

The *Successful* Christian Life

15 LESSONS FOR
SPIRITUAL SUCCESS

BY

DR. MIKE HOLLOWAY



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LED US TO THE PLACE OF
TROUBLE WHERE WE CAN
experience spiritual growth.

Lesson THREE



GOD'S PATTERN FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING

In the Old Testament, the Bible gives much detailed information concerning Israel. It describes how the Lord delivered her out of Egypt and was finally able to bring her into the Promised Land. While we accept this as a literal happening in Israel's history, we should also recognize the spiritual implications and teachings to be derived from Israel's experiences. Using Israel as God's pattern for the Christian, let us examine nine stages God has planned for ...

... EVERY CHRISTIAN TO PASS THROUGH AT SOME POINT IN HIS CHRISTIAN LIFE.

1 PHASE 1 – BONDAGE UNDER A HARSH TASKMASTER

EXODUS 1:8-9; 13-14

“Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph. 9 And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel *are* more and mightier than we: 13 And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour:

14 And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, *was* with rigour.”

The condition of the Israelites was that of slavery which is a perfect picture of a lost person bound by sin. As Pharaoh despised the Israelites, Satan despises everything about God's creation, especially people. Why? Satan hates God above all things, and since he cannot harm God, he does the next best thing by afflicting the grandest part of God's creation – people! In this condition of slavery, the Lord has found all of mankind, and He desires to move them quickly from this wretched condition to freedom in Christ.

2 PHASE 2 – DELIVERANCE THROUGH THE BLOOD

EXODUS 12:12-13

“For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite 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. 13 And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye *are*: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy *you*, when I smite the land of Egypt.”

When it came time to remove the people from the grip of Pharaoh, it was necessary to shelter or protect them from the curse that was to come upon the land, the death of the firstborn. God's appointed way to escape the curse of death was by the application of the blood. It is interesting to see that the blood was not limited only to the Hebrews but was available to anyone who was willing to believe. When the death angel came to claim the lives of the firstborn, he was not looking to see whether the family was Jewish or Egyptian but whether they were trusting in the blood. The application for lost people is quite clear, for there is no freedom from the penalty of sin to be found unless it is through the shed blood of Christ.

3 PHASE 3 – WOLVES AMONG THE SHEEP

EXODUS 12:38

“And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, *even* very much cattle.”

When the Hebrews were finally set free, they were accompanied by many who were not Hebrews but were a mixed sort of people from various countries. What was the significance of these people joining God’s people on their journey? Since they were not believers in Israel’s God, they quickly became tools of the devil in raising doubts and creating discouragement when the way became difficult.

NUMBERS 11:4-6

“And the mixt multitude that *was* among them fell a lusting; and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat? 5 We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick: 6 But now our soul *is* dried away: *there is* nothing at all, beside this manna, *before* our eyes.”

These unspiritual, lost people discouraged God’s people and brought them to the point of complaining against the Lord. This accurately pictures one of the major causes of problems in churches today – lost people. They are not the lost people from the community but rather those who call themselves church members.

4 PHASE 4 – THE LEADING OF THE LORD

EXODUS 13:21-22

“And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the

GOD'S PATTERN FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING

way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: 22 He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, *from before the people.*”

From their first step out of Egypt, God never did intend for His people to wander with no direction or leading. The Lord Himself chose to dwell among them, leading them through a cloudy pillar during the day and protecting them through a fiery pillar at night. By doing so, there was NO question about where they were supposed to go or what direction they were to travel. The significance is obvious. Anytime they encountered great difficulties such as a lack of food or water, they were to take great comfort in the fact that the Lord had led them to that very place and experience. For Christians today, the cloudy pillar has given way to the still, small voice of the indwelling Holy Spirit. What a comfort it ought to be when we encounter great trials, for if we have been walking with the Lord, we can rest assured He has led us to the place of trouble where we can experience spiritual growth.

5 PHASE 5 – VISIBLE OWNERSHIP

EXODUS 14:29-31

“But the children of Israel walked upon dry *land* in the midst of the sea; and the waters *were* a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. 30 Thus the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore. 31 And Israel saw that great work which the LORD did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD, and his servant Moses.”

When the Lord parted the Red Sea, He made it known throughout Canaan that these freed slaves called Hebrews belonged to Him. This knowledge caused their God to be feared, and it caused them to be hated. When a person gets saved, he has been set free from the bondage of his sins and is to immediately get baptized.

What does baptism do? One of the most important functions of baptism is to show ownership. When a saved person gets baptized, the ceremony is not to be private but rather public, letting the entire world know the new Christian belongs to the Lord. When a person gets baptized, he should immediately join a local church where he can begin tithing. What is the significance of the tithe? It, too, is a token of ownership. When a person gives 10% of his income, he is testifying that all he has, including himself, belongs to the Lord. When a person becomes involved in a local church, he should then be taught Biblical separation including how to dress modestly and to abstain from worldly amusements such as mixed bathing, playing the lottery, drinking, smoking, etc. What is the importance of having standards and separation?

1 CORINTHIANS 6:20

“For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

Standards are a very visible way to show Who a Christian belongs to. It ought to be evident that a person is a Christian simply by how he is dressed. The way society is changing, it should be getting easier every day!

PHASE 6 – BITTER TRIALS

EXODUS 15:22-23

“So Moses brought Israel from the Red sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water. 23 And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they *were* bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah.”

When the children of Israel crossed the Red Sea, they were probably expecting a quick trip to the Promised Land, but the Lord first wanted to show them how far they were from what they needed to become. It is easy to trust the Lord during

the good times. Therefore, the Lord brought His people to a place where they thought they were going to die. Instead of trusting the Lord, they allowed themselves to be transformed into a very ugly people who were frightened and wanted to blame someone for their misery. What was the Lord trying to show them? He was teaching them they would still encounter great difficulties while they were on their way to the Promised Land. The worst thing new Christians can think is that salvation removed all the problems from their lives. Usually, the battle really begins after salvation! A new Christian living in sin will immediately be faced with the decision of doing right and moving out of a sinful relationship. A new Christian will immediately have to face family and friends and reject their offers to return to an old lifestyle that is repulsive to the Lord.



PHASE 7 – CONSTANT WARFARE

EXODUS 17:8-9, 16

“Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim. 9 And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: to morrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand. 16 For he said, Because the LORD hath sworn *that* the LORD *will have* war with Amalek from generation to generation.”

When these Hebrew slaves chose to follow the Lord, they soon discovered there are many people in the world who will hate them simply because of God. These people had done nothing to alienate the Amalekites except being willing to follow the Lord, and that decision was enough to stir up the devil and his forces. Moses sent Joshua and his men into the valley while he and two others ascended to the top of a hill. There, Moses obeyed the Lord and stretched his hands toward Heaven. As long as his hands remained uplifted, God's people were victorious. At the end of the day, the Amalekites had been defeated but not destroyed. The idea was they would be back and more battles would take place in the future. While this battle was a literal one fought with sword and spear, it was also typical of the

on-going spiritual battle every Christian has been thrust into. The first realization every Christian needs to have is that every day is a new day of combat. We are wasting our time looking for a day without temptations, trials, or troubles. God has guaranteed we will always be engaged in spiritual combat from generation to generation.



PHASE 8 – THE CHURCH IN THE WILDERNESS

EXODUS 25:8-9

“And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. 9 According to all that I shew thee, *after* the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make *it*.”

ACTS 7:37-38

“This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear. 38 This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and *with* our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us:”

Moses ascended Mount Sinai not only to receive the Ten Commandments but also to receive the pattern for the tabernacle. The tabernacle was a building covered by animal skins on the roof. It looked very plain and ordinary from the outside while inside it was filled with gold and beautiful linens of different colors. The purpose of the tabernacle was simply to be a place where the Lord could dwell among His people. The tabernacle was not a local church as we have nowadays but was a place for the people to gather as an assembly, among whom the Lord wanted to dwell. When Jesus began His ministry, one of the important reasons was to establish a local church. For Him, the church was to be an extremely important creation. Why? The local church is an assembly with which He has promised to meet each and every time they choose to meet together.

9 PHASE 9 – VICTORY

JOSHUA 1:1-3

“Now after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying, 2 Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, *even* to the children of Israel. 3 Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses.”

