

Unless a Grain of Wheat

The Amplified Teaching

*"... unless a grain of wheat
falls into the ground and
dies..." (John 12:24)*

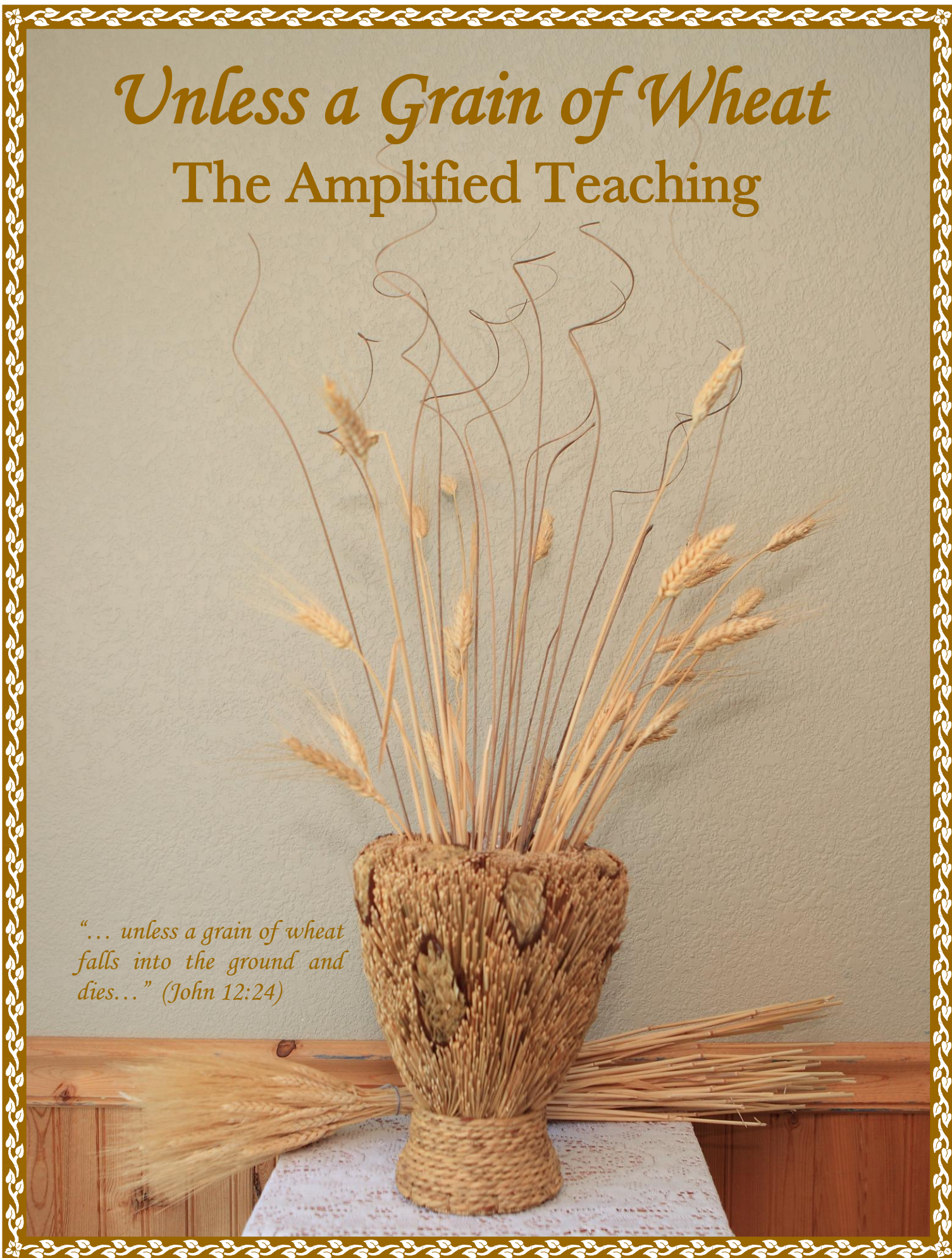


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The Model of Man

As revealed in the scriptures, we are going to see that "The Model of Man" is actually the unveiling of man's spiritual history. One may wonder what God had in His mind before He said "Let Us make man in Our image according to Our likeness..." (Genesis 1:26)

In order to answer that question, we must first turn our attention to the word "model" and understand what it means. The word "model" can mean:

- A small object, usually built to scale, that represents an existing object; or
- A preliminary pattern that represents an item not yet constructed, and that serves as the plan from which the finished work...usually much larger...will be produced

Let's move on now into our study and focus our attention on God.

The Bible does not seek to prove that God exists; instead, it assumes His existence and then unveils numerous attributes that are His alone. Scripture, all of which is God-breathed, makes it very clear from the beginning that:

- God is one being - one in nature and essence
- and that this one God exists in a perfect unity of three identifiable and distinct, though not separate, Persons...in other words, these three Persons are not three Gods; nor are they three parts or expressions of God...rather they are three Persons so completely united that they form and act together as the one and only true God
- and this one God, existing in three Persons - God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit - functions from all eternity in reciprocal love, fellowship, and in the exercise of their Divine attributes, mutual communion, and interrelationship - all within the Godhead.

This one God in the beginning created the heavens and the earth as a manifestation of His glory, wisdom and power. The crowning act in this creation came when He created man in His image, according to His likeness.

"God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them." (Genesis 1:27)

The creation of man in His image:

image: “to shade”...i.e., a silhouette...a representative figure or head. Created in God’s image...the One who has and exercises all authority and dominion.

Man as His representative head was to have dominion and authority over all of His created order in all of the cosmos.

The creation of man according to His likeness:

likeness: similar in nature, form, appearance, and function...i.e., a resemblance...when a son looks just like his father...

Man as God’s resemblance was created to be in a loving, intimate, and personal relationship with God Himself and....with his fellow man...and thus be a reflection into the earth of His glory, of who He is and what He does.

The Structure of Man:

Various passages in scripture from both the Old Testament (Genesis 2:7) and the New Testament (1 Thessalonians 5:23), unveil for us man’s tri-une structure and functioning. As we move on now we will see the integrated uniqueness of man’s being when God originally created him.

In the beginning, and throughout Scripture, we see man as tri-une...three in one...having been created in God’s image, according to His likeness...man would be, and function as a spirit, soul, body person (see diagram in the UGW syllabus, page 6.) Like a highly integrated circuit board, each of these components would possess different faculties and functions, and yet as one highly integrated unit would function through a delicate interaction transpiring between them.

You may wonder at this point why spirit, soul, and body.

“God is spirit and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”
(John 4:24)

Now let us consider each one of man’s components.

“Thus declares the LORD who... forms the spirit of man within him.” (Zechariah 12:1)

1) Man's Spirit:

- The spirit of man was created and fashioned by God as the most central and deepest part of man's identity. This is what set him apart from and crowned him above all of God's other creation.
- The word spirit (pneuma) means "breath." Isaiah 57:16 says it like this: "...*the breath of man within him.*"
- In Luke 24:39 the Lord Jesus said that a spirit does not have flesh and bone. He was indicating and reminding us that a spirit is non-material and also invisible to the natural eye. Yet like the wind it is very powerful, and like a body of water it is essential to the life around it...in other words, it is where life is found.

The human spirit can be defined as: 1) that part of man that relates most directly to God and therefore is most sensitive to and suits man for the spiritual realm; 2) that area of human awareness that is God-conscious and through which God most immediately encounters man and communes with him in spirit to Spirit relationship. (1 Corinthians 2:1-16)

A few verses that open this up for us:

- *"Jesus was deeply moved in spirit when He saw Mary weeping ..."* (John 11:33)
- *"For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son..."* (Romans 1:9)
- *"If I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays."* (1 Corinthians 14:14)

We see in these scriptures that man's spirit is both relational and functional.

Thus, through his spirit man would:

- enter into direct relationship with God,
- know the things of God,
- share in the things of God,
- and respond to Him in personal love, trust, and obedience.

In this way, God Himself set man apart from all the rest of His creation by forming the human spirit.

***"The LORD God... breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."* (Genesis 2:7)**

2) Man's Soul:

- The soul is the seat of his personality, and is made up of three parts:
 - a mind

- a will
 - and emotions.
- With his soul man was designed by God to:
- think in union with His mind
 - will in union with His will
 - and feel in union with His emotions.

Man's soul animates and gives life to his physical body. Like his spirit, man's soul is also immaterial and invisible; and much like identical twins, man's soul and spirit are very similar in their natures and functions. As such they permeate one another in such a way that they are inseparable...see Hebrews 4:12

Like a clean pool of water, the living soul would uniquely reflect God's holiness and glory into all of creation.

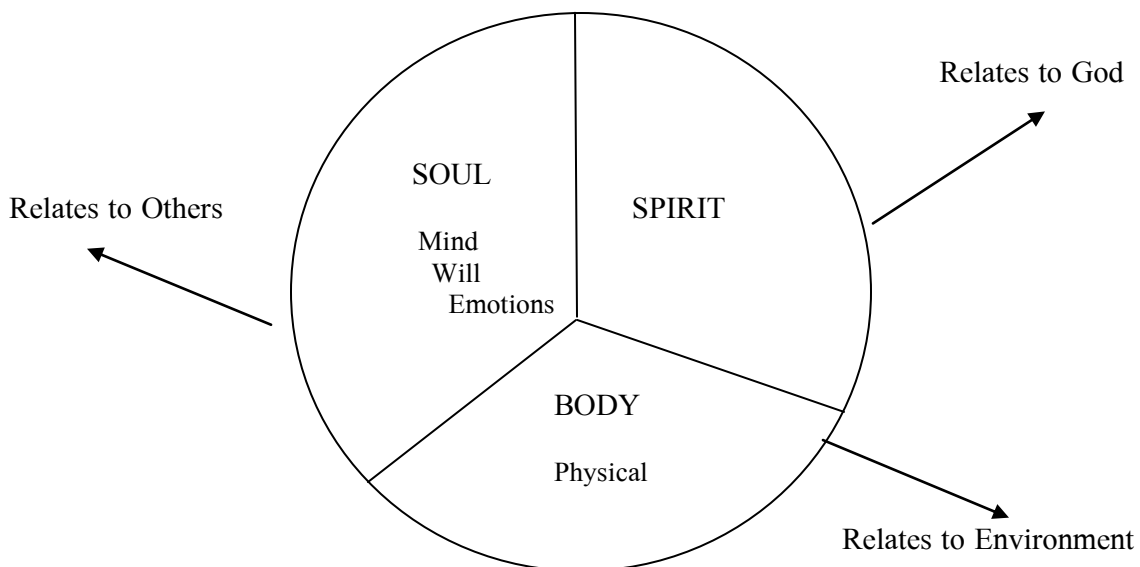
"Then the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground...." (Genesis.2:7)

3) Man's Body:

- Man's body is composed of material substances including muscle, bones, blood, glands, organs...all intricately working together along with five senses (sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch.)

The body of man was to be the vehicle through which the soul would not only relate to its outside world but also, in union with the spirit, have its expression.

Before we close now, we want to have one more look at man's whole person living and functioning in harmony and unbroken fellowship with his Triune God. ***"...whole spirit and soul and body..." (1 Thessalonians 5:23)***



The Model of Man:

- The spirit, man's highest and noblest part that occupies the deepest part of his being,
- would be in direct communion with his Triune God
- and then govern the body by acting upon the soul;
- the soul in turn expressing itself through the physical body.

In this way, man would be a reflection of God's person and power into the earth...filling the earth with the knowledge of God and His glory...as well as manifesting and expressing His dominion and authority over all the rest of creation...including the aggressive Satanic forces which would soon be impinging upon it.

Closing thoughts:

"The man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed." (Genesis 2:25)

Man at the onset of his creation was pure and innocent, and they had not yet come to know good and evil. Thus, man knew no shame and was clothed in and with God's glory. We have had a picture here in "The Model of Man," not only of God's beautiful tapestry and wisdom in man's creation, but also of man's whole being in his intrinsic value, human worth, and Divine destiny as a tri-une creation. Paul certainly understood this...man's high and noble place and purpose in the order of God's creation...for he wrote these words to us in 1 Corinthians 6:20 *"...glorify God in your body."*

And the more we understand what God had in His mind in the beginning of creation, the more we should never be pleased to dwell on a level of existence lower than that on which God has made it possible for us to dwell. For in the model of man we can also see another facet of God's thinking: that capacity and ability constitute accountability and responsibility.

At this point, you will want to move on now to our next treasure of truth, "The Fall of Man," where you will come into yet another unveiling of man's spiritual history.

The Fall of Man

A Recap from the Model of Man:

“From the beginning God’s heart to build a dwelling place for Himself in the earth is seen in His creation of man and woman – together, the foundation of the house of the Lord. Through the two of them together, He intended to live and reveal Himself in the world. Through them God intended to manifest His character and authority (image), express His dominion over the earth, display His indisputable power over the works of darkness, and His archenemy, Satan.” New Spirit Filled Life Bible footnote on Genesis 1:26-28

Man in Distress:

The Bible clearly depicts the fall of man as a definite event that took place in human history and is never to be thought of as a myth. The account of man’s fall is in the book of Genesis in the Bible. To say that man fell is to say that there was a collapse from a lack of internal structural support. Sadly, we are going to see in this treasure of truth that every person at birth is his own Adam and indeed, fallen in sin.

The details of man’s fall are very clear to us from the scriptures.

- Mankind’s first parents, Adam and Eve, were tempted by Satan to disobey God’s express command to Adam not to eat from the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. God knew that the fruit from that tree would indeed be poison to them should they choose to eat of it, and in so doing they would surely die on that day. And so...
 - tempted first to doubt God’s Word...Did God say?
 - then led on to not believe Him...You will not die!
 - and then to disobey His explicit command...they both ate.
- On that day Adam and Eve...
 - both sadly and tragically rebelled against the authority of God’s word and the purpose of their being: to live and act entirely for the glory of their sovereign and gracious Creator and thereby fulfill His will for them being here on earth...
 - and they ate: at that very moment they chose to find life and fulfillment outside of the Person and life of God Himself...
 - and also at that very moment: Adam and Eve both fell in sin, each collapsing now from a lack of internal structural support in spirit. They had in fact been cut off and separated from God’s life within them and did indeed die. Their intimacy and fellowship with their Creator had disintegrated and come to an end. They were now in a state of death...alone...and lost.

"For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks... for they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped the creature rather than the Creator who is blessed forever."

(Romans 1:21, 25)

In the words of C.S. Lewis from The Problem of Pain: "Man's fall was not comparable to mere deterioration as it may now occur in a human individual. It was a loss of status as a species. What condition was transmitted by heredity to all later generations was not simply what biologists call an acquired variation. It was the emergence of a new kind of man; a new species, never made by God, had sinned its way into existence... it was a radical alteration of his constitution."

Now we see man in a state of distress rather than rest. Adam and Eve were in a condition now of being in need of immediate assistance for they had ceased to be truly human. They had ceased receiving and reflecting light of the life of God in whom alone the meaning of their existence could be found. The fall had in fact overthrown their true identity and dignity. Here we have an explanation for everything that is wrong in the world today. As a fallen race, man knows only a spiritual vacuum within himself: a space that is empty of God's life. Having been polluted by sin now, he no longer possesses the original goodness with which God had created him. Instead, a perversity has entered into his nature which now controls his heart, mind, disposition, and his will.

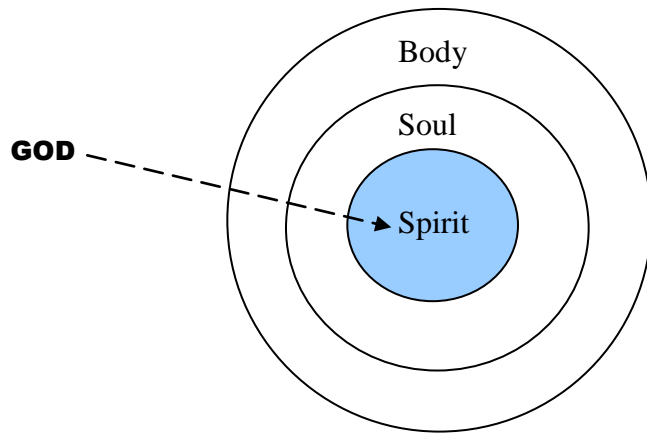
Sadly, it is at the very moment of conception that at each one of us inherits a state of hostility towards God our Creator that originated in Adam's fall. For it is with our natural birth that we are born into a realm of spiritual death through Adam. In this state, we constantly suffer from the effects of non-equilibrium with God, with others, and with ourselves since we fail to understand that true manhood consists only in conformity to the image of God.

A Closer Look Now at Man's Spiritual History:

As you read here, it is important to remember that the Scriptural teaching of man's fall in the book of Genesis completely contradicts the modern world's view of man's history through evolution. The theory of evolution says that man is a being, who by some kind of slow evolutionary development has succeeded in rising from the groping ignorance of a lesser species, say, like an ape, to the proud heights of sophistication, education, industrialism, and religious insight that we see today. Can you see here how deceived and lost man really is in this kind of thinking? For God's Word never portrays man as risen, but as fallen and in the most desperate need of help.

