fellowship He must first cast his sins away.

Do you see now why Jesus cried out that God had forsaken Him? God had turned His back to Him due to the sins of mankind, which Jesus was bearing. This is also why Isaiah prophesied in Isaiah 53:8: "He was taken from prison and from judgment, . . . For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken." Do not forget that a living being is one whose spirit has fellowship with God.

Let us look at what Jesus says to get the real definition of living, in Matthew 22:23–33: "The same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Him and asked Him, saying: 'Teacher, Moses said that if a man dies, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. Now there were with us seven brothers. The first died after he had married, and having no offspring, left his wife to his brother. Likewise the second also, and the third, even to the seventh. Last of all the woman died also. Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife of the seven will she be? For they all had her.' Jesus answered and said to them, 'You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven. But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob"? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.' And when the multitudes heard this, they were astonished at His teaching."

We must remember that we can find the will of God in the Bible, so it is compulsory to meditate on the Word of God day and night and to treasure it in our heart if Jesus is really our Lord and Savior. After all, how can we follow Him if we do not know the will of God? Before doing the will of God as Jesus did up to the time that He died we must know it.

Prescription 36:

So it was, when Jesus returned, that the multitude welcomed Him, for they were all waiting for Him. And behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue. And he fell down at Jesus' feet and begged Him to come to his house, for he had an only daughter about twelve years of age, and she was dying.

But as He went, the multitudes thronged Him. Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any, came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped.

And Jesus said, "Who touched Me?"

When all denied it, Peter and those with him said, "Master, the multitudes throng and press You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?'"

But Jesus said, "Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me." Now when

the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately.

And He said to her, "Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace."

While He was still speaking, someone came from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, "Your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the Teacher."

But when Jesus heard it, He answered him, saying, "Do not be afraid; only believe, and she will be made well." When He came into the house, He permitted no one to go in except Peter, James, and John, and the father and mother of the girl. Now all wept and mourned for her; but He said, "Do not weep; she is not dead, but sleeping." And they ridiculed Him, knowing that she was dead.

But He put them all outside, took her by the hand and called, saying, "Little girl, arise." Then her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And He commanded that she be given something to eat. And her parents were astonished, but He charged them to tell no one what had happened (Luke 8:40–56)

Description:

Jesus is the wellspring of life; believe in Him without fail no matter what situation you find yourself

in to overcome the situation and to receive everlasting life

Recommendations for use:
There are two wonderful revelations Jesus teaches us here. First of all, by touching His garment, power comes out of Him, meaning Jesus is a wellspring of life. Indeed, Proverbs 16:22 states: "Understanding is a wellspring of life to him who has it. . . ." And the Bible declares in Colossians 1:18: "And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things he may have the preeminence." This means that Jesus Christ has the best understanding of God and so is the perfect wellspring of life, which is why He communicated life and power to the woman in the crowd and healed her.

Secondly, when the messenger told Jairus that his daughter had died, Jesus said: "Do not be afraid; only believe, and she will be made well" (Mark 8:50). In other words, He said that the man should refuse to accept fear in his heart but instead keep focusing on his faith. This awesome revelation unveils a secret: the key to the kingdom of God is faith, while the main component of this world is fear. Faith always leads to victory, no matter what your circumstances are, but fear always ends in defeat or destruction even it seems that a worldly man is winning. This teaches us that we must focus on Jesus or God's Word at all times, especially in times of trouble or tribulation. Always keep in mind John 16:33 (". . . In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the

world.") and 1 John 5:4 5 ("For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?"). This is not merely a promise, but a fact. Jesus has done His part; all we have to do is to keep meditating on the Word of God, hope for the best, and be patient even if all around us deny our faith and in the end we will have our victory.

Prescription 37:

"At that time Herod the tetrarch heard the report about Jesus and said to his servants, 'This is John the Baptist; he is raised from the dead, and therefore these powers are at work in him.' For Herod had laid hold of John and bound him, and put him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. Because John had said to him, 'It is not lawful for you to have her.' And although he wanted to put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet. But when Herod's birthday was celebrated, the daughter of Herodias danced before them and pleased Herod. Therefore he promised with an oath to give her whatever she might ask. So she, having been prompted by her mother, said, 'Give me John the Baptist's head here on a platter.' And the king was sorry; nevertheless because of the oaths and because of those sat with him at the table; he commanded it to be given to her. So he sent and had John beheaded in prison. And his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to her mother.

Then his disciples came and took away the body and buried it, and went and told Jesus." (Matthew 14:1 12)

Description:
Pay attention to any reproof, and act upon it if it is consistent with God's Word and you will not go astray

Recommendations for use:
As far as Herod was concerned, John the Baptist was guilty of saying to him that it was not lawful to have his brother's wife, even though John the Baptist had done nothing but remind Herod of Leviticus 18:16: "You shall not uncover the nakedness of your brother's wife; it is your brother's nakedness." John the Baptist was simply doing his job; he had been sent by God to call people to repentance because the kingdom of God was at hand. Proverbs 10:17 says: "He who keeps instruction is in the way of life, But he who refuses reproof goes astray." Herod ignored John the Baptist's warning, and instead put him in prison. It is no wonder, with his mindset, that Herod went astray and eventually killed John the Baptist.

Let us picture the path Herod followed in life. First of all, he refused to listen to the warning of John the Baptist. Secondly, he intended to kill him but he did not not because of a change of heart, but because he feared the wrath of the multitude who considered John the Baptist to be a prophet. Thirdly, he beheaded John the Baptist because he valued his own oath and the opinions of those at his table more than his consciousness and desire to do right. Do you see how far

it can go when you refuse to listen or pay attention to God's Word?

Prescription 38:

"Now John answered Him, saying, 'Teacher, we saw someone who does not follow us casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow us.' But Jesus said, 'Do not forbid him, for no one who works a miracle in My name can soon afterward speak evil of Me. For he who is not against us is on our side. For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in My name, because you belong to Christ, assuredly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward." (Mark 9:38 41)

Description:

No matter what congregation you are in, you can use Jesus's name to perform miracles all you have to do is believe in Jesus

Recommendations for use:

This man who expelled demons in the name of Jesus was the first to do so. He understood that Jesus's name holds the same power as Jesus Himself. The Spirit was first given to Jesus's followers so that they could cast out demons, and when this man used Jesus's name to expel demons John did not like it and forbad him from using it. But Jesus told His disciples that anyone could use His name, because those who did would eventually become new believers. Jesus was teaching them that only one thing matters: using His name. The

use of Jesus's name means that you believe in Him. There is no need to belong to a specific Church or denomination you only have to believe in Jesus Christ.

Prescription 39:

"Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem, and sent messengers before His face. And as they went, they entered a village of the Samaritans, to prepare for Him. But they did not receive Him, because His face was set for the journey to Jerusalem. And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, 'Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?' But He turned and rebuked them, and said, 'You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them.' And they went to another village. Now it happened as they journeyed on the road, that someone said to Him, 'Lord, I will follow You wherever You go.' And Jesus said to him, 'Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.' Then He said to another, 'Follow Me.' But he said, 'Lord, let me first go bury my father.' Jesus said to him, 'Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God.' And another also said, 'Lord, I will follow You, but let me first go and bid them farewell that are at my house.' But Jesus said to him, 'No one, having his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.'" (Luke 9:51 62)

Description:

You must be willing to take a difficult path and give up everything you have to become a disciple of Jesus Christ

Recommendations for use:

In Luke 9:51 62, Jesus warns Christians against two dangers: the danger of taking the easy way and the cost of discipleship. First of all, when James and John saw that a village of Samaritans refused to receive them, they asked Jesus to permit them to destroy the town, as Elijah did according to what is written in 2 Kings 1:9 10 ("Then the king sent to him a captain of fifty with his fifty men. So he went up to him; and there he was, sitting on the top of a hill. And he spoke to him: 'Man of God, the king has said, "Come down!"' So Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, 'If I am a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men.' And fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty"). But Jesus revealed to His disciples the character of the spirit they originated from: the Spirit who gave them birth is a merciful spirit and His purpose is to save people not to judge them by destroying their lives. Jesus wants His followers to be conscious of the challenges they will have to face as prophets or believers, and to know that evil will resist them. The lesson Jesus is teaching us is that we must focus on our purpose: saving men's lives.

Secondly, Jesus admonishes us against keeping our focus on the world while saying we will follow Him.

Why? Because our commitment to Christ must be total, and not divided. Our attachments to our families and the things we did before we were born again which are not in line with God's Word must be cut off. We cannot become His disciples without giving up everything we have. This is also spoken of in 2 Corinthians 5:17: "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." When we give our life to Jesus Christ and do not give up everything we own, we behave like a salt which has lost its flavor, as Jesus explained in Luke 14:25–35: "Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them, 'If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it—lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, "This man began to build and was not able to finish"? Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks condition of peace. So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple. Salt is good; but

if the salt has lost its taste, how shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill, throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!'"

Prescription 40:

"And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, 'Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed You!' But He said, 'More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!'" (Luke 11:27–28)

Description:

Listen to God's Word and put it into action and you will be blessed

Recommendations for use:

Can you see that those who hear the Word of God and put it into practice are blessed? This means that if you hear God's Word and put it to work, it will bring you happiness (a sense of peace or a feeling of freedom from anxiety or pain).

Prescription 41:

"And which of you, having a servant plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come at once and sit down to eat'? But will he not rather say to him, 'Prepare something for my supper, and gird yourself and serve me till I have eaten and drunk and afterwards you will eat and drink'? Does he thank that servant because he did the things

that were commanded him? I think not. So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.'" (Luke 17:7 10)

Description:

Your righteousness will exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees, and you will gain access to God's kingdom if you obey God's Word and constantly have this thought in your heart and mind: 'I am an unworthy servant who has done his duty'

Recommendations for use:

Jesus teaches us that as believers we do not deserve thanks for obeying God's Word, because this is our duty our role to play and our responsibility. God has already done His part by granting us faith and His righteousness, and He is now waiting for our obedience to His Word. Once He has our obedience He will give us all the spiritual gifts or blessings we need to fulfill our destiny, as Jesus declares in John 14:23: ". . . If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him." This means that obeying or keeping God's Word causes God and Jesus to come into us and stay with us. Having Christ in us brings all the blessings of heaven and earth, as the Bible declares in Colossians 1:27: ". . . Christ in you, the hope of glory." Therefore, our highest responsibility is to obey God's Word without looking for thanks. Such behavior keeps us from boasting about our deeds, speech,

or thoughts, and therefore our righteousness will exceed that of the scribes and the Pharisees, as Jesus said in Matthew 5:20: "For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven." Can you see that the only way for a believer to have this kind of righteousness is to obey God's Word? To do this, you must remember to always have in your mind and heart this single thought: "I am an unworthy servant who has only done his duty."

3) A Cure to Stop People from Worrying about the Riches of this World, so that They Always Give Priority to the Kingdom of God and God's Word

Prescription 1:

"Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, 'If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.' But He answered and said, 'It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God."'" (Matthew 4:1 4)

Description:

Nourish yourself with God's Word every day

Recommendations for use:

Jesus is telling us that every day of our lives we must nourish ourselves with the Word of God before we think of eating physical foods.

Prescription 2:

"Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, 'If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written:

"He shall give His angels charge over you," and, "In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone."' Jesus said to him, 'It is written again, "You shall not tempt the Lord your God."' (Matthew 4:5–7)

Description:

Worrying about your life and asking whether or not God will help you out of your circumstances is as bad as tempting God, for you must always put your trust in Jesus

Recommendations for use:

Every time God talks about temptation in the Old Testament, He is pointing out the times His people failed to heed His voice or pay careful attention to His Word, instead concerning themselves with physical needs, like food, as we learn in Exodus 16:1–11:

> And they journeyed from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came to the Wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they departed from the land of Egypt. Then the whole congregation of the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. And the children of Israel said to

them, "Oh, that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat and when we ate bread to the full! For you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you. And the people shall go out and gather a certain quota every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in My law or not. And it shall be on the sixth day that they shall prepare what they bring in, and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily."

Then Moses and Aaron said to all the children of Israel, "At evening you shall know that the Lord has brought you out of the land of Egypt. And in the morning you shall see the glory of the Lord; for He hears your complaints against the Lord. But what are we, that you complain against us?" Also Moses said, "This shall be seen when the Lord gives you meat to eat in the evening, and in the morning bread to the full; for the Lord hears your complaints which you make against Him. And what are we? Your complaints are not against us but against the Lord."

Then Moses spoke to Aaron, "Say to all the congregation of the children of Israel, 'Come near before the Lord, for He has heard your complaints.'" Now it came to pass, as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the children of

> Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud.
>
> And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "I have heard the complaints of the children of Israel. Speak to them, saying, 'At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread. And you shall know that I am the Lord your God.'"

And we learn that we should not worry about water in Exodus 17:1–7:

> Then all the congregation of the children of Israel set out on their journey from the Wilderness of Sin, according to the commandment of the Lord, and camped in Rephidim; but there was no water for the people to drink. Therefore the people contended with Moses, and said, "Give us water, that we may drink."
>
> So Moses said to them, "Why do you contend with me? Why do you tempt the Lord?"
>
> And the people thirsted there for water, and the people complained against Moses, and said, "Why is it you have brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?"
>
> So Moses cried out to the Lord, saying, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me!"

> And the Lord said to Moses, "Go on before the people, and take with you some of the elders of Israel. Also take in your hand your rod with which you struck the river, and go. Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock in Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink."
>
> And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. So he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the contention of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the Lord, saying, "Is the Lord among us or not?"

We are also instructed to do as God tells us in Numbers 14:1 22, where we learn that if we do not heed God's Word we will not see His glories. The signs and miracles God performed did not help His people to understand what God was really telling them. All He was asking them to do was to believe in Him and keep His commandments. If you do this, then there is no need to worry about your life, God cares about us, as Jesus said in Matthew 6:25: "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?" God and Jesus are teaching us that what matters is to be concerned for the needs of our spirit. When our spirit's needs are satisfied, then our spirit will produce the fruits to fulfill our body and soul's needs. No wonder Jesus said in Matthew 6:33: "But

seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."

In Exodus 17:7, Moses gave the best definition of temptation, saying: ". . . And because they tempted the LORD, saying, 'Is the LORD among us or not?'" This reveals an important principle of God's kingdom: any time you worry about your life, you tempt God because, in essence, you are saying to Him "Is the LORD with me or not?" Can you see that Moses is teaching us that we tempt God any time we doubt Him or do not believe He will intervene to meet our needs? God cautioned us against doing this when He said in Deuteronomy 6:16: "You shall not tempt the LORD your God as you tempted Him in Massah." A genuine believer always puts his trust in God, no matter what's going on.

Looking again at the dialogue between Satan and Jesus, we notice Satan's taunt: "If you are the Son of God, throw Yourself down." Think of this conundrum. If Jesus knows He is the Son of God, He does not need to throw Himself down. But if Jesus was not sure He was the Son of God, then He might throw Himself down from the temple to find out. Therefore, if He threw himself down, that would have been the same as tempting God.

Prescription 3:

"Now when Jesus heard that John had been put into prison, He departed to Galilee. And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea,

in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: 'The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: The people who sat in darkness saw a great light, And upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned.' From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, 'Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand.'" (Matthew 4:12–17)

"... 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel.'"(Mark 1:15)

Description:

To receive everlasting life, you must repent and believe in Jesus

Recommendations for use:

Although Matthew and Mark speak of repentance because the kingdom of God is near, in Daniel 7:21–22, it is written: "I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom." Also, remember that Jesus said in John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." Examine carefully what is said in Daniel 7:21–22 and John 3:16, and what do you see? Satan's kingdom prevailed until Jesus came to earth and the sovereign declaration of God was made

in favor of the saints, proclaiming that anyone who believed in God and Jesus would have everlasting life.