After 40 long, frustrating years, the Lord chose to allow His people to enter into the Promised Land. The years of wandering and chastening ended, and the Lord opened the windows of Heaven and poured forth victory after victory to Joshua and His people. The last stage of a Christian's life is where he can enjoy victory after victory.

1 JOHN 5:4

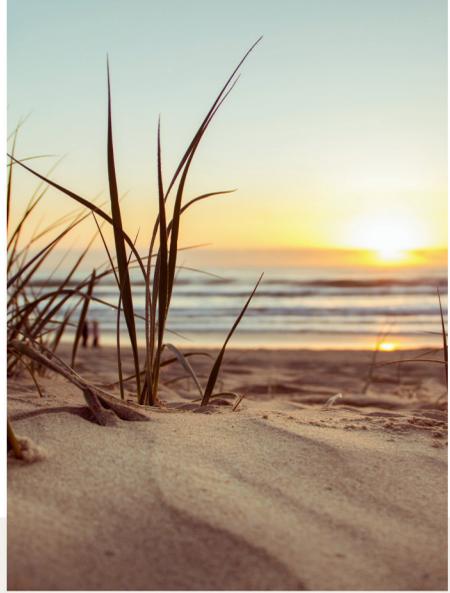
“For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, *even* our faith.”

The only reason God's people were prohibited from entering into the Promised Land was simply that they were not willing to trust Him. The only way to gain a victory throughout our Christian lives is to come to the place where we become like children and learn how to TRUST HIM, which is called faith!

“

THE ONLY PLACE WE CAN
FIND THE SOLUTIONS
to get rid of sinful worry
IS FOUND IN THE BIBLE.

Lesson FOUR



HOW TO CONQUER WORRY

There should be no doubt that when Christians allow themselves to worry, they are doing so against the Lord's desires. Why? God is not the One wanting or causing us to worry. In this lesson, we are going to the one and only source we have to conquer worry. It is not defeated by improving our self-esteem as Robert Schuller says, nor is it destroyed by giving money to a TV preacher or fake healer like Benny Hinn. Worry will never be conquered by a person paying a shrink \$200 an hour to lie on his couch telling childhood stories about how rough he had it. The only place we can find the solutions to get rid of sinful worry is ...

... FOUND IN THE BIBLE.

1 THE BIBLE REVEALS ... THE SOURCES OF WORRY.

#1 - SATAN

EPHESIANS 6:16

“Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.”

The primary battle taking place in the Christian's life is in the mind. Therefore, it should be no surprise when we can trace many of our worries to thoughts the devil has planted in our minds.

#2 - PEOPLE

PROVERBS 24:19

“Fret not thyself because of evil *men*, neither be thou envious at the wicked;”

One of the most idiotic things for a Christian to worry about is whether or not someone else who is not as godly is going to prosper more than he is. Usually our first thought when something bad happens is to ask ourselves, “Why me?” What we are doing is verbalizing our worry that others are getting by with something we got punished for.

#3 - CIRCUMSTANCES

JOHN 16:33

“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”

Since the Bible tells us trouble is our lot in life, why should we worry? As Jesus has overcome the world, so He can also overcome our problems.

2 THE BIBLE REVEALS ... THE RESULTS OF WORRY.

#1 - SIN

ROMANS 14:23B

“... for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.”

Sin is not only defined by a list of don'ts in the Bible but also defined on an individual basis by the Holy Spirit. For this reason, one Christian can perform a deed that he feels is not sinful while another Christian, who has perhaps been saved longer and knows more, is convicted about the same behavior. When he does it, to him it has become sin.

#2 - INDECISION

JAMES 1:8

“A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.”

When Christians allow themselves to worry, they are forfeiting the ability to have the mind of Christ. They are then forced to make decisions without the clear leading of the Lord.

3 THE BIBLE REVEALS ... THE SOLUTIONS FOR WORRY.

#1 - GET RIGHT WITH GOD AND MAN.

EPHESIANS 4:32

“And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.”

The first and most important step to conquering worry is to realize it is sin. When there is sin, there must be confession.

#2 - TURN IT LOOSE AND TRUST HIM.

1 PETER 5:7

“Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.”

The natural result of worry is to try to solve the problem in the flesh. The best way to get rid of our worries is to quit trusting in our own ability, turn our problems over to the Lord, and leave them there.

#3 - BE THANKFUL FOR PAST BLESSINGS.

1 **T**HESSALONIANS 5:18

“In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”

When we take time to give thanks for previous times when the Lord blessed or helped us, we are encouraging ourselves in the fact that if He did it in the past, He can do it again in the future.

#4 - CONTROL YOUR THOUGHTS.

2 **C**ORINTHIANS 10:4-5

“(For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) 5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;”

Because our primary battleground is the human mind, we need to realize God has given us the ability and the command to control our thoughts. They must be captured and controlled.

#5 - LEARN HOW TO WAIT.

PSALM 62:5

“My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation *is* from him.”

Why is waiting so important in getting rid of worry? Waiting is important because God seldom operates according to our time schedule.

If it hurts, we want it to end NOW, yet God may desire our troubles to have a longer lasting work in our lives.

#6 - PRAY! PRAY! PRAY!

PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7

“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

We have every right in the world to bring our fears and worries to the Lord asking Him to take care of the problem and to remove our worry.

JAMES 4:2B

“... ye have not, because ye ask not.”

#7 - EXPECT TROUBLE AS A WAY OF LIFE.

PSALM 34:19

“Many *are* the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.”

This verse states that the righteous are the ones who have many afflictions. Whether we agree with God or not, He has appointed our lives to be filled with trouble because we can become better Christians through them. Our comfort then is not to come from thinking that one day we will not have any more troubles but rather the realization that God can help us get through all of them.

#8 - LIVE ONE DAY AT A TIME.

MATTHEW 6:34

“Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.”

Between the devil and the Lord, they are both going to make sure we have our hands full with the problems of today. Instead of borrowing trouble from tomorrow and worrying about what has not yet arrived, we should allow God to keep the tomorrows and just focus on living a worry-free life today.

#9 - DEAL WITH THE PAST.

PHILIPPIANS 3:13

“Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *this* one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,”

A past that is used against a Christian is like an open wound that has never healed. It can become infected and cause a lot of pain, and it will not go away by itself because the devil will make sure he keeps the past stirred up. How can the past be resolved? It might require the person making things right with people he has not seen in years. It might be a matter of forgiving oneself for past mistakes. It might be that a person is guilty of using the past to punish someone else, and he needs to bury it and leave it alone.

#10 - BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT.

1 JOHN 4:4

“Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.”

Worry can often be caused by a lack of surrender in a person's life. The obvious solution is then for a person to make sure God has all of him. Another term for

this level of commitment is to be filled with the Holy Spirit. This fulness is not a matter of the Christian possessing more of God, but of the Lord being able to possess more of the person.

#11 - GET BUSY.

MATTHEW 10:39

“He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.”

One of the best ways for a person to control his thinking is to get busy doing something for God. When a person is busy, he will have less time to dwell on the wrong kinds of thoughts.

“

THE CHURCH PROVIDES
EVERY CHRISTIAN WITH A
GROUP OF PEOPLE
who are to be committed
TO LOOKING OUT FOR EACH
OTHER.

Lesson SIX



WHY IS CHURCH SO IMPORTANT?

EPHESIANS 5:25-27

“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.”

The subject of church can be an unusually touchy subject for many people, especially for those who are either lost or backslidden. Contrary to the views of these people, the church is not only important but is VITAL to living a successful Christian life. A person can be a Christian without ever going to church, but he can NEVER be a good Christian without it. This lesson will list nine reasons Christians should be ...

... ATTENDING CHURCH ON A REGULAR
BASIS.



FOR THE PURPOSE OF ... ENCOURAGING OTHER CHRISTIANS

HEBREWS 10:24-25

“And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: 25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”

We are told here to consider, not ourselves, but others. Why should we consider others? We should be trying to encourage them to love others and to get involved doing good works that are pleasing to the Lord which will earn them crowns at the Judgment Seat of Christ.