I. Adam *before* the fall: a spiritual man

What we saw in "The Model of Man" is that by God's design, having been made in the image of God and after His likeness, man was in perfect harmony and union with his Creator because he was an integrated spirit, soul, body person.

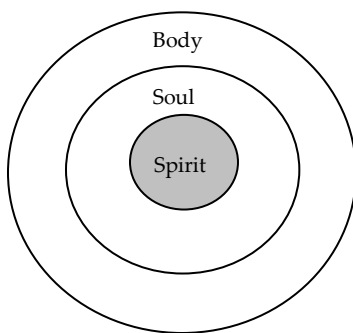


With God Himself in the center of his being, the **essence** of Adam was spiritual. His spirit is in ascendancy and is here the highest center of operation for him.

- Essence: the quality or qualities of a thing that give it its identity...the intrinsic or indispensable properties of a thing...the crucial element...you cannot live without it.

Do you see the **I** in the diagram of your Unless a Grain of Wheat syllabus (page 8)? The position of the **I** shows you from what source you are drawing life, identity, and purpose. What the **I** tells you here is that Adam's life, identity, and purpose were wrapped up in God. Thus, as an essentially spiritual being Adam enjoyed unbroken fellowship with his Triune God.

II. Adam **after** his fall: a natural man



Who is no longer in this picture?

At the very moment of Adam's transgression, his spirit no longer had God's life in it. Thus, Adam died: his spirit cut off now from God and independent of Him. Adam's soul becomes for him the center of operation and he is now a natural man.

Now look again at the **I** in the diagram of the syllabus. What does the **I** tell you now? Having just collapsed through disintegration, Adam is no longer a spiritual being. He is a soulical person now. For his soul, having just been cut off from God's life:

- from His mind,
- His perfections,
- and His purity

is now isolated and away from God. In fact, Adam is hostile towards Him! (Genesis 3: 9-12) Adam can only find his identity and purpose now from within his soul and body. Instead of being God-centered, he is self-centered: his life is all about him and having his needs met now apart from God. Adam can only find life from drawing upon his own natural resources within his soul for he no longer has the true knowledge of God within him. Driven now by self-centeredness and selfish motives, Adam is earth bound. Indeed, how tragic here Adam's fall; and how far he had fallen away from his God through sin. He is sadly earth bound, and this is as high as he can go as a mortal man now.

Opening up the consequence of Adam's sin by further defining death...

- Death in all Scripture means separation from the purpose for which one was created... never annihilation or extinction of being.
- Physical death is separation of the inner man from the body. Only the body dies at this time and goes back to dust. (Genesis 3:19; James 2:26).
- The spirit and soul are immortal and are dead in sins or in possession of eternal life in Christ at the time of physical death. In either case, they continue in consciousness whether in heaven or hell. (Luke 16:22-23)

"Jesus said, 'He who is without the Son is without life.' "
(I John 5:12)

III. Now what is true for all of us: a natural man at physical birth

Due to the pollution of man's nature through Adam's sin, every one of us at birth is born morally corrupt for we all have the life of Adam in us. To be morally corrupt, or one might say totally depraved, does not suggest that every man is as base as he can be or incapable of thinking or doing any good whatsoever. Rather, we are to understand by this term that man is inherently corrupt from within: in every part of his human nature. Thus, he is incapable of doing any spiritual good in relation to God. This the Scriptures clearly tell us. (Romans 7:18; Ephesians 4:17-18; 2 Timothy 3:2-5; Titus 1:15-16)

Sin is inherent within man at conception since Adam's rebellion has been passed down to us. (Psalm 51:5) The essence of each child born into the earth therefore is soulical; and that means they have no divine resources to draw on from within themselves. Empty of God's life within, each one by nature looks for their life, identity, and purpose within themselves; and so each one goes their own way. The position of the **I** in the diagram in the Unless a Grain of Wheat syllabus shows you mankind with the life of Adam in them now.

The Result of the Fall for Mankind:

In God's eyes, every person is born destitute of His righteousness: meaning empty of that which is consistent with His own nature; and so each one is born in need of God's

life. Unregenerate...meaning without spiritual life and separated from God...all are born:

- lost,
- completely sinful,
- and utterly unable to save themselves.

“...for by the transgression of the one (Adam) the many died.” (Romans 5:15)

With the essence of man being soulical, the soul being the center of operation, what we have is dysfunction through self-centeredness. For his soul can no longer

- function in harmony with its human spirit
- and is driven instead now by its own self-centeredness and selfish motives.

Man's identity is sadly wrapped up in himself: he is self-centered and self-seeking, attempting to meet his needs independent from God. Being a natural man by nature now, he thus lives separated from God in his trespasses and sins while he

- orders his life and thoughts according to the course of this world
- walking after the prince of the air
- indulging the desires of the flesh
- being darkened in his understanding
- excluded and alienated from the life of God
- from the ignorance that is in him
- because of the hardness of his heart

By nature, all are sinners:

- spiritually dead
- under Satan's dominion
- enslaved by sin and
- under God's condemnation (death)

All will manifest some of the following:

Matthew 15:19

evil thoughts
murders
adulteries
fornicators
thefts
false witness
railings

Romans 1:29-32

insolent
haughty
inventors of evil things
disobedient to parents
covenant breakers
without natural affection
unmerciful

1 Timothy 1:9-10

lawless
unruly
homosexuals
kidnappers

2 Corinthians 12:20

strife
 jealousy
 wrath
 factions
 backbiting
 whisperings
 gossip

1 Corinthians 5:10

covetous
 extortioners
 idolaters
 reviler
 drunkard

Conclusion: We have seen sin for what it really is, and what it has done, and what it continues to do. Sin is a disruptive force! Sin always divides, always separates, and always splinters. It divides a man within and against himself. It has produced the constant fight and struggle we are all aware of in our lives. There is the constant problem of good and bad, right and wrong: what should I do; and what should I not do? Sin always produces and brings division between man and man; it leads to enmity and war and strife. Man, and the world he lives in, has been shattered by sin.

It is only against this backdrop of man's sin that the saving action of God through His Son takes on its true and glorious significance. By God's design before the Fall, what was forfeited by Adam's fall would be restored to mankind through personal faith in Christ's atoning death on the Cross and His resurrection. Herein would be the only remedy for this condition of sin: a new birth wherein...

- the image and likeness of God would be recovered within him,
- his true and intended dignity now restored to him,
- the purpose of his life having been recaptured for him,
- and the way into intimate communion with God is reopened for him.

New Birth

As we open our teaching here, we are going to discover that the reality of the new birth is based upon a promise of God. In fact, a promise that was spoken by God long before times eternal, and that has now come into it's fulfillment in the New Testament.

It is most helpful here if we realize that any promise made by God is always an undertaking on His part to both do and give something. Whenever God promises anything, it signifies on His part a gift graciously bestowed. It is not a pledge that can be secured by anyone's negotiation or self-efforts or works of doing their best: trying to be good enough to earn His favor or win Him over to their side. That's what children do.

Jesus spoke to the Samaritan woman at the well with these words: "If you knew the gift of God..." He knew that His Father's gift is a gift indeed...one

- that fully satisfies
- and is given with no strings attached
- so it may indeed be embraced and received as one's own

Let's begin our study in this treasure from Unless a Grain of Wheat now by remembering man's condition of having been born in Adam after the fall:

- being dead by reason of trespasses and sins
- without God in the world (meaning consciously existing in separation from Him)
- at enmity (having deep seated hatred) with Him
- sons of disobedience
- and having no hope

With this as the backdrop, we can look now at God's promise to man; and how He then secured it for us even while we were yet sinners!

Titus 1:2 unveils for us that in confident expectation God Himself, who cannot lie, promised eternal life long before time began. In Jeremiah 24:6 you discover another unveiling of God's infinite grace to us through His promise when you read His words: "...for I have set my eyes upon them for good."

God made His promise of eternal life to us out of love: a love by choice in which He would seek and secure for humankind their highest good. We read in Ezekiel 36:26-27 the internal dynamic of how He would accomplish this in time: *"Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to do My ordinances."*

From this scripture, we understand how God in His infinite love and wisdom knew what we needed in order for Him to accomplish His highest good for mankind. The Lord Jesus Christ also knew and understood this when He said to Nicodemus in John 3:7: *"You must be born again."* For without a birth of another kind, there could be no spiritual life for man: no relationship, no fellowship, and no intimacy with his Triune God. What did God then do? His love manifested: He sent His Son born of a virgin into the earth.

***"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son,
that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."
(John 3:16)***

Ponder just for a moment here what was in God's mind and on His heart when He said that He gave His only begotten Son.

- He had the Cross in mind
- He would give His only begotten Son sacrificially
- to be slain on the Cross as an offering for sin: for your sin, for my sin, for our sin

For God understood the depth of man's sin: that sin is a fundamental relationship. It is not wrong doing, but wrong being: rooted in a deliberate and determined independence from God. Now we can see more clearly the wonder of what God would be accomplishing for us through the Cross of His Son Jesus Christ:

***"For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son,
much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved in His life."
(Romans 5:10)***

The sacrificial death of His Son is how you and I have been reconciled to God: how we have been reunited and made friends again with Him: "through the death of His Son." Consider now the death that His Son died for you:

- the death of a cross
- a death to sin in the flesh
- by His own life blood being shed for you
- because the punishment for your peace fell on Him
- so that God's wrath against sin could be turned away from you.

In this manner, a right standing before God would be secured for fallen man. It is at the Cross of Christ that each one must come personally by faith in God the Father and the finished work of His Son on the Cross...

- having believed in their heart that He raised Jesus Christ His Son from the dead
- while confessing Him as Lord with their mouth
- asking Him for the forgiveness of their sin

Immediately they are washed free from sin by His shed blood, and their state of alienation from God immediately ceases and they receive God's gift of eternal life.

The wonder of it all: that person actually becomes someone they never were before through a birth of another kind! At that very moment of faith and surrender, a new creation in Christ emerges in which the old soulical man passed away and behold: a new creature exists! (2 Corinthians 5:17) For through the ministry of the Holy Spirit at this very moment of personal surrender to Christ, they are taken immediately out of Adam and placed eternally into Christ: having now passed out of death into eternal life!

The new birth through regeneration:

"...who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:12-13)

What we see here is that whenever a person personally believes on the Lord Jesus Christ they are born of God. What a miracle this is! For this new birth comes not by physical descent, human effort, or human volition, but by the power of God.

Think for a moment now about what it means to be born. The word born means "brought into." Thus, it has this thought in mind: an entrance into. Now think of what happens when a baby is born: in this case, the one born has had an entrance into the earth. The new birth, however, is from heaven. The one who is born of Him passes out of death into eternal life. As a born one now, they have had an actual entrance into the life of God, the family of God, and the kingdom of God.

In Christ, the spiritual DNA of every new creation is that of being "new": new as to form and of a different nature. For a born one of God immediately becomes in Christ all that God requires a man to be and all that He could never be in himself. This is the miracle of the new creation in Christ mentioned by Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:17.

Every new creation is a child of God through this new birth: a birth that is of another kind...

- one that is spiritual
- one that is from heaven
- and one that is of the Holy Spirit.

In Titus 3:5 this new birth is called "regeneration."

Regeneration can best be understood by thinking of what happens when a power switch is flipped: suddenly the power comes on. There's light! This is the thought in the word "regeneration": a regeneration in which there is

- a dramatic change
- that comes about through the Holy Spirit's power
- making a mortal man a new creation by
- affecting and permanently changing the moral and spiritual nature within him
- making him alive to God
- while passing him out of death and into eternal life in Christ

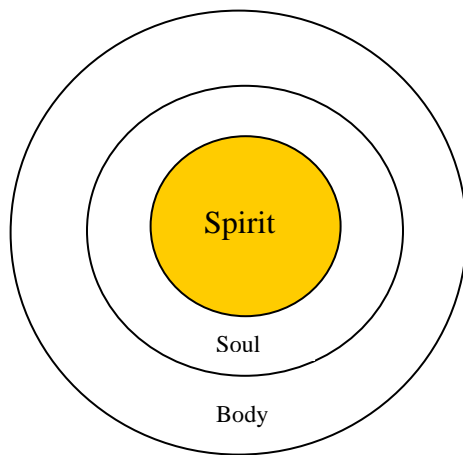
A child of God is born...he doesn't come into existence any other way!

From our diagram below we can get a better picture now of the miracle of the new birth and the beginning of that life.

In regeneration, there is simultaneous deliverance from sin and immediate union with God. Here there is an actual and permanent change in our moral and spiritual nature. This new man has the life of God within him here: the same resurrection and glorified life of Christ in his spirit having been brought into union and oneness with Him there. Now

- his human spirit is alive to God
- renewed in the image of God
- united with Christ's resurrection and glorified life
- having been created in righteousness and holiness of truth

Do you see here that the new man is once again triune in function? Being a born one with the resurrection life of Christ in him, he is no longer self-centered in the soul for he is God-centered in his spirit.



The gold in the center of the new creation now identifies him as a spiritual man; for that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. (John 3:6) His spirit being in union with Christ's resurrection life and glory and he is now in direct communication with his God.

The position of the **I** in the diagram in the Unless a Grain of Wheat syllabus (pg. 11) also shows you from what source the new man draws his life, identity, and purpose: for his spirit is the highest center of operation in him.

The power of identity is in knowing who you are.

Identity is defined as a set of characteristics by which something is recognizable and known. Beginning in the book of Acts and then throughout the rest of the New Testament the identity of the new creation is clearly spelled out.

Notice now the word **SAINTS** superimposed over the **I** in the diagram on page 11: like a brand mark (or a brand name), this is the mark of your new identity in Christ. This word "saints" gives you identity and ownership. The word indicates purity and nearness to God; not some level or conduct that someone is seeking to attain. Like a pool of water, it is reflecting the place where God meets his child, and His child meets with Him in Spirit to spirit fellowship...

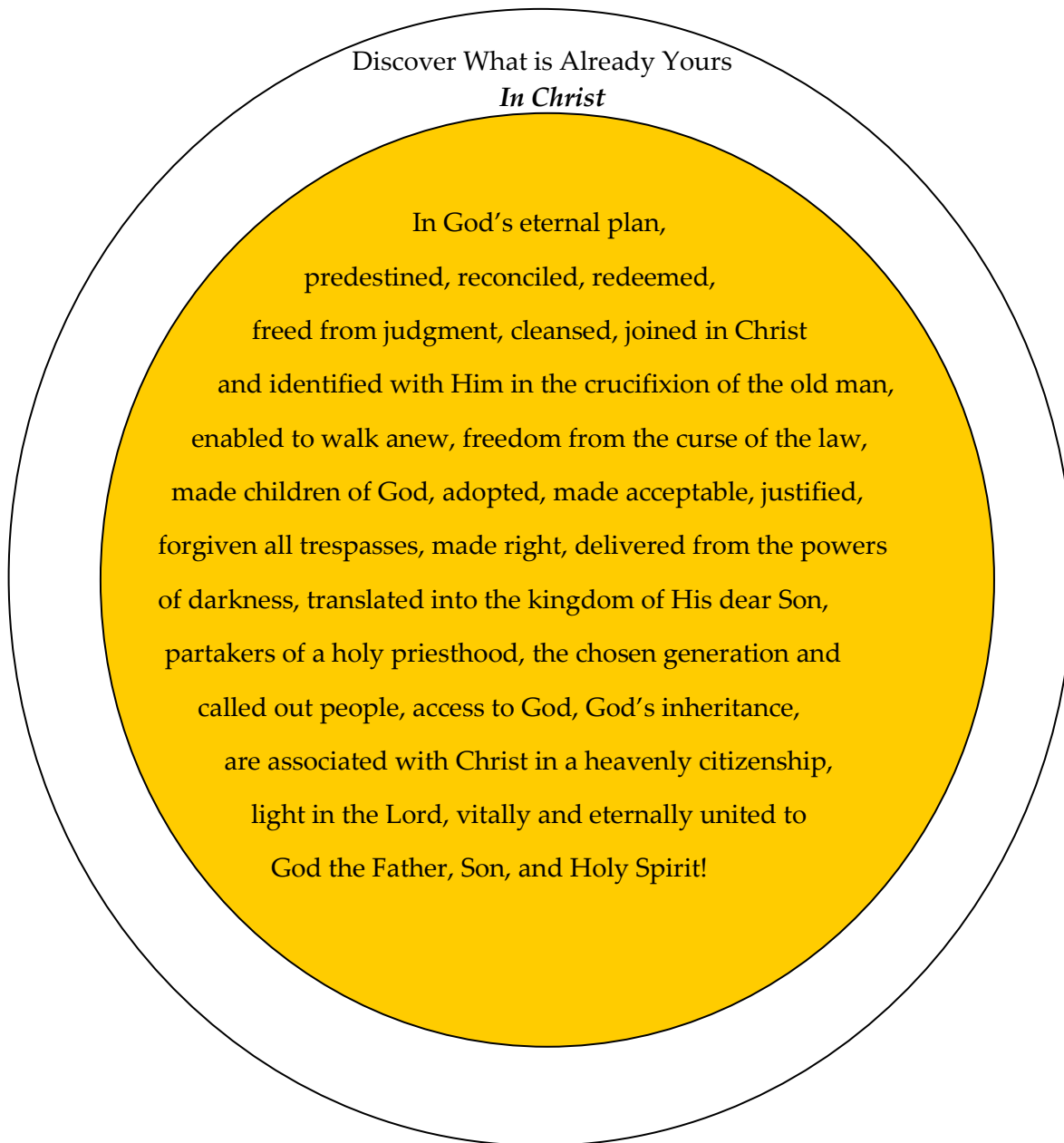
- like Adam and Eve who, in the cool of the day, heard the sound of God walking in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:8a)
- like Moses who heard God say to him "... *the place on which you are standing is holy ground*" (Exodus 3:5)
- like Samuel who, when he heard the LORD call him by name, said "*Speak, for Your servant is listening*" ((1 Samuel 3:10)

The word "saints" means "holy ones." Having been thoroughly cleansed from sin in the blood of Jesus Christ, every new creation is a "saint." Every born one is pure, holy, and clean and so blameless before God. Having thus been made near to Him, each one is set apart for sacred use. As we understand more and more who we already are in Christ, we learn to walk with the Holy Spirit. Consider for a moment now how a child learns to walk: the first thing they must learn to do is to hold their head up!