This judgment opened the door of God's kingdom in order to allow the saints to possess the kingdom of heaven. Before God gave His only begotten Son to be put to death for the salvation of those who believe in Him, Jesus said in Mark 1:15: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel." Jesus was pointing out that the time is right, the kingdom of heaven is near, and that anyone who turns away from his sins, believes the Good News, and becomes perfect in God's love, will not perish but have everlasting life in the kingdom of God.

Prescription 4:

"And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then He said to them, 'Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.' They immediately left their nets and followed Him. Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. He called them, and immediately they left their boat and their father, and followed Him." (Matthew 4:18–22)

"Now so it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were

washing their nets. Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitude from a boat. When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, 'Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.' But Simon answered and said to Him, 'Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at your word I will let down the net.' And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they begin to sink. When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, 'Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!' For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, 'Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men.' So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him." (Luke 5:1–11)

Description:

If you follow Jesus you will receive back a hundredfold what you have lost, as well as the gifts of eternal life and everlasting salvation

Recommendations for use:

Do you see that when Simon Peter, Andrew, James, and John brought their boats to land, they gave up

everything and followed Jesus? In Matthew 19:27–29, it is written: "Then Peter answered and said to Him, 'See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?' So Jesus said to them, 'Assuredly I say to you that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life. Jesus also said, in John 10:27–30: "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one." Have you noticed that if anyone follows Jesus; nobody can take him away from God because he is saved forever that is to say, he gets everlasting salvation?

Prescription 5:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:3)

Description:

Be humble to receive understanding and the kingdom of God.

Recommendations for use:

As we have already discussed, to be poor in spirit means to lack God's Word and behave like a child—prompt to

believe and willing to learn as Jesus said in Matthew 18:1–5: "At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, 'Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?' And Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me." In Matthew 11:25, Jesus also says this about the importance of childlike grace: ". . . I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes."

Prescription 6:

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." (Matthew 5:4)

"And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.'" (Mark 16:15–18)

"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works

than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it." (John 14:12 14)

Description:

Believe in Jesus, be baptized, and then put Mark 16:15 18 and John 14:12 14 into practice in the name Of Jesus

Recommendations for use:

Let us consider the meaning of the word "mourn." It means to feel sad because something or someone no longer exists or is no longer the same, or to feel loss when your health, liberty, or hope has gone away. These cases are always satisfied by Jesus when we commit them to Him, because, as we learn in Matthew, those who mourn will be comforted and become physically relaxed and free from pain so that they can move into a state of having a pleasant life. When you commit your sorrows to Jesus, He delivers you from your pain, worry, and unhappiness. Let us look at the Word of God to read about these cases. It is written in Isaiah 61:1 2: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, Because the Lord has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, . . ."

Let us think about what Jesus said about this prophesy made by Isaiah at the beginning of His ministry, as

it is written in Luke 4:16–21: "So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: 'The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed, To preach the acceptable year of the LORD.' Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, 'Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.'" Jesus Himself declared that the prophecy had come true, testifying that His works were signs that He was the Son of God.

Jesus said the same things to those John the Baptist sent to Him, in Matthew 11:4–5: "Jesus answered and said to them, 'Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them.'"

Jesus is the answer to all of our problems (any lack, affliction, sickness, or hopeless situation in the world). That is the prophesy which Isaiah made in the past and Jesus came to earth to accomplish. King David prophesied the same thing when he declared, in Psalm 34:18: "The Lord is near to those who have a broken

heart, And saves such as have a contrite spirit."

How can we benefit from Jesus's help? King David answered this question in Psalm 40:17 in his prayer: "But I am poor and needy; Yet the Lord thinks upon me. You are my help and my deliverer; Do not delay, O my God." But after His resurrection, Jesus gave believers a more powerful tool to solve this kind of problem in Mark 16:15 18 and John 14:12 14. This means that the answer to any lack, sickness, curse of the law, or hopeless situation is to believe in Jesus and be baptized, and then put these teachings into practice in the name of Jesus.

Prescription 7:

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled." (Matthew 5:6)

Description:

Hunger and thirst for God's Word the bread of God and be satisfied forever

Recommendations for use:

Isaiah 55:1 3 and Isaiah 55:6 7 say: "Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk Without money and without price. Why do you spend money for what is not bread, And your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, And let your soul delight itself in abundance. Incline your ear, and come to me. Hear, and your soul shall live; And I will make

an everlasting covenant with you The sure mercies of David. . . . Seek the Lord while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; Let him return to the Lord, And He will have mercy on him; And to our God, for He will abundantly pardon."

Proverbs 9:1 6 also calls people to eat at the table of the Lord: "Wisdom has built her house, She has hewn out her seven pillars; She has slaughtered her meat, She has mixed her wine, She has also furnished her table. She has sent out her maidens, She cries out from the highest places of the city, 'Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!' As for him who lacks understanding, she says to him, 'Come, eat of my bread And drink of the wine which I have mixed. Forsake foolishness and live, And go in the way of understanding."

(Do not forget, we have already found out that Jesus is the wisdom of God.) Here both Isaiah and King Solomon tell us that the Lord Jesus is waiting to feed us with His Word, which is food for our soul. As our physical body needs physical food to live, so our soul our spirit needs the Word of God to live. As a matter of fact, the Word of God has the ability to give us understanding. Moreover, Isaiah specifies that God's bread (or God's Word) satisfies, but physical food and water do not.

Look at what Jesus thought about what we have just said. In John 4:13 15, it's written: "Jesus answered and said to her, 'Whoever drinks of this water will thirst

again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing into everlasting life.' The woman said to him, 'Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw.'" Do you understand that it is better to thirst and hunger for righteousness than to seek food which perishes?

Notice that righteousness also comes from God's Word. After all, how can you believe in Jesus if you do not hear God's Word? If you hunger and thirst for righteousness, God will give you a fountain of water springing into everlasting life, and unlike physical bread, God's bread satisfies! To get a better understanding of what I have just said, let us look at what God said to His people in Deuteronomy 8:1 6: "Every commandment which I command you today you must be careful to observe, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land of which the Lord swore to your fathers. And you shall remember that the LORD your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD. Your garments did not wear out on you, nor did your foot

swell these forty years. So you should know in your heart that as a man chastens his son, so the LORD your God chastens you. Therefore you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him."

The purpose of our life and our life's experience is to open our spiritual eyes so that we understand the desires of our heart, which hungers and thirsts for God's Word to live by. Therefore, all you have to do is to believe in Jesus Christ the Son of God, who took our sins and gave us His righteousness, and then fed us with His sayings so that we will become fountains of water springing into everlasting life. In this way, God's Word satisfies when it becomes in you a fountain of everlasting life.

Prescription 8:

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Matthew 6:19–21)

Description:

Store God's Word in your heart to receive treasures in heaven

Recommendations for use:

To get a better understanding of what Jesus said in Matthew 6:19–21, let us look at how Jesus defines "lay

up for yourselves treasures in heaven" in Matthew 19:16 22: "Now behold, one came and said to Him, 'Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?' So He said to him, 'Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.' He said to Him, 'Which ones?' Jesus said, '"You shall not murder," "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not steal," "You shall not bear false witness," "Honor your father and your mother," and, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."' The young man said to Him, 'All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?' Jesus said to him, 'If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.' But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions."

Jesus is telling us that any charitable deed we do on earth credits us with treasures in heaven. Now look at how Jesus defines the same concept in Luke 12:13 21: "Then one from the crowd said to Him, 'Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.' But He said to him, 'Man, who made Me a judge or an arbitrator over you?' And He said to them, 'Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.' Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: 'The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying, "What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?" So he said, "I will do this:

I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.'" But God said to him, "Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?" So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God.'" Jesus teaches us, here, that getting riches to satisfy selfish concerns is laying up treasures for yourself on earth, but it gives you no credit in heaven.

There is another definition for "laying up treasures for yourselves in heaven," given in Job 22:22 30: "Receive, please, instruction from His mouth, And lay up His words in your heart. If you return to the Almighty, you will be built up; You will remove iniquity far from your tents. Then you lay your gold in the dust, And the gold of Ophir among the stones of the brooks. Yes, the Almighty will be your gold And your precious silver; For then you will have your delight in the Almighty, And lift up your face to God. You will make your prayer to Him, He will hear you, And you will pay your vows. You will also declare a thing, And it will be established for you; So light will shine in your ways. When they cast you down, and you say, 'Exaltation will come!' Then He will save the humble person. He will even deliver one who is not innocent; yes, he will be delivered by the purity of your hands." We learn from this that "lay treasures for yourselves in heaven" also means "lay up God's Word in your

heart" instead of "laying up gold and silver in your house or bank."

Wisdom gives us the same definition found in Job in Proverbs 2:1 22:

My son, if you receive my words,
And treasure my commands within you,
So that you incline your ear to wisdom,
And apply your heart to understanding;
Yes, if you cry out for discernment,
And lift up your voice for understanding,
If you seek her as silver,
And search for her as for hidden treasures;
Then you will understand the fear of the Lord,
And find the knowledge of God.
For the Lord gives wisdom;
From His mouth come knowledge and understanding;
He stores up sound wisdom for the upright;
He is a shield to those who walk uprightly;
He guards the paths of justice,
And preserves the way of His saints.
Then you will understand righteousness and justice,
Equity and every good path.

When wisdom enters your heart,
And knowledge is pleasant to your soul,
Discretion will preserve you;
Understanding will keep you,
To deliver you from the way of evil,
From the man who speaks perverse things,

From those who leave the paths of uprightness
To walk in the ways of darkness;
Who rejoice in doing evil,
And delight in the perversity of the wicked;
Whose ways are crooked,
And who are devious in their paths;
To deliver you from the immoral woman,
From the seductress who flatters with her words,
Who forsakes the companion of her youth,
And forgets the covenant of her God.
For her house leads down to death,
And her paths to the dead;
None who go to her return,
Nor do they regain the paths of life
So you may walk in the way of goodness,
And keep to the paths of righteousness.
For the upright will dwell in the land,
And the blameless will remain in it;
But the wicked will be cut off from the earth,
And the unfaithful will be uprooted from it.

Do you see that this means that if you treasure God's Word in your heart and seek her as silver or hidden treasures you will get the fear of the Lord and the knowledge of God? Tell me, what are fear of the Lord and knowledge of God aren't they treasures in heaven? And on top of all of this, the one who lays up God's Word and seeks God's Word as gold and silver also gets God's protection against wicked men and women. Finally, God delivers this man from the way of evil and allows him to dwell in the promised land.

Therefore to store your treasures in heaven, you must be merciful by giving to those in need and treasuring God's Word in your heart.

Prescription 9:

"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon." (Matthew 6:24)

Description:

No matter how rich you are, all you have to do is to believe in Jesus and then God will intervene by giving you help and power to keep His commandments

Recommendations for use:

As we read in Prescription 8, in Matthew 19:16 26 Jesus teaches why it is impossible to serve God and mammon (worldly riches) at the same time, when He explains to the young man that he will have to give away all of his possessions to have true riches in heaven. He then goes on to say: ". . . 'Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.' When the disciples heard it, they were greatly astonished, saying, 'Who then can be saved?' But Jesus looked at them and said to them, 'With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.'"

Remember, it is written in Matthew 19:22: "But when

the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions." Observe the contrast between his sorrow because of his great possessions and his strong desire to have eternal life. His riches are not the issue; the issue is that he loves his riches more than he loves God. His desire to hold fast to his great possessions instead of giving them away in exchange for eternal life creates an evil thought lust in his heart that results in his expression of sorrow because it is causing him to give up eternal life. We are all cautioned against this kind of thinking in Proverbs 4:23, which says: "Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life." Always be aware of your thoughts, so that you do not let any evil thought enter into your heart, because your lack of diligence will determine your destiny.

As we have read, after they watched the young man leave, it seemed to the disciples that no one could be saved, so they asked Jesus, "Who then can be saved?" He told them that things which are impossible for men are possible with God. Indeed, God makes a path for His followers where there is no earthly path, as it is written in Isaiah 43:19: "Behold, I will do a new thing, Now it shall spring forth; Shall you not know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness And rivers in the desert." This is why, for those who are wealthy and do not feel able to live a life of renunciation, Jesus tells His disciples that all things are possible for God.

It is God's responsibility to ensure our salvation. All we have to do is to believe in Jesus and God will

intervene to play His part by giving us help and the power to keep His commandments. Can you see this? The young man in the story pointed out what mattered to him in his life when he asked Jesus this amazing question in Matthew 19:20: "What do I still lack?" Jesus answered his question by showing him that he lacked faith. It was not His intent to make this man poor, but simply to show him that he did not really believe in God. How did Jesus know this? Because if the man had really believed in God, he would have given his riches to the poor and believed that God would be able to restore his wealth in heaven.

Prescription 10:

"Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we

wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble." (Matthew 6:25–34)

Description:

Never worry about anything but instead be positive, as we are instructed through God's Word

Recommendations for use:

What does Jesus teach us in Matthew 6:25–34? He tells us what we also learn in Psalm 127:1—that unless the Lord builds our house, we labor in vain. Apart from that, He advises us to seek God's kingdom before we seek out anything of this world. This is an excellent way to receive not only His righteousness but also all things which unbelievers worry about. So, instead of worrying about things you may not get—and which may not last—instead be wise and choose God's Way, which will satisfy all your needs. Let us look at what King Solomon says in Psalm 127, and what Wisdom also says in Proverbs 8:17–21. Let us begin with Psalm 127: "Unless the LORD builds the house, They labor in vain who build it; Unless the LORD guards the city, The watchman stays awake in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, To sit up late, To eat the bread of sorrows; For so He gives His beloved sleep. Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, The fruit of the womb

is a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, So are the children of one's youth. Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them; They shall not be ashamed, But shall speak with their enemies in the gate."

Can you see that unless you seek God's help, you will work hard for a living but your work will be useless? What is the solution? We find it in Proverbs 8:17 21: "I love those who love me, And those who seek me diligently will find me. Riches and honor are with me, Enduring riches and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold, yes, than fine gold, And my revenue than choice silver. I traverse the way of righteousness, In the midst of the paths of justice, That I may cause those who love me to inherit wealth, That I may fill their treasuries." You see, Wisdom says that if you seek her diligently you will find her and she will also give you riches and honor enduring riches and righteousness and help you to inherit great wealth. This means that if you seek God or His Word first, then all things will be given to you.

Prescription 11:

"Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it."(Matthew 7:13 14)

Description:

Choose the narrow gate the way of God that leads to life and blessing

Recommendations for use:

God has already told us what the terms "narrow gate" and "wide gate" mean in Deuteronomy 30:11–20: "For this commandment which I command you today is not too mysterious for you, nor is it far off. It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will ascend into heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it. See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil, in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments, His statutes, and His judgments, that you may live and multiply; and the LORD your God will bless you in the land which you go to possess. But if your heart turns away so that you do not hear, and are drawn away, and worship other gods and serve them, I announce to you today that you shall surely perish; you shall not prolong your days in the land which you cross over the Jordan to go in and possess. I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live; that you may love the LORD your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days; and that you may dwell in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham,

Isaac, and Jacob, to give them." This teaches us that there two ways to go in life: the Way of God and the way of the devil. God's Way is the narrow way, which is more difficult so few take it, and the devil's way is the wide, easy way.

Psalm 1 teaches us the same thing: "Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper. The ungodly are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind drives away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, But the way of the ungodly shall perish."