FOR THE PURPOSE OF ... WINNING THE LOST

ACTS 8:30-31

“And Philip ran thither to *him*, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? 31 And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.”

Philip was an evangelist and part of a local church who had been sent to a desert area for the purpose of witnessing to this lost Ethiopian man. As Philip approached him, he asked if he was able to understand what he was reading. The man was frustrated because while he wanted to know how to go to Heaven, he needed help understanding what the Bible had to say about getting saved. Then through the help of this church member, God was able to save the Ethiopian man. It is the duty and responsibility of the local church to train its people how to witness to the lost and help them trust Christ as their Savior.

3 FOR THE PURPOSE OF ... RAISING A GODLY FAMILY

DEUTERONOMY 6:6-9

“And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: 7 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. 8 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. 9 And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.”

The responsibility of teaching children to get saved and live a separated, godly life lies with the parents. God has given the local church as a tool to further help the parents with the rearing of their children. The church was never to be in place of but in addition to the family.

4 FOR THE PURPOSE OF ... STRENGTHENING THEMSELVES SPIRITUALLY

WE GROW SPIRITUALLY WHEN WE LEARN . . . HUMILITY.

MATTHEW 6:33

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

We are naturally selfish. Therefore, we are commanded to lay aside our own selfish desires and to seek after the desires of God. The church provides an excellent place where we have opportunities to serve the Lord and to put His desires ahead of our own.

WE GROW SPIRITUALLY WHEN WE LEARN . . . OBEDIENCE.

HEBREWS 10:25

“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”

We are commanded to NOT forsake those times when God’s people officially gather themselves together which are called church services. To obey in this matter serves as a thrice-weekly reminder that we are not our own and are to live in submission to the will of God for our lives.

WE GROW SPIRITUALLY WHEN WE LEARN . . . HOW TO FIGHT.

MATTHEW 16:18

“And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

When Jesus Christ established His church, He created an army of born-again believers who were to storm the gates of hell and win as many of the lost as possible. The picture of this language is obviously of warfare. For this reason, Paul encouraged Timothy to be a good soldier. The best boot camp in the world was started by Jesus Christ as a place to train His troops.

WE GROW SPIRITUALLY WHEN WE LEARN . . . THE FEAR OF THE LORD.

ACTS 5:10-11

“Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying *her* forth, buried *her* by her husband. 11 And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things.”

The Lord chose to kill Ananias and Sapphira in the church in full view of the members. Why? He wanted everyone to see that the church is BIG business with

the Lord. The natural result of the deaths of these two hypocrites was that the people feared the Lord even more.

WE GROW SPIRITUALLY WHEN WE PREPARE . . . OURSELVES TO MEET CHRIST.

ROMANS 14:12-13

“So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. 13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in *his* brother's way.”

Another important purpose of the local church is to help us get ready to one day stand before Christ and explain why we did what we did after our salvation experience. Our motives will be inspected. Our words will be reviewed. Our deeds will be examined. One of the single greatest places where we can learn how to get our hearts right, our conversation changed, and our hands busy doing God's business is in the local church.

5 FOR THE PURPOSE OF ... RESTORING THE BACKSLIDDEN

MATTHEW 18:15-17

“Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. 16 But if he will not hear *thee*, *then* take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. 17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell *it* unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.”

GALATIANS 6:1

“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.”

The church provides every Christian with a group of people who are to be committed to looking out for each other. If a person gives in to temptation, others should run to his side and encourage him to give up his sin by confessing it. If that Christian refuses to surrender his sin, then ultimately the church is to be informed for the purpose of withdrawing fellowship. When this takes place, the Holy Spirit is then able to speak even more clearly to a heart that is hopefully broken.

FOR THE PURPOSE OF ... TRAINING NEW CONVERTS

MATTHEW 28:18-20

“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.”

One of the greatest responsibilities of the church is to establish a training program whereby new converts are able to grow in grace, having ample opportunity to serve the Lord. The church needs to be a place where the Bible is taught. This is the purpose of Sunday school and the mid-week Bible study. The church needs to be a place where a person is taught how to serve the Lord. This is why there is a need for teacher’s meetings for Sunday school teachers, bus meetings for training bus workers, etc. The church needs to be a place where a person is taught how to lead others to Christ. This is the specific purpose of churchwide soulwinning.

7 FOR THE PURPOSE OF ... STARTING OTHER CHURCHES

ACTS 13:1-3

“Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. 3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid *their* hands on them, they sent *them* away.”

The only missions program in the Bible was church planting. Unfortunately, a variety of other ministries and parachurch organizations have replaced church planting which is not only unwise but also unscriptural.

8 FOR THE PURPOSE OF ... PRAYER

ACTS 12:5

“Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.”

It has always been the business of the church to meet together for the purpose of praying for the needs of others. Why? The Bible tells us there is more power in the prayers of two people than in the prayers of just one!

MATTHEW 18:19-20

“Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. 20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”

Some people do not like the standards, the soulwinning, or the preaching of a good church, but when tragedy strikes, those same people will not hesitate to ask the church to pray for their loved one because even they know prayer works.

9 FOR THE PURPOSE OF ... FINANCING GOD'S BUSINESS

LEVITICUS 27:30

“And all the tithe of the land, *whether* of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD'S: *it is holy* unto the LORD.”

MALACHI 3:10

“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that *there shall not be room enough to receive it.*”

The tithe belongs to God. The church is the ONLY institution on Earth established by God and commissioned to do His business. Therefore, it too, is the only divinely accepted place to store God's tithe. It takes money to send out missionaries to start churches. It takes money to fulfill the Great Commission. The only financial backing the Lord has provided for His church are the tithes and offerings of His people.

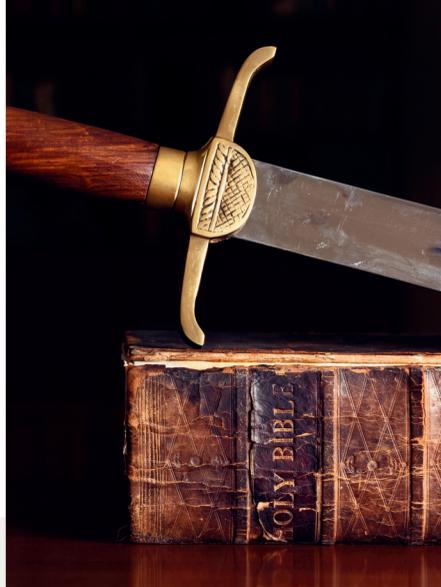
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WE CANNOT AFFORD TO BE
IGNORANT OF THE WEAPONS
OR DEVICES THAT

Satan employs against

US.

Lesson EIGHT



SPIRITUAL WARFARE

2 CORINTHIANS 2:9-11

“For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things. 10 To whom ye forgive any thing, I *forgive* also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave *it*, for your sakes *forgave I it* in the person of Christ; 11 Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.”

Paul wrote this letter to the Corinthian church for basically one reason. He had given them instructions earlier and then wrote this second letter to determine whether or not they had obeyed. He then made a statement that informs us of the purpose of this chapter and warns us that we cannot afford to be ignorant of the weapons or devices Satan employs against us. This chapter contains what seems to be a long list of weapons the devil is extremely effective in using against God's people. To be aware of his methods and weapons is to ...

... INCREASE OUR EFFECTIVENESS IN OUR
SPIRITUAL WARFARE AGAINST HIM.

1 WEAPON #1 - PRIDE

1 CHRONICLES 21:1-2

“And Satan stood up against Israel, and **provoked David to number Israel.** 2 And David said to Joab and to the rulers of the people, Go, number Israel from Beersheba even to Dan; and bring the number of them to me, that I may know *it.*”

Most people look at David’s sin in this chapter and automatically think his great crime that resulted in the deaths of 70,000 Israelites was numbering the people. However, in 1 Kings chapter 20, Ahab numbered the people in preparation for an attack by Benhadad, and he won the battle! What was the difference? God wanted Ahab to number the people to show him there was no human way of winning the battle with only 7,000 men. The numbering was used by God to strip the king of all confidence in the flesh. David, on the other hand, was not facing a national invasion and numbered the people out of a fleshly desire to enjoy his power as a king. In other words, he was motivated by pride. When Ahab numbered the people and saw his weakness, he won the battle. When David numbered the people and saw his strength, he lost an invisible war against God’s destroying angel. What is our best defense against pride?