As a new creation, a born one of God, you must know your identity in Christ: you are a heavenly citizen and have a new position, having been totally accepted by God your Father. Having become the righteousness of Him in Christ, you have been raised up and seated in heavenly places in Christ as well. As you come to understand these truths and your new identity in Christ, you will become more single-minded in your life as God's very own child. In this way, you also come to know your heavenly Father more intimately and will bring glory to His name as you allow the Holy Spirit more and more influence to direct your life now:

- in your character
- in your service
- and in your praise.

Unwrapping the gift: God your Father has blessed you with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. (Eph.1:3) It's a fact! It has already been done. These blessings, however, are like a gift that still needs to be unwrapped after having been received.



Notice the word “discover” in the outer circle. Discover means to uncover and arrive at through search and study. It’s much like a treasure hunt. As you read and search the Scriptures, you will discover what is already yours in Christ in the inner circle. The outer circle is the path of sanctification in which you and I are to walk in – a path that involves the uncovering and arriving at what is in the inner circle: the whole truth of God about Him and you! Each one of these treasures from God’s word, the Bible, will become a reality to you as you are reading it: a tapestry of your perfect standing before God. As you discipline yourself in opening, reading, and searching the scriptures, you will learn over time to appropriate them by faith. Whenever you do this, and as you do it, you are partnering with the Holy Spirit in His ministry of sanctification in your life, one that develops the new life of Christ within you.

In this manner, you will possess more and more your eternal inheritance in the inner circle by being brought more and more into the light of them; and thus more and more into fullness and maturity in Christ. This so pleases God your heavenly Father: it makes Him happy to see you receiving what has already been given to you!

A closing thought: As I close this teaching, reflect upon the words D.L. Moody spoke just before he died around Christmas time in 1899. “Someday you will read in the papers that D.L. Moody is dead. Don’t you believe a word of it. At that moment I shall have gone up higher, that is all; out of this old clay tenement, into a house that is immortal - a body death cannot touch and that sin cannot taint. I was born of the flesh in 1837. I was born of the Spirit in 1856. That which is born of the flesh will die. That which is born of the Spirit will live forever. That’s what the Mighty God does in a life. What should you do? What step ought you to take? If you do not know Jesus, ask Him to take charge of your life and show you the plan He has for you. I urge you to do that today. If you do know Him as the Mighty God, give Jesus thanks this Christmas for His great gift to you. Then go and tell others Jesus Christ is born.”

A CALLED OUT PEOPLE

As we learned in our last treasure of truth from Unless a Grain of Wheat that your first life was the one you had in Adam. Through the new birth, you entered eternal life as a new creation in Christ. At that very moment, as we will learn in this treasure, God set you apart for a very special purpose!

In order to begin to understand what it means to be set apart, let's listen first to how Paul wrote to the church on three different occasions at three different locations:

- at Rome: "...among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ; to all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints ..." (Romans 1:6-7)
- at Corinth: "...to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours..." (1 Corinthians 1: 2-3)
- at Philippi: "...to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi..." (Philippians 1:2)

From these three scriptures we can see that God's people, those who are in Christ Jesus, are indeed a called out people. Having been set apart in Him, they not only have something in common now, but they share together in both a real and clear sense of:

- identity
- belonging
- and purpose

For every new creation in Christ belongs to God and to each other as well. This the early church knew very well. (Acts 2:44-47)

What you must know:

It is by calling that every new creation in Christ has been...

- separated out from among the dead: those who are dead in their trespasses and sins...and thus any non-believer in the earth
- while at the same time being set apart in Christ Jesus for God's eternal glory.

When we say "by calling" it is much like what happens at the end of a hide and go seek game when you call everyone who has not been caught to come out from hiding. The word "calling" means to bid or call forth aloud. It is what Jesus did when he called Lazarus forth from the grave. He very pointedly called Lazarus by name after he had been dead for four days: "Lazarus, come forth!" Lazarus heard that calling, and that

calling he responded to immediately: he came forth alive from the dead. He left behind the old life and came forth into the new!

As it was with Lazarus, so it has been for each sinner when God's calling came into their ears

- by the greatness of His power in His voice speaking to them
- calling forth each by name
- personally and purposefully

His calling is personal and rich in purpose to each one. It is first a calling unto, meaning to the point of salvation. The call comes only through the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is an invitation to enter the kingdom of God's Son and to participate in the blessings of His redemption. Whenever His calling is heard and received by faith, it then becomes a continual calling unto (to the point of) holiness. In other words, having been called of God and then set apart to Him upon believing faith, that calling keeps on calling the one saved up higher into their new life in Christ.

Here we have the word sanctification: the process in which the Holy Spirit continues to develop and perfect a new creation in their new life in Christ all the way into fullness and maturity. Sanctification, then, is always progressive: meaning it never stops, a process that keeps moving you along in

- growing you
- in proceeding steps
- and continuing steadily by increments

as you are learning to listen to the Lord's voice speaking to you through His Word.

This is growing in Christ. You are learning more and more to respond to the Holy Spirit's promptings through obedience to His Word by stepping out in faith. In this way, you serve your heavenly Father with reverence and godly fear.

*"Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people whom
He has chosen for His own inheritance." (Psalm 33:12)*

The Church: what is it?

As those chosen by God, these called out ones have been summoned to participate in His calling to a heavenly life while still on the earth. The English word "church" actually comes from a Greek adjective "ecclesia" meaning "belonging to the Lord." We see here that the church is not a place, but a people. The people of God are the church, and in Psalm 111:1 they are called the company of the upright and the assembly.

The church then, is actually a covenant community in which all its members are individually blessed with God's blessings and promises; and as living stones, they are being built together into a spiritual house that Christ Himself purchased with His own blood as He hung on the Cross at Calvary.

The church is both what is visible and invisible to the natural eye.

- There is the universal church, the body of Christ: here all true believers are united by their living faith in Christ who is their King and head. (Ephesians 2:19-22)
- There is the local church (an assembling of the called ones) in a particular place: it is a manifestation of the universal church in a particular area.

The church's existence indicates to you that your relationship to God as your heavenly Father is both close and secure by membership and ownership.

- You have membership in the body of Christ along with every other believer. In the company of the upright, all are on equal footing with all other members. It is a part of everyone's birthright.
- Ownership, however, belongs to God. Having been purchased and then set free from sin with the precious blood of Christ, your life is no longer your own. No longer are you to live your life independently from God or other members.

Now a closer look:

Look at your diagram on page 13 of the Unless a Grain of Wheat syllabus so you can more clearly see who you are in this assembly of gathered ones. The inner circle indicates both:

- a gathering together into a group
- and a fitting together of the parts thereof

"The new creation that we see here is not a symbolic rebirth, like that achieved by ritual in some pagan religions of antiquity and even of today. It is a fundamental change in human nature, so great a change that it amounts to a genuine form of speciation... we indeed remain in the world, but we are no longer of the world." Man in Adam and in Christ by Arthur W. Custance

What this quotation is saying is that your separation by calling is at a far deeper and more fundamental level than mere genetics. God Himself calls His people "*My chosen people*," and speaks of them as "*...the people I have formed for Myself*." Having called you

out of darkness into His marvelous light, you are now a member of a new race by birth and are presently living in the kingdom of God's very own Son. (Isaiah 43:21; 1 Peter 2:9-10; Colossians 2:13-24)

As you reflect on the words in the inner circle of the diagram, you will come to understand that the word "you" is fact in the plural. Such is the mindset of God, and such was the mindset of the early church as a covenant community of believers in Christ Jesus. Notice the plurality in these words:

- chosen race
- royal priesthood
- holy nation
- people

See the center:

In the center the word SAINTS is in bold caps. As we started to learn in our last treasure of truth, it is an inclusive word. All believers in Christ are saints by virtue of their calling and new birth.

A holy calling from a holy God requires from each one a holy response: first in humbleness of heart at the Cross and then with our very lives. (Romans 12:1) *"Not my will, but Yours, O God"* is the vocation and calling of every saint's life!

Having been born of the Holy Spirit, you can see here that all are at the same place at the same time by birth. Yet, depending upon variables all will be at different levels of maturity in their holy calling. The beauty of it all though, is that whether you are just beginning your new life in Christ or have in fact become more developed in your walk with the Lord, all are saints...all a called out people.

It is here by means of calling and regeneration that all believers are presently suited by nature for Christ's eternal kingdom. Through the new birth, all a

- **chosen race:**
 - chosen: picked out – it implies the idea of choosing in kindness; much like picking and gathering flowers for a bouquet, God chose you in Christ for Himself and at the moment of your new birth you immediately became a recipient of His everlasting favor
 - a race: a body with a common life and descent
- **royal priesthood:**
 - royal: kingly in nature; in the service of a kingdom; founded, chartered, and/or authorized by a sovereign

- priesthood: a priestly fraternity – those who execute the priest’s office: those who come near to the LORD to minister unto Him (Ezekiel 40:46)

□ **holy nation:**

- holy: pure...having been separated out from what is common and unclean and set apart for God
- nation: a multitude of people of the same nature, who share common origin, customs, and language and are organized under a single government

□ **a people for Gods’ own possession:**

- possession: means literally “to make around”; that is, to make something and then to surround it with a circle, thus indicating ownership: whose we are, and who we serve

The inner circle tells us that our lives in Christ indeed have true purpose and meaning. They can be genuinely and spiritually productive now, for it is through our lives being centered in the innermost circle that we are able to reign in newness of life as we proclaim His excellencies while here on earth. In this way, we bring glory to His name in:

- our character
- our service
- and our praise

For your encouragement:

From this innermost circle you see that this set apart position will demand a separation in the life of each saint: a separateness that will require of you a separation from everything that interferes in the least with your worship of God and your service to Him: the One to whom you owe your allegiance!

In the innermost circle, you are personally associated now with your Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. As His church, a called out people of saints who are God’s own possession, you are now in a race. It is a race of a different kind: one in which you run by being pressed more deeply into Christ. By being single-minded in God’s upward call in the innermost circle, you are speeding along earnestly now while keeping the faith. Keep looking ahead: look unto Jesus! For in this way, the entrance into the eternal kingdom of your Lord and Savior will be richly supplied to you as you are running your race; and at His second coming you will indeed enter into your reward. (Hebrews 11:14-16; 2 Peter 1:11; 1 John 2:28)

Sojourners

Having come into a deeper understanding in the last treasure of truth of the new creation reality that is for every child of God, we are ready now to gain even higher ground in our walk with the Lord. In this teaching we will be learning who we are as sojourners in the world. For as you come to know from a heavenly perspective what this word really means to you as one who has been born of God, you will then come into a fuller surrender to it. In this way, you will be even more free to apply it in your daily walk with the Lord Jesus Christ.

What to remember:

Having already been sprinkled with the blood of Jesus Christ and washed free of sin, you have been separated out from the world by the Holy Spirit. He is the One who has set you apart for the purpose of obedience and holy living. As the Father's very own child, you can live your life now by His Holy Spirit's power within you. Obedience will be your response to Him for all that His Son has already done for you! It is in this way that you bring glory to your heavenly Father with your life and the manner in which you live while here on the earth.

What will be needed?

To live your life to do God's will requires a mindset on your part that only comes from the Word of God. From within its pages you will discover more and more through the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit the eternal perspective that God has for your life: a perspective that also has an eternal glory and purpose in it for you!

Peter certainly knew this heavenly perspective when he started his first letter to the saints. He wrote to them as "to those who reside as aliens" or in another translation "to the strangers." (1 Peter 1:1) Here Peter is stressing for each one of us the truth that every Christian is an alien...a stranger...during their stay here on earth.

Peter's perspective came from the Old Testament words: "sojourner" and "sojourn."

- a sojourner: a permanent resident who has moved into his new residence; once a citizen of another country
- to sojourn: to turn aside, and so to dwell in a place to which one moves after fully leaving his first habitation

Through the new birth, you left everything behind and have moved into Christ. He is your home, and you are now a sojourner!

Understanding your high calling in Christ:

Having been born from above by God, a Christian is no longer of this world. The world is no longer his place of origin, and so no longer his reference point...meaning where he gets his identity from. As a member of another family, people and race, he is a citizen of heaven even while here on earth. His citizenship being in heaven, he is in fact an alien: a foreigner on earth. By nature, he owes his allegiance to another: to his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Each believer as a child of God is an outsider in spirit, being neither a friend nor even an acquaintance of the world...for friendship with the world makes you an enemy of God. (James 4:4) This the apostle John also knew. These are his words of exhortation to the church: to every believer...to us, to you, and to me for faithful and holy living to the Lord Jesus Christ: *“Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If any man loves the world the love of the Father is not in him.”* (1 John 3:15)

As a Christian, you and I are residing in a world that is at its very core entirely ungodly as well as hostile to our Lord and His full gospel of salvation. Your true identity is that of a new creation in Him; and as such you are no longer “suited” for the world system you find yourself in. (Galatians 3:26-27)

Listen now to Paul’s words of exhortation to the church at Rome:

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

Let’s talk now about how you as a saint are to live as a sojourner during your stay here on earth. What you will need to remember in sojourning is this: like Abraham, a sojourner never wanders about aimlessly. That’s what lost people do. Instead, as God’s very own child, you are to have your destination in mind: a definite focus with a point of interest and a point of arrival. A new heaven and a new earth is what lies ahead for every Christian. (Hebrews 11:9; Revelation 21:1; John 14:1-3)

Romans 12:2 is your instruction manual for living life on earth as a sojourner:

- **First point: don’t be conformed to this world**
 - There is a very real and constant danger that originates from the pressures of the world around you to be conformed into its patterns of thinking and behaving: by what you see and hear and feel. It will most often make its appeal to your flesh through your five senses.

- If these pressures and messages are not resisted and put in check, you will be squeezed into its molding effect on many different levels. Much like a frog in boiling water doesn't recognize its gradual death, your heart in stages and degrees will become hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. You will become a hypocrite: one who is masquerading, showing on the outside what is not true on the inside.
- Look now at the diagram on page 11 of your syllabus. The world system will be making every effort to seduce you and pull you off course from your true identity in the inner circle (your spirit.) It will be making its appeals and sending its messages to your mind, will, and emotions in the outer circle (your soul) through your flesh. Should you choose to go in this direction and continue in doing so by ignoring the promptings of the Holy Spirit, the real you...the new creation that you are...will barely be seen; if at all.
- The only way for you not to fall into this trap is in the next point.
- **Second point: be transformed by the renewing of your mind**
 - The renewing of your mind involves adjustments in your moral and spiritual vision and thinking to the mind of God. This can only happen as you are reading the Word of God and hearing it in public preaching and teaching. For the Lord Jesus said to His grumbling disciples, "The words I have spoken to you are spirit and life." (John 6:60-63)
 - Romans 12:2 stresses the necessity for the willing response on your part to partake of your true identity and spiritual heritage in the inner circle. For all His precepts are sure and completely worthy of your trust and your time and your attention and focus.
 - God's Word is designed by Him to have a transforming effect on you as you read it and hear it. As you continue on in the meditation of it, faith is birthed and transformation happens. For Christ Himself in His Word will renew your mind in such a way that your vision and values and plans will be governed more and more by the Holy Spirit's revelation to you in that particular eternal truth, rather than by the world's deceptive plans and patterns for your life, all of which are temporal.

Transformation always comes from the inside out:

- As your mind is being renewed through the Word of God, your true identity in the inner circle will be affecting your soul in the outer circle. By faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, you will be living a transformed life before God and others:

manifesting and making apparent on the outside what is already true on the inside. This is real and genuine transparency: others are seeing Christ in you!