Prescription 12:

"Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. For I have come to 'set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;' and 'a man's enemies will be those of his own household.' He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who finds his life will lose

it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it." (Matthew 10:34–39)

Description:

Follow Jesus by putting Him – or God's Word – first in all your activities to become worthy of Him and receive a higher life

Recommendations for use:

To better understand what Jesus is teaching us here we must look at Proverbs 21:21: "He who follows righteousness and mercy Finds life, righteousness, and honor;" and in Proverbs 8:35–36: "For whoever finds me finds life, And obtains favor from the LORD; But he who sins against me wrongs his own soul; All those who hate me love death." Jesus is telling us that anyone who follows Him finds life since Wisdom (another name of Jesus) also said that anyone who follows righteousness or finds Jesus also finds life. No wonder the Bible says in 1 John 5:11–12: "And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life." Do not forget it is written in Jeremiah 23:5–6 that Jesus is our righteousness: "'Behold, the days are coming,' says the LORD, 'That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."

Moreover, the Apostle Paul also said in 1 Corinthians 1:30–31 that Jesus is our righteousness: "But in Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption—that, as it is written, 'He who glories let him glory in the LORD.'" No wonder Jesus said he who follows Him finds life, since anyone who follows righteousness finds life, and the Scriptures add: "He who has the Son of God has life." God never lies and does not contradict Himself, He always tells the truth. Do not forget that Jesus declares in Matthew 6:33: "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." In Matthew 10:37, Jesus states the same thing: "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me." Jesus is teaching us that love for our family is good but putting Jesus or God's Word first in all our activities must be done to be worthy of Him, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Prescription 13:

"While He was still talking to the multitudes, behold, His mother and brothers stood outside, seeking to speak with Him. Then one said to Him, 'Look, your mother and your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak with You.' But He answered and said to the one who told Him, 'Who is My mother and who are My brothers?' And He stretched out His hand towards His disciples and said, 'Here are My mother and

My brothers! For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother." (Matthew 12:46 50)

Description:

Love for God and Jesus should be your top priority your love for God's Word is more important than other things and should be dealt with first

Recommendations for use:

Jesus put into practice, in Matthew 12:46 50, what He taught in Matthew 10:34 39: "Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. For I have come to 'set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;' and a man's enemies will be those of his own household.' He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it."

Remember that, in the story where Jesus had run off from His parents and He was found in the temple, Jesus said that He was dealing with His Father's business when someone told Him that His mother and brothers were looking for Him. If He had stopped and gone to meet His mother and brothers, He would have contradicted Himself, showing that He loved His relatives more than His Father in Heaven. Doing the will of His

Father needed to happen, first. Teaching by example, Jesus shows us to love those who do the will of God more than their relatives, because spiritual fellowship should always come before relationships of the flesh.

Prescription 14:

"Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these parables, that He departed from there. When He had come to His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, 'Where did this Man get this wisdom and these mighty works? Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas? And His sisters; are they not all with us? Where then did this Man get all these things? So they were offended at Him. But Jesus said to them, 'A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own house.' Now He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief." (Matthew 13:53–58)

Description:

Do not trust your own opinion, trust definitively in God's Word

Recommendations for use:

Do you see why these people hesitated to follow Jesus's teachings? It is because of their unbelief. Instead of taking hold of what they heard and what Jesus said so that they could understand and then believe in Him, they struggled with their senses concerning their

prior knowledge of Jesus. Wisdom says in Proverbs 28:26 (Amplified Bible): "He who leans on, trusts in, and is confident of his own mind and heart is a [self confident] fool, but he who walks in skillful and godly Wisdom shall be delivered." Can you see that anyone who follows his own opinions is a fool, and that it's better to follow God's thoughts, which are found in His Word? Belief in your own opinions is the central principle of unbelief, which means that trusting in your own opinion instead of God's Word leads to unbelief. So be careful, and do not trust in your own opinion but trust definitively in God's Word.

Prescription 15:

"From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, 'Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!' But He turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men." (Matthew 16:21–23)

Description:

Do not go back and forth between the revelation knowledge in your spiritual heart and your own thoughts, but continually meditate on God's Word so that your spiritual heart will be filled with God's Word

and it will soak into every fiber of your being so that everything you think, feel, speak, and do will be in line with God's Word

Recommendations for use:

Can you see that you must pay attention to the things of God, instead of the things of men? The same Peter who, a short time before, had received praise from Jesus was now called "Satan." This means that he was going back and forth between the revelation knowledge in his spiritual heart and the thoughts of his mind. A genuine son of God must only focus on God's Word, which is in his spiritual heart. Beware of your own opinions, thoughts, and feelings, and do not let them determine what you say or do. The only way to avoid this kind of confusion is to meditate on God's Word continually so that your spiritual heart is full of His Word, which will soak into your very being so that everything you think, feel, speak, decide, and do will be in line with God's Word. If you do this, then at the end of the day everything you do, speak, think, decide, and feel will please God.

Prescription 16:

"Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe to the world because of offenses! For offenses must come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes! And

if your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the everlasting fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire."(Matthew 18:6–9)

Description:

Get rid of anyone and anything that can cause you to sin

Recommendations for use:

Let us think back on Matthew 16:21–23 to see what Jesus meant by "offense" ("From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, 'Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!' But He turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.") Can you see that Jesus teaches us to be careful of the riches and lusts of this world? People of this world want to have a good life and are ready to do anything to achieve their purpose, but these are only the "things of men."

When Jesus talked about His sufferings, His death, and His resurrection, Peter advised Him not to go

through any of it. But Peter's thoughts were the thoughts of the people of this world, who fear suffering and death so much that the fear of suffering and death becomes their master. But we must realize that fear of suffering and death is the mark of Satan.

People of this world want to win the race to heaven without satisfying the conditions that are needed to succeed. So Jesus shows us that there is no way to get victory without going through suffering (both physical and spiritual) and death (both physical and spiritual when we deny ourselves and give priority to God and Jesus). Therefore, whatever causes people to sin is an offense in the mind of Jesus, and so to God.

At the end of the day, if your friend or your relative or anyone else can lead you to sin, you must stay away from him. If what you own can make you a sinner, get rid of it. If your own thoughts, words, and deeds can defile your spiritual heart, you must submit yourself to God and meditate on the Word of God day and night, so that you will receive a new pure heart. In fact, as it is written in John 15:3, the Word of God has the power to cleanse your heart: "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you."

Jesus dealt with the same point in Mark 9:49 50, saying, "For everyone will be seasoned with fire, and every sacrifice will be seasoned with salt. Salt is good, but if the salt loses its taste, how will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another." In this passage, the salt represents a believer, while the fire represents God's Word. So everyone will

be purified by God's Word, just as sacrifice is purified by salt.

(In the Old Testament, sacrifices were purified by salt to become holy before God as it is written in Leviticus 2:13: "And every offering of your grain offering you shall season with salt; you shall not allow the salt of the covenant of your God to be lacking from your grain offering. With all your offerings you shall offer salt.") Like that salt, God's Word in your heart is able to cleanse you and helps you to live in peace with one another.

If you "lose your taste" it means that you have failed to treasure God's Word in your heart, or the cares and worries of this life have caused you to forget God's Word, and you have ceased to meditate on it. When this happens, your first priority is to focus on "the things of man" and not on God's Word. No wonder God told His people to add salt to their offerings. A human being worth his salt is a genuine believer. But the believer who loses his salt is a believer who fails to put his trust and hope in Jesus just like a sacrifice which cannot be accepted by God if it is not seasoned with salt.

Prescription 17:

"Then Peter answered and said to Him, 'See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?' So Jesus said to them, 'Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will

also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.'" (Matthew 19:27–30)

Description:

Because you are now in the kingdom of God and have received both dominion over this world and everlasting life you must act like a champion, and experience a new, victorious life with no more failure, defeat, or fear

Recommendations for use:

Jesus talks about three things in Matthew 19:27–30: His throne of glory, the judgment, and the everlasting life given to His followers. All of these things have already been seen by the prophet and reported in Daniel 7:13–14, 22, 27: "'I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed. . . . until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom. . . . Then the kingdom and dominion, And the greatness of the kingdoms under the

whole heaven, Shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And all dominions shall serve and obey Him.'"

Jesus told His disciples things that were already in the Scriptures to emphasize the fact that these events were sealed and nobody could hinder them from coming to pass. And, in our time, two of these three things have already come true: His throne of glory (or His kingdom) with dominion granted to the saints, and everlasting life being given to the saints. All that remains is judgment, which will certainly come true.

Prescription 18:

"Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold doves. And He said to them, 'It is written, "My house shall be called a house of prayer," but you have made it a "den of thieves."' Then the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them. But when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying out in the temple and saying, 'Hosanna to the son of David!' they were indignant and said to Him, 'Do You hear what these are saying?' And Jesus said to them, 'Yes, Have you never read, "Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants you have perfected praise"?' Then He left them and went out of the city to Bethany, and He lodged there." (Matthew 21:12–17)

Description:
Get to the Word of God, digest it, be filled with it, and so be ready to face any challenge in life

Recommendations for use:
Let us bring to mind the three scriptures Jesus quotes here. Isaiah 56:7 says: "Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, And make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices Will be accepted on My altar; For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations." Jeremiah 7:11 states: "'Has this house, which is called by My name, become a den of thieves in your eyes? Behold, I, even I, have seen it,' says the LORD." Psalm 8:2 completes this, saying: "Out of the mouth of babes and infants You have ordained strength, Because of Your enemies, That You may silence the enemy and the avenger."

Let us read now the report of the Apostle John about the cleansing of the temple. He gave more details in John 2:13 25: "Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers doing business. When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables. And He said to those who sold doves, 'Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!' Then His disciples remembered that it was written, 'Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up.'

So the Jews answered and said to Him, 'What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?' Jesus answered and said to them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' Then the Jews said, 'It has taken forty-six years to build the temple, and will You raise it up in three days?' But He was speaking of the temple of His body. Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said. Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name when they saw the signs which He did. But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men, and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man."

As we can see, as far as Jesus was concerned, His body was identical to the temple of God made out of stones. And what is the purpose of the temple of God?

When King Solomon finished all the work on the temple, he brought the Ark of the Covenant into it, as it is written in 2 Chronicles 5:13–14: ". . . indeed it came to pass, when the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD, and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music and praised the LORD, saying: 'For He is good, For His mercy endures forever,' that the house was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house of God." This means

that bringing the Ark of God into the temple, singing songs, and giving thanks to God and saying, "For He is good, For His mercy endures forever," turned the temple into the dwelling place of God.

Furthermore, Jesus said in John 14:23: ". . . If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him." This means that loving God will cause God and Jesus to make our body their dwelling place, in other words, we will become the temple of God. No wonder there is no difference for Jesus between the temple of God made of stones and the body of man where God and Jesus dwell.

But you must look closely at the two temples. What causes God to manifest Himself in the temple of stones is not the presence of the Ark of God, just as He does manifest Himself simply because of the presence of God's Word in our heart. Why? Because, as Jesus reveals in Matthew 18:30 and John 14:23, the two principles that bring the presence of God into our midst or into our heart are the combination of our love for Him and gathering together in unity in His name. Matthew 18:20 says: "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them." And, as we've just read, John 14:23 declares: ". . . If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him."

Thus, unity in the name of Jesus and love for Jesus are the two principles that bring God's presence into

our midst or into our heart. This means that, in the sight of God, love in the heart of a human being is the same as lifting our voices as if we were one person in the temple of God.

Through these teachings, Jesus shows us a new way of worship in the kingdom of God — in spirit and truth — as it is written in John 4:23–24: "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." Thus worshiping God in spirit and in truth has the ability to train our spirit in the ways of God and brings us the presence of God — or activates the power of God that dwells in us. To "worship in spirit and in truth" means to pray by speaking in tongues and with understanding (with God's Word). (Do not forget that "truth" signifies the Word of God.)

The Scriptures say in 1 Corinthians 14:14–15: "For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful. What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding."

We cannot pray in spirit and succeed to communicate with God if our spirit lives in darkness and we lack God's Word in our heart. Why not? First, because only God's Word treasured in our heart gives light to our spirit, as it is written in Psalm 119:130: "The entrance of Your words gives light; It gives understanding to the

simple." Secondly, without the light brought by God's Word, our spirit will remain blind and unable to find good things in our heart to exchange with God during our speaking in tongues. Here is how a true worshiper presents his sacrifice to God, as it is written in Psalm 141:2, a psalm of King David: "Let my prayer be set before You as incense, The lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice."

In both solutions given by Jesus (showing love for Jesus and creating unity to bring God's presence into us or into the physical temple), receiving God's peace and ceasing to worry about this life all begins with our belief of God's Word treasured in our heart. So we must guard our heart to allow only truths from outside our mind — which are in line with God's Word — to come in, as it is written in Proverbs 4:23: "Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life." So Christ's act of driving out the people who were trading in the temple is similar to cleansing evil thoughts from ourselves, since our body is also a temple of God.

How do we cleanse our heart? It is simple, and Jesus our Lord and savior has already given us the answer in John 15:3: "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you." This means that the key method for cleansing our heart from impurities (evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, or foolishness) is through treasuring God's Word in our heart and

meditating on it. And what is the purpose of God's Word? The answer is given in John 2:22: "Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said."

Do you see that the purpose of God's Word or Jesus's Word is be used as the reference for all truths that exist on earth and in heaven and cause us to believe in the Scriptures?

God said: If someone says something that comes true, this prophet's sayings come from Him. So God's Word is truth since everything God said in the past came to pass. Therefore we can be sure that every word of God about our life will also come true. This principle is based on Deuteronomy 18:18 22: "I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him. But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.' And if you say in your heart, 'How shall we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?' when a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him."

Therefore we have to use Jesus's sayings or God's Word to verify the truthfulness of anything we face in this world. If the answer is that what we have heard is truthful, then we should store the corresponding truth in our heart. Then, once we have these truths in our heart, our spirit of faith will produce outward results, as it is written in 2 Corinthians 4:13: "And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, 'I believed and therefore I spoke,' we also believe and therefore speak." This means that what we express through our speech and deeds is the product of our beliefs. And, by confessing God's Word, we frame the course of our life, as it is written in Proverbs 18:21: "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit."

Nothing in this life will be able to stand against us when we put into action the passages we have just read.

Prescription 19:

"And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. Again, he sent out other servants, saying, "Tell those who are invited, 'See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding.'" But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, and another to

his business. And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them. But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. Then he said to his servants, "The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite them to the wedding." So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests. But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. So he said to him, "Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?" And he was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, "Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." For many are called, but few are chosen.'" (Matthew 22:1–14)

Description:

The key to entering into the kingdom of God, receiving His understanding and faith, and fulfilling your destiny as a child of God is being open-minded and humble

Recommendations for use:

In this parable, the king represents God. His son is Jesus. Those who were invited to the wedding and refused to come are people who are minding their own earthly business, who worry about the riches of this

world, or are proud and selfish. Those who came in are the people who are humble or open-minded. The dinner represents the Word of God. Those who killed the servants represent the wicked men whose fate is death. The man who did not have on the proper wedding garment represents all those who believe in God or Jesus but do not do the Word of God, because they share the same fate as the unbelievers. God invites us, His guests, to come to join with His Son Jesus, by believing in Him.

Now compare the parable Jesus told, above, with Proverbs 9:1–6, 13–18:

> Wisdom has built her house,
> She has hewn out her seven pillars;
> She has slaughtered her meat,
> She has mixed her wine,
> She has also furnished her table.
> She has sent out her maidens,
> She cries out from the highest places of the city,
> "Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!"
> As for him who lacks understanding, she says to him,
> "Come, eat of my bread
> And drink of the wine I have mixed.
> Forsake foolishness and live,
> And go in the way of understanding."
>
> A foolish woman is clamorous;
> She is simple, and knows nothing.
> For she sits at the door of her house,
> On a seat by the highest places of the city,
> To call to those who pass by,

Who go straight on their way:
"Whoever is simple, let him turn in here";
And as for him who lacks understanding, she says to him,
"Stolen water is sweet,
And bread eaten in secret is pleasant."
But he does not know that the dead are there,
That her guests are in the depths of hell.