WE NEED TO REALIZE HOW MUCH GOD HATES IT.

P ROVERBS 6:16-19

“These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination unto him: 17 A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, 18 An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, 19 A false witness *that* speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.”

Out of a list of six things God hates, He put pride first on the list.

WE NEED TO REALIZE GOD WILL JUDGE IT.

1 CHRONICLES 21:11-12

“So Gad came to David, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Choose thee 12 Either three years' famine; or three months to be destroyed before thy foes, while that the sword of thine enemies overtaketh *thee*; or else three days the sword of the LORD, even the pestilence, in the land, and the angel of the LORD destroying throughout all the coasts of Israel. Now therefore advise thyself what word I shall bring again to him that sent me.”

God hates pride so much that He not only punished David but also the entire nation as they felt the pain of 70,000 deaths, probably because they were also full of pride.

WE NEED TO REALIZE GOD'S DESIRE IS HUMILITY.

2 CHRONICLES 7:14

“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”

In order to conquer pride, a person must either be willing to humble himself or get ready for the Lord to humble him.

2 WEAPON #2 - DISAPPOINTMENT

1 KINGS 21:1-4

“And it came to pass after these things, *that* Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard, which *was* in Jezreel, hard by the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. 2 And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it *is* near unto my house: and I will give thee for it a better

vineyard than it; or, if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money. 3 And Naboth said to Ahab, The LORD forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee. 4 And Ahab came into his house heavy and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him: for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers. And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread.”

Disappointment usually results when a person does not get what he believes he should have gotten; and therefore, he allows himself to become bitter. While disappointment may not seem too terrible, it can result in terrible consequences when the devil uses it. For Naboth, Ahab’s disappointment proved fatal. Naboth and his entire family were murdered, and his vineyard was stolen simply because Ahab was too immature to deal with it. Too many Christians allow their feelings to get hurt too easily, and they retaliate with harsh words and a mean spirit. What is the best solution when a person becomes disappointed? When Hannah saw the Lord had not allowed her to bear children, she was sad and heartbroken which are the natural results of being disappointed. However, instead of allowing herself to become angry and bitter, she used it to get closer to the Lord and to improve her prayer life.

1 SAMUEL 1:10-11

“And she *was* in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore. 11 And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.”

Instead of allowing disappointment to produce bitterness and destruction, Hannah used it to produce a tender heart and powerful prayers. The result was a supernatural birth to a son named Samuel.

3 WEAPON #3 - DESPAIR

To despair is basically to abandon all hope. To despair is to omit God from the solution. Despair can be a deadly weapon in the hands of Satan, for it causes a Christian who is indwelt by the Holy Spirit to give up and quit. Elijah despaired when he learned Jezebel was seeking his life. The result was that he crawled under a juniper tree to quit. Peter despaired when he discovered how weak he really was when he denied knowing Christ three times. Because of his seeming hopelessness, he, too, quit. John Mark despaired while traveling with Paul on a missionary journey. Whether or not his despair was due to the dangers or the enormous sacrifices lying ahead, he chose to turn his back on the ministry, and he also quit. When Judas Iscariot realized the awfulness of his crime in betraying innocent blood, he tried to return the 30 pieces of silver to the Pharisees but was rejected. Seeing no other solution, he hanged himself because of despair. In all of these instances, Satan won a victory, not because of what he did as much as because of what the individuals did, for they quit. Satan did not stop them; they stopped themselves. Where did their despair come from? It came from looking at difficulties and circumstances with a viewpoint that God did not exist or at least would not help. However, a huge difference lies between those people and the example of Paul who actually suffered many worse things.

2 CORINTHIANS 4:8-10

“We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; 9 Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; 10 Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.”

The one and only difference is that Paul saw what could be done through Christ and not without Him!

4 WEAPON #4 - DOUBT

GENESIS 3:1

“Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?”

When the devil introduced temptation into the world, he aimed at the most valuable source of protection man was given to hide behind, the Word of God. When Satan wanted to bring forth disobedience, he simply cast a shadow of doubt on what God had told man. According to Paul, doubt is associated with another problem that should not exist in the Christian life, prayerlessness.

1 TIMOTHY 2:8

“I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.”

While many may find prayer boring and ineffective, God has linked it to the strengthening of our faith. When we fail to pray, we fail to believe. When we fail to believe, we begin to doubt. One of the simplest ways to conquer doubt is mentioned in Mark chapter nine.

MARK 9:22-24

“And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us. 23 Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things *are* possible to him that believeth. 24 And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.”

In this verse, Jesus is not the One Who called this man’s problem unbelief, which is a gross hardening of one’s heart because of continued doubting. Jesus simply

pointed to the necessity to believe. The simple way this man got what he needed was to ASK or pray to the Lord expressing his need.

5 WEAPON #5 - UNBELIEF

H EBBREWS 3:12

“Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.”

This verse shows the next and fatal step when doubts are allowed to persist without prayer being used to conquer them. Unbelief results from a spiritual hardening of the heart and is a very dangerous condition. This word of warning was not spoken to the lost but rather to saved people. Prayerlessness can damage a Christian to the point that his heart becomes calloused because of his unbelief.

6 WEAPON #6 - DISTRACTION

M ATTHEW 14:29-30

“And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. 30 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.”

Instead of criticizing Peter for sinking, we ought to marvel that he walked on the water more steps than any of us have. The one detail mentioned that kept him from doing the impossible for God was the simple fact that he allowed himself to become distracted by something else. His distraction was not caused by looking at something sinful such as the wind, but rather something that took his eyes off Christ. Distractions come in all shapes and sizes.

CIRCUMSTANCES

This type of distraction was Peter's case. He became more concerned about the storm surrounding him than about the Lord Who was in front of him. Not only can people be easily distracted but also churches, especially when they get caught up in a battle.

CAUSES

Many churches have taken their eyes off of Christ's Great Commission and soulwinning because they have become sidetracked fighting abortion and other causes. Many of these crusades may be very worthy and noble, but they can only be side issues and not the main focus in a person's life or in the purpose of a church. A church can get sidetracked with a crusade. A preacher can get sidetracked with a hobby horse. A Christian can get sidetracked with a non-church issue, such as, saving the whales.

FLESH

The world also has distractions to offer in hopes of luring God's people away from God's will. They will offer every vice and sin, hoping a person will get so caught up in what he wants that he soon forgets what God wants. A church can become distracted by newer or nicer facilities. A Christian can get sidetracked by money, promotion, material possessions, and a thousand other things that must be guarded against.



WEAPON #7 - DISCONTENTMENT

HEBREWS 13:5

“Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”

Satan has perfected this weapon to such a degree that even the best of Christians have been slain by it. Solomon was the wisest man in the world, yet he never learned to be content with just one wife. His fleshly discontentment led to his downfall and the dividing of the kingdom. Korah was not satisfied with his lot in life and wanted to have some of the power Moses had. His lust for power meant death and ruin. David was not satisfied with his wives, so he allowed himself to lust after a woman he saw bathing from a distance. Before the devil was through with him, discontentment caused him to commit adultery and murder.

How does Satan use the tool of discontentment in churches today? He causes husbands to be discontented with their jobs and always tempted to move away from a good church to find better work. He causes wives to be discontented with their husbands, so they constantly nag, trying to change him instead of praying for God to change him. He causes a family who moves into a new area to constantly compare their new church with their old church, never allowing themselves to put down spiritual roots. He causes young people to worry more about what they wear and how they look than the strength of their character. What is the Lord's solution? He wants each Christian to remember that regardless of where he may be or what he may be doing, God will never leave him nor forsake him. In other words, if a person is walking with God, his location is of little or no importance.



WEAPON #8 - DOUBLE-MINDEDNESS

JAMES 1:8

“A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.”

What is a double-minded man? He is a man with two great loves in his life. He will be a miserable, frustrated individual, because a person cannot serve two masters. God has created us with the ability to be consumed by one passion at a time. It might be money, power, a job, a car, or a person. The responsibility of every Christian is to have his love life in order and to love God first and foremost.