- In this way, and only in this way, will you be able to test and prove and affirm that God's will for you is good and acceptable and perfect. As you grow in this knowledge, you will be more quick to say "Yes, Lord" when He asks something of you.

Transformation is your only alternative to being conformed to the world's values. There are no gray areas here and there is no other way. What you must come to understand is that through the values of the world, Satan is actually slandering God's will as being unacceptable and imperfect, just like in the Garden of Eden. It is through the renewing of your mind that you will come to know and embrace God's will for yourself and others as the very highest and best way of life.

Only with the renewing of your mind in God's Word will you be ready as a sojourner for your next step here on earth: obedience. Obedience is the response of a renewed mind in the soul (outer circle) to the will of God in the spirit (inner circle). Be aware as you are sojourning here on earth, you will be running into hindrances. These come from within the outer circle (see diagram on page 14 of syllabus.) Here is what Paul wrote to the children of God in Galatia who had been tugged off course by believing in another gospel...

"You were running well; who hindered you from obeying the truth? This persuasion did not come from Him who calls you. A little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough."
(Galatians 5:7-9)

The question Paul asked: Who hindered you from...

- seeing
- believing
- and acting

...upon truth? Or it could be said like this: "Who broke up the road along which you were traveling so well: who or what is cutting into your progress in the Christian life?"

Now look carefully at the diagram below and you will be able to see more clearly what is going on behind the scenes in Paul's question:

Blindness

2 Peter 1:9
1 John 2:11

Believer does not practice the truth

James 1:22-24
Matthew 7:26-27
1 John 1:6

Lack of Faith

Hebrews 4:2

Drift Passivity

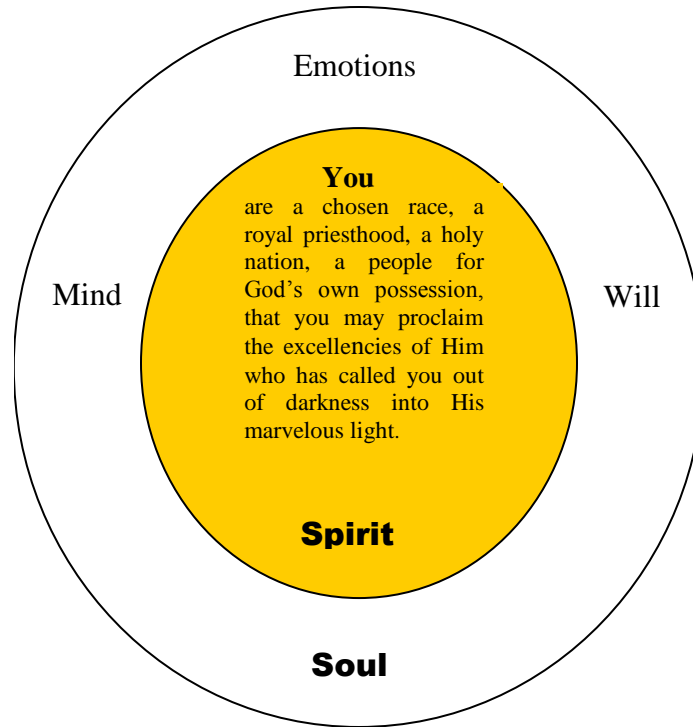
Hebrews 2:1

Prolonged spiritual immaturity

1 Corinthians 3:1-3
Hebrews 5:11-14

Ignored the Light

Ephesians 4:17-19



Enemy instigates doubt

Genesis 3:1

Enemy undoes God's work

Mark 4:15

Lack of correct mindset

Colossians 3:1-4
Romans 8:5-7

Failing to fight

1 Timothy 1:18

Lack of discipline

2 Timothy 2:4

Forgot to remember

2 Peter 1:8-9
James 1:23-24

See the inner circle: your spirit is the higher element as well as the deepest part of your identity. Being the center, it is where your identity in Christ actually is. As you are sojourning, you will be learning to remain positioned here in spirit so that you may actually walk out its reality in your soul.

The outer circle, your soul, is the lower element. Like a cluttered closet, this is where things are out of sorts, and so these things "cut" into your walk of faith and hinder you in your allegiance to your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Be aware that there is a very subtle inter-play between the left side and the right side of the two circles. Watch and see now.

On the left> Blindness is a condition of the eyes in which one walks in darkness. As a chosen race, you and I are children of light. When you do not practice the truth of God's Word or simply choose to ignore the light of it, you will walk in spiritual darkness through unbelief. In time, and left unchecked by you, you will drift into passivity and then into prolonged spiritual immaturity.

On the right> Lack of a correct mindset comes through a lack of discipline either in the reading of the scriptures and/or in the application of them in your life. In such a state of laxity, you fail to stand your ground and fight. Being a forgetful hearer, you forget to remember or do not put into action the truth you already know to be true.

Consider now an overview.

Walking in blindness by -

- **Forgetting:** not remembering that you have been forgiven of your old sins and have been thoroughly and permanently cleansed of them once and for all.
- **Hatred:** an ill will that has lodged itself in your heart towards someone who has hurt you.

Note: Learn to forgive offenses quickly so that your hurt and anger do not turn to resentment and hatred and then to bitterness; this the scriptures clearly warn against.

- **Ignoring the light:** by not reading the truth of God's Word, you can never believe it; and when you are not believing it, you will never start to act on it by faith. You are in a state of dulled spiritual sensitivity and perceptivity.

The lack of spiritual discipline in the diagram is pivotal. It is how prolonged spiritual immaturity sets in, meaning it is beyond the normal time of expected growth; and so it goes on and on. You might say a spiritual paralysis has set in, and thereby you become arrested in your development as God's child. Being dull in your hearing, you have stopped growing in the grace and knowledge of your Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Peter 3:18)

What is Really Going on Behind the Scenes:

- Satan instigates doubts: "Indeed, has God said...?" and a questioning begins that leads you to hesitation and uncertainty about what to do or not to do. Your mind is distracted now and you become anxious. When you leave this unchecked or unchallenged, you will drift away from the truth over time; and that is exactly where your enemy wants you to be!
- Satan is actually working to undermine and undo your walk here with the Lord and His plan for your life. Listen carefully to what your Lord said in the sowing of the word: "...When they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts." (Mark 4:5)
- Often, either through lack of spiritual discipline or of not knowing what to do, we fail to take up our spiritual weapons through the Word of God and resist the intrusion or we forget to call to mind as quickly as possible the truth we know.

*"Since all of this is true, we ought to pay much closer attention than ever to the truths that we have heard, lest in any way we drift past (them) and slip away."
(Hebrews 2:1)*

What to remember now:

- Your true identity in Christ is in your spirit. It's the real you. Here your position is steady and sure, solid like a rock. It never fluctuates or changes. As you learn to remain positioned in truth here you will quite naturally walk after the Spirit.
- You run into trouble in your soul. Like hidden reefs that lie unseen underneath water, there are hindrances here in your soul. These hindrances are lying buried in the soil of your heart and so your soul fluctuates. It is pulled back and forth in the middle of adversity and affliction between the truth of God's Word and what the circumstances are shouting to you through doubt and unbelief.
- God's Word to you is a word of hearing; and this hearing penetrates the soul and generates faith which brings about obedience. Your obedience demonstrates the reality of what you have actually heard and believed in God's Word. Your faith is now in action and in time and with patience will have its finished work.
- Saving faith in Christ has within it the capacity for an obedient life. Now you must stay focused in the truth. The truth will make you free from its beginning inception. When you start to read it, right on through as you continue to reflect on it, and practice it all the way through to its very attainment. The truth now has its very expression through you. (John 8:31-32)

"We think that we have to change the way we act in order to be different. God says, 'No, I have made you different,' and when you believe it, you will automatically change the way you act." From Guilt to Glory by Ray Stedman

Selah!

The Waging War

As we continue on our journey, I would like to direct your attention now to a verse in 1 Peter where he exhorts God's people to remain faithful and to live holy lives in spite of the trying circumstances they were finding themselves in. Peter wanted them to hear what they needed to know.

*"Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims abstain from
fleshly lusts which war against the soul."*

(1 Peter 2:11)

Word definitions that are helpful in bringing more clarity:

- Beg: "to call near" – there's a sense of urgency here because of what is at hand; and as such, it requires immediate attention in the midst of their trial and suffering
- Abstain: to hold oneself from or refrain - to hold oneself off; constantly having no relationship with while remaining distant from it, much like a relative you no longer care to see or have contact with
- Fleshly lusts: sensual impulses and urges called evil desires - the passions of the flesh (the lower nature you had before you were born again) and whatever came naturally to you in your fallen condition before salvation
- War against: to draw up in battle; it's what fleshly lusts do in our lives as new creations in Christ while here on the earth

You can begin to see here in this verse an internal conflict that Peter himself knew to be the waging war. We are going to be coming into a deeper understanding now in this treasure of truth:

- what this waging war is
- and what is fighting against what.

Let's start. In Romans 7:21-23 scripture teaches us that even though we are new creations in Christ there is actually a law, meaning a principle or influence, within our bodily members waging war. By looking at the diagram in the syllabus (pg. 15) you will see what is actually happening in the waging war, as well as where and why it moves with intensity.

When you look at the diagram, you can see that the war wages itself in the mind! In other words, your mind is the battlefield; and therefore as your mind goes, so will go the battle! (James 1:13-15)

Now look at the spirit in the diagram and the bold **I**. The **I** here stands for identity: who you are, where you are going, why you are here. For every new creation, the **I** is in the area of the spirit because it speaks of their true identity in Christ. The position of the **I** also shows every believer where they are to be drawing identity, purpose, and life: it is to be from the resurrection life of Christ within their spirit.

It is especially important to remember here that as new creations in Christ, the position of the **I** never changes. Truth remains constant here. However, there is indeed an intense tug of war that goes on in the soul through the mind as to where that identity is going to be drawn from:

- either from the Lord Himself through the Bible (His Word) and the Holy Spirit both of whom are in perfect union with your spirit
- or from all those many natural resources that are outside of Christ and in the world

What Peter knew: By not knowing that both their identity and purpose in life can only be found in Christ, Christians would soon fall into the temptation to draw from themselves as their own resource rather than from God through His Word and the Holy Spirit. In time, they would slowly loose sight of their true purpose in this earth to glorify Christ; and like a ship loosing sight of its destination, they would be taken off course and become ineffective in their lifetime here through unbelief. That is the war waging around you!

What Paul knew about himself: Now look again at the diagram in your syllabus. Paul wrote for us in Romans 7:22...*“For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man.”* Beyond any shadow of doubt, Paul knew himself to be a new creation in Christ, and so he used the word “inward man” in this scripture. Here he was speaking of:

- his human spirit in union with Christ’s Spirit, and therefore indwelt by His Holy Spirit...
- the new creation in Christ
- who has a new nature wherein the law of God operates
- and who delights in doing God’s will at all times

Yet out of the personal observation of his own life as this new creation, Paul immediately follows this truth with these words: *“But I see another law in my members,*

warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."

Ah, there is the problem! Did you see that? Paul saw that, in spite of his innermost desire to do what was right in God's eyes, there was indeed an internal conflict taking place by another principle operating in his bodily members. What is important to remember is this: "The one point of the passage is that it describes a man who is trying to be good and holy by his own efforts and is beaten back every time by the power of indwelling sin. This is the experience of any man who tries this experiment, whether he be regenerate or unregenerate." (Romans by Donald Barnhouse)

The Holy Spirit then gives even more light on helping us to understand how this conflict is carried on when Paul wrote these words in Galatians 5:17: *"For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish."*

The words here "lusts against" means "sets its desire against." In this war that is waging we see here that the flesh sets its desire against the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit sets His desire against the flesh. Can you sense here the direct opposition that they have towards each other? For much like an arm wrestling match, these two opponents lie opposite one another: the flesh opposing every claim of God on your soul and hindering and impairing every effort of yours to please Him; while the Holy Spirit at the same time is equally insistent within your inner man on righteousness and holy living. It is comforting to know that this waging war is something that all of us experience as new creations in Christ regardless of our personal Adamic history or our maturity in Christ.

What you need to know: Always remember that positionally sin no longer has its power over you, but that it will try to have its influence in your life through the unrenewed places of your thinking.

Can you see that in the diagram in your syllabus?

In the upper right hand corner: the spirit of the new man in Christ (who you really are) wants to live in newness of life and obedience to God; this is because

- his spirit is in perfect union with the Holy Spirit...
- he having been taken out of Adam and placed into Christ;
- no longer in the flesh, he is a regenerate person now with a Divine nature and so is an "in the Spirit" person by nature: always holy, righteous, and blameless before God: he has all the resources of God available to him at all times.
- Jesus said of this person, *"The spirit is ready..."*

In the lower left corner: the power of sin (which indeed has been broken in Christ) is still attempting to have its expression by rebelling against the restraint of the Holy Spirit within, and so it is...

- always vying for attention and fulfillment of its own...
- with all its cravings, evil desires, and wills
- empty of life or anything that is intrinsically or morally good and fulfilling.
- Jesus said then, "...but the flesh is weak."

In the middle of these two opponents is your mind. Do you see that in the diagram? The purpose of each, the flesh and the Spirit, is to stop you from doing what the other moves you to do. The Holy Spirit always prompts you to obedience: "this is the way, walk in it." While the flesh sends you an impulse to sin against God: "go your own way, do your own thing."

Between these two opponents is a choice: one you must make and one in which you learn to exercise faith. The faith you are to exercise can only come in the light of God's Word, and as you remember that you are no longer to live your life ruled by the standards and dictates of your flesh!

Every Christian by nature is an "in the Spirit" person; but they can temporarily walk "after the flesh" by yielding their members to the power of sin. This yielding is done

- through ignorance and unbelief in God's Word;
- by not remembering to practice obedience to God's Word in the midst of the fiery trial or the temptation to sin;
- or by willfully going their own way.

This produces a condition called "flesh." It is at this point that you are no longer walking according to who you truly are in Christ: a new creation wherein the old has passed away and **behold** all things are new!

God's wisdom in all of this: You are being personally trained by God your Father and are growing up into His Son's righteousness and holiness as you are practicing obedience to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. In the waging war, you will learn more and more to yield your members to the Holy Spirit rather than to the dictates and impulses of your own flesh. In this way, you are being brought into a fruitful life of holy living.

Solomon's Search

As we come into this teaching, we will be gaining even more understanding about “The Waging War” by learning from one man’s search for:

- life
- identity
- and purpose

...but all apart from God.

This is the true story of Solomon, a son of King David. It is his story of how he tried to discover for himself value and meaning in his life apart from God, meeting his own needs through his own strength and resources.

Let’s visit for a moment now Solomon’s personal story of life in the wilderness from Ecclesiastes 2:1-11.

In Solomon’s search for significance, he actually did become a self-made man, meaning that he actually accumulated for himself and had in his own possession anything and everything he wanted:

- houses
- vineyards
- gardens and orchards
- all kinds of fruit trees
- pools of water for their care
- servants – both bought and house-born
- herds and flocks
- silver and gold
- and musical instruments

In his search for what matters most in life, Solomon had denied himself absolutely nothing:

- whatever his eyes desired, he did not keep from himself
- neither did he withhold his heart from any kind of pleasure

Solomon lived a good part of his life at this particular time without any restraints on himself. Sadly enough, it was only at the end of his searching that Solomon then looked

at everything his own hands had acquired, and discovered what it had accomplished for him: absolutely NOTHING!

Like trying to grasp wind in his hands, Solomon discovered that he was empty handed: all his efforts had been futile and worthless for they had produced nothing of any real value. His life instead was actually barren. It was non-productive and empty; you might say a wasteland. All the things he had acquired were mere vanity. Much like being all dressed up in front of a mirror, these things had been made up to him to be something they could not deliver. What Solomon understood after his search, was that in spite of all his riches here on earth, he was bankrupt before God. There was nothing of any real value or eternal worth in what he had gained for himself on earth.

Knowing this Solomon wrote these words at the end of his search so others could know for themselves what he had learned:

"Then I looked on all the works that my hands had done and on the labor in which I had toiled and indeed all was vanity and grasping for the wind. There was no profit under the sun." (Ecclesiastes 2:11)

Like Solomon, you and I have these same fleshly tendencies to seek purpose and value in our lives through worldly avenues of identity and security and pleasure and comfort. It can be done through such things as careers, friends, wealth, children, clothes, entertainment, education and, yes, even ministry itself.

Note: There is nothing intrinsically wrong with any of these. It's the motive of your heart in the seeking and acquiring of them that will determine whether it's right or wrong in God's eyes.