Can you see that God is willing to give us His Word as food and drink to build our spiritual being? Those who humble themselves or are open minded can have access to His kingdom. But those who refuse the Word of God, who worry about things of this world, who mind only their own business or are selfish and proud, are really foolish people. They do not want to learn, or to come to the light of Jesus's or God's Word. So they remain in darkness, therefore they are doomed to die, as Proverbs 14:12 says: "There is a way which seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death."

Remember that it says in Proverbs 21:2: "Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, But the LORD weighs the hearts." Jesus says in John 14:6: ". . . 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.'" Proverbs 3:6 speaks of the same topic: "In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." And, finally, Proverbs 1:32 declares, "For the turning away of the simple will slay them, And the complacency of fools will destroy them." So you must remember to humble yourself or be open minded to the guidance of Jesus as you

choose your path. This is the key to entering into the kingdom of God and receiving both understanding and faith from God.

Prescription 20:

"Now Jesus sat opposite the treasury and saw how the people put money into the treasury. And many who were rich put in much. Then one poor widow came and threw in two mites, which make a quadrans. So He called His disciples to Himself and said to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury; for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood.'" (Mark 12:41–44)

Description:

When you give your offering to God, give it with a good heart – both generous and giving of yourself – for this matters more in the sight of God than the amount

Recommendations for use:

It is hard for many people to understand that even though the widow put almost no money into the offering box, Jesus declared that she put more in than all the others. So let us go to 1 Kings 17:8–16 to shed light on what our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is teaching us: "Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, 'Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and dwell there. See, I have commanded a widow there to

provide for you.' So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, indeed a widow was there gathering sticks. And he called to her and said, 'Please bring me a little water in a cup, that I may drink.' And as she was going to get it, he called to her and said, 'Please bring me a morsel of bread in your hand.' Then she said, 'As the LORD your God lives, I do not have bread, only a handful of flour in a bin, and a little oil in a jar; and see, I am gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die.' And Elijah said to her, 'Do not fear; go and do as you have said, but make me a small cake from it first, and bring it to me; and afterwards make some for yourself and your son. For thus says the LORD God of Israel: "The bin of the flour shall not be used up, nor shall the jar of oil run dry, until the day the LORD sends rain on the earth."' So she went away and did according to the word of Elijah; and she and he and her household ate for many days. The bin of flour was not used up, nor did the jar of oil run dry, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke by Elijah."

Can you see in reading this that the mind of God is the same as the mind of Jesus? God and Jesus both teach us that what matters is not what you give (the amount or the quantity), but how you give (generously giving of yourself). Though the widow was about to have her last meal with her son and die, she agreed to bring a cup of water to Elijah and told him the truth about her livelihood. This means that she had

a pure heart, which explains why God sent Elijah to her. When Elijah spoke the Word of God to her and she did everything according to what Elijah said, her household were blessed.

In the same way, the poor widow's offering in Jesus's story was all her livelihood, but she did not hesitate to give it to God, trusting that God would be able to supply all her needs. She gave him her life all she had to live on while the others merely put in what they could easily spare of their riches.

Prescription 21:

"Now it happened as they went that they entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, 'Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me.' And Jesus answered and said to her, 'Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.'" (Luke 10:38 42)

Description:

The most important thing in life is to pay attention to God's Word and then you will become fruitful and live in peace

Recommendations for use:

Mary chose to listen to the word of Jesus, while Martha was upset about all the work she had to do. Jesus said in Matthew 6:25,33: "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? . . . But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." This is what Mary was doing she was seeking the kingdom of God and His righteousness. Martha was worried and troubled about the work she had to do, for, as we learned in Matthew 13:22, people who care about the life of this world becomes unfruitful ("Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful").

Jesus said in Luke 8:11: ". . . The seed is the word of God." This means that the word of God was choked in the heart of Martha by her cares of this life, so she became unfruitful, and lost her peace by worrying and being troubled by many things. On the other hand, Mary became fruitful because she sat with Jesus and received His word without worry.

Prescription 22:

He also said to His disciples: "There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and an accusation was brought to him that this man was wasting his

goods. So he called him and said to him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.'

"Then the steward said within himself, 'What shall I do? For my master is taking the stewardship away from me. I cannot dig; I am ashamed to beg. I have resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.'

"So he called every one of his master's debtors to him, and said to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' And he said, 'A hundred measures of oil.' So he said to him, 'Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.' Then he said to another, 'And how much do you owe?' So he said, 'A hundred measures of wheat.' And he said to him, 'Take your bill, and write eighty.' So the master commended the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light.

"And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home. He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much. Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in what is another man's, who will give you what is your own?

> "No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."
>
> Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, also heard all these things, and they derided Him. And He said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God." (Luke 16:1 15)

Description:

If you use worldly resources to make friends on earth you will be able to exchange it for spiritual gifts or blessings in heaven

Recommendations for use:

We have already found out in Chapter Eleven that the spiritual realm gives birth to the physical realm. Likewise, spiritual gifts or blessings bring forth physical material. In other words, things which are connected with money, possessions, etc. come out of spiritual blessings, as it is written in Proverbs 8:12 21: "I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, And find out knowledge and discretion. The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverse mouth I hate. Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom; I am understanding, I have strength. By me kings reign And rulers decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, All the judges of the earth. I love those who

love me, And those who seek me diligently will find me. Riches and honor are with me, Enduring riches and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold, yes, than fine gold, And my revenue than choice silver. I traverse the ways of righteousness, In the midst of the paths of justice, That I may cause those who love me inherit wealth, That I may fill their treasuries."

Can you see what this says? First of all, Wisdom, who is Christ, states that He is understanding. Secondly, Wisdom declares that his fruit is better than gold and her revenue is better than choice silver. This means that spiritual blessings are greater than physical material, riches, or the money of this world. Wisdom also specifies that wealth and the treasuries of this world are within her since she causes us to inherit wealth, treasures, and enduring riches.

We also know that Wisdom is Jesus and God's Word. Therefore physical materials and riches are also within God's Word, which is the most important and spiritual gift of God. As far as Jesus is concerned, it is compulsory for all believers to give priority to God's Word, which is able to produce all the other spiritual gifts of God, as well as the physical riches and material of this world, as it is written in Ephesians 1:3: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ."

Jesus advises us to make friends with worldly resources so that we can benefit others and, when our earthly possessions are gone, you will be welcomed

into the eternal home, as it is written in Matthew 19:16 22: "Now behold, one came and said to Him, 'Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?' So He said to him, 'Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.' He said to Him, 'Which ones?' Jesus said, '"You shall not murder," "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not steal," "You shall not bear false witness," "Honor your father and mother," and, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."' The young man said to Him, 'All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?' Jesus said to them, 'If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, and follow Me.' But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions."

Jesus is telling us here that any charitable deed we do on earth credits us with treasures in heaven, which are far better than the money or riches of this world.

4) A Cure for People's Lack of Love, to Give Them the Love of God and One Another

Prescription 1:

"Blessed are the merciful, For they shall obtain mercy." (Matthew 5:7)

Description:

Forgive others even your enemies and be kind to others to become God's lender and a son of God.

Recommendations for use:

Let us begin by seeing what it means to be merciful by looking at what Jesus said in Luke 6:27 36: "But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those you curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you. To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also. And from him who takes away your cloak, do not withhold your tunic either. Give to everyone who asks of you. And from him who takes away your goods do not ask them back. And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise. But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful."

Do you now see that being merciful means that you are ready to show people kindness and to forgive others even your enemies? Jesus advises us to be prompt to forgive people who hurt or wrong us. He also tells us to be quick to show kindness to others. As a matter of fact, only forgiveness and kindness turn us into God's lender, because we lend to God when we

are kind or forgiving. Notice also that being kind and forgiving makes you a son of God. Let us now look at two parables Jesus gave to illustrate that forgiveness and kindness are the issues.

We will start with Luke 16:19–31, which talks about kindness.

> "There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.
>
> "Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.' But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.'
>
> "Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, for I

> have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.' Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.'"

Secondly, we are going to illustrate the case of forgiveness using a story found in Matthew 18:21–35.

> Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?"
>
> Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven. Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made. The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt.
>
> "But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii;

> and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!' So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done. Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?' And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him.
>
> "So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."

We should remember, when thinking about this story, that to forgive also means that you should not take revenge on any who wrong you. Just as He said in Luke 6:27–36, Jesus also said in Matthew 5:38–41: "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two."

Prescription 2:

"Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God." (Matthew 5:8)

Description:

If you purify your heart through meditation on God's Word, you will see God

Recommendations for use:

What does it mean to be pure in heart? Jesus defines this in Matthew 15:1 20:

> Then the scribes and Pharisees who were from Jerusalem came to Jesus, saying, "Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread."
>
> He answered and said to them, "Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition? For God commanded, saying, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.' But you say, 'Whoever says to his father or mother, "Whatever profit you might have received from me is a gift to God" then he need not honor his father or mother.' Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition. Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying:
>
> > 'These people draw near to Me with their mouth,
> > And honor Me with their lips,
> > But their heart is far from Me.

> And in vain they worship Me,
> Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'"

When He had called the multitude to Himself, He said to them, "Hear and understand: Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man; but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man."

Then His disciples came and said to Him, "Do You know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?"

But He answered and said, "Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch."

Then Peter answered and said to Him, "Explain this parable to us."

So Jesus said, "Are you also still without understanding? Do you not yet understand that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and is eliminated? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man."

First of all, when He says "These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips,

but their heart is far from Me," Jesus shows us that a man may say something different from what is in his heart but what matters is what is in his heart. Secondly, when He says "But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, and blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man," Jesus declares that most of the time a man expresses by his mouth what is in his heart. Therefore, being pure in heart means that you have a heart without evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, and blasphemies in it, because you have a heart which draws near to God and full of God's Word.

King David prophesied, in Psalm 24:3 4, what Jesus later said in Matthew 5:8: "Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? Or who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has neither lifted up his soul to an idol, nor sworn deceitfully."

Remember that Jesus told us, in John 15:1 8, how we must clean our heart, when he said: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it

abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, so shall you be My disciples." This means that it is God's Word that cleanses our heart. So the Word of God has the ability and the power to purify our heart. If we keep on exposing ourselves to God's Word, we will get a pure heart.

Above all Jesus reveals, in Matthew 15:17–20, one of the most important principles of life: that what comes from inside us—from our heart—is more important than what comes from outside. Proverbs 23:7 says the same thing as Jesus said: "For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. . . ." Your heart is the source of the river of life that dwells in you. What you treasure in your heart will flow through your mind, mouth, feelings, sight, and deeds. So if you store up God's Word, this will inspire you to do well. But only one evil thought is sufficient to defile you and, if this happens, then the defiled river of life will flow through your whole being, driving you into darkness and prompting you to go astray. At the end of the day, we simply have to expose ourselves—every day and every night—to God's Word to clean our heart.

Prescription 3:

"Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God." (Matthew 5:9)

Description:

If you work for peace by holding back your anger, forbidding yourself from insulting people, and settling differences with others quickly, you will become a son of God

Recommendations for use:

Let us look for Jesus's definition of peacemaker in Matthew 5:21 26 (Good News Bible): "You have heard that people were told in the past, 'Do not commit murder; anyone who does will be brought to trial.' But now I tell you: if you are angry with your brother you will be brought to trial, if you call your brother 'You good-for-nothing!' you will be brought before the Council, and if you call your brother a worthless fool you will be in danger of going to the fire of hell. So if you are about to offer your gift to God at the altar and there you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar, go at once and make peace with your brother, and then come back and offer your gift to God. If someone brings a lawsuit against you and takes you to court, settle the dispute with him while there is time, before you get to court. Once you are there, he will hand you over to the police, and you will be put in jail. There you will stay, I tell you, until you pay the last penny of your fine."

Your brother will have something against you if you are angry with him or use offensive language or dispute with him about something. But a peacemaker holds back his anger and forgets what makes him angry, thereby purifying his heart. He also forbids himself from insulting people and if he has an issue with somebody else he settles the matter at once. This is what the Bible says about peacemakers in Isaiah 32:17: "The work of righteousness will be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever." This means that one of the characteristics of a righteous man is that he works for peace. Therefore, working for peace is the effect of righteousness, which explains why Jesus declares that peacemakers shall be sons of God.

Prescription 4:

"Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly." (Matthew 6:1–4)

Description:

Do your charitable deeds in secret to receive God's reward, for you defile your heart when you desire to show your charitable deeds to others

Recommendations for use:

Jesus is showing us, in Matthew 6:1–4, that what matters is what is unseen (in our heart), not what people see of our outward behavior. Proverbs 11:18 says: "The wicked man does deceptive work, But he who sows righteousness will have a sure reward." Do you see that the wicked man deceives others by doing charitable deeds only to impress others, hoping that they will think he is righteous? His desire to be seen by others as he does these good deeds defiles his heart and earns him no reward from God's. True charity must be done in secret, with a pure heart, which is what Jesus wants us to do. At the end of the day, we must realize that only the state of our heart matters to God. When our heart is defiled by any evil motive or feeling we hinder God from blessing us.

Notice also that genuine charitable deeds (such as giving alms, praying, and fasting) are good works you do because God causes you to do them, and because it is the will of God for you to do them. For example, here is a description of how you should deal with fasting, found in Matthew 6:16–18: "Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you,

they have their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly."

Prescription 5:

"And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. But when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him. In this manner, therefore, pray:

Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come.
Your will be done
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
As we forgive our debtors.
And do not lead us into temptation,
But deliver us from the evil one.

> For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen." (Matthew 6:5 13)

Description:

Pray the model prayer of Jesus every day and night this is God's desire for you and, when your confession is in line with God's kingdom, it will grant you a wonderful life

Recommendations for use:

Let us compare this model prayer with God's thoughts concerning us. He revealed His genuine thoughts about us in Ezekiel 36:16 38:

> Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying: "Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their own ways and deeds; to Me their way was like the uncleanness of a woman in her customary impurity. Therefore I poured out My fury on them for the blood they had shed on the land, and for their idols with which they had defiled it. So I scattered them among the nations, and they were dispersed throughout the countries; I judged them according to their ways and their deeds. When they came to the nations, wherever they went, they profaned My holy name when they said of them, 'These are the people of the Lord, and yet they have gone out of His land.' But I had concern for My holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations wherever they went.

"Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord God: "I do not do this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for My holy name's sake, which you have profaned among the nations wherever you went. And I will sanctify My great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst; and the nations shall know that I am the Lord," says the Lord God, "when I am hallowed in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them. Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God. I will deliver you from all your uncleannesses. I will call for the grain and multiply it, and bring no famine upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of your trees and the increase of your fields, so that you need never again bear the reproach of famine among the nations. Then you will remember your evil ways and your deeds that were not good; and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight, for your iniquities and your abominations. Not for your sake do I do this," says the Lord God, "let it

> be known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel!"
>
> 'Thus says the Lord God: "On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will also enable you to dwell in the cities, and the ruins shall be rebuilt. The desolate land shall be tilled instead of lying desolate in the sight of all who pass by. So they will say, 'This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden; and the wasted, desolate, and ruined cities are now fortified and inhabited.' Then the nations which are left all around you shall know that I, the Lord, have rebuilt the ruined places and planted what was desolate. I, the Lord, have spoken it, and I will do it."
>
> 'Thus says the Lord God: "I will also let the house of Israel inquire of Me to do this for them: I will increase their men like a flock. Like a flock offered as holy sacrifices, like the flock at Jerusalem on its feast days, so shall the ruined cities be filled with flocks of men. Then they shall know that I am the Lord."'"