MATTHEW 6:33

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

Gehazi stands out as a man who was double-minded. At one time, he had a passion for the ministry and was willing to be a servant to Elisha, who initially saw great potential in him. However, with the passing of time, double-mindedness set in and caused him to become hard-hearted towards people while being more concerned about finances.

2 KINGS 5:21-26

“So Gehazi followed after Naaman. And when Naaman saw *him* running after him, he lighted down from the chariot to meet him, and said, *Is all well?* 22 And he said, *All is well.* My master hath sent me, saying, Behold, even now there be come to me from mount Ephraim two young men of the sons of the prophets: give them, I pray thee, a talent of silver, and two changes of garments. 23 And Naaman said, Be content, take two talents. And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and laid *them* upon two of his servants; and they bare *them* before him. 24 And when he came to the tower, he took *them* from their hand, and bestowed *them* in the house: and he let the men go, and they departed. 25 But he went in, and stood before his master. And Elisha said unto him, Whence *comest thou*, Gehazi? And he said, Thy servant went no whither. 26 And he said unto him, Went not mine heart *with thee*, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? *Is it* a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and oliveyards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and maidservants?”

A love of money became the consuming passion in Gehazi's life to the point that it overshadowed his love of the ministry and resulted in his being cursed by God with leprosy.

9 WEAPON #9 - APATHY

REVELATION 3:15-17

“I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. 16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. 17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:”

One of the worst tools found in Satan’s arsenal is an I-don’t-care attitude that is being pushed by a lot of sports greats. When they say, “I just don’t care,” what they are really saying is, “I don’t care about YOU because I’m too busy caring about ME!” How did this church come to a place of not caring about the things that were important to the Lord?

THEY ALLOWED THEMSELVES TO GET WRAPPED UP IN MONEY.

The first step down occurred when they allowed themselves to be consumed with making money. The problem was NOT money, but rather allowing themselves to be driven or consumed with it. The danger is that money ceases to be a tool used by a Christian and becomes an all-consuming god that pushes, forces, and drives a person beyond a willingness to give sacrificially to the Lord.

THEY ALLOWED THEMSELVES TO GET WRAPPED UP IN MATERIAL POSSESSIONS.

There is something wrong with a Christian who is never satisfied with an old fishing pole and HAS TO HAVE the newest, fanciest, and most expensive version to just hit the market. This kind of attitude will certainly lead to spiritual problems, because if he cannot be satisfied with the old reliable things he owns, eventually he will not be satisfied with his church, his job, or his spouse. He will respond to the things the Lord wants to be first and foremost with a take-it-or-leave-it attitude. The primary concept to understand is that lukewarmness or

apathy does not mean a person does not care about anything. It just means he does not care about what he should be caring about.

THEY ALLOWED THEMSELVES TO GET WRAPPED UP IN THEMSELVES.

One last quality that characterizes this person with the I-could-care-less attitude is that HE is his own first love. He has reached a dangerous level of selfishness. This is such a dangerous and effective tool because even if he sees the problem, he just does not care. He has lost his fear of being a castaway in the eyes of God.

10 WEAPON #10 - DELAY

ECCLESIASTES 11:4

“He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap.”

Solomon was mentioning the danger of doing nothing, regardless of what kind of an excuse a person may have. A lost person can delay getting saved in a church service because he thinks the church is full of hypocrites, but that is not a good reason to go to hell. A young person can delay getting rid of sin in his life because he thinks his parents have been unfair, but that is not a good reason to continue living a life in rebellion to God's desires. When God has spoken to a person's heart about doing a certain thing, the devil will be sure to give him plenty of options to think about and consider, but a wise person will brush aside all of his distractions and focus on pleasing the Lord. A person should never delay getting saved if he knows he is lost. Judas may have had the other disciples fooled into thinking he was saved, but in his heart, he knew he was lost and would one day burn in hell if he did not get saved like the others. A person should not delay apologizing if he knows he has wronged someone. A funeral is never a good place to try to say those words, because then it is always too late. A person should not delay forgiving someone who has hurt him. David made this mistake with Absalom, and his delay turned his son into a first-class rebel.

11 WEAPON # 11 - DISCORD

PROVERBS 6:16-19

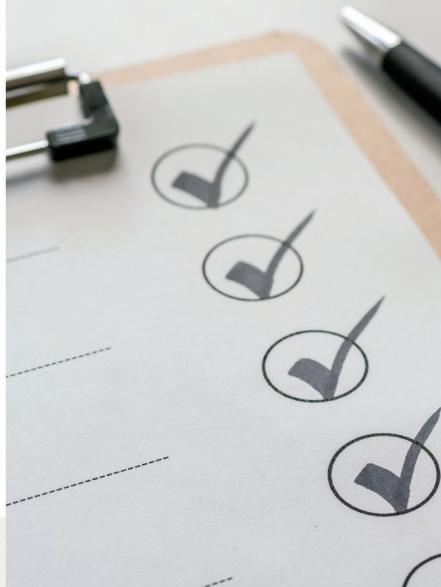
“These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination unto him: 17 A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, 18 An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, 19 A false witness *that* speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.”

God has a special hatred towards anyone who will intentionally create strife between two Christians. Anyone who sows discord needs to remember that he is allowing himself to become a pawn of the devil. A new baby is often the sower of discord in a home as new parents will argue over the matter of discipline. Too often, the mother will make the mistake of making the baby the first priority in her life over and above her husband whom God intended to have priority over the children. A job can also become a great divider in the home in any number of ways. Sometimes, the wife earns more than the husband which wounds his pride. Other times, the husband demands that the wife not work when she is wanting to do so because she enjoys it. In-laws can also be sowers of discord as they too often offer advice that is neither sought nor should be, yet they are unwisely brought too far into the home situation and usually create a lot of interference and trouble. For this reason, troubles in the home should never be broadcast to a parent as strife is usually the only result. Other topics commonly used by the devil to attack and weaken homes are money, disciplining of children, and authority. It is up to every couple to be aware of the hot button that exists in their own private situation and to handle the topic with great wisdom and a healthy respect for what the devil can do in an unguarded moment.

“

Nothing is too small
TO INSPECT IF IT HAS TO DO
WITH SIN.

Lesson THIRTEEN



A SPIRITUAL CHECKLIST

2 CORINTHIANS 13:5

“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?”

It is vital that Christians learn how to examine their own spiritual condition rather than waiting for someone else to point out a spiritual problem. By that time, a person may be so far backslidden that he will refuse to turn himself around. Why is it so important for Christians to judge themselves in every area of their lives? It is important simply because God has placed us in a house with glass windows for all the world to observe how we live. Therefore, we must be willing to judge every area of our lives, ensuring our lives do not become an excuse for others to do less than their best for the Lord. NOTHING is too small to inspect if it has to do with sin. Therefore, we need to be very diligent in examining ourselves to make sure the smallest of sins are rooted out, for little sins soon grow up into adult-sized problems. In the list below are some very practical things to look for in our Christian lives which can be corrected immediately and very simply ...

... IF WE ARE WILLING TO CATCH
THEM EARLY.

A - ASSURANCE

1 JOHN 5:13

“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”

There are generally three reasons why a person will doubt his salvation.

HE WAS NOT GROUNDED PROPERLY FOLLOWING HIS SALVATION EXPERIENCE.

This is the person who got saved, but never got into a fundamental Baptist church where he could have been taught how to grow in his Christian life.

HE HAS SIN IN HIS LIFE.

Sin opens the door for the devil to start bombarding his mind with all kinds of doubts. Even though a person may trust Christ as his Savior, he will question his salvation if he still smokes or continues other sins he was involved with before he got saved. Here again, he may not have gotten involved in the right kind of a church where he could be taught how to live the victorious Christian life.

HE IS NOT SAVED.

Just because a person has gone to an altar and prayed in a church service or has prayed a sinner's prayer does not mean he is saved. There must have been conviction by the Holy Spirit and a genuine desire on the sinner's part to turn his life over to Christ.

2 B - BIBLE

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: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.”

Most Christians do not read and study their Bibles as they should simply because they do not see the value of it. However, these verses tell us it is profitable for:

1. Doctrine (knowing what is right)
2. Reproof (knowing what is not right)
3. Correction (knowing how to get it right)
4. Instruction (knowing how to keep it right)

The great benefit to the Christian for consistently reading and studying the Bible is perfection or spiritual maturity.