As we start to move more deeply into this treasure of truth, what we want to remember here is that all believers in Christ have been sanctified in Him: meaning that as a new creation, they have already been separated out from sin and set apart to God and seated in heavenly places in Christ. That is the truth and the reality of who and where each one is. (1 Corinthians 1:2; Ephesians 2:4-6)

Now look at the diagram on page 16 of the syllabus. You are looking at three concentric circles along with what appear to be "holes" in the outer two circles. This picture of a new creation in Christ is actually representative of why our soul and body are in need of transformation. Transformation is much like gardening in which there is a process of pulling weeds. For us as believers, transformation is the rooting out of worldly thinking and fleshly behavior patterns that have become deeply imbedded and entrenched in the soil of our hearts.

In this diagram, the holes represent vacuums. Vacuums are empty spaces that are waiting to be filled with something. In spite of any self-attempts at filling them, these

vacuums do indeed remain empty. They remain empty because they have not yet been filled with the One who *truly* satisfies. (John 4:13-14)

It's also important for us to remember here that all these empty spaces are in neutral. That means that each one of these vacuums can move towards one of two directions: towards the Lord Jesus Himself...or away from Him. As long as the vacuums remain empty of Him who *truly* satisfies, they conflict with their real identity as a new creation in Christ.

Now look more closely at the diagram again. You can see now that the spirit of the new creation in Christ is obscured by these empty vacuums that are not yet filled with the resurrection life of Christ. Thus they continue to crowd around the spirit. (1 Corinthians 3:1-4)

So the question is: how can these vacuums be filled?

The first thing you must know is that there is a choice you must make. You can choose one of two things:

- you can give the right of way to the Holy Spirit by spending daily quality time in the scriptures with the Lord; and as you do that, you allow Him to fill these empty spaces with what He knows is best for you
- or you can give into your flesh by not coming to the Lord in the scriptures; and then either through ignorance or your own self-will, you rush out in front of Him like Solomon did, making your own decisions and your own attempts at filling the vacuums

With the first choice: over time, you will come to reap and enjoy eternal life within your soul and body in its fullest measure.

With the other: over time, you will discover like Solomon that they are still empty and that you, like Solomon, are empty handed before God. (Galatians 6:7-8)

As you ponder the diagram and the ramifications here, the question may arise in your own heart now as to how you can avoid becoming futile in your own thinking and behaving like someone who is striving after the wind.

In simplicity, as a new creation in Christ you must learn ever increasingly to walk after the Spirit according to truth. Truth can only be found in one place: that place is in the Bible. Only as you open your Bible and begin to read and genuinely reflect on the truth set before your eyes, will it begin to make a lasting impression in and upon your soul. The apostle Paul said it like this: "...and be renewed in the spirit of your mind..." (Ephesians 4:22-23)

It is through the ministry of the Holy Spirit as you are reading and reflecting on God's Word, that you will then discover and access the grace you have need of for obedience to His Word. As you act on it in faith, in time you will reap a harvest of righteousness in your soul having progressively experienced transformation into the very image of Christ. It is as the spirit of your mind is being renewed with the Word of God that you will be putting off your old manner of living while at the same time putting on the new man in Christ. In this way, and only in this way, can these vacuums in your soul and body be filled with Christ Himself; for He is the only One who *truly* satisfies you His new creation!

As I bring to a close this particular treasure of truth, there is a very important question you must ask yourself in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ, much like the one He asked Adam: "Where are you?"

Like Solomon, are you looking for ways or things or persons to satisfy your own needs and desires in your soul or physical body with things other than the Lord and what He has in mind for you?

Let the Holy Spirit search your heart now and answer that question for you. As you quiet yourself before Him, He will pinpoint for you any secret sin that is presently hidden from your eyes and blocking these vacuums from being filled. At that moment, you may genuinely surrender to Him through a godly repentance, and He then will come into that place and begin to take up for you on your behalf. Now you can draw upon the Lord for that particular need...vacuum...to be met and filled by Him!

Now listen closely to Solomon's conclusion for your only hope in being fully satisfied as a new creation in Christ as you are sojourning here on the earth.

"The end of the matter is, Fear God - know that He is and revere and worship Him - and keep His commandments; for this is the whole of man (the full original purpose of his creation, the object of God's providence, the root of character, the foundation of all happiness, the adjustment to all inharmonious circumstances and conditions under the sun) and the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it is good or evil." (Ecclesiastes 12: 13-14 AMP)

SELAH...take the time now to quietly reflect in the Scriptures on this truth and then how and where it may apply to you.

The Cross of Christ

In God's eternal mind, His remedy for sin has always been and ever will be the Cross of His Son Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God. (Revelation 13:8; John 1:29) It is because of the shed blood of Christ on the cross that it has never lost its power to save...and never will.

1 Corinthians 1:18 helps us to understand why this is so. For the message of the Cross – the preaching of Christ crucified – is foolishness only to those who are perishing in their sins and are on the path of destruction. However, to those who have been born of the Spirit and are alive in Christ Jesus, the Cross of Christ is the power of God: the manifestation of His continuous active power. (Romans 1:16)

An understanding of what happened on the Cross is paramount to a Christian's walk. Jesus Christ suffered the punishment for your sins as He hung on the Cross for you. By His obedience unto death--this shameful death of a cross--He rendered the devil, who had the power of death, powerless and inoperative. In this way, the Lord made it possible for us who were slaves to sin, through fear of death, to be completely set free from its power. At the moment of conversion, when you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, the power of His Cross manifests in your life. The ruling power of sin to condemn you is permanently and completely broken, much like when there is a power outage due to a short circuit.

Now that God's remedy is in place for you, you may be wondering "Why then do I still sin?" What we are about to discover in this next treasure of truth is that the Cross of Christ is not only the Father's answer for sin, but also His way to resolve the conflict of the waging war for every one of His children.

Romans 6 alerts us to a reckoning that counts: one that makes the difference, and one that breaks the hold sin had on us before we were saved. This reckoning breaks the hold of sin as we rely upon (take into account and count on) the truth of the Cross of Christ and a new view of ourselves: one that is true because we are now in Christ as new creations. We will only be able to reckon upon this view of ourselves through the renewing of our minds with the Word of God.

Now we can look at the diagram on page 15 in the syllabus, remembering that...

- the **I** in the diagram represents identity and meaning, and that the position of the **I** shows you the source from which you are to draw your identity, life, and purpose as a new creation in Christ;
- from the waging war, the tug of war is taking place in your mind, and this is why your mind must be renewed with God's Word so you can see who God is and who you are in Him

- although the power of sin desires to influence you in such a way as to have its expression through your body, it has in fact been truly deprived of its power in you as a new creation in Christ.

Note: You can see right here the importance of the renewing of your mind. It is only when you count on the truth, through the renewing of your mind, that you will experience what has already taken place on the Cross. It will manifest in you by the Holy Spirit bearing witness to that truth.

Notice the cross in the diagram and its placing: your spirit, soul, and body are behind it, and it stands between your soul and body as well. Because of the blood of Christ that has been shed on the Cross, like a giant red stop sign it is saying “I’m dead to the ruling power of sin.”

Christ took your place on the Cross and suffered the wages of sin, which is death. He did that for you so that in Him your old man would be put to death in the likeness of His death, and that your new man would then be raised up into newness of life in the likeness of His resurrection life. Now you can live for God. This is the power of Christ crucified and the message of His Cross! It manifested on your behalf because of the sacrificial shedding of the Lord’s blood on the Cross. This finished work of the Cross was applied or credited to you when you believed on Him.

His Cross says to you that:

- your deliverance from the ruling power of sin has been accomplished and secured by your union with Him in His death, burial, and resurrection,
- and you have been healed from the defeat of sin (1 Peter 2:24)

*Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature;
old things have passed away; behold, all things are new.
(2 Corinthians 5:17)*

This is reality for everyone who has put their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ through His finished work of atonement on the Cross. This is the truth, and now the reckoning that counts for every believer...

- the old has passed away: you are now indeed dead to sin
- all things are new: you are alive to God forever

Now as God the Father’s very own child you must learn ever more increasingly that your temptations to sin are not who you are. In other words, they are not your identity.

In light of this, you are not to identify with them. An example of this would be to think or to say, "I gave into [], and therefore I am a []."

You must learn instead to reckon on the truth that what God says to be true about you is in fact true. When you do this, your struggle with sin's influence will begin to diminish and eventually stop, for it is the reckoning on your new self-image in Christ that delivers you. When you begin to think of yourself as God sees you, you can then draw upon the Holy Spirit within you and say 'No' to the temptation of any sin.

Listen carefully to these words from Ray Stedman in his book From Guilt to Glory:

"We think that we have to change the way we act in order to be different; God says, 'No I have made you different, and when you believe it you automatically change the way you act.' "

That makes sense doesn't it? The key here is "when you believe it." Faith is much like having an automatic transmission in a car instead of a standard one where you have to work at driving the car. You may be wondering now where that kind of faith comes from. Only through the renewing of your mind with the Word of God: for faith comes from hearing, and that kind of hearing comes directly and only from His Word.

This renewing of your mind involves both the digesting and the assimilating of the Word of God. The reading of the Bible for information will never make you strong in the Lord or renew your mind. It is only through your contemplative reflection upon the truth you read that allows it to penetrate more deeply into the very core of your being, and thus become a part of you. Now it is hidden in your heart! (Psalm 119:11; John 8:32)

Only with a renewed mind will you be able to stand upon the truth. You will then begin to see that your new life in Christ is not to be a constant struggle, but rather a constant victory! The way to that victory is from the stance that comes to you only with a renewed mind in your union with Christ in His death, burial, resurrection and ascension. Through this union you are now presently seated in the heavenly places with Christ. It is from this position you are to deal with any and all temptations to sin.

Through the renewing of your mind comes the reckoning that counts. Remember then, this is the way to the believer's victory: the truth of your union in Jesus Christ's death and burial, His bodily resurrection and subsequent ascension to the throne of God His Father. He is Lord!

Look at pages 22-24 in the syllabus. Here you see other truths you can stand on whenever you find yourself in a conflict between spirit and flesh. For the renewing of your mind let's go deeper in some of them now.

Cleansed by His Blood: The Cross of Christ speaks of Christ crucified, and there the active power of God manifests because of the blood of His Son Jesus Christ that was shed on it. *"...for without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness..."* (Hebrews 9:22)

The Cross of Christ is the work of God to bring about a very real and living cleansing from sin for anyone who has believed and surrendered their lives to Him. The effectiveness of the cleansing power of the shed blood of Christ on the Cross then reaches into the past, the present, and the future for every believer who believed while...

- thoroughly cleansing you from your past: for only the shed blood of Christ can remove the penalty of sin (death) once and for all. *"...to Him who loves us and washed us from our sins by His blood..."* (Revelation 1:5) Washed here means to bathe the whole person by plunging. Through this "plunging" in Christ's shed blood, you were immediately released from sin and its penalty once and for all: every sin having been remitted on His Cross. Since you are now no longer a slave to sin or a sinner by nature...**there is no need for guilt of any kind.**
- continually empowering you for the present: for the shed blood of Christ removes the power of sin as well. As God's new creation in Christ, the Holy Spirit instructs every believer how they are to speak about the Cross. *"I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me..."* (Galatians 2:20) Empowered now to live your life in intimate union with your Lord in His death, resurrection, and ascension sin no longer has any kind of control over you...**so you do not need to yield to it in any way.**
- and richly promising you a future: in the new heavens and the new earth and the ages that will follow...the blood of Christ will have removed any residual effects of sin... *"God will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be anguish of soul – sorrow and mourning – nor grief nor pain any more; for the old conditions and the former order of things have passed away."* (Revelation 21:4 AMP) This is the glorious hope of the believer...**there is so much to look forward to!**

The message of Christ's Cross: remember here the active manifestation of God's power in your life, having been joined to Christ and identified with Him in the crucifixion of your old man. With your new man raised up now in His resurrection life you are enabled to walk in newness of life because...

- **you have been freed from judgment:** having been justified from sin and now being in Christ, you are complete in your identification with Him. God your Father no longer has any judgment against you as a sinner: there is no condemnation for you now; you are free from the law of sin and death

- **you have been freed from the Law**: now dead to sin in Christ, sin having been deprived of its ruling power, you are united in spirit with Him and the Holy Spirit. You are set free from obeying the Law as a way of life, as a way of gaining God's favor through your own self-efforts, your own strength, or your own attempts to please Him. You are dead now to that system of "trying" which is the arm of the flesh. For you already have His acceptance and approval through His grace! It is the very presence of the Holy Spirit in you who brought you into the kingdom of Christ and you are now under His grace. You can draw on this grace for obedience to your heavenly Father: for where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty to walk in newness of life.

Do you see now that in Christ you have indeed been well-suited by God your heavenly Father for your sojourning here on earth? Having been delivered from the power of death and translated into the kingdom of His beloved Son, you are now complete in Christ. You are God's very own child, a heavenly citizen, and united with Christ the Son in both a heavenly relationship and a heavenly position for all eternity!

In closing this teaching on "The Cross of Christ," always remember Jesus' words on the Cross: "***It is finished.***"

"This was not the despairing cry of a helpless martyr. It was not an expression of satisfaction that the end of His sufferings was now reached. It was not the last gasp of a worn out life. No, it was the declaration on the part of the Divine Redeemer that all for which He came from heaven to earth to do, was now done; that all which was needful to reveal the glorious character of God had now been accomplished; that everything necessary for the putting away of the sins of His people, providing them a perfect standing before God, securing for them an eternal inheritance and fitting them for it, had been done." (The Gospel of John by Arthur W. Pink)

It is finished!

Our New Identity

In this treasure of truth, we will be coming into more of an understanding of

- the Cross of Christ and your union with Him through it
- and of your relationship and commitment to Him as Lord.

Here you will identify...pinpoint...your new identity in Christ and what it actually means for you.

Let's begin now with this thought: In the Old Testament the Jordan River often gives us a picture in the New Testament of the beginning of a deeper union of the believer's heart with Christ in His death.

In order to understand what that means and how it applies to anyone who is a new creation in Christ, imagine with me now the children of Israel who...

- having been driven out of Egypt from under Pharaoh's rule, and having crossed the Nile River,
- they then wandered aimlessly in the wilderness for 40 years because of their unbelief and disobedience to God.
- When that generation died off, the next generation was raised up by the Lord to go in and possess the land promised by Him to their forefathers.
- Now facing the Jordan River, they were ready to step into its waters at flood stage by faith alone...

with what they knew to be true in their hearts: *"How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?"* (Romans 6:2) In this same way, the truth of this scripture is where all true Christian life in Christ begins experientially!

Let's consider what all this means practically to those of us who have been washed in the blood of Christ and are now new creations in Him. Like a key that unlocks a door for you -

identification with Christ begins first with understanding your own death and burial and resurrection in Christ.

As we begin to have a closer look, an understanding of the word "union" will be helpful. In the Old Testament, it means to be one through joining, i.e. united or planted together in such a way that two actually become one in the sense of being inseparable. An example of this kind of uniting is what happens when you tightly intertwine two pieces of rope together into one piece.

In the same way, your union in Christ remains forever inseparable. His life is in you and your life is in Him. This union is exactly what God the Father saw from before the foundations of the earth and down through all the ages and corridors of time. For in His mind whatever would be true of His Son the Lord Jesus Christ would be true of those also who put their faith into Him. Remembering that, let's look at the Cross on page 20 of the syllabus.

Listen carefully now. Christ's finished work on the Cross over 2000 years ago actually happened in you when you first believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. It manifested because in that moment of faith you were inseparably united with Him in spirit; and in that very moment you shared with Him in His death, burial, and resurrection.

- United with Him in His death: you shared in His death, you experienced in likeness the death that He died to sin. Through His death, the old you died and was buried into His death; thus sin lost its ruling power in your life
- United with Him also in His resurrection: having been buried into death, you then shared in His resurrection. His Divine life was imparted to you. The new man arose victorious from the grave of death alive forever more!

The Cross is the death that begins new life for you.

This truth Jesus knew when He said to Thomas in the gospel of John, "I am the way, the truth, and the life, no one comes to the Father except by Me." (John 14:6)

Listen again to what your union with Christ really means. Having been planted together in the likeness of His death on the Cross of Calvary, the ruling power of sin has been broken in your life forever! Therefore, you no longer have to sin. Having also been planted together in the likeness of the Lord's very own resurrection from the dead, His resurrection life now flows within your spirit. You have the power to walk in the newness of eternal life, a life that is now well-pleasing to your heavenly Father.

Your new identity in Christ: being dead indeed to sin, you are alive to God! Through Christ's crucifixion, burial, and resurrection, you have died a death to sin and have been made alive and victorious in the Spirit. By the presence and power of the Holy Spirit within your spirit, you are free now to walk in your true identity here in Christ and live for the glory of God.

"When Christ calls a man He bids him come and die..."

The Cost of Discipleship by Dietrich Bonhoeffer

On page 20 of your syllabus you can see that Christ's Cross supports two grand truths from the Bible that speak of this union with Him in His death, burial, and resurrection.

On the left: *"Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin."* (Romans 6:6-7) On the left side of the Cross, the old man, a slave to sin, is dominated and controlled by the sin nature. Through the Cross of Christ, that old man has been permanently done away with, for Jesus Christ has already defeated it on the Cross. In Christ, therefore, you no longer have a relationship with sin.