First of all, let us look at what Jesus tells us to say when we pray: "Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name." What does this mean? God says in Ezekiel 36:17: "Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their land, they defiled it by their own ways and deeds; to Me their way was like the uncleanness of a woman in her customary impurity." Moreover, He says in Ezekiel

36:20 21: "When they came to the nations, wherever they went, they profaned My holy name when they said of them, 'These are the people of the LORD, and yet they have gone out of His land.' But I had concern for My holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations wherever they went." This shows us that God is concerned for His holy name. Why? Because people living where God's people went were offended by what happened to them. Therefore, the fact that God's people had defiled the land of Israel by following their own ways and deeds, had caused God's holy name to be profaned. On the other hand, if we pray "Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name," that means that we declare that we will not follow our own ways or deeds but those of God.

"Hallowed be your name" is also translated "glorified be your name," as it is written in:

> Hallowed be thy name. It is the same word that in other places is translated sanctified. But here the old word hallowed is retained, only because people were used to it in the Lord's prayer. In these words, (1.) We give glory to God; it may be taken not as a petition, but as an adoration; as that, the Lord be magnified, or glorified, for God's holiness is the greatness and glory of all his perfections. We must begin our prayers with praising God, and it is very fit he should be first served, and that we should give glory to God, before we expect to receive mercy and grace from

him. Let him have praise of his perfections, and then let us have the benefit of them. (2.) We fix our end, and it is the right end to be aimed at, and ought to be our chief and ultimate end in all our petitions, that God may be glorified; all our other requests must be in subordination to this, and in pursuance of it. "Father, glorify thyself in giving me my daily bread and pardoning my sins," &c. Since all is of him and through him, all must be to him and for him. In prayer our thoughts and affections should be carried out most to the glory of God. The Pharisees made their own name the chief end of their prayers (Mt 6:5, to be seen of men), in opposition to which we are directed to make the name of God our chief end; let all our petitions centre in this and be regulated by it. "Do so and so for me, for the glory of thy name, and as far as is for the glory of it." (3.) We desire and pray that the name of God, that is, God himself, in all that whereby he has made himself known, may be sanctified and glorified both by us and others, and especially by himself. "Father, let thy name be glorified as a Father, and a Father in heaven; glorify thy goodness and thy highness, thy majesty and mercy. Let thy name be sanctified, for it is a holy name; no matter what becomes of our polluted names, but, Lord, what wilt thou do to thy great name?" When we pray that God's name may be glorified, [1.] We make a virtue of necessity; for God will sanctify his own name, whether we desire it or not; I will be exalted

among the heathen, Ps 46:10. [2.] We ask for that which we are sure shall be granted; for when our Saviour prayed, Father glorify thy name, it was immediately answered, I have glorified it, and will glorify it again.

Source: Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible, Volume V (Matthew to John) http://www.lords-prayer-words.com/meaning_commentary_matthew_henry_2.html

This is very important, because our confession must be in line with God's Word dwelling in our heart. Before confessing, we've got to be sure we are not trying to deceive God by saying something which does not come from our heart. If this is not the case, we must be aware that our confession will frame our course of life, as it is written in Proverbs 18:21: "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit." So when you confess "Hallowed be Your name" it will cause you to leave your own ways and follow God's Ways.

Secondly, we say in the model prayer in Matthew 6:10: "Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven." What is the kingdom of God and what is His Will? Let us look again at what God says in Ezekiel 36:24 29: "For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will

take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them. Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God. I will deliver you from all your uncleannesses. . . ." This means that God will take away all our sins and give us a new heart, which will be able to receive, understand, and store up His Word. That also means God will give us His Spirit, which will cause us to walk in His statutes, keep His judgments, and do them. The Law and the Prophets tell us to obey the law but do not give us the power or the Holy Spirit to fulfill that command. But, in the kingdom of God, his will is to give all believers His Holy Spirit or His Word, which has the power to cause us to walk in His statutes, keep His judgments, and do them. Therefore, if we confess "Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven" that indicates our agreement with the Will of God. It means that we confess our desire to be inhabitants of His kingdom and if we are already in His kingdom our desire to continue to live there. It also means that we declare our will to be cleansed from our sins and iniquities, our craving to get a new heart which is able to receive, understand, and store up God's Word, and our desire to receive the Holy Spirit who causes us to do the Will of God,.

Thirdly, we pray in Matthew 6:11: "Give us this day our daily bread." Here is the declaration of God in

Ezekiel 36:29–30: ". . . I will call for the grain and multiply it, and bring no famine upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of your trees and the increase of your fields, so that you need never again bear the reproach of famine among the nations." Since we have already confessed our craving for God's kingdom, and because those who belong to God's kingdom are heirs of the promise He made in Ezekiel 36:29–30, it is no wonder that Jesus teaches us to confess in our prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread."

Fourthly, we confess in Matthew 6:12, "And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors." I now exhort you to observe what God says in Ezekiel 36:31–33: "Then you will remember your evil ways and your deeds that were not good; and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight, for your iniquities and your abominations. Not for your sake do I do this,' says the Lord GOD, 'let it be known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel!' Thus says the Lord GOD: 'On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will also enable you to dwell in the cities, and the ruins shall be rebuilt." God is saying here that when we repent He will cleanse us from our iniquities. We have already declared in our prayer "Hallowed be Your name," declaring that we have abandoned our ways and our deeds. So, according to God's Word spoken in Ezekiel 36:31–33, we can proclaim the forgiveness of our sins, as God has promised.

Fifthly, we confess in Matthew 6:13: "And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one.

. . ." Furthermore, God tells us in Ezekiel 36:36 38, "Then the nations which are left all around you shall know that I, the LORD, have rebuilt the ruined places and planted what was desolate. I, the LORD, have spoken it, and I will do it.' Thus says the Lord GOD: 'I will also let the house of Israel inquire of Me to do this for them: I will increase their men like a flock. Like a flock offered as holy sacrifices, like the flock at Jerusalem on its feast days, so shall the ruined cities be filled with flocks of men. Then they shall know that I am the LORD." God urges us to inquire of Him to seek answers from Him so that He can make His will become true. We all know it is impossible to look for God if we still are in the hands of devils. So if we inquire of God, that really means we have been delivered from the devil's hands.

Sixthly, we confess in Matthew 6:13: ". . . For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen." In fact, God says in Ezekiel 36:36, ". . . I, the LORD, have spoken it, and I will do it." That declaration shows us His power to make what is said come to pass. This means that His Glory and His Kingdom will last forever.

We can now conclude that the model prayer given to us by Jesus is our confession of the reality of God's kingdom and what it is all about. Therefore Jesus's model prayer is our faith's declaration, as we ask God to fulfill His desires for our life, having total confidence in the promise He gives us in Ezekiel 36:36: "I, the LORD, have spoken it, and I will do it."

Prescription 6:

"The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!" (Matthew 6:22–23)

Description:

If you never hold evil in your heart, your good thoughts will provide light to your mind, eyes, feelings, mouth, and feet

Recommendations for use:

Let us begin by looking at the definitions of the eye of the body, which were given by God in Deuteronomy 15:9, and by Jesus in Matthew 20:1–16.

Deuteronomy 15:9 says: "Beware lest there be a wicked thought in your heart, saying, 'The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand,' and your eye be evil against your poor brother and you give him nothing, and he cry out to the Lord against you, and it become sin among you." God defines the eye as spirit and warns that an evil thought in our heart is the very thing that defiles our spirit and causes our spirit to become evil. Thus "evil eye" means a spirit with evil thoughts in its heart. Remember that a thought is an idea or opinion created in our mind and this thought will be stored in our heart as a belief if we think that it is true.

Let us now see the definition from our Lord Jesus about evil eye, found in Matthew 20:1–16: "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out

early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. Now when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard and whatever is right I will give you.' And they went. Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle, and said to them, 'Why have you been standing idle all day?' They said to him, 'Because no one hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right you will receive.' So when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, 'Call the laborers and give them their wages, beginning with the last to the first.' And when those came who were hired about the eleventh hour, they each received a denarius. But when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; and they likewise each received a denarius. And when they had received it, they complained against the landowner, saying, 'These last men have worked only one hour, and you made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the heat of the day.' But he answered one of them and said, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? Take what is yours and go your way. I wish to give to this last man the same as to you. Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or is your eye evil because I am good? So the last will be first, and the first last.

For many are called, but few chosen." Do you see that those hired first complained about the landowner's payments, expressing the evil thoughts of their hearts?

Again, Jesus has the same definition for evil eye as the one given by God, that is: a spirit with an evil thought in his heart. At the end of the day, we can now conclude that light stands for a spirit who is enlightened by good thoughts in his heart, while darkness refers to a spirit who is darkened by evil thought in his heart. So Jesus emphasizes that the issue is the nature of the thoughts we have in our hearts. Any evil thought in our heart puts our whole being (both spirit and body) into darkness. Therefore it matters to take extreme measures to avoid any evil thoughts in our heart.

Notice our heart is different from our mind. Proverbs 23:7 says: "For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. . . ." Do not forget, your "real" you is your spirit which lives in your body. So Proverbs 23:7 tells us that every human being is identified by the thoughts he has in his heart, because what his mind thinks of will become a belief in his heart, and this belief stored in his heart will, in turn, determine the thoughts in his mind, the speech from his mouth, the feelings in his body, what his eyes focus on, and where his feet go.

There are only two possibilities. If a man has an evil thought, this evil thought will put his whole being in darkness, therefore his mouth can only speak wrong or bad things, his eyes can only focus on evil things, his feelings can only be negative (fear, sadness, guilt,

hatred, and so on), his feet can only go where evil people go, his ears can only pay attention to bad things, and his mind will only be filled with evil thoughts. On the other hand, if he has only good thoughts in his heart, his mind and eyes will focus only on right things, his ears will only pay attention to right things, his feelings will only be good (peace, joy, love, innocence, and so on), and his mouth will only speak right and sweet words. So if you never think and put evil in your heart your good thoughts and beliefs will provide light to your life.

Prescription 7:

"So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city. And behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, 'Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven.' And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, 'This Man blasphemes!' But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, 'Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, "Your sins are forgiven," or to say, "Arise and walk"? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins' then He said to the paralytic, 'Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.' And he arose and departed to his house. Now when the multitudes saw it, they marveled and glorified God who had given such power to men." (Matthew 9:1 8)

Description:

Go to Jesus to receive forgiveness for your sins and you will be healed body, heart, and soul

Recommendations for use:

The Lord says in Zechariah 8.17: "'Let none of you think evil in your heart against your neighbor; and do not love a false oath. For all these are things that I hate,' says the LORD." Jesus points out in this that the principle characteristic of sin is having evil thoughts in your heart. Moreover, Jesus declares that He has power on earth to forgive our sins. Jesus is more explicit in John 5:26 27 when He says: "For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man." So it's clear that Jesus has power to forgive sins on earth, and this forgiveness has nothing to do with His death or resurrection, because Jesus forgave sins before His death and resurrection. The difference is that the forgiveness of sins before His death was not forever, in contrast to the forgiveness Jesus could give after His death and resurrection, as it is written in Isaiah 43:25: "I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; And I will not remember your sins."

Just as important, there is something awesome in what Jesus said: He compares illnesses in the body to sins in the spirit. For Jesus, they are the same though sins in the heart or in the spirit are more valuable in God's mind than illness in the body, since the second is the result of the first.

Prescription 8:

"Then the disciples of John came to Him, saying, 'Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but Your disciples do not fast?' And Jesus said to them, 'Can the friends of the bridegroom mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast. No one puts a piece of unshrunk cloth on to an old garment; for the patch pulls away from the garment, and the tear is made worse. Nor do they put new wine into old wineskins, or else the wineskins break, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved." (Matthew 9:14 17)

Description:

Be genuine when you help afflicted souls in your neighborhood and God will reward you

Recommendations for use:

Jesus's answer to John's disciples means that fasting is something you do in mourning. We all know that we mourn because we lack something or miss somebody and, thus, turn to God to give us what we ask for. But before we look at more of Jesus's answer, we need to go to Isaiah 58 to fully understand what Jesus said:

"Cry aloud, spare not;
Lift up your voice like a trumpet;
Tell My people their transgression,
And the house of Jacob their sins.
Yet they seek Me daily,

And delight to know My ways,
As a nation that did righteousness,
And did not forsake the ordinance of their God.
They ask of Me the ordinances of justice;
They take delight in approaching God.
'Why have we fasted,' they say, 'and You have not seen?
Why have we afflicted our souls, and You take no notice?'

"In fact, in the day of your fast you find pleasure,
And exploit all your laborers.
Indeed you fast for strife and debate,
And to strike with the fist of wickedness.
You will not fast as you do this day,
To make your voice heard on high.
Is it a fast that I have chosen,
A day for a man to afflict his soul?
Is it to bow down his head like a bulrush,
And to spread out sackcloth and ashes?
Would you call this a fast,
And an acceptable day to the Lord?

"Is this not the fast that I have chosen:
To loose the bonds of wickedness,
To undo the heavy burdens,
To let the oppressed go free,
And that you break every yoke?
Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
And that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out;
When you see the naked, that you cover him,

And not hide yourself from your own flesh?
Then your light shall break forth like the morning,
Your healing shall spring forth speedily,
And your righteousness shall go before you;
The glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.
Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;
You shall cry, and He will say, 'Here I am.'
"If you take away the yoke from your midst,
The pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness,
If you extend your soul to the hungry
And satisfy the afflicted soul,
Then your light shall dawn in the darkness,
And your darkness shall be as the noonday.
The Lord will guide you continually,
And satisfy your soul in drought,
And strengthen your bones;
You shall be like a watered garden,
And like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail.
Those from among you
Shall build the old waste places;
You shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
And you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach,
The Restorer of Streets to Dwell In.

"If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath,
From doing your pleasure on My holy day,
And call the Sabbath a delight,
The holy day of the Lord honorable,
And shall honor Him, not doing your own ways,
Nor finding your own pleasure,

Nor speaking your own words,
Then you shall delight yourself in the Lord;
And I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth,
And feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father.
The mouth of the Lord has spoken."

So God defines a fast as "A day for a man to afflict his soul." This means that, for God, a fast day is a day do deny yourself food and, therefore, a day to help people whose souls are afflicted not because of their own will but because of their conditions (heavy burden or yoke, lack of bread, poverty, being naked . . .). But Jesus came to earth to satisfy the needs of those who are afflicted. Why? Look at Jesus's answer to those John the Baptist sent to Him in Matthew 11:4 6: "Jesus answered and said to them, 'Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: The blind receive their sight and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me.'"

This means that Jesus's disciples have no need to fast since Jesus is with them, and he fulfills all their needs. But on the day Jesus returns to His Father then there will be a need of fasting.

Notice that Jesus said, in Matthew 9:15: "Can the friends of the bridegroom mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then

they will fast." This means that if the bridegroom (who represents Christ) is with his friends they lack nothing, and this is the real meaning of fasting: satisfying the needs of people around us.

Let us listen again to God's definition of fasting, given in Isaiah 58:6–8: "Is this not the fast that I have chosen: To loose the bonds of wickedness, To undo the heavy burdens, To let the oppressed go free, And that you break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, And that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; When you see the naked, that you cover him, And not hide yourself from your own flesh?" Do you see that what Jesus was doing by satisfying the needs of sick people, the demon-possessed, and the four or five thousand men who were hungry in the wilderness — and by bringing to God's house tax collectors and sinners who were cast out — is, indeed, the real meaning of fasting?