3 C - CHURCH

MATTHEW 16:18

“And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

What is so important about the church that Jesus would create it and leave it behind when He ascended to Heaven? It is God’s tool for spreading the Gospel throughout the world. It is God’s boot camp for training His people how to fight in spiritual combat. It is God’s hospital used to heal those who have received

spiritual wounds such as discouragement, apathy, or worldliness. Every Christian must ask himself if he is allowing God to use the church to change his life.

4 D - DAILY WALK WITH GOD

HABAKKUK 2:1

“I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved.”

The prophet Habakkuk described what walking with God is all about. It is a time of having a conversation with a Person. He was waiting for the Lord to reprove him while also preparing to speak with Him. Prayer is our talking to God. Reading the Bible is God’s talking to us. Meditation is taking the time to contemplate over what we have read in the Bible, allowing it to speak to our hearts. For some, this is best done by having a notepad handy in order to write down truths that God impresses upon the heart and mind.

5 E - EXAMPLE

1 THESSALONIANS 1:6-7

“And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost: 7 So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.”

Whether we like it or not, God has given every person influence. He expects His people to use their influence to help others in their Christian living. If a Christian chooses to stay home from church, he may be responsible for someone else being

absent as well. If he chooses not to go soulwinning, he may be guilty of causing others to feel that soulwinning is not a duty for every Christian.

There was a time when sports heroes knew their responsibility as role models and would alter their lifestyles somewhat because of their influence. When Babe Ruth was still hitting home runs, he was asked to endorse a certain beer which he regularly drank. He stated that he would not take any amount of money to associate his name with any beer because of how it might affect the youth of America. Too many of today's professional athletes have chosen to live their lives selfishly, closing their eyes to the fact that whether they like it or not, they DO have influence, and they are role models. As Christians, we do not have the right to live our lives without taking into account how our actions will affect those around us.

F - FAMILY

E P H E S I A N S 5:31-33

“For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. 32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. 33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife *see* that she reverence *her* husband.”

E P H E S I A N S 6:4

“And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”

A person can fool people he works with and he can fool people at church, but he cannot fool those who live with him in the same home. Men have a definite, God-given responsibility to be the image of Christ in the home, and the wife and kids are going to see just how good or bad that image is. Women also have a God-given role in the home and are to be the cheerleader of the husband.

Both husband and kids are going to know first-hand whether she is an encourager or a discourager. Both husbands and wives have a clear command to ensure their children are reared for the Lord and Christ is the center of the home.

G - GIVING

MALACHI 3:8

“Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.”

There are several excellent reasons why God requires His people to give. The tithe is God’s appointed way of financing His church. The church has been given the enormous task of evangelizing the entire world. The cost of doing so rests upon the shoulders of God’s people. The tithe is also God’s appointed way of reminding ourselves that everything we have really belongs to Him. The tithe simply becomes rent for the Christian’s breathing God’s air and enjoying His world. The offering is not mandatory as the tithe but is purely voluntary and is given as an opportunity to express our love and devotion to the Lord. Every Christian must ask himself if he is more in love with God or the world.

MATTHEW 6:24

“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”



H - HOLY SPIRIT'S FULNESS

EPHESIANS 5:18

“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;”

What does it mean to be filled with the Holy Spirit? It means a person allows God to have so much of him that he is being subconsciously controlled by the Lord, and the Holy Spirit is literally able to live His life through that person. Four basic steps must be taken on a daily basis to ensure a Christian has God's power on his life. These four steps should be taken as a daily part of one's prayer time.

ASK GOD FOR THE FULNESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

LUKE 11:13

“If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that **ask** him?”

OBEY THE HOLY SPIRIT IN EVERY MATTER.

ACTS 5:32

“And we are his witnesses of these things; and *so is* also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that **obey** him.”

DESIRE THE FULNESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

ISAIAH 44:3

“For I will pour water upon him that is **thirsty**, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring:”

CLAIM THE FULNESS OF GOD'S POWER BY FAITH.

ISAIAH 61:1

“The Spirit of the Lord GOD **is** upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to *them that are bound*;”

9 I - IMMERSION

ROMANS 6:4

“Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”

Perhaps the single greatest meaning of Christian baptism is that it identifies us with Christ. When a person is standing in the water ready to be placed under the waters, he is identifying himself with the death of Christ, for he is in the same vertical position as Christ was on the cross when He died. When a person is placed under the water, he again identifies himself with Christ in His burial, as He was placed in the tomb and laid in a horizontal position in death. When a person is brought up out of the water, he is once again identifying himself with the ascension of Christ up to Heaven where He received a new glorified body and began a new work. The Christian's responsibility to be immersed or baptized is not limited to just water baptism. There are several types of baptisms that apply to the Christian life.

BAPTISM INTO THE BODY OF CHRIST

1 PETER 3:21

“The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:”

This baptism is NOT referring to water or symbolic baptism but rather to a person’s salvation experience. When a person gets saved, he is immersed or placed into the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit, thus assuring him of ETERNAL life.

SYMBOLIC BAPTISM

A ACTS 8:36-37

“And as they went on *their* way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, *here is* water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? 37 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.”

This is water baptism and has nothing to do with salvation. In fact, water baptism must be after the salvation experience or else it has nothing to symbolize.

BAPTISM BY FIRE

M MATTHEW 3:11

“I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and *with* fire:”

What is this baptism with fire?

M MATTHEW 20:22-23

“But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am

baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. 23 And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of 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 shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared of my Father.”

Christ was simply promising His disciples the opportunity to experience the same hatred by the world and the same problems He had encountered. His baptism with fire gives us the opportunity to share His fellowship of sufferings. Periodically, every Christian needs to inspect his immersion, as to whether or not he has been saved, has been obedient, and is living the kind of Christian life that will earn him the same trials Christ promised to His disciples.

10 J - JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST

ROMANS 14:10-12

“But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. 11 For it is written, *As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.* 12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.”

One of the greatest motivating factors in the life of a Christian is the imminent return of Christ, meaning Jesus Christ’s return for His people could be at ANY moment. If Christians would live as if Jesus were coming at any moment, they would live in such a way to be ready to give an account of their lives. This judgment is not for the lost, as they will be judged at the Great White Throne and cast into hell. This judgment is not for our sins, as they were judged at Calvary. This judgment is for our works done after we got saved and will determine our heavenly status, our rewards, and our promotion to even greater opportunities and areas of service.

11 K - KEEPING THE FLESH SUBDUED

1 CORINTHIANS 9:27

“But I keep under my body, and bring *it* into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.”

If Paul's greatest fear as a Christian was allowing his flesh to so dominate him that he would be disqualified from fulfilling God's calling on his life, then it ought to be of great concern to all of us as well. The flesh out of control can be the cause of poor health or obesity which could cut a Christian's life shorter than what God had purposed for him. The flesh out of control can be the cause of divorce which could cripple a Christian's effectiveness. The flesh out of control can be the cause of becoming backslidden to the point of dropping out of church. Every Christian should take definite steps to gain control over his flesh. First, he must realize the best Christian can become a castaway. He must also realize the destructive power of the flesh and discipline the flesh by use of a schedule and by actively serving the Lord.

12 L - LOYALTY

REVELATION 12:11

“And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.”

Loyalty is simply faithfulness to a cause or a person. Many Christians consider themselves to be loyal to Christ and to their faith and imagine themselves capable of dying for their faith. The problem with loyalty is that it must be proven. A Christian who is not faithful to church for every service will not be willing to

take a stand for that church when troubles come. A Christian who is not loyal to his pastor will not stand beside him if and when he is ever falsely accused but will be quick to condemn on hearsay. A Christian who is not faithful to a Biblical conviction like tithing is one who may be tithing, but with the idea that the time may come when he will not be able to due to unexpected expenses.

13 M - MINISTRY

1 CORINTHIANS 16:15-16

“I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and *that* they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,) ¹⁶ That ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with *us*, and laboureth.”