On the right: *"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me."* (Galatians 2:20) On the right side of the Cross, there is the new man alive now from the dead. Having been translated by the Holy Spirit to another realm, the kingdom of God's very own Son, he is free from the ruling power of sin and is alive forever to God. It is from here that he is to live his new life in Christ as a son of God and a servant of righteousness.

Contemplate this thought from Ronald Barnhouse's commentary on the book of Romans. **"The birth of a child does not make him grow, rather it places him in an atmosphere where he may grow."** The apostle Paul said the same thing to us when he asked this question in his letter to the Roman church: *"How can we who died to sin live any longer in it?"*

Do you understand now your identification with Christ? He has indeed given you a new identity: one that not only defines the new you, but also gives you the legal right to walk in that identity while here on earth and throughout all eternity!

In the Old Testament, the Jordan River typified a deeper walk by faith with the Lord. For someone in Christ it typifies a deeper union of their heart with Christ in His death on the Cross. This union must happen at every new juncture in your walk with the Lord: for only in that deeper union of death can there be a major cessation of the activities of your flesh!

In the language of faith, John the Baptist expressed this same truth for us with these words: *"He must increase, but I must decrease."* (John 3:30.) It's that simple: the more Christ increases before you, the more you will decrease in giving place to fleshly expressions. For truly, it is no longer you who live, but it is Christ who is lives in you!

When the Holy Spirit illuminates this truth to you in a new way: bringing you into a fresh and fuller understanding of your union with Christ in His death and resurrection and your true identity in Him, **at this juncture** you will experientially find yourself denying the self-life more deeply by walking in the light of this your new identity in Christ: dead to sin indeed...but alive to God!

Dying to Live

Much like a tapestry in which threads of various colors are pulled together to make up the whole, this treasure of truth will be pulling truths together from the past two teachings into this truth: "Dying to Live: Becoming What God Intended Us To Be."

Let's begin this study with a thought from one of Zac Poonen's writings entitled The Cross Separates. "On the hill of Calvary, in the hour when Jesus was crucified, two thieves, condemned with Him, hung on either side, with Jesus in the middle. For the hour of their suffering they were thus separated, if only physically, by the cross of Jesus. In the outcome they were eternally separated, one to perdition and the other to be with Him forever. This is a picture of what the cross of Jesus always does. It separates men who choose the light from men who choose the darkness. Yes, it separates."

The Lord Jesus also understood the reality of these words and their principle long before He was crucified on a cross. What He understood first and foremost was that the Cross of Calvary, as an instrument of death, would be the way to His glorification and His enthronement in His Father's glory as the Son of Man. He knew this principle not only for Himself, but for anyone who would follow Him as His disciple... anyone desiring to be in union with Him and become like Him. In other words, one who would be going in the same direction He was going.

Therefore, the Lord said these words to two of His disciples who came to Him and wanted to know if it was permissible and possible for Greeks to follow Him too, as His disciples:

*"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies it produces much grain."
(John 12:24)*

"It remains alone": one mere grain, all by itself, isolated and alone; and although alive within, in this state it never becomes more than itself...never more than what it already is.

Jesus then continued in His answer with these words "but if it dies." These words indicate what must happen, as well as a decision that must be made. For in the ground it will enter into a process of death. Just like the hinge on a door that makes it possible for it to open, so the process of death is pivotal for this single grain of wheat to "produce much grain" in the end. There will now be other grains of wheat just like itself!

As the Creator of all things, Jesus knew perfectly well this life of a seed when He spoke these words to His disciples. For only when the seed is sown into the ground is its protective covering broken down by the soil which then allows water to penetrate and

release the life inside to become what the seed is in fact designed to be...a full head of grain.

Jesus' word picture here of dying to live is actually what every new creation enters into at the moment of their new birth. It is the Holy Spirit's ministry of sanctification: a process in which He will begin to break down the outer shell of self-protection around the resurrection life of Christ within their spirit. This work of the Holy Spirit releases and imparts more of that very life of Christ into their soul in such a way that they will become, and continue to be fruitful in their lives here on earth.

For the holy character of God cannot be transferred to any believer or imputed to their account. Instead, it is an individual possession and is built up over time through the Holy Spirit's power and each one's obedience to God's Word as their minds are being renewed in Christ.

In looking at the diagram on page 21 of the syllabus, you will be able to have a much better understanding of the power of dying to live. Here we see that every child of God may become in practice what God has intended all along: a living epistle of Christ who is easily read by all, one in whom Jesus Christ is clearly seen.

Now let's look more closely at that process:

What you see on the left:

I. the big circle: the Lord Jesus Christ Himself being the Golden Grain of Wheat...the Risen and Glorified One; with all the other golden grains of wheat on the inside of that circle being those who are born of the Holy Spirit, each one having been:

- cleansed free of sin with His sprinkled blood
- sealed in Him now with the Holy Spirit of promise
- His resurrection life and power operative within their spirit
- to be glorified with Him

II. outside of the big circle: zones of comfort that are patterns of fleshly thinking and behaving, familiar to us because we have been accustomed to functioning by them...each one though is an outer layer of self-protection that blocks the flow of the resurrection life of Christ into their soul. These comfort zones are in fact hindrances which are promoting:

- lukewarm lifestyles
- favorable surroundings
- coziness
- pleasures

Note: Hindrances are anything that stand in the way of the goal and thereby block progress towards it.

III. inside the big circle: believers in Christ Jesus who are little golden grains of wheat...their goal by nature now is the resurrection life of Christ within them waiting to be released ever more increasingly into their soul that they might indeed attain to the resurrection from the dead and glorify God their Father in their physical bodies.

With a closer look, you will see that each one of these little golden grains of wheat is insulated by its own individual comfort zones called flesh patterns. In that particular zone they are only mildly warm to the Lord to some degree or another. They are behaving like a soldier in uniform who is "off duty". Having relaxed their vigilance, they are now in a state of ease. To say it another way, they have come to a place of growth, but are not growing beyond that particular comfort zone. They are, in fact, in a state of resistance to change to that fleshly comfort. For the flesh never wants to die, and it cannot be dealt with effectively any other way than the Cross!

IV. the wilderness: the futility of doing things in their own strength can be seen at the bottom of the circle and to the left of the Cross. Simply put, the wilderness experience is doing things in your own strength, in your own ways, and through your own resources. Like a car running out of gas, the futility is easy to see when you finally realize you have no strength of your own to get the job done. In the end, this futility is ineffective and hopeless for it has produced nothing beneficial or useful. It is not only non-productive, but also counter productive from an eternal viewpoint!

What happens next: By His Spirit, Jesus begins to knock on the door of your heart through scriptures in the Bible and pressing circumstances. In effect, He is saying to you in this your wilderness experience: "Come out of your lukewarmness!"

*Because you say, I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing;
and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked.
(Revelation 3:17)*

The Lord's kindness here is that He is bringing each one of these golden grains of wheat into a genuine, deep repentance of their sin in each fleshly comfort zone. For what the Lord knows is that any zone of comfort is not just a hindrance to His goal for each one of them, but also a deception. These comfort zones have no desire, capacity, or ability to reproduce His resurrection life within their spirit out into their soul!

What must happen: an absolute surrender to God the Father's desire, capacity, and ability to reproduce the life of His Son in them with a heart felt response of:

- "Yes...Lord, I see that fleshly comfort zone now"
- "Yes...it's hindering You from being glorified through my life"

- “Yes...I’m releasing it to You now so that You may have the right of way”
- “Yes...Father, I ask You to forgive me for my sin of self-preservation in this matter,” and
- “Yes...Lord, You can have complete ownership and control of it now.”

This is Lordship. The Holy Spirit is free to begin His work of bringing you into the death of that particular zone of fleshly comfort. This is what you see on page 3 from the inner circle to the Cross. He is separating out from you those things that are at enmity with Christ’s life within you: those things that are holding up progress and have been hindering Him from bringing a fuller expression of the Lord’s resurrection life through you!

What you see on the right: The Cross in the picture here is pivotal. Pivot means to place under the control of a determining factor. It is at this very juncture of surrender, by increasing insight into what the Cross really means, you then choose it as an instrument of death to your flesh. As you, by faith, hold fast to the revelation of the Cross, the power of the resurrection life takes you up and holds you fast. Thus, you may indeed live as one who has been crucified! (Galatians 2:20) Knowing this: that your old man was crucified with Christ on that Cross, and that it is no longer you who lives. It is Christ who lives in you! For in Him you are indeed dead to sin, but alive to God. You are free now to walk each moment in a deeper consciousness of that truth.

The revelation of the Cross held to this particular fleshly comfort zone is the truth in action. With the continual renewing of your mind in this area and the help of the Holy Spirit, you start to walk according to truth. Thus, you are going in the opposite direction...away from that fleshly comfort zone. In this way, the outer shell of self-protection and control breaks down; and you are actually being transformed from faith to faith and from glory to glory into the image of Christ!

Discipleship is costly: death to any fleshly comfort zone always involves suffering...for transformation is very costly. Jesus said to His disciples,

*“If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself
and take up his cross and follow Me.”
(John 12:24-25)*

Listen now to the words of Darby about what that suffering is. “...the Savior spoke of His whole life as one unbroken experience of trial! How real and deep His ‘sufferings’ were, many of the Messianic Psalms reveal. The very fact that He *suffered* when ‘tempted’ manifests His uniqueness. He suffered, never yielded. We do not suffer when we yield to temptation: the flesh takes pleasure in the things by which it is tempted. Jesus suffered, being tempted.”

He suffered because He never for a moment yielded or gave in to that temptation: that was His suffering. This He did, and this we must do.

For the one who loves his life, meaning the life of his soul by having a “phileo” friendship with it, is in a danger zone. A phileo friendship means being user friendly with that comfort zone: it is easy to get along with. When left unchecked, you will lose the true life of your soul at this juncture; and in the end, you will find it empty of anything of eternal life and value. However, the one who hates his soul life in this world, who has a strong aversion for its self-centeredness to the point of disregarding it, will in fact keep it for eternal life. Here they enter into an abundance of resurrection life on earth as well as in heaven.

This is what you see on the other side of the Cross for one such golden grain of wheat:

- resurrection life is indeed flourishing
- 30, 60, or even a 100 fold
- this one golden grain of wheat is bearing fruit
- and it is saying, “I’m of my own kind: I’m reproducing after Christ’s image. I’m His offspring, He indeed being the Golden Grain of Wheat in me.”

As the Lord of the harvest, what Jesus knows to be true about each grain of wheat in Him is that all have the same potential and all have the same destiny...because of His resurrection life within each one of them. This means that the potential for every golden grain of wheat is 100 fold! He also knows though, that the difference here on earth will be the degree in which the outer shell of self-protection is broken down in each golden grain of wheat.

In Christ, there is for each golden grain of wheat a continual call...in fact a continual knocking...to come up higher in Him. That, my dear one in Christ, will depend entirely upon your response to whenever He knocks on the door of your heart regarding a fleshly comfort zone, and says to you: “Come out of your lukewarmness.” Your response at this point depends upon your availability to the Holy Spirit to hear and say “Yes” to that knocking...and surrender to it. As you co-operate with Him, He will then take you through a process of dying to live. This is the way of the Cross. The deeper union of your soul with Christ in His death now releases His resurrection life into your soul. This is the only way through which you may indeed become what your heavenly Father has intended: a golden grain of wheat that is reproducing after its own kind.

*“For it is God who is at work in you both to will and do of His good pleasure.”
(Philippians 2:13)*

His pleasure in you is 100 fold!

Life in the Heavens

This treasure of truth, called “Life in the Heavens,” will bring you into an understanding of the consecration of the new man. The Holy Spirit Himself will be increasingly illuminating more understanding to you. Through His personal ministry, your heart will be receiving the brightness of confident expectation, called hope, as the wealth of God’s investment in you is more fully understood...

- of the exceeding greatness of God’s power towards us who believe,
- and of our glorious new standing in Christ as a new creation.

Consider these words for a moment from The Tabernacle, the Priesthood, and the Offerings by Henry Soltau. “From the ruin, degradation, and death entailed on him by the Fall, the sinner is raised into a standing of perfection, glory, and life, to be a king and a priest, to go no more out, to be an heir of God, and joint-heir in Christ.”

As we have learned in “Our New Identity,” a Christian’s new identity comes from their union with Christ in His...

- death
- burial
- bodily resurrection, and

...as we are going to see now, in His ascension.

The word ascension here is referring to the *bodily* lifting up of the Lord Jesus Christ from the earthly to the heavenly. It was His entrance back into the Divine Glory: the very One who descended *from* heaven ascended *to* heaven!

Ephesians 1:19 tells us that His ascension was according to the working of God’s mighty power: “...*which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.*”

Not only is this true for the Lord, but for all who would believe on His Son. For this is what God had in His eternal mind: that in the same measure and to the same degree, He would do the same for us according to the working of His mighty power in Christ.

Ephesians 2:5-6 clearly tells us this, that God *"...even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus."*

For at this very moment in Christ:

- ❶ when Christ died, the old man (the natural man) died;
- ❷ when Christ was buried, the old man was buried;
- ❸ and when Christ was raised up out of the grave in newness of life, the new man was raised up with Him...and *at the same moment*, was also seated with Him in the heavenly places.

What we see here is that what God the Father did for His Son He does for every new creation in Christ. In spirit there is a shift, meaning there is a complete change in the realm in which you live. You are now seated in the heavenlies in spirit...the truth from which you are now to live.

Such union with Christ in His ascension actually points out

- the absolute completeness of your salvation in Him,
- and the loftiness of your new standing before God both presently and for all eternity.

This is the high privilege of your calling, and the marvel and miracle of this new life for you which is all from God!

The word "seated" is the state of being installed, meaning

- to put in a position
- to settle in a condition

For those who are born of the Holy Spirit, it specifically means that they have been instated into God's favor with

- dignity restored
- status conferred
- and all spiritual blessings given to them.

This seated position is where life on earth is lived for the new man in Christ. This is reality in Christ, and it is how much God's power has influenced your life, and how truly transformed each one of us is in Christ Jesus. For we have been seated together in Christ for an eternal purpose.

This is God's wisdom in Christ. For even before the foundations of the world, this place of partnership is what God the Father had in mind for us all along. For in spirit, the new man is to share in Christ's present life and rule at His right hand in the present work of His kingdom power here on earth...as well as in the ages to come. (John 14:12; Matthew 25:34)

Like Elisha's servant whose eyes needed to be opened by God to see into another realm, the Holy Spirit used these words "heavenly places" to point out that there is indeed another realm: a sphere of spiritual action and activity that surrounds our present daily lives and circumstances here on the earth...an invisible spiritual realm not seen by the natural eye.

The reality here in Christ is that you are presently enthroned in spirit with Him in these heavenly places, far above all angelic principality and power and might and dominion. For as a newly created child of the Father, you have been enthroned in spirit with your risen and ascended Lord in the heavenlies--at the same time the Lord, by His Spirit, is indwelling you here on earth.

This is the glorious and endless position in which every believer has been placed, whether he is aware of it or not. The Christian who comes to see his enthroned position of being seated with the Lord Jesus Christ, begins to experience (meaning he begins to partake of personally and thereby participates in) the benefit of all he already is in Christ. The source of his daily mindset is this eternal standing before God Himself. For the Lord Jesus said, *"In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you."* (John 14:20)

It will be through your union and your identification with Christ in His...

- death
- burial
- resurrection
- and ascension

...that you will also perceive and experience the true meaning of consecration. For the Lord Jesus said, *"Where I am, there My servant will also be."* (John 12:26)

For your new man is already consecrated, having been set apart in Christ to God for service. (Ephesians 2:10)

- Like a good soldier who is in uniform and at attention, reporting for duty, he answers his commanding officer with these words, “Yes, sir!”
- Or like the young boy Samuel who, hearing the Lord call him, responded immediately with, “Speak Lord, for your servant is listening.”

As alive from the dead and seated in the heavenlies, you are to present yourself to God in the same manner.

It is as each one of us understands more fully who we truly are in Christ that we are able, from our seated position of completeness in Christ, to consecrate (set apart) the new man to God our Father for service. For he is already in right standing with God, and only the new man is capable of serving God in a way that is acceptable to Him.

This is something we will come into a better understanding of in our next truth, called “Quench Not, Grieve Not the Holy Spirit.”

Now we are ready to look at the diagram on page 27 in our syllabus. What you are looking at here is one unit made up of three parts. We will initially be looking at it from the inside out: moving from the spirit out to the soul, and then out to the body.

On the immediate right you see your innermost part: your human spirit in union with the Holy Spirit (the Spirit of Christ) joined as one. This is the new man in Christ, the inward man who always delights in God’s Word and in doing His will. This is what Paul knew to be true about himself, and about everyone who is born of God’s Spirit, and why he wrote these words in Romans 7:22: *“For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man.”*

On the left you see what’s on the outside of the new man. First on the upper left, you see the soul made up of the mind, will, and emotions; and then on the lower left the physical body, which is an “earthen vessel.”