Prescription 9:

"Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, 'The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.'" (Matthew 9:35–38)

Description:

If you are in need, sick, broken, lost, or ruled over with force and cruelty, go to Jesus, the Good Shepherd, and you will receive what you need to fulfill your destiny on earth

Recommendations for use:

Let us begin by examining what Jesus means by "they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd." We find the meaning of this phrase in Ezekiel 34:

> And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God to the shepherds: "Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool; you slaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the flock. The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought what was lost; but with force and cruelty you have ruled them. So they were scattered because there was no shepherd; and they became food for all the beasts of the field when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and on every high hill; yes, My flock was scattered over the whole face of the earth, and no one was seeking or searching for them."
>
> 'Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord: "As I live," says the Lord God, "surely because

My flock became a prey, and My flock became food for every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, nor did My shepherds search for My flock, but the shepherds fed themselves and did not feed My flock" therefore, O shepherds, hear the word of the Lord! Thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will require My flock at their hand; I will cause them to cease feeding the sheep, and the shepherds shall feed themselves no more; for I will deliver My flock from their mouths, that they may no longer be food for them."

'For thus says the Lord God: "Indeed I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land; I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, in the valleys and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them in good pasture, and their fold shall be on the high mountains of Israel. There they shall lie down in a good fold and feed in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. I will feed My flock, and I will make them lie down," says the Lord God. "I will seek what was lost and bring back what was driven away, bind up the broken and strengthen

what was sick; but I will destroy the fat and the strong, and feed them in judgment."

'And as for you, O My flock, thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I shall judge between sheep and sheep, between rams and goats. Is it too little for you to have eaten up the good pasture, that you must tread down with your feet the residue of your pasture and to have drunk of the clear waters, that you must foul the residue with your feet? And as for My flock, they eat what you have trampled with your feet, and they drink what you have fouled with your feet."

'Therefore thus says the Lord God to them: "Behold, I Myself will judge between the fat and the lean sheep. Because you have pushed with side and shoulder, butted all the weak ones with your horns, and scattered them abroad, therefore I will save My flock, and they shall no longer be a prey; and I will judge between sheep and sheep. I will establish one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them My servant David. He shall feed them and be their shepherd. And I, the Lord, will be their God, and My servant David a prince among them; I, the Lord, have spoken.

"I will make a covenant of peace with them, and cause wild beasts to cease from the land; and they will dwell safely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods. I will make them and the places all around My hill a blessing; and I will cause showers to

> come down in their season; there shall be showers of blessing. Then the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase. They shall be safe in their land; and they shall know that I am the Lord, when I have broken the bands of their yoke and delivered them from the hand of those who enslaved them. And they shall no longer be a prey for the nations, nor shall beasts of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and no one shall make them afraid. I will raise up for them a garden of renown, and they shall no longer be consumed with hunger in the land, nor bear the shame of the Gentiles anymore. Thus they shall know that I, the Lord their God, am with them, and they, the house of Israel, are My people," says the Lord God.'
>
> "You are My flock, the flock of My pasture; you are men, and I am your God," says the Lord God.

Do you see now who a good shepherd is in God's point of view? A good shepherd, according to God, is he who feeds the needy, strengthens the weak, heals those who were sick, binds up the broken, brings back those were driven away, and seeks those who were lost, while he with authority and wisdom rules them. Therefore, if people are in need, weak, sick, broken, driven away, or lost, that means there is no good shepherd.

God's will is that anyone who lives on earth should find food when he is hungry and clear water when he

is thirsty, get strength when he is weak, is healed when he is sick, is brought back by the preaching of the good shepherd when he is driven away, and is sought when he is lost. And Jesus is the ultimate Good Shepherd, so you must simply go to Him to satisfy any need or lack you have.

Prescription 10:

> And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease. Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.
>
> These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: "Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts, nor bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; for a worker is worthy of his food.

> "Now whatever city or town you enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and stay there till you go out. And when you go into a household, greet it. If the household is worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet. Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city! (Matthew 10:1 15)

Description:

It is your assignment as a Christian or a believer to act as our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to be moved with compassion for others and preach the gospel to bring forth the faith which is essential for manifesting miracles and the wonders which are evidence of the kingdom of heaven

Recommendations for use:

Jesus was moved by compassion, which is the main character of good shepherd. In the Lord Jesus, God's loving care became a truly human, emotional love for all of us. He cares; and He shows it through compassion for deprived, sick, and unhappy people. Notice that, in the mind of God and Jesus, most diseases or afflictions are caused by evil spirits or demons. So the healing activity of Jesus and His disciples which was seen as expelling the evil one is a beautiful sign of the coming of the kingdom of God in the world, as it is written

in Matthew 10:7–8: "And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give." In the last section in the passage from Ezekiel we saw that one of the duties of a good shepherd is to heal people. So since Jesus wanted His disciples to be good shepherds, He gave them the power to cast out unclean spirits, and the power to heal all kinds of sicknesses and diseases.

It is crystal clear that sickness and diseases are not the will of God. We all must do our best to be in good shape and especially to be good shepherds of Jesus. Notice that Jesus began His instructions by saying, "And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'" This means that preaching the gospel is important to our lives because it is why Jesus came to earth, as it is written in Luke 4:43: ". . . but He said to them, 'I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent.'" Of course, healing people, casting out demons, and raising up the dead are all activities which derive from the preaching of the gospel. Therefore, it is important to preach the gospel, first, to bring forth the faith which is essential for the manifestation of the signs, wonders, and miracles which are evidence of the kingdom of heaven.

Prescription 11:

"At that time Jesus answered and said, 'I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden

these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes." (Matthew 11:25)

Description:
Show your love for God by always giving thanks to Him.

Recommendations for use:
Jesus gave thanks to God for the revelation knowledge He gives the babes in spirit those people who are unlearned, and the humble, who are able to always give glory to God for every good thing that happens to them and for His Word which dwells in their hearts and gives them the presence of God and Jesus and, therefore, peace and joy.

It is written in Psalm 136:26: "Oh, give thanks to the God of heaven! For His mercy endures forever." Giving thanks to God at all times is the characteristic of one who really loves God and is a genuine believer in Christ, as it is written in Philippians 4:4 7: "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God; which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

Prescription 12:
"Now Jesus called His disciples to Himself and said, 'I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing

to eat. And I do not want to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way.' Then His disciples said to Him, 'Where could we get enough bread in the wilderness to fill such a great multitude?' Jesus said to them, 'How many loaves do you have?' And they said, 'Seven, and a few little fish.' So He commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. And He took the seven loaves and the fish and gave thanks, broke them and gave them to His disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitude. So they all ate and were filled, and they took up seven large baskets full of the fragments that were left. Now those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children. And He sent away the multitude, got into the boat, and came to the region of Magdala." (Matthew 15:32 39)

Description:

No matter what you feel or what your circumstances are, always give thanks to God for what He has already done for you in the spiritual realm which will surely come to pass in the physical realm

Recommendations for use:

Let us compare this passage from Matthew 15:32 39 to Matthew 26:26 30: "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, 'Take, eat; this is My body.' Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say to you, I will not drink

of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom.' And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives."

Do you see that in the two situations Jesus uses the same signs? In the case of Matthew 15:32–39, He takes bread and fish, gives thanks, breaks it, and gives it to His disciples. In the case of Matthew 26:26–30, He, first of all, takes bread, blesses it, breaks it, and gives it to His disciples and then takes the cup of wine, gives thanks, and gives it to His disciples. What does this tell us? In the first case, Jesus turned seven loaves and a few fish into enough bread and fish to physically feed the multitudes. But in the second case, Jesus turns bread and wine into His body and blood for the forgiveness of sins, to feed our spiritual needs of salvation, peace of mind, and fellowship with God. Notice—even though the situations are very different—that Jesus always gives thanks to God before He performs His great miracles, showing us that He has already seen in the spiritual realm the miracles He is about to perform in the physical realm.

Prescription 13:

"When they had come to Capernaum, those who received the temple tax came to Peter and said, 'Does your Teacher not pay the temple tax?' He said, 'Yes.' And when he had come into the house, Jesus anticipated him, saying, 'What do you think, Simon? From whom

do the kings of the earth take customs or taxes, from their own sons or from strangers?' Peter said to Him, 'From strangers.' Jesus said to him, 'Then the sons are free. Nevertheless, lest we offend them, go to the sea, cast in a hook, and take the fish that comes up first. And when you have opened its mouth, you will find a piece of money; take that and give it to them for Me and you." (Matthew 17:24–27)

Description:

Do your best not to offend people with your deeds, for your deeds must not contradict the Word of God

Recommendations for use:

Although Jesus is the Son of God, so He should be free from paying temple tax, He did not want to offend those who received the temple tax, so He made up His mind to pay it. In this, Jesus shows us that, although we must follow God's teachings, we should try to do so without offending others.

Prescription 14:

"Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven. For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost. What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine and go to the mountains to seek the one that is straying? And if he should find it, assuredly, I say to you, he rejoices more over that sheep than over the

ninety-nine that did not go astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish." (Matthew 18:10 14)

Description:

Although you are a sinner, you are of great value in the sight of God and the worth of your repentance is beyond price, therefore, when you repent you give joy to God's angels and in return receive grace, glory, and salvation from God

Recommendations for use:

In Matthew 18:10 14, Jesus again deals with the character of a good shepherd, as He also did in Ezekiel 34 (which can be found in its entirety in Prescription 9, above). So now do you understand what makes a good shepherd in God's mind? A good shepherd, according to God, is someone who feeds the needy, strengthens the weak, heals those who were sick, binds up the broken, brings back those who were driven away, and seeks those were lost; while ruling them with authority and wisdom. Therefore, if you see that people are in need, weak, sick, broken, driven away, or lost, that means they do not have a good shepherd. God's will is that anyone who lives on earth should find food when he is hungry, clear waters when he is thirsty, strength when he is weak, health when he is sick, shelter in the Word of God when he is driven away, and sanctuary when he is lost. So as far as Jesus is concerned, it is more important to focus on lost people than on people who are righteous and do not need help from God.

Therefore every sinner (or lost sheep) is very important in the sight of God. Jesus stressed this truth in Luke 15:8–10, which is sometimes called "the parable of the lost coin": "Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a light, sweep the house, and seek carefully until she finds it? And when she has found it, she calls her friends and neighbors together, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I lost!' Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents." Jesus also made it clear that the soul of a sinner is priceless is His sight in Mark 8:34–38: ". . . 'Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."

Prescription 15:

"But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, 'Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?' Jesus said to him, 'You shall love the LORD

your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.'" (Matthew 22:34–40)

Description:

Love your neighbor not by your measure of love but by Jesus's measure of love

Recommendations for use:

Notice that Mark 12:32–34 adds some more details to this story, saying: "So the scribe said to Him, 'Well said, Teacher. You have spoken the truth, for there is one God, and there is no other but He. And to love Him with all the heart, with all the understanding, with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is more than all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.' Now when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, He said to him, 'You are not far from the kingdom of God.' But after that no one dared question Him." The statement Jesus makes in His response is actually a combination of Deuteronomy 6:5 ("You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.") and Leviticus 19:18 (". . .but you shall love your neighbor as yourself . . ."). What is new, here, is that Jesus fits them together, stating that without the love of your neighbor, you make the love of God of no effect, and your love of God profits you nothing. At

the same time, without the love of God, your love of neighbor will not last; it will vanish especially in you are faced with disappointments.

In John 13:34, Jesus adds something else, saying, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another." This is different from what God said in the Old Testament in the full passage from Leviticus 19:18: "You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the LORD." Do you see that Jesus tells us to love one another not as we see fit but by how He sees fit?

Prescription 16:

> "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'

"Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'

"Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.'

"Then they also will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?' Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life." (Matthew 25:31–46)

Description:

Love others, and minister to the needy, the deprived, and the downtrodden to receive passage to the kingdom of God

Recommendations for use:

In these wonderful scriptures, Jesus identifies himself with the deprived and downtrodden people and people in need of something they cannot get by their own effort. Jesus explains that how you treat the "least of these" is how you are treating Him. This clearly shows that people in need, the deprived, and the downtrodden are images of Jesus Christ; they are the representatives of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ on earth. He who has pity on the poor lends to the LORD, and He will pay back what he has given. Can you see that if you see or meet one of them and fail to help them, you are also ignoring Jesus? Proverbs 19:17 talks about the reward of being merciful or kind to others turns us into God's bank or lender. This means that our love for Christ is expressed by our love for others. This is the core of Jesus Christ's teaching.

Indeed, Jesus gave us a new rule to follow in John 13:34: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another." Therefore, the second coming of Jesus Christ on earth will be a new beginning for those who have followed Jesus and paid attention to His great commandment of love. But, for those who have failed to love others, it is the beginning of excruciating and everlasting sufferings. So you have two ways before you: love for others or lack of love for others. Before you make your choice, be sure to meditate on the consequences.

Prescription 17:

Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, that He said to His disciples, "You know that after two days is the Passover, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified."

Then the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders of the people assembled at the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and plotted to take Jesus by trickery and kill Him. But they said, "Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar among the people."

And when Jesus was in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, a woman came to Him having an alabaster flask of very costly fragrant oil, and she poured it on His head as He sat at the table. But when His disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, "Why this waste? For this fragrant oil might have been sold for much and given to the poor."

But when Jesus was aware of it, He said to them, "Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a good work for Me. For you have the poor with you always, but Me you do not have always. For in pouring this fragrant oil on My body, she did it for My burial. Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her."

Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, "What are you

willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?" And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him.

Now on the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying to Him, "Where do You want us to prepare for You to eat the Passover?"

And He said, "Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, 'The Teacher says, "My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at your house with My disciples."'"

So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them; and they prepared the Passover.

When evening had come, He sat down with the twelve. Now as they were eating, He said, "Assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me."

And they were exceedingly sorrowful, and each of them began to say to Him, "Lord, is it I?"

He answered and said, "He who dipped his hand with Me in the dish will betray Me. The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born."

Then Judas, who was betraying Him, answered and said, "Rabbi, is it I?"

> He said to him, "You have said it."
>
> And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."
>
> Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom."
>
> And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. (Matthew 26:1 30)

Description:
In return for believing in Jesus by eating the body of Christ and drinking the blood of Christ, Jesus gives you His righteousness and everlasting life

Recommendations for use:
We must always keep in mind that everything Jesus said or did in His lifetime was foretold in the Scriptures. This consciousness is the "master key" to understanding God's Word and to getting the light of Jesus Christ in our heart and being enlightened by the Word of God.

Let us compare Matthew 26:1 30, which we have just read, with Exodus 12:1 28 to receive the light from Jesus in order to better understand what was described

and the revelation knowledge Jesus intended to communicate to us. It is written in Exodus 12:1 28:

> Now the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, "This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household. And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take it according to the number of the persons; according to each man's need you shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it. Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted in fire its head with its legs and its entrails. You shall let none of it remain until morning, and what remains of it until morning you shall burn with fire. And thus you shall eat it: with a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. It is the Lord's Passover.

'For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord. Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

'So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses. For whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel. On the first day there shall be a holy convocation, and on the seventh day there shall be a holy convocation for you. No manner of work shall be done on them; but that which everyone must eat that only may be prepared by you. So you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this same day I will have brought your armies out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as an everlasting ordinance. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening. For seven days no leaven shall be found in your houses, since whoever eats what is leavened, that same person shall be cut

off from the congregation of Israel, whether he is a stranger or a native of the land. You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your dwellings you shall eat unleavened bread.'"

Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, "Pick out and take lambs for yourselves according to your families, and kill the Passover lamb. And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin. And none of you shall go out of the door of his house until morning. For the Lord will pass through to strike the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the Lord will pass over the door and not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to strike you. And you shall observe this thing as an ordinance for you and your sons forever. It will come to pass when you come to the land which the Lord will give you, just as He promised, that you shall keep this service. And it shall be, when your children say to you, 'What do you mean by this service?' that you shall say, 'It is the Passover sacrifice of the Lord, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians and delivered our households.'" So the people bowed their heads and worshiped. Then the children of Israel went away and did so; just as the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

Do you see the similarities between Matthew 26:1 30 and Exodus 12:1 28? We must remember that the ritual outlined in Exodus was repeated over the years until the time reported in Matthew 26:1 30. Now look carefully at what Jesus did in Matthew. He identified His body with bread and gave to His disciples to eat, and then He identified His blood with wine and gave His disciples to drink. Through these actions, Jesus turned the ritual of the Passover into a new covenant representing Jesus's sacrifice for the remission of sin.

In Luke 22:19, Jesus was even more specific than in Matthew, saying: ". . . 'This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.'" By this, Jesus established His new covenant as a ritual for generations to come, in essence making the Lord's supper a Christian Passover sacrifice and sacrificial repast. It is an anticipated memorial of the Lord's sacrificial death on the cross, when our Lord's blood was shed in atonement, to ratify a new covenant between God and mankind. It is written in Luke 18:9 14: "Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: 'Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, "God, I thank You that I am not like other men extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess." And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, "God, be merciful to me a

sinner!" I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.'" This means that justification and righteousness are not related solely to good works, but also on the repentance of those who falter.

Psalm 32:1–2 states: "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit." Isaiah 54:17 also declares: "No weapon formed against you shall prosper, And every tongue which rises against you in judgment You shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, And their righteousness is from Me, Says the LORD." So God reveals to us, in Psalm 32:1–2 and Isaiah 54:17, that He is the source of the righteousness of all human beings. And Jesus said in Matthew 26:28: "For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." The law of God, as written in Ezekiel 18:20, declares: "The soul who sins shall die. . . ." And Jesus is telling us that He shed His blood for the forgiveness of our sins, clarifying what He said in John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." This means that the blood of Jesus is shed to break the bonds of the sovereign law of God, allowing those who believe in His Son to overcome death. Thus, those who believe in Jesus are separated from those who are the seed of Adam. This

passage from John also declares that God gives everlasting life to the believers. And we know that it is not possible to have everlasting life without righteousness. Indeed, Proverbs 11:19 states: "As righteousness leads to life, So he who pursues evil pursues it to his own death." This explains why Jesus said His blood was shed for the forgiveness of sins in order to give us His righteousness and, later, everlasting life.

Prescription 18:

> And when He came to the disciples, He saw a great multitude around them, and scribes disputing with them. Immediately, when they saw Him, all the people were greatly amazed, and running to Him, greeted Him. And He asked the scribes, "What are you discussing with them?"
>
> Then one of the crowd answered and said, "Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit. And wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid. So I spoke to Your disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not."
>
> He answered him and said, "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me." Then they brought him to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth.
>
> So He asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?"

And he said, "From childhood. And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us."

Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes."

Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"

When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it: "Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and enter him no more!" Then the spirit cried out, convulsed him greatly, and came out of him. And he became as one dead, so that many said, "He is dead." But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose.

And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?"

So He said to them, "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting."(Mark 9:14–29)

Description:
If you believe in Jesus and picture what you desire, your hope will come to pass; but, if unbelief dawns in your heart then you must first pray to get help from Jesus.

Recommendations for use:
Jesus stresses the importance of faith and hope in this wonderful conversation between Him and the father of the boy afflicted by an evil spirit. Let us look at the most important exchange of their conversation. The father questioned Jesus's authority, saying, "But if you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us." Jesus answered him, saying, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes." In this wonderful comment from Jesus, "believe" stands for "have faith" and if you have faith, hope comes to him who believes. You need to have strong faith and strong hope to see what you are looking for in the spiritual realm.

Why is it important to visualize what you want to be (or to get) in your mind? We all know that, in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1:1). Jesus said, in John 4:24, that God is the Spirit: "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." This means that a spirit being created material beings and those things exist in two forms. The universe must have existed in the mind of God first, and after God had spoken about them with His mouth, they became physical material. It is the same thing an architect does. His job is to design buildings, so he creates an idea the picture of the future building in his mind. And there is no way for the building to become real without first being pictured in the mind of an architect.

Coming back to the story of Jesus, He shows us that what we picture in our mind is as real as physical

material, and is what we commonly call "hope." Faith and hope allow our desires to come true. The afflicted boy's father grasped what Jesus was telling him, so he cried out and said with tears: "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!" meaning that he had faith, and that he wanted Jesus to help him to picture his son completely healed and to have any evil thoughts taken from him. Therefore, unbelief is spiritual blindness, and if you have unbelief you are unable to picture your desires even though you have faith in Jesus. When this happens, your hope dies, and only God and Jesus can help you.

Jesus is always moved with compassion. So when the boy's father cried out with tears it is no wonder that Jesus heard the prayers of the boy's father and rebuked the unclean spirit and cast him out. That's why Jesus said, "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting." Remember that, aside from this case, Jesus often said to those who were sick or to people who went along with sick: "All that is necessary to be healed is to have faith." Why was faith not sufficient to heal this boy? Because, in this case, the father of the boy was caught without hope, between faith and unbelief. When the father came to Jesus, it proved that he had faith, but the disciples were unable to cure the boy because the father failed to picture his son being healed.

Prescription 19:

"And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and

healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people. Then His fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all sick people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments, and those who were demon-possessed, epileptics, and paralytics; and He healed them. And great multitudes followed Him from Galilee, and from Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan." (Matthew 4:23–25)

"And He came down with them and stood on a level place with a crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and be healed of their diseases, as well as those who were tormented with unclean spirits. And they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch Him, for power went out from Him and healed them all." (Luke 6:17–19)

Description:
Believe in Jesus and become a genuine imitator of Him, and He will give you power so that your touch or speech will be able to give life and health to others

Recommendations for use:
Jesus said in John 4:14: ". . . but whoever drinks of the water that I give him will never thirst. But the water that I give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." So Jesus has something in him, which has the power to give life. This is why Proverbs 11:30 declares: "The fruit of

the righteous is a tree of life, And he who wins souls is wise." Let us look again at the testimony about the resurrection power of Elisha's bones, as it is written in 2 Kings 13:20–21: "Then Elisha died, and they buried him. And the raiding bands from Moab invaded the land in the spring of the year. So it was, as they were burying a man, that suddenly they spied a band of raiders; and they put the man in the tomb of Elisha; and when the man was let down and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived and stood on his feet." Can you see that the bones of Elisha had the power to give life to the dead body? Therefore it is not surprising that the living body of Jesus Christ has the power to heal anyone who comes in contact with Him, as in the case of those described in Luke 6:19: "And the whole multitude sought to touch Him, for power went out from Him and healed them all."

Prescription 20:

"He also spoke this parable: 'A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. Then he said to the keeper of the vineyard, "Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none. Cut it down; why does it use up the ground?" But he answered and said to him, "Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize it. And if it bears fruit, well. But if not, after that you can cut it down."'" (Luke 13:6–9)

Description:
As a believer, you are obliged to bear fruit, otherwise you will share the fate of the unbelievers

Recommendations for use:
As believers, we must bear fruits in other words, we must outwardly manifest the blessings we have been given. If we treasure God's Word in our heart and fail to manifest the glory of God outwardly through our sweet speech, the right thoughts in our mind, the right focus of our eyes, the right attention of our ears, and the good actions and good feelings of our body, we are likewise a fig tree which uses up the ground, does not bear fruit, and deserves to be cut down with the unbelievers.

Prescription 21:

"Now He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way raise herself up. But when Jesus saw her, He called her to Him and said to her, 'Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity.' And He laid His hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God. But the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath; and he said to the crowd, 'There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and not on the Sabbath day.' The Lord then answered him and said, 'Hypocrite! Does not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or

donkey from the stall, and lead it away to water it? So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound think of it for eighteen years, be loosed from the bond on the Sabbath? And when He said these things, all His adversaries were put to shame; and all the multitude rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by Him." (Luke 13:10 17)

Description:

Whenever you meet someone who is sick, you must first cast out their demons or the spirit of infirmity, then lay your hand on them to heal them, whether it is on the Sabbath or not

Recommendations for use:

The woman Christ healed was crippled by the spirit of infirmity. The Bible specifies that many sicknesses are caused by an evil spirit or a spirit of infirmity. This means that the first thing any believer must do when he faces sickness in another is to use the authority Jesus has given him to cast out the demonic spirit that is responsible for that disease. This is according to the clear mandate believers were given in Mark 16:15 18: "And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it

will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."

Before Jesus gave us the power to cast out demons and heal sick people by laying our hands on them, He demonstrated for us how to use this power as He did for the infirm woman in the story. He cast out the spirit of infirmity, then when He laid His hands on her the woman instantly stood straight. To deal with the issue of working on the Sabbath, we have to remember exactly what God said about the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20:1–17:

> And God spoke all these words, saying:
>
> "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.
>
> "You shall have no other gods before Me.
>
> "You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.
>
> "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.

"You shall not murder.

"You shall not commit adultery.

"You shall not steal.

"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

"You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's."

Can you see what God declared in Exodus 20:6? The New Living Translation, Second Edition gives us even more clarification: "But I lavish unfailing love for a thousand generations on those who love me and obey

my commands." His unfailing love and mercy will be given for a thousand generations on those who love Him and obey His commands. Do you see now why Jesus healed this woman, even though it was on the Sabbath? She was a daughter of Abraham and belonged to the thousand generations of Abraham. So it was her right to receive the mercy of God.

Moreover, the unfailing love of God and His mercy were included in the Ten Commandments as it is written in Exodus 20:6 (NKJV): "but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments." Therefore, demonstrating His love for others is not contrary to our observance of the Sabbath. This means that in the same way that we honor our father and mother on the Sabbath day without desecrating the Sabbath, likewise we can, like God, be merciful and show mercy to others without disobeying the Sabbath.

Prescription 22:

"Now it happened as He went to Jerusalem that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. And they lifted up their voices and said, 'Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!' So when He saw them, He said to them, 'Go, show yourselves to the priests.' And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. So Jesus

answered and said, 'Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?' And He said to him, 'Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well.'" (Luke 17:11–19)

Description:

Demonstrate your faith by testifying to your healing and thanksgiving and giving glory to God

Recommendations for use:

Can you see how Jesus reciprocates the faith of the Samaritan leper with the testimony of the Samaritan about his healing and his thanksgiving or glory to God? Our testimony concerning our healing and our thanksgiving – and our giving glory to God – are an important point any believer must do in daily basis. By behaving in this way, you show your strong desire to lift up your soul, heart, and voice to God, as it is written in Psalm 143:8: "Cause me to hear Your loving kindness in the morning, For in You do I trust; Cause me to know the way in which I should walk, For I lift up my soul to You;" and in Isaiah 24:14–15: "They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing; For the majesty of the LORD They shall cry aloud from the sea. Thereby glorify the LORD in the dawning light, The name of the LORD God of Israel in the coastlands of the sea."

Prescription 23:

"For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the

Sabbath. But Jesus answered them, 'My Father has been working until now, and I have been working.' Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God. Then Jesus answered and said to them, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel. For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them even so the Son gives life to whom He will. For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.'" (John 5:16 23)

"If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true. There is another who bears witness of Me, and I know that the witness which He witnesses of Me is true. You have sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth. Yet I do not receive testimony from man, but I say these things that you may be saved. He was the burning and shining lamp, and you were willing for a time to rejoice in his light. But I have a greater witness than John's; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish the very works that I do bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me. And the Father himself, who sent Me, has testified of Me. You have

neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form. And you do not have His word abiding in you, because whom He sent, Him you do not believe. You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me." (John 5:31–39)

Description:

Believe that Jesus is the Son of God and receive eternal life, for there are four sources which attest to this fact: John the Baptist, the works of Jesus when He was on earth, God's Word in the Scriptures, and the Holy Spirit

Recommendations for use:

Jesus came to earth to give us His God-kind of life eternal life. He claimed to be the Son of God, but some people did not believe Him. So He pointed out the three sources that bore witness that He was who He claimed to be: John the Baptist, the very works He performed, and the Scriptures. The Law of Moses declared, in Deuteronomy 19:15, that: "One witness shall not rise against a man concerning any iniquity or any sin, in any sin that he commits; by the mouth of two or three witnesses, the matter shall be established." Can you see that the Law of Moses requires two or three witnesses to establish the truth – and that our Lord and Savior showed us His three witnesses that proved that He is really the Son of God?

John 5:18 says: "Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making

himself equal with God." The Jews sought to kill Jesus because He said God was His Father. People who were listening to Jesus were Jews and knew the Law of Moses, but still failed to perceive the truth. So Jesus gave them the three witnesses that bore testimony to Him. Nevertheless, they did not change their minds toward Him.

But for people of our time, there's no excuse for such behavior because we have one more witness: the Holy Spirit, who also came to earth to testify to the words Jesus taught us, as it is written in John 14:26: "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things I said to you."

Conclusion

When your mind has no more doubt and worries, you can receive the peace of God and hold the absolute conviction that God's Word is the truth. Once this happens, this truth will come out of your mouth and frame your course of life.

Throughout this book, we have discussed the four dimensions of faith that begin with understanding God's Word. Putting that Word into practice to build your foundation in Christ is the second dimension of faith. You reach the third dimension of faith when you put Jesus (or God's Word) first in everything you do in your life. And, finally, true love of Jesus will catapult you into the fourth dimension of faith.

We have also discussed the different names of faith. Faith is, first of all, your knowledge of God and Christ Jesus, which means that faith is your life in Christ Jesus. Then faith turns into your root in Christ when you put the Word of God into practice, that is to say, faith becomes your love of Christ (John 14:23). As you keep on being moved only by God's Word instead of your life's circumstances or what you can see, feel, or hear that is not consistent with His Word your love of

Christ increases and you start being deeply rooted in Christ Jesus and become invincible and unshakeable. When the Bible talks about knowledge, roots, eternal life, or your love of Christ, it truly refers to real faith. Therefore, all these terms are other names of faith, or of the degrees of faith.

Notice that our root in Christ Jesus can actually begin to grow only when we start turning our mind towards God to adopt His thoughts, speak like Jesus, and take corresponding actions in agreement with the Word of God. Our change of thought towards God is the beginning of real faith, which means that right thinking is faith, right *speaking* is faith, right *believing* is faith, and right *actions* are also faith.

This book has revealed to you what faith is and its process of growth. Faith begins with right hearing (Romans 10:17), and then it grows by right thinking (Proverbs 23:7, Mark 11:23, and Philippians 4:4–7). Faith continues to increase when your conviction is established in the things of God or the Word of God, which is called right believing (Acts 16:31; notice, also, that Jesus is the Word of God, as it is written in John 1:1–5). The things of God are defined in 2 Corinthians 4:18: "while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

After that, your faith's growth is improved by right speaking (2 Corinthians 4:13) that corresponds to the spirit of faith. Finally, faith's cycle ends by right acting

(taking any corresponding actions in agreement with the Word of God). So faith grows according to this wonderful cycle: Right Hearing à Right Thinking à Right Believingà Right Speaking à Right Acting and, again à Right Hearing.