Interestingly, a vast difference lies between how Paul looked at the ministry and how today’s typical Christian sees it. The typical Christian is extremely concerned about burnout and quality family time. Therefore, he excuses himself from getting overly involved in serving the Lord through the local church. Paul, however, is using a group of people who were seen as being addicted to serving the Lord as being role models for other Christians and worthy of being leaders. The work of the ministry is not to be a drudgery but a controlling force in one’s life that causes him to crave doing God’s work.

14 N - NUTRITION

1 CORINTHIANS 6:19

“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?”

This verse is usually used to condemn smoking and drinking because of the damage done to the body. Smoking does cause cancer and drinking alcohol does kill brain cells. However, this verse should not be limited to only the sinful vices mentioned above but should also be expanded to include the sin of gluttony and eating unhealthy food. Is the Holy Spirit in control of our eating habits? Are we taking proper care of our bodies so we can live a productive, active Christian life as we grow older? We need to realize that while God may have the day of our death established, He has allowed us to determine the quality of life up to that time. In other words, God may choose to let us live to be 70 years of age, but we are the ones to decide if we will spend the last 15 of those years in a nursing home or in our own homes. The Bible tells us about the physical condition of Moses when he died.

DEUTERONOMY 34:7

“And Moses *was* an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.”

While Moses may have been an old man, he died in good health, meaning God ended his life while his health was still good.

15 O - OTHERS

MATTHEW 5:23-24

“Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; 24 Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.”

It is interesting to notice in these two verses the fact that the Lord put human relationships before serving the Lord. We must therefore understand that people are more important than things. Since the Bible places a premium upon our relationships over and above our duties, what should our priorities be with

people? Our first priority should be God. Our second priority should be others, and we should put ourselves last.

16 P - PRAYER

LUKE 11:1

“And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.”

In inspecting our prayer lives, we should ask some very definite questions that are indicators as to the quality of our praying. Are my prayers getting answered?

JAMES 5:16

“Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”

Am I praying at least 15 minutes every day or is it five minutes on a hit-and-miss basis? Do I have seasons of prayer in addition to my quiet time? Do I get enjoyment from my prayer closet? Can people see a difference in me because I have prayed and met with God?

For prayer to be beneficial and have lasting benefits, it will usually consist of four major components which can be remembered by the letters A-C-T-S.

A- ADORATION (THANKING GOD FOR WHAT HE IS)

A-Advocate, B-Brother, C-Companion, D-Defender, E-Everlasting, F-Friend, G-Good, H-Holy, I-Infinite, J-Just, K-Kind, L-Lord of Lords, M-Mighty, N-Never leave me, O-Omnipotent/Omniscient/Omnipresent, P-Precious, Q-Quickened my soul, R-Rock, S-Strength, T-Tender, U-Understanding, V-Victorious, W-Wise, X-Exalted One, Y-Yoke, Z- Zealous for me to do right

C - CONFESSION (CONFESSING OF SPECIFIC SINS)

Mind (wicked thoughts), Eyes (things looked at), Ears (conversations listened to, music, etc.), Tongue (words spoken), Hands (deeds done or omitted that should have been done), Feet (walk with God)

T - THANKSGIVING (THANKING GOD FOR WHAT HE HAS GIVEN)

Salvation, Family, Friends, Home, Health, Will of God for my life, Church, Ministries, Bible (KJV), Prayer, Soulwinning, Ministry, Trouble

S - SUPPLICATION (ASKING GOD FOR SPECIFIC NEEDS)

A-help to control fleshly appetites, B-Bills/finances and baptisms, C-church and converts, D-deacons, E-enemies, F-family members, G-Gospel preachers, H-members in hospital, I-ill, J-people looking for a job, K-knowledge (to learn the Bible and how to pray), L-love people, M-members, N-nation, O-opportunities, P-power of God, Q-quitters who have left the church, R-revival, S-staff members and family, T-transfer everything back to the Lord, U-safety for members in uniform/police, V-vision of how God wants to use me, W-wisdom, X-exceptional situations, emergencies, etc., Y-yielded, Z-zealous for souls to be saved

17 Q- QUICK TO OBEY

1 SAMUEL 15:20-22

“And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. 21 But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God in Gilgal. 22 And Samuel said, Hath 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 hearken than the fat of rams.”

Probably Saul's biggest mistake was hesitation in obeying the Lord. When he was told to slaughter the enemy and all livestock, he hesitated long enough to allow the devil to talk him into partial obedience. Instead of obeying the Lord in every point, Saul began to justify holding onto the best of the livestock and even sparing the enemy king's life. The results of Saul's partial obedience were devastating. He was condemned by the Lord as being a disobedient rebel, and he was rejected from being king.

18 R - REVIVAL

EZEKIEL 37:1-5

“The hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley which *was* full of bones, 2 And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, *there were* very many in the open valley; and, lo, *they were* very dry. 3 And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest. 4 Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. 5 Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live.”

Revival can only take place where there has first been death, and there cannot be death unless there was first life. For that reason, a lost person cannot experience a revival because he has not yet been born again. Why is a revival needed? A Christian needs revival because of pride and independence. Jesus warned us that He is the vine, we are the branches, and we cannot survive apart from Him. If we try, we will find that our joy gives way to discouragement, our soulwinning surrenders to a critical spirit, our prayer closet becomes empty, and our hearts become cold. When our Christianity becomes a burden instead of a delight, we are in need of a revival! How does a revival come about?

IT COMES THROUGH THE WORD OF GOD.

The preaching of God's Word by Ezekiel eventually produced life, just as the preaching of Jonah brought forth revival in Nineveh.

IT COMES THROUGH HUMBLING OF SELF.

2 **C**HRONICLES 7:14A

"If my people, which are called by my name, shall **humble themselves**,"

IT COMES THROUGH PRAYER.

2 **C**HRONICLES 7:14B

"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and **pray**,"

IT COMES THROUGH CHASING AFTER GOD.

2 **C**HRONICLES 7:14C

"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and **seek my face**,"

IT COMES FROM FORSAKING KNOWN SIN.

2 **C**HRONICLES 7:14

"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and **turn from their wicked ways**; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

19

S- SUBMITTING TO AUTHORITY

H E B R E W S 13:17

“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.”

It is so vital that a Christian understand this matter of submission, for it affects nearly every area of our lives and is but a reflection of our submission to the Lord. The author of Hebrews was addressing the relationship between pastor and congregation and the necessity to submit to one another. Husbands and wives are also to maintain this joint submission in the marriage, the wife to her husband and the husband to the Lord.

E P H E S I A N S 5:22

“Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.”

While the submission of the wives is stated directly, the submission of the husbands to the Lord is implied since Jesus Christ was submissive to His Father.

A C T S 23:2-5

“And the high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to smite him on the mouth. 3 Then said Paul unto him, God shall smite thee, *thou* whited wall: for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law? 4 And they that stood by said, Revilest thou God's high priest? 5 Then said Paul, I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.”

Paul was rebuked and humbled when slapped after he behaved improperly towards the high priest. Obviously, Ananias was not a good guy; however, Paul was not submitting himself to a person but to the position he held as the high priest.

1 PETER 2:18

“Servants, *be* subject to *your* masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.”

Instead of fighting against the wrongs of slavery, Peter stressed submission. Likewise in the book of Romans, Paul encouraged citizens to be submissive to civil rulers.

ROMANS 13:1-7

“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. 2 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. 3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: 4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil. 5 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. 6 For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. 7 Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.”

Not only are citizens to submit themselves in the matter of obedience to the law of the land but also in the matter of taxes. Paul extended submission into the home as well.

COLOSSIANS 3:20

“Children, obey *your* parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.”

20 T - TRAINING OTHERS

2 TIMOTHY 2:2

“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”

It is the responsibility of every Christian to train someone to take his place. As a person has been trained to lead people to Christ, he should then train someone else in the matter of soulwinning. As a Sunday School teacher has learned how to teach a Sunday School class, he needs to train his helper to be able to teach his own class. As a pastor has learned how to preach, he must then work at training others to be able to preach also. As older wives have learned how to love their husbands and maintain a Christian home, so they are obligated to train the younger ladies to do the same.

TITUS 2:3-5

“The aged women likewise, that *they be* in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; 4 That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 *To be* discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.”