Now when you look at the diagram, imagine looking at a car with

- a framework > the body
- a seat > the soul
- and a driver > the new man.

Whenever the new man is prompted by the Holy Spirit, and the soul remains in a place of submission - then and only then, can he bring an expression to that specific prompting. There can now be a manifestation of the resurrection life of Christ within him through his physical body into the earth. This is how the new man is to live. This is God's original design of man.

Now we come to the Cross in the picture. The Cross tells us that there is an alignment issue. The soul with its own belief structures from its un-renewed thinking and unhealed emotions, does not readily submit itself to the desires of the inward man and obey the promptings of the Holy Spirit. In fact, it is resistant to that submission, and even at times hostile to it. This is because uncrucified flesh refuses to be and never can be consecrated to God.

Listen carefully now: the Cross in the diagram tells us that crucifixion must come before there can be a fuller consecration. What has to happen involves the renewing of your mind with the Word of God:

- for each truth of God's Word received in your mind as light brings with it its own liberating power; much like what happens when the driver uses the key to turn on the ignition of the car: the power is on
- and only then can the Cross be held up against your uncrucified flesh according to that truth; much like the driver having his foot on the accelerator, he can now begin to drive the car.

This is living life in the heavenlies. This is also how the initial consecration at your new birth is maintained, and how your new man, who is dead to sin and alive to God, is released more and more to bring an expression of God's glory in His Son here on the earth. Remember: no one can serve two masters at the same time:

- either he will hate the one, and love the other;
- or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other.

It will be impossible for you to serve God and mammon at the same time. (Matthew 6:24)

With a new mindset that comes only with focusing your thinking on the truth in God's Word, you can then present your new man to God as being alive for His service and your bodily members as instruments of righteousness for His glory.

Quench Not, Grieve Not the Holy Spirit

As we ended our last treasure of truth, one of the things that we came into a deeper understanding of is the reality of an unseen spiritual realm called “heavenly places.” Paul knew this realm very well by revelation, and he clues us in to what is going on behind many of the things we see with our natural eyes. Knowing what he knew, he wrote to the church at Ephesus with these words: “...we wrestle not against flesh and blood...” (Ephesians 6:12)

Through this teaching, along with the following two: “The World System” and “Satan: Know Your Enemy,” you will be seeing more clearly that anyone who has put their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and subsequently been born of the Holy Spirit has entered into this invisible warfare.

Donald G. Barnhouse brings scriptural perspective to us from his book The Invisible War. All around us on a daily basis, and moment by moment, there is a drama being acted out behind the scenes of life on planet Earth! What is this drama?

“In this theater of the universe, the earth is the stage on which the whole drama of rebellion, ruin, fall, judgment, redemption, salvation, and the ultimate vindication of God’s wisdom and righteousness is being unrolled in the amazing spectacle of the invisible war.”

In any arena of warfare, it is especially crucial for every soldier...

- to know
- to recognize
- and know beyond a shadow of doubt
- and practically understand

...his enemy!

This is no less true for you as one of God’s children. At the outset, you must understand the reason for the warfare and your enemies. God’s will is to flow His life and power through you as a new creation in Christ into the world so souls can be saved and brought into His Kingdom.

Now consider this: “When a baby is born, biologically he has everything he needs for adulthood. He just has to grow into it. The same is true with your spiritual progress. Godly growth in you is a providential journey of becoming what you already are.” (Spirit Filled Life Study Bible)

It doesn’t take long as a Christian for you to see that there is indeed a conflict over your spiritual growth. There is in fact an enemy of your soul working behind the scenes who

wants to stop that growth if at all possible, and at all cost. Paul described this conflict over his own soul as “...troubled on every side, conflicts without, fears within...” (2 Corinthians 7:5)

Yes, there is an enemy: an adversary who is and will continue in attempting to oppose, injure, and impede your growth and progress as a Christian. The enemy wants to slow you down and trip you up and if possible, stop you altogether from remaining loyal to your Lord and Savior in thought, word, and deed. In this way, he makes you ineffective in the things of God while you are here on earth.

As a Christian, it is vital and of utmost importance that you know this enemy. You must come to understand as early and as quickly as possible that your enemy is in fact not one, but three...

- the flesh
- the world
- and Satan

...all working together in a relentless effort, attempting to stop your growth and productivity in this earth as God’s child.

In this particular truth, “Quench Not, Grieve Not the Holy Spirit,” you will come to practically understand and recognize the first of these enemies more readily: the flesh.

Look above again at your three enemies. Of these three, the flesh is your most deadly enemy. Like a tree stump, if left in the ground it will send out its runners in an attempt to make a come back. Your enemy the flesh is the one that opens the door and gives room for the other two to come in and operate.

A simple definition of the flesh is the sinful element in human nature along with its corrupt desires. It may also be thought of as...

- the seat of sin in man...from where sin operates
- those evil impulses of the fallen nature of man
- that compulsive inner force inherited from man’s fall, which always expresses itself in both general and specific rebellion against God and His righteousness
- a built in law of failure making it impossible for the natural man to please or serve God in any kind of way.

What you must recognize about the flesh is that it cannot be reformed or improved upon. You must know that it’s only remedy is death—a death that can only come through the Cross of Christ. The flesh, whether a person is saved or unsaved, always invites open hostility to God.

On a grander scale, the flesh becomes an avenue for the expression of the world system through its impulses:

- the lust of the flesh: cravings for sensual gratification that include impure desires and running after sinful pleasures and gratifications
- the lust of the eyes: greedy longings of the mind that include coveting or lusting after things that are attractive to the eye, but forbidden by God; these include the desire to read about or watch that which gives sinful pleasure involving pornography, violence, ungodly conduct, nudity, or immorality on stage, cinema, television, videos, gaming, internet, or magazines
- the pride of life: subtle pride and arrogance that often rises with wealth or material blessings; assurance of one's own resources, positions of power, promotions, personal achievements of honor; and self-sufficient independence, as well as the stability of earthly things.

Each one of these impulses (1 John 2:15-17) is the opposite of submission to God and His Word and a humble trusting of Him in His ways.

Go back again and look above at the list of your enemies. The flesh is at the top of the list because it is the most immediate one, meaning it is the one closest to you. Therefore, it is your most deadly one. Your struggle with this enemy will be either:

- to surrender to it and thereby submit to sin's control again in your life;
- or yield yourself to the Holy Spirit's leading and apply the Cross of Christ to it.

Remember you are dead to sin in Christ. In this way you remain under His reign as your flesh is being put to death experientially and incrementally.

***"I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish."** (Galatians 5:16-17)*

WORD OF CAUTION: In the same way that soldiers in an army learn to live under their commanding officer, you too must learn as a new creation in Christ to live your life under the control, influence, and empowerment of the Holy Spirit within you. This will be quite a training ground for you. For even though every Christian desires to do so by nature, the Word of God makes it very clear that this desire alone is not enough to overcome sin. (Romans 7:21) As a believer in Christ you have been called to active duty in God's army to war against your flesh. In this warfare there will be a tug-of-war in which

your flesh urges you on the one side to indulge in sin and the Holy Spirit constrains you from the other side to righteousness and what is right in God's eyes.

In the middle of this tug-of-war between your flesh and the Holy Spirit is a choice. The choice is yours to make. (Deuteronomy 30:19-20) If you submit yourself to the Holy Spirit's guidance, control, and power, He will enable you in time to...

- subdue,
- put to death,
- and thereby overcome your flesh.

Oftentimes this will be an intense spiritual conflict, and you will discover that it can last over an extended period of time. Victory in this tug-of-war is found in:

- understanding that Jesus Christ has already won that victory for you
- abiding in a right relationship with Him, the Victorious One through the daily reading of His Word
- remembering that your true strength is only found in Him
- submitting in obedience to the leading and prompting of His Holy Spirit

Only in this way are you able to put to death the deeds of your flesh.

WORD OF WARNING: The Lord Himself warns you of the dangers of indulging, yielding to, pampering, humoring, or gratifying your flesh in any kind of way.

"Don't be deceived, God is not mocked; for what ever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption; but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life." (Galatians 6:7-8)

Keep this in mind: whenever lust conceives it brings forth sin; and sin when it is finished, brings forth death. ALWAYS! This is exactly what happened in Achan's downward spiral of indulgence. Read Joshua 7:1-26. Did you see how it happened? Knowing full well what had been forbidden by God, Achan...

- saw
- coveted
- took
- and hid

...what had been forbidden by God. In the end, because it was left unchecked by him at each downward spiral, it cost him his life.

Now look at page 30 in your syllabus. The deeds of your flesh are the unfruitful works of darkness. They exhibit themselves basically through two different kinds of behaviors:

Self-reliance: a self-centeredness that Paul addressed in himself as confidence in the flesh: a self-awareness in outward appearance and behaviors which you see in the circle on the left.

Moral laxity: showing little concern for what is morally right and good: a lack of self-control whose various manifestations are seen in the circle on the right.

All these fleshly expressions always quench and grieve the Holy Spirit. He is blocked from releasing the resurrection life of Christ through the new creation—the spirit, soul and body person. To more fully understand the seriousness of this, ponder here for a moment the question that Paul asked the church at Corinth:

“Do you not know that you are a temple of the Spirit of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?” (1Corinthians 3:16)

How very glorious our lives will be when we truly realize this! For as a new creation in Christ you are a sanctuary of the Holy Spirit Himself:

- a place where He has taken up personal residence,
- a place in which He Himself dwells and is very active,
- a place where He desires to have room to breathe in and through!

TO QUENCH:

The word means to extinguish, suppress, or smother. It’s what happens when you deprive fire of the oxygen it needs in order to burn.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:19 each one of us is admonished not to quench the Holy Spirit. You are to give Him the right of way whenever and however He wants to manifest Christ’s resurrection life and power in you or someone else. You are not to stand in His way and thereby quench Him.

TO GRIEVE:

This word means to cause pain and so make sorrowful or distressed.

In Ephesians 4:30 each one of us is admonished not to grieve the Holy Spirit. Whenever or wherever you do not cooperate with His work of developing you in Christ’s character, it causes Him pain and He grieves.

God's ultimate purpose is to have your soul be a place where He can bring an expression of the resurrection life of Christ within you, not just in fruitfulness but in His power as well. Can you see more clearly now the warfare over your soul? Your flesh wants to take first place. If you do not put it in check by the power of the Cross, you can never attain to what God has intended for you on this earth. This will be a great loss to you, and others as well.

The divine person of the Holy Spirit within you is always working towards the life of your soul to form the resurrection life of Christ there. His desire is to manifest the power of Christ's presence in your ministry to others, much like when water overflows the banks of a river. (John 7:38)

WHAT TO REMEMBER IN THIS WARFARE:

- you can go no faster than a full dependence upon God
- just like the Israelites who had unknown sin hidden in their camp, you will not be able to stand before your enemies until you have removed the things under the ban

YOUR THREE PRIMARY WEAPONS AGAINST YOUR FLESH:

- you must be renewing your mind with the Word of God
- you must hold the Cross up against your flesh to deny it the pleasures of sin
- you must also be praying with a humble heart to remove any hidden sin

THREE PRAYERS FOR THIS WARFARE: Psalm 139:23-24; Psalm 19:12-14

Now that you know what grieving the Holy Spirit is:

"Search me, O God, and see if there is any way of pain in me" (Psalm 139:23-24)

Now that you know what quenching the Holy Spirit is:

"Keep me back from presumptuous sins...let them not rule over me" (Psalm 19:12-14)

Now that you know what God's will is:

"Lead me in the way everlasting" (Psalm 139:24b)

*"This I say then, walk in the Spirit and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh."
(Galatians 5:10)*

The World System

What we learned in our last teaching, and will continue to learn in this one and the next, is that there are very real forces at work in a Christian's life which oppose him or her from experiencing life through their seated position with Christ in the heavenlies.

In this treasure of truth, "The World System," you will be gaining a deeper understanding of how this particular enemy functions. A *system* is a methodology. It is a way of getting things done, or a way of accomplishing something. In order not to be deceived by any of the world system's enticing allurements or its fatal attractions, you must have a biblical understanding of...

- who runs it,
- how it functions,
- and what it desires to accomplish.

As you begin to delve into this teaching, remember in your warfare that Satan is the author of evil, with the world system as his bait and the flesh as his hook! Now let's start.

As a Christian you have already been called out of the world system, having been separated from it through your new birth. Having been born from above, you are now in the kingdom of the Father's Son Jesus Christ. In this way, you have entered into the arena of spiritual warfare. Listen carefully to what God your Father says to you and all His children about the world system:

"Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever."

(1John2:15-17)

The Holy Spirit is warning us in this scripture not to love the world system, or any of the things in it! The words "do not" are an explicit warning to you. It is like a sign driven down into the shallow waters of a deep lake or ocean surf with dangerous rip tides and sneaker waves. The sign says, "Danger, no swimming here!" This scripture is a serious warning to all believers alerting them to a very real and grave danger!

You are warned in this scripture what not to love as a Christian...what not to treat or cherish with any kind of affection or tenderness...what not to hold dear or close to your heart...and what not to fondly keep in your mind. Look again at the scripture, and you will see why!

To see more clearly why we are warned by the Holy Spirit not to love the world or the things of the world, we need to understand the use of the phrase “the world.” In the Bible these two words together can be used in at least three different ways. They can mean:

- 1) the created material universe...the round world...our planet called Earth;
as in: “The God, who made *the world* and all things in it...” (Acts 17:24)
- 2) or the inhabitants of the world...the whole race of men alienated from God, and thus hostile to the cause of Christ;
as in: “...the Spirit of truth, whom *the world* cannot receive, because it does not see Him nor know Him.” (John 14:17)
- 3) or the world system...the whole of society organized and operated independently of God: a way of getting things done along with the whole circle of its worldly goods, endowments, riches, advantages, pleasures and the values attached to them...all of which attempt to seduce people from God;
as in: “What will it profit a man if he gains *the whole world* and forfeits his soul?” (Matthew 16:26)

The world system is your enemy. Remembering that a *system* is actually a way of getting things done, it doesn’t take long to realize that there must be a mind behind it. Much like a puppeteer who pulls the strings of a puppet, Satan is actually this world system’s ruler aided by his fallen angels and demons as his emissaries and all of fallen mankind as his slaves. That sounds like a kingdom, doesn’t it? Scriptures clearly describe this, and that is exactly how Jesus understood it. In Matthew 12:29 He called it “...*the strongman’s house.*”

What you must know is that the infrastructure of this world system as well as everything in it, both tangible and non-tangible, is based on satanic value judgments. This means it is energized and guided by satanic pride and philosophy. As such, it is arranged purposefully in open hostility against God, His Kingdom, and His righteousness. That is reality! Now you can understand why James wrote in James 4:4-5, “...*that friendship with the world is hostility toward God...whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.*” These are very strong and sobering words for every Christian!

Much like a giant amusement park, the world system has many **attractions**, especially for anyone who is misinformed. There are sights and sounds that glitter and dazzle with rides and games, food and pleasures, thrills and spills for all. They beckon with: “Come, take a little time off, relax, take it easy, and have a good time! You can have...

- fame and fortune
- control
- image
- success
- wealth
- friends.”

Just like a barker who stands before the entrance of a sideshow and solicits its customers with his loud, colorful sales talk, the world system offers to those who will listen, real but only temporal and deceptive treasures.

Do you see now that the world system makes its appeal to your flesh, primarily through your emotional and psychological side? By looking at the diagram on page 32 in your syllabus, you can see why. Because the new man has no appetite for anything the world has to offer, the world system will never make its appeal to the new man. The beauty of the gospel of Christ is that, at the moment of new birth, the Cross of Christ separated the world system from your new man, and he from it. (Galatians 6:14)

Although the world system is often veiled to you as your enemy, remember that it always is! Like an amusement park it has **an atmosphere** in which air is breathed. It has its own moods and its own climate. Like fog rolling in off the ocean, its influence is insidious and very subtle. Intending to trap you, it oftentimes spreads itself out by stealth attempting to hide from you what it is really doing. Like smog, it is also full of toxins. Being energized by satanic power it attempts to make you lethargic through the appetites of your flesh. When you indulge or give in to your fleshly appetites, you are in fact being drawn away from your loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ alone...much like anesthesia that will put you to sleep!

Through the...

- lust of your flesh,
- the lust of your eyes,
- and the pride of life

...the world system shouts to you, “It’s not enough!” At the same time, Satan will attempt to seduce you away from your faith in the Lord Jesus; enticing you first to want and then to gain what the world system offers. He will do this by lifting up and exalting the wisdom of the world system above God’s in your thought life, and by tempting you to be ashamed of the Lord Jesus Christ and communicating His gospel.

Remember the sign: “Danger, no swimming here!”

The mastermind behind this world system and its ruler is Satan. (Luke 4:5-6; John 12:31) His strategy is to draw you out and away from experiencing your seated position with Christ in the heavenlies. If he can successfully entice you with worldly desires, cravings, and passions, he hinders you from being the full reflection of God's glory in this earth that you were created to be.