You have read in this book that you cannot hear right until you listen and pay attention to the Word of God, that you cannot think right until you hear right through God's Word, that you cannot believe right until you think right, that you cannot speak right until you believe right, and, finally, that you cannot do right unless you speak right.

Faith is a gift of God, because God has dealt to every one of us a measure of faith (Romans 12:3) and our responsibility is to grow the seed of faith sown in our heart and become a man of giant faith, a champion in any area of life. When you have the Word of God (Jesus) in your heart, you can do anything (Philippians 4:13). But there is one condition which must be met for you to become an "I can do anything" man a man who never fails and a champion, which is to have no doubt in your mind. Notice that your doubt will decrease as you grow from the first dimension of faith (understanding God's Word) to the fourth dimension of faith (the love of Christ) passing through the second dimension of faith (doing the Word of God) and the third level of faith (putting God first in your life).

Remember that the Bible says, in Matthew 14:22 31: "Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He

sent the multitudes away. And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on a mountain by himself to pray. Now when evening had come, He was alone there. But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary. Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, 'It is a ghost!' And they cried out for fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid.' And Peter answered Him and said, 'Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.' So He said, 'Come.' And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried out, saying, 'Lord, save me!' And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"

When Jesus our Lord calls Peter a man of little faith and asks why he doubted, Jesus tells us that if Peter had not doubted, he would have kept walking on the water. But he failed to do so because of doubt, which shows us that for us to profit from the advantages that faith can grant us, we must keep our faith far away from doubt. Before Peter began to sink, he walked perfectly on the water, as Jesus had done, which means that his faith in the Word of Jesus sustained him until he started focus on the winds. We must remember that our faith in Jesus activates the power of God in us

through the Word of God. Fear activates the power of Satan in our life and brings us defeat, failure, poverty, and sickness. A true faith is, therefore, the firm one. You could say that Peter paid a price to learn this.

Should we conclude, then, that it is impossible for a man to be a believer, since doubt is practically part of human nature? This is not what Jesus has just said to us in Matthew 14:22–31 (quoted above). In fact, true faith must never be questionable. God is omnipotent, and this must be understood as an obvious fact. Thus, if we perceive things as true Christians, then we will experience the marvels of God in our daily lives. Remember that faith is a gift, but it is also a process, for faith is a seed sowed in us that must grow and become mature. When we take time to know God, faith—as well as eternal life and a love of Christ—will germinate in us.

Chapter One through Chapter Thirty dealt with the foundations of faith, with the aim of permitting you to receive the basics of faith deep inside yourself. Why? Because the Bible is the Book of Faith. In other words, every believer must know the reason why Jesus came to this world, what his relationship with Christ should be, and who he is in Christ. Those first thirty chapters were aimed at casting doubt out of your mind so that you could be granted faith and become grounded in it. The purpose of those thirty chapters was to reveal the wisdom of God and real faith in God—and how to get true faith and put it to work. You cannot acquire the true knowledge of God and Jesus, which is true

faith in God, unless you succeed in defeating doubt in your thoughts and heart. And yet, eternal life consists of knowing the only true God, the Father, and Jesus Christ His Son, whom He has sent for you (John 17:3).

How can you know Jesus if you doubt the Word of God or God's wisdom? The first thirty chapters of this book were aimed at leading you along the path of real knowledge that will enable your spirit not to doubt anymore but, rather, to acquire a perfect knowledge of God the Father and His Son, as well as His principles.

You must meditate constantly on this knowledge, as well as on Jesus and his principles, in order to receive the thoughts of God in your heart, and so that those thoughts can make you one with Jesus Christ, as it is expressed in Proverbs 23:7 ("For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. . . ."), and consequently produce eternal life in you. This is the promise which comes from your belonging to the kingdom of God and your co-heritage with Christ.

Our understanding of God the Father and Jesus produces eternal life in us (John 17:3). This eternal life, in turn, destroys any disease in our body and prevents us from catching new diseases. It also destroys the whole curse of the law and gives us access to God's provisions for us: blessings, joy, and peace, as well as their byproducts, such as riches and prosperity in our present lives.

Therefore, the first part of this book revealed the secrets of God, whose understanding delivers us from the contingencies of the present life, and shows us His

intimacy, transforming us totally into God's children and making us become leaders in every domain or activity during our life on earth. In fact, each statement or assertion that we make should always be based on the Word of God, and this book is based on that simple, biblical principle.

To understand the power of that principle, let us follow the dialogue between Jesus and His disciples in Matthew 16:13–20: "When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, 'Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?' So they said, 'Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Simon Peter answered and said, 'You are Christ, the Son of the living God.' Jesus answered and said to him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.' Then He commended His disciples that they should tell no one that He was Jesus the Christ."

Jesus asked His disciples two questions. The first one was: "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" and the second one was: "Who do you say that I am?" Those fundamental questions are timely, because

for us to be believers and persevere, we obviously have to know who we are dealing with. The answer to the first question enables Jesus to understand the ambivalence of the reactions of the people about Him, since He was sometimes adulated, but at other times renounced. (This is evidence that Jesus was unknown by the people, and that even those who were close to Him compared Him to one of the ancient prophets.) But did that reaction differ from the one of His disciples? Let us dwell a bit on Simon Peter's answer: "You are Christ, the Son of the living God."

Before attempting to understand the full meaning of Simon Peter's answer, let us analyze its impact on the Lord Jesus. Jesus appreciates the answer, which He considers to be a revelation from the Most High because He feels it reflects His true nature. So, what is that nature? John the Baptist and, before him, all the great prophets predicted that He, Jesus the Messiah, the Son of the living God, God as man, would come to save us from all sins and to give us eternal, everlasting life. That is, therefore, what Peter's answer reveals, and that is what delights the Lord. And when the Lord is proud of us, He rains graces upon our lives. (Peter immediately benefited from that, because Jesus made him the cornerstone of His church.)

Beyond the person of Peter, the whole Church of Christ benefits from that enthroning. Like Peter, the Church and all the baptized have received the keys to the kingdom of heaven, the power to possess eternal life over which the gates of death have no dominion,

and the capacity for changing the circumstances in their life by confession that is in keeping with the Word of God. This is all true because of what Christ said to Peter.

Peter opened our eyes by revealing to us who Jesus really is. Jesus has not changed since that time, and will never change. He will remain eternally the Son of the living God, and that is the why our faith in Him must remain firm and inflexible through meditation on the Word of God, the wisdom of God. I hope that the book which you hold in your hands has helped you to understand this, for it will continue to help you to discover the secret thoughts of God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, Our Lord and God.

In conclusion, the Bible says, in 1 Peter 1:23: ". . . having being born again, not of the corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, . . ." Do you see that the Word of God gave us birth in the realm of the spirit through our knowledge of Jesus Christ? So the seed of God's Word, after it is planted in our heart, grows as we increase our knowledge of God and Jesus by our continual meditation on the word of God. Our meditation on God's Word then increases our knowledge of Jesus that brings us eternal life and love for Christ, and that love of Christ allows us to put God's Word into practice. As we increase our knowledge of Christ, we increase our love for Jesus, as it is written in 1 John 4:7 8: "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God, and everyone who loves is born of God and

knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love." This scripture proves that everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. And John 17:3 states that eternal life comes from knowing the only true God and Jesus Christ. Therefore, as born-again Christians, we have the seed of love and eternal life in us. And we grow this seed of love and eternal life by increasing our knowledge of the things of God or our knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Romans 4:17 22 encapsulates the four dimensions of faith: "(as it is written, 'I have made you a father of many nations') in the presence of Him whom he believed God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things, which do not exist as though they did; who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, 'So shall your descendants be.' And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb. He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He promised He was also able to perform. And therefore 'it was accounted to him for righteousness.'"

This passage of the Holy Scriptures gives us the best conclusion for this book. First of all, it tells us that God gives life to the dead, meaning it is not too late whatever the situation you are in. God can give life to your dead business, your dead womb, your dead

body, or your dead bank account.

Secondly, this scripture also declares that God calls those things which do not exist as though they already exist, which means that God is the God of faith. Faith, as we know, is when we call real what we cannot see, as it is written in Hebrews 11:1: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the existence of thing not seen." Therefore, if you are sick, exercising your faith means you are under obligation to say, as a child of God: "I am healed." Saying this is speaking like God, and will bring about your healing. Your healing will come into being or into existence because you have spoken in agreement with the Word of God. This is the principle of faith.

Did you notice that this passage does not say: "He calls those things which exist as though they were not"? For example, if you have a growth of cancer, you would not declare: "This growth does not exist" because that statement is a lie. It is not in line with faith, because you are denying what is true. Faith is calling into being what you want to happen, which is in agreement with the Word of God. Do you see why the importance of confession has been greatly emphasized in this book? Through our faith's proclamation — our confession of God's Word — we can bring into being anything, as it is written in Philippians 4:13: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

Thirdly, it is written in Romans 4:18: "who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, 'So

shall your descendants be.'" That means that, although the situation was outwardly hopeless, Abraham took hold of that which was promised. That is faith. Romans 4:19–21 is more specific about Abraham's faith: "And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb. He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform."

Weak faith considers the circumstances a man is in, so that one time he will believe, while another time he will doubt because of his condition. Weak faith goes back and forth between two opinions, such as "Am I healed?" and "Am I trying to be healed?" But strong faith does not consider the circumstances, or the symptoms of sickness, fear, pain, etc. When you are strong in faith, you give glory to God through your faith's proclamation or your confession of God's Word, as it is written in Romans 4:20: "He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, . . ." No wonder the Bible says, in Philippians 4:6–7: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." That means that to show strong faith you must confess God's Word

or give thanks to God irrespective of what you feel or see.

Fourthly, Romans 4:21 says: ". . . and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform." The purpose of the first thirty chapters of this book was to feed your faith on the ability of God and to help you realize that no matter what obstacles you face you are going to win. By your meditation on God's Word, your proclamation of faith, and your corresponding actions in consent with God's Word, you will become fully persuaded, as Abraham did.

Now that you know the transformation that takes place in you and in your life when you are studying, reading, and putting into practice what this book teaches you, you can start reading this book again and you will discover a beautiful, balanced, and wonderful life here on earth. This balanced and wonderful life begins at the moment you start being Christ Jesus by hearing, thinking, believing, speaking, and acting differently from the rest of the world. You are not ordinary, you are a unique human being, as it is written in 1 Peter 2:9: "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; . . ."

Why can we say we are not ordinary? We are not ordinary people because we no longer live with the life of the flesh, but by the life of God brought to us by the spirit of God as it is written in John 1:12 13: "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the

right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Do you see that we hail from God, our origin is the Word of God and the spirit of God, so we are born of the Word of God and the spirit of the Lord? Therefore we are under obligation to have the same hearing as Jesus, and the same thoughts as Jesus, to believe like Him, talk like Him, and act like Him. It is our identification with Jesus Christ that produces eternal life in us. No wonder the Bible says in Hosea 4:6: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge . . . ;" but we receive eternal life by knowing Jesus, as it is written in John 17:3: "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."

Do you see that ignorance brings us death, sickness, and all of the negativities of this world, but knowledge of Christ produces eternal life? The Word of God that we digest every day gives us revelation knowledge that produces eternal life in us, as Jesus declares in John 4:14: "but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." In the same way, this wonderful statement of Jesus Christ is applicable to the spirit of God, as it is written in Romans 8:11: "But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who

dwells in you." God's Word and the Holy Spirit refer to the same realities, because the confession of His Word activates the Holy Spirit who releases His power, as Jesus said in John 6:63: "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life."

We all know that Jesus is saying that the spirit of God gives life, but how does God's Word give life? Jesus answers this, saying that when we speak His Word, it becomes His Spirit, meaning that the confession of His Word activates the Holy Spirit, and then His Spirit releases the power of God to bring into existence what we say. Do you see now why the Bible declares, in 1 John 5:4, that faith is our victory that overcomes the world? Romans 4:17 states that faith is calling what does not exist as though it already existed. No wonder Isaiah 33:24 says: "And the inhabitants will not say, 'I am sick'; The people who dwell in it will be forgiven their iniquity." So as children of God, we do not talk about what we feel or what we can see when it is not consistent with the Word of God, but we speak what God's Word says concerning our condition or circumstances of life. When we do this, the Holy Spirit releases His power to produce changes in our life and nothing in this world can resist the power of God. That is why our faith is our victory that overcomes the world, and our faith, our knowledge of Christ, our love of Christ, our corresponding actions in consent with the Word of God, and our being that can only be

moved by His Word instead of being moved by our circumstances of life, are our victories that overcome the world.

Your mindset determines your ability to win or fail. Only Jesus or God's Word can alter your mindset through His Word to turn it toward eternal life, success, or victory. This truth was revealed by Jesus Himself in Mark 11:22–23 when He said: "... 'Have faith in God. For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, "Be removed and be cast into the sea," and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will come to pass, he will have whatever he says.'" This shows us that true faith has three basic components, which are required to make things happen in the physical world: thoughts, belief, and speech.

Do you see that the righteous man of faith has a mindset, a conviction, and powerful speech? He thinks like Jesus or God without any doubt in his mind — this is the right mindset. He believes like Jesus or God, convinced that whatever he says will come to pass — this is right belief. He speaks like Jesus or God according to the Word of God — this is right speaking. That means that a righteous man of faith is destined to win, so it is no wonder the Bible says, in 1 John 5:4, that faith is our victory.

On the other hand, an unrighteous man — a man without faith — is predestined to fail. Although he can have temporary victory, his life will end with defeat. Therefore, if you want to become a winner all the days of your life you need to be redirected so that

you only have God's hearing, God's thoughts, God's beliefs, and God's speech — and that can be achieved only through the Word of God or faith — and this book will help you reach this goal and cause you to fulfill your destiny. Why? Because your faith will overcome the doubt, fear, and negative circumstances of your life and make you a champion, unshakeable and invincible.

Look at the greatest revelation knowledge this book has taught you — or will teach you if you are about to start reading this book. This revelation knowledge will change your life forever, and it begins with Romans 10:17, which states that faith comes by hearing the Word of God; so as we hear it, listen to it, or meditate on it, we receive faith.

Secondly, the Bible says in Romans 5:1: "Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," which means that our faith — our love for Christ — is what allows us to receive the gift of righteousness that enables us to do right. As our faith in Jesus or our love for Christ increases, we become more righteous, and much more able to put God's Word into practice.

Thirdly, the Scriptures declare in 2 Peter 1:2: "Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord," meaning that, as our knowledge of God and Jesus increases we receive more grace and more peace from God. (Remember that, as we learned in John 17:3, our knowledge of the true God and Jesus is eternal life).

Fourthly, the Bible says in Romans 5:17: "For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ." This means that, as we receive the gospel of Jesus Christ and welcome it into our heart, every piece of revelation knowledge we have acquired brings us grace and the gift of righteousness, gives us the ability to put it to work in our life here on earth, and increases our love for Jesus, since righteousness equals our love for Jesus and makes each of us a master or king in that area of his life.

About the Author

Dallied Charlemagne Kien is well known to his readers for two books concerning the same matter written in French and English: *The Ethics-Based Approach; or Keys of Human Fulfillment.*

During the political crisis in Ivory Coast after the presidential election, he became a refugee in Lome (Togo), where he truly met the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ, through his daily meditation on God's Word, his Lord and Savior. This encounter changed his life forever. As a terrible, incurable, terminal disease of this world attacked him, he went successfully through the challenge without drugs but with the Word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit. He became victorious in other negative situations in his life by using the name of Jesus and his consciousness of the presence of the Holy Spirit and His power in him.

Along with the truthfulness of God's Word, this book is also a testimony to Dallied's own experiences and who Christ really is. After all, it is never too late to defeat any bad circumstance of life.