21 U - USING YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS

1 CORINTHIANS 12:4-11

“Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. 6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. 7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. 8 For to one is given by the Spirit

the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; 9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; 10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another *divers* kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: 11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.”

All these gifts were given to Christians for one reason - for the benefit or the edifying of the local church. Five of these gifts were temporary gifts, meaning they existed for a certain time. When their purpose was fulfilled, they then ceased to exist. These temporary gifts which no longer exist were the office of the apostle, prophecy (foretelling of future events), healing through a person, tongues, and the interpretation of tongues. Why did these gifts cease?

MARK 16:19-20

“So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. 20 And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.”

God used these temporary gifts as signs to authenticate the Word of God as it was being written. These gifts were used by God to prove to the Christian world that the newly written, inspired letter was authentic. Once the Bible was completed, the temporary gifts were removed.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:10

“But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.”

The remaining gifts have been passed out by the Holy Spirit as He has seen fit and are to be used for the benefit of the church. These gifts are the office of the evangelist (Eph. 4:11 motivator of soulwinning), pastor (Eph. 4:11), teacher (1 Cor. 12:28 ability to clarify Bible doctrine), helps (1 Cor. 12:28 ability to give practical assistance with a skill or ability), rule (1 Cor. 12:28 ability to organize), mercy

(Rom. 12:8 helping the sick in a cheerful manner), exhortation (Rom. 12:8 ability to encourage others), giving (Rom. 12:8 ability to accumulate and give large amounts of money to God's work), wisdom (1 Cor. 12:28 ability to rightly apply human and divine knowledge), discernment (1 Cor. 12:10 ability to differentiate between the works of the Lord and the works of Satan or the flesh), and faith (1 Cor. 12:9 ability to believe and expect great things from God).

22 V - HAVING A VISION

P ROVERBS 29:18

“Where *there* is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.”

What kind of a vision is being referred to in this verse? A church must have a vision for themselves. Without a vision, a church will become satisfied. The first stage of a church losing their vision is to have the mentality of “us four and no more” where they are bothered by strangers coming in and trying to change tradition. A church must be willing to see itself from God's vantage point as His tool for reaching the world with the Gospel.

M ARK 16:15-16

“And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”

Any church that feels like it has done its job and has grown as big as God wants it to become has forgotten the size of their ministry - the world. Without a vision, a church will become stagnant. The second stage of a church losing its vision is when stagnation sets in, meaning there are no conversions and no baptisms. This occurs when there are no new people being brought into it because there is no soulwinning. To appreciate the proper vision that a church should have, one

would need to look to the first church in Jerusalem. It started with Jesus. Then it grew to include the 12 disciples. From there they became the 120 in the upper room on the day of Pentecost. From 120, they became a multitude (Acts 4:32). Then they became multitudes (Acts 5:14). The growth and outreach of the Jerusalem church created quite a stir and a sense of alarm in many people, as best seen in their unintentional compliment to Peter.

ACTS 5:28

“Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.”

Without a vision, a church will die. This is the third and final stage in a church gone blind. When they reach the place where they have lost sight of their purpose, Christ removes Himself.

REVELATION 2:5

“Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.”

Basically, this verse means that a church must either recapture their vision of getting people saved or they will cease to exist as a church.

23 W - WAITING ON THE LORD

Two of the best people in the Bible who illustrate the two ways of waiting on God are Saul and David. When a problem came up in Saul's life, he waited on God until he FELT he could wait no longer, and then he took over the situation.

1 SAMUEL 13:11-12

“And Samuel said, What hast thou done? And Saul said, Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and *that* thou camest not within the days appointed, and *that* the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash; ¹² Therefore said I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the LORD: I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt offering.”

Saul's attitude is basically that he had no other choice. When David ran into trouble, he chose to let God handle the situation completely.

P SALM 27:1, 14

“The LORD *is* my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD *is* the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? ¹⁴ Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.”

David had his faults, but one area of his life that seems to be a very strong area was his patience. He put up with Saul's antics for six years, and he waited for God to deal with him. God eventually did. In fact, David felt so strongly about letting God take care of Saul, that he had a person killed who claimed to have killed Saul on the battlefield. This is a huge reason why I feel it is **WRONG** for a married couple to separate, divorce, or agree to either one. Separation and divorce are nothing more than impatient people trying to bring about a solution in a hurry. Those problems did not develop overnight, and God is usually not going to solve them overnight either.

24 X - LIVE EXPECTING

TITUS 2:13

“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;”

One of the clearest facts about Jesus Christ is that He is coming back in two phases.

PHASE #1 - THE RAPTURE

1 CORINTHIANS 15:51-52

“Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”

God used these temporary gifts as signs to authenticate the Word of God as it was being written. These gifts were used by God to prove to the Christian world that the newly written, inspired letter was authentic. Once the Bible was completed, the temporary gifts were removed.

REVELATION 3:10

“Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.”

This rapture is imminent, meaning it can happen at any moment and does not require the fulfilling of any signs. Because of its imminency, every lost person must be aware that he would be left behind while every Christian must be ready to meet Jesus Christ face to face.

PHASE #2 - THE SECOND COMING

REVELATION 3:11-14

“Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. 12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, *which is* new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and *I will write upon him* my new name. 13 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. 14 And unto the angel of

the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;”

The latter phase of Christ’s return comes at the end of the Tribulation when He returns with the redeemed of all the ages. The most important point of concern for the Christian is that this final return is the point of no return for their lost loved ones. When Christ returns to establish His kingdom, all who are alive and still lost will be condemned to hell.

25 BE YIELDED (GO TO THE ALTAR)

ROMANS 12:1

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is your reasonable service.*”

Every Christian should make a total yielding of his life to the Lord on a daily basis, asking God to help him to die to his flesh, wants, and dreams.

26 Z - HAVE ZEAL WITH KNOWLEDGE

ROMANS 10:1-2

“Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. 2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.”

In these verses, Paul summed up Israel's tragedy and condition in that they were zealous for their religion but ignorant of their true Messiah. Christians need to be careful to have a good balance between zeal and knowledge. That does not mean to reduce our zeal but to INCREASE our knowledge.

The AUTHOR

FROM THE COCKPIT TO THE PULPIT

In 1976, I graduated from Indiana State University with a degree in Aerospace Technology and a goal of becoming an airline pilot. After learning that over eighty percent of all airline pilots had been pilots in the military, I applied for and was accepted into the

Navy's flight program. Two years later, I received my wings as a Naval Aviator and was assigned to an A-7E squadron based near Jacksonville, Florida. As attack pilots trained to drop nuclear weapons, my squadron was assigned to the aircraft carrier CV-59, the USS Forrestal, and completed two tours to the Mediterranean. During this time, I completed over three-hundred carrier landings, one hundred of which were at night. In between my cruises to the Mediterranean, I got saved; and God began working in my heart about serving Him in the ministry instead of becoming an airline pilot. Following my fulfillment to the Navy, I resigned my commission and was hired as an Assistant Pastor in a Baptist church that my wife and I had joined after I got saved. After almost six years on staff, I was asked to become the pastor of Temple Baptist Church in Kokomo, IN, and began my pastorate there in 1988.



The COLLEGE

WHY A CORRESPONDENCE COLLEGE?

After five years of pastoring, I began Baptist College of America with two goals in mind. First, it was created purely as a correspondence college. This was the intention from the beginning because while I was in the Navy preparing to become a pilot, my training

was conducted in two different phases. The first phase was Ground School where I studied various aspects of jet aircraft with most of those studies using correspondence courses. Books were provided with minimal classroom instruction. It was up to each pilot to read, study, and absorb the information with tests being administered. The second phase was actually flying an aircraft with an instructor pilot. Baptist College of America was created along those same lines with two separate phases involved for each student. The first is a biblical ground school with courses being used along with correspondence teaching materials completed at each student's pace which are then submitted for grading. The second phase is being involved in a solid local church under the leadership of that church's pastor. The second phase is not graded but is vital for a BCA student to become properly trained in and for the ministry. As such, it is not necessary to attend a resident Bible college which means that a complete biblical education can be accomplished while remaining in one's own local church. As of this writing, BCA has over 1,000 students with students in every state of the country and in thirty-three countries around the world.



The PUBLICATIONS

MORE TITLES BY DR. HOLLOWAY

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