Should you yield to the deceitfulness of wealth and riches and/or the cares and concerns of the world system, you will begin to indulge your flesh and will decline into a mere earthly life, just like Esau did who sold his birthright for a small morsel of food! Like him, you too will miss out on the intended blessings that God your Father had in mind for you during your stay here on earth.

When Jesus prayed His high priestly prayer, He said...

*"They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."
(John 17:16)*

In the same way that the Lord Jesus knew this truth about His disciples, so must you! As a new creation in Christ, your point of origin is heaven. Although in the world, you are no longer of it! As a regenerate person and God's very own child, you have been delivered out of darkness by your Lord Jesus Christ. By nature you are now utterly unrelated to this world system, having escaped the corruption that is in it through greed and covetousness!

Through your new birth, the new man in you (see the diagram on page 32 again) has and shares a deep spiritual union with Christ. Your real hunger is for intimacy with your Lord, and your true and only ambition is to live a life pleasing to Him. Your new man's only focus is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and he feeds and acts upon the light given to him by the Holy Spirit from the Father's exceedingly great and precious promises in the Bible. In this way, he grows into spiritual maturity and becomes light and salt to others: someone in whom Christ Himself may actually manifest. This is what Satan is afraid of, and this is what he is attempting to stop in you through the world system!

You may be wondering now how you are to relate to the world system as a new creation in Christ who has been rescued from this present evil age. Above all else, you must know and remember your point of origin: both where you came from and where your citizenship is (UGW Syllabus: Ch. 3 "New Birth" & Ch. 5 "Sojourners") and your purpose in life (Ch. 17 "Beholding" & Ch. 22 "Salvation of the Soul.") Like the needle point of any compass that functions to point you in the right direction, these truths will direct your heart towards right choices as you renew your mind with them and hold them fast.

Whenever the world system makes any kind of overture towards you, you must make a choice. This choice of yours in refusing the evil and choosing good is actually another opportunity for you in affirming your loyalty to Jesus Christ as the One you pledged your life to the moment you received Him as your personal Lord and Savior.

Do not be deceived! The new man has no appetite for anything the world system offers. Do not be deceived! You cannot pursue the kingdom of God and the world system at the same time.

Should you ignore the light of God's Word about the world system and thus give in to the appeals made to your fleshly appetites, you will decline over a period of time into a state of carnality. Like a thick fog that comes in where you can't see your hand in front of your face, your condition is difficult for you to recognize. You turned away from grace - you forgot that you were cleansed from your former sins by the blood of Jesus Christ. In this way, you fell back into them. The longer you stay there now, the more you will miss out on God's wonderful plan for your life. (Romans 12:2) Repent now, and come back to Him.

As a new creation in Christ, you are to be on the alert like a soldier: awake and watchful for his enemy at all times! This world system, which at its core is wicked and alienated from God, is very deceptive. It will present itself to you as being cultured, educated, powerful, wise and even outwardly moral at times.

To the disciples whose eyes had grown heavy, Jesus said,

*"Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation;
the spirit is ready, but the flesh is weak."
(Matthew 26:41)*

Remember that this enemy, the world system, will stop at nothing in order to oppose God's plan and purpose for your life. Remember, too, the Lord Jesus who said these words, *"I came to do the will of the Father."* Do likewise and choose life! (Proverbs 23:1-8)

Satan

As the Holy Spirit has been illuminating our understanding through truth about the principles of spiritual warfare in the last two treasures of truth, He has also been bringing us into a deeper understanding that every new creation in Christ is engaged in a spiritual conflict. There is actually an invisible war that is going on around us moment by moment. Every Christian is to be on alert! Like any good soldier, you must be thoroughly acquainted with the strategies and the cunning of each one of your opponents:

- your flesh,
- the world system,
- and Satan and the powers of darkness.

In better understanding the realm of this warfare and how these opponents work together, it is important for you to know that there are two kingdoms on this earth that are moving alongside of each other...

- the kingdom of God whose head is the Lord Jesus Christ
- and the world system of evil headed up by Satan

These two kingdoms are opposed to one another and are constantly at sword's point, meaning ready to clash with each other. The life of Christ while here on earth as shown in the gospels clearly demonstrates the reality of this realm.

As you begin to read here in "Satan, Know Your Enemy," this teaching is not intended to exalt him in any way. Instead, it is to expose his identity, his lies, his strategies, and his attempts at subverting the truth of God. If he remains unexposed, he can undermine your personal walk with the Lord Jesus through ignorance and unbelief, and hold the church back from her exalted and rightful position of authority and power in the earth.

*"...the household of God, which is the church of the living God,
the pillar and support of the truth."
(1 Timothy 3:15)*

Question: Are you aware that he is very real? The Bible makes it clear that he is! Here are some facts for you to know about who he is, where he came from, and how he operates.

Know your enemy: His original name in heaven was Lucifer, meaning "morning star."

Ezekiel 28:13: “...in the day that you were created...” he is not from eternity past, he is a finite created being...created by God...and therefore, completely incapable of being omnipresent, omnipotent, or omniscient like God his Creator!

Ezekiel 28:14: “...the anointed cherub that covers...” one of the highest ranking order of angels, and the highest angel in that order...Lucifer was anointed of God to be a light bearer at His throne...to be there a reflector and a guardian of His glory!

Isaiah 14:11: “...the sound of your stringed instruments...” he was internally gifted also as an instrument of worship and praise to his God, the Most High...the Lord God Almighty!

What happened next is very sobering indeed for every person on this earth. Iniquity (guilt) was found in Lucifer. With his heart having become lifted up in pride, Lucifer became filled with violence from within. He repeatedly said in his heart:

- I will ascend into heaven
- I will exalt my throne above the stars of God
- I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north
- I will ascend above the heights of the clouds
- I will be like the Most High

Know your enemy: Through unchecked pride, self-will, and personal ambition, Lucifer’s one desire was to supplant God’s reign with his own! In attempting to do so, he sinned. Along with a third of the angels who had joined him in his treason, he was cast from heaven by God Himself and thrown down to the earth. No longer being a light bearer, Lucifer is called by another name from this point on: Satan (Luke 10:18)

Fast forward now to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Satan cunningly usurped Adam’s God given dominion and authority in the earth when he fell into sin. Along with his hierarchy of evil spirits, Satan began at that time to dominate the world, and now patrols the earth seeking people’s alienation from God and their subsequent destruction by enslaving and keeping captive those who are without Christ. Jesus Himself knew this to be true about him, and so He said to those of the Pharisees who were with Him:

*“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy...”
(John 10:10)*

Only those who are in Christ Jesus have been delivered from Satan’s clutches. Yet he remains a very real threat to each one of them. Like a roaring lion that prowls around stalking his prey, Satan’s method is to divide, separate, and isolate believers from each other. Be aware of this! He is seeking to harm and devour any believer in such a way

that he actually renders them inoperative, ineffective and unfruitful in being witnesses to the gospel of Jesus Christ during their earthly pilgrimage.

For you or any Christian to be either ignorant or misinformed in this matter is perilous, foolish, and deadly. You must know that Satan is very real, and that he is your enemy. In fact, he has a strategy, one that is specific for you, to undermine your walk with the Lord. You are his enemy. Remember that! As a masterful strategist, he will seek your downfall through various schemes. (1 Peter 5:8)

Know your enemy: It is of utmost importance for you as a new creation in Christ to understand that Satan's chief tactic is to hide his identity, his traps, and his assaults from you. As a soldier in God's army on the earth, you must be able to recognize and pinpoint them!

Identity is often seen in someone's name. No longer being a light bearer, God's archenemy is now called Satan. His name means "adversary." Like an antagonist who likes to start a fight, he is a formidable and hostile opponent. (Genesis 3:1; Luke 4:1-3) Satan has nothing but hatred for God, and he craftily works to overthrow His glory--especially by seeking to gain the advantage over you and any one of God's people.

It is in the unseen realm...beyond our natural eyesight...that Satan attempts to hinder

- glorifying Jesus Christ as Lord in heaven and on earth
- God's work of having the gospel of Jesus Christ preached in its fullness
- your life being a witness and vessel of Jesus' transforming power

Know your enemy: Satan is also referred to in the New Testament as the devil. The word means "slanderer" and it is a signal to you that he is a separator. To slander means "to hurl across." It is to call something in against someone...to find fault with someone and then spread it.

Satan slanders in order to separate. Through slander, he exerts dominion over men by maligning God's name and misrepresenting Him to them. God then becomes their enemy, the One they hate! Have you ever wondered where atheism comes from or how or why it happens? The devil has been craftily at work.

Satan is the accuser of the brethren. (Revelation 12:10) In Christ, you are a threat to him: for in Christ you are united in spirit not only with the Lord Jesus Christ and your heavenly Father, but united to every other believer as well. (Ephesians 4:1-4) As his enemy, you pose a real threat to him. From the moment of your new birth, Satan will take advantage of every opportunity that presents itself to him to divide or separate you

from those around you who are Christians. Through offense and accusation and slander, he will attempt to sow discord into your relationship with God your heavenly Father and other Christians.

As the father of lies, Satan is the source and engineer of all deception and confusion. As a liar, he can only operate out of deception; and as a deceiver, he will then perpetuate those lies through cunning and much subtlety. Be on the alert!

- Through lies and deception, Satan will attempt to blind the mind of a believer in order to lead them into error. In this way he can cause them to wander away from truth and go astray in their hearts, unable now to do the will of their Father in heaven. (2 Timothy 2:26)
- Through lies and deception, he attempts to blind the minds of a leader in the body of Christ and thereby leads the children of God into error, causing all of them to wander away from truth and go astray in their hearts. In this way the true gospel is being hindered from going forth and bearing fruit. (Galatians 2:11-21)

Know your enemy: Satan injects wicked thoughts, accusations, and purposes into men's thoughts...especially when the Holy Spirit is sowing the word of God into a person's heart. Satan then attempts to twist and misuse and manipulate the scriptures of the Bible in such a way as to foster unbelief, and in this way perpetuating the hearing of another gospel: a gospel that is no gospel at all! He also attempts to introduce false doctrines into the church, the preaching of another gospel, in very subtle ways in order to misrepresent the gospel of the glory of Christ to anyone who will listen and to all who are deceived because they are ignorant of the truth.

Be aware, be alert! As a soldier in God's army, you must be able to recognize Satan for who he is and what he is doing. Remember, in this arena of spiritual warfare, you are still a threat to him although he has indeed been defeated on the Cross of Christ. Thus you are his target, through wiles, for specific demonic strategy and attack.

Some of his wiles include:

- division in the church
- unbelief in God's promises
- discouragement
- compromising your conscience
- an unwillingness to forgive
- getting your eyes off Jesus
- fear of any kind
- faultfinding

- not being knitted in a local church
- lack of time spent in the Word of God
- the indulging of your fleshly appetites
- distracting you through the cares and concerns of the world system
- spiritual apathy

Know your enemy: All of Satan's wiles mentioned above are indications of spiritual warfare. Don't be deceived, and don't be fooled: your adversary the devil does prowl around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour. That someone is you!

Satan's position is one that is always contrary to the will of God and always hostile to your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He is always working to overthrow the Lord's glory, and always desiring and seeking to gain the advantage over God's people on the earth. Don't be fooled: unchallenged by you, Satan will not go away! Don't be deceived: he knows that as long as he can stimulate pride of any sort in your heart, and if it is left unchecked by you, you will eventually fall into that temptation and sin.

Satan is the tempter. He always entices you to do what God forbids. He will attempt to lead you into various kinds of idolatry in order to secure your worship. Be aware and be alert! He is especially engineering and implementing various snares and traps for you in order to silence your testimony, and prevent you from reflecting Christ's glory in the earth and thus fulfilling God's call on your life.

Remember: Your position in the heavenlies in Christ is strategic and very important to the Lord's orchestration here in the earth. Your stance against Satan must always come from a humbleness of mind and heart. Your heavenly Father is opposed to the proud. The question with which you must always answer any temptation is: "How do the scriptures read?" (Luke 10:25-26)

Then, submit yourself to God through that word. As you act upon it, allow Him to give you more grace for remaining strong in the power of your Lord's might...and continue in doing what is right. From a position of both victory and of humbleness of mind, you may then effectively resist the devil just as the Lord did in the wilderness and stand firm in the faith. (James 4: 6-10; Matthew 4:4, 7, 10)

Listen carefully again to what you must do:

- ❖ **submit** to God first,
- ❖ then **resist** the devil...

God's promise to you is that after having done this, Satan will flee from you!

The Armor of God

Paul, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, wrote to the church at Corinth and Ephesus that even though he was living in the realities of the present world system, he never used fleshly weapons against Satan or any of his demonic hosts. Knowing full well that any man who does not understand the nature of the problem at hand is already doomed to failure, Paul instructed the church in her walk of victory by helping its members to understand what that walk is, and how then to stand against the strategies and deceptions of their adversary, the devil.

*“Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able
to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.”
(Ephesians 6:11)*

As you begin this treasure of truth, “The Armor of God,” it would be well to call to mind Joshua by the walled city of Jericho. It was there that he was made aware of the unseen presence of the Commander of the LORD’s hosts ready to do battle for him. This in fact is Paul’s message to the church in his letter to the Ephesians. In chapter 6:10-18 he reminds them of God’s full provision for them in their warfare in the heavenly places, and exhorts them to put on the full armor of God. For every Christian, life on earth is a call to be ready for battle. It is a definite call to duty, rather than to a life of comfort and ease. Coming into this realization is indeed half the battle for the church, yet only half.

Look now at the picture of a Roman soldier in the syllabus on page 41. What you see here is the full combat equipment of a heavily armed soldier having all his weapons for combat without the lack of any single part. What you want to remember here in your conflict with Satan and his hierarchy of demonic hosts is that...

- with your natural eyes you are only going to see flesh and blood
- the reality of your warfare, however, is in the heavenlies against satanic forces
- Satan is a cruel and vicious enemy, and the only way you can remain standing as the victor against him is by keeping on the armor your heavenly Father has given to you in His Son Jesus Christ
- if you don’t keep yourself dressed with who His Son is, you will be placing yourself in a position of grave danger and harm

Listen to these words from Kenneth Wuest: “Thus, the Christian is to take up and put on the Armor of God as a once for all action and keep that armor on during the entire course of his life, not relaxing the discipline necessary for the constant use of such protection. The historian Gibbon relates how the relaxation of discipline and the disuse

of exercise, rendered soldiers less willing and less able to support the fatigue of the service. They complained of the weight of their armor, and obtained permission to lay aside their cuirasses and helmets.” (Word Studies in the Greek New Testament, Vol.1)

Every good soldier knows never to underestimate their enemy. So must you! Lest Satan gain an advantage over you, you must remember that even though Jesus Christ defeated him on the Cross, he’s been in operation long before the creation of the heavens and the earth as we know them. Never think of yourself more highly than you should, neither be ignorant of any of his devices! In Eden he was able to deceive Eve in such a way that she turned around and successfully tempted Adam to disobey God’s word to him. With this cunning device, when Adam succumbed to it, Satan took the both of them and the whole human race with them as his captives. You are indeed facing a formidable foe. Know that!

“Therefore, take up the full armor of God so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.”
(Ephesians 6:13)

Look again at the picture of the Roman soldier. You can see that with the full armor of God on, you have all the protection you need as well as the strength to stand against, resist, and oppose any of your enemy’s onslaughts. As a new creation in Christ, you will be able to remain standing firm in your place of victory in Christ.

As you continue to look at this first century Roman soldier, you will see that he is fully dressed in his combat equipment and standing at attention fully armed, readied, and positioned for warfare. For you as a Christian this is a picture of what it means to be clothed in the life of Christ and His character. The armor here is a picture for you of an internal stance in the truth of Christ alone...not a mantra you chant every morning. It is instead, a stance you take because you have been actively hearing and continually abiding in truth within your heart. In this way, having put on the Lord Jesus Christ, you will be ready and fully armed for warfare of any kind at any time. (Galatians 3:26-28)

Now we are ready to look more closely at the individual pieces of the armor of God. Each piece of your spiritual armor actually communicates and reflects an aspect of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. As the Christ who has risen from the grave and defeated the enemy...Jesus, the glorified One is your armor. The truth of what He has done on the Cross and who He is in His ascension glory, when internalized in your heart, will make you invincible. This “armor” protects you in the midst of any battle, thus enabling you to remain standing victorious in HIM. As a good soldier, you are to

*“...put on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts...”*
(Romans 13:14)

Having girded your loins about with truth: Truth, when revealed to your spirit and reflected on in your heart, will give you free and unencumbered action. It gives you stability and confidence to stand your ground in Christ and walk by faith in newness of life. This is much like the cinch of a saddle that, when tightened, fixes and holds the saddle firmly in place for its rider. Remember that Satan is the father of lies. You must fortify your inner man with truth through the written Word of God, especially with *who* the Truth is:

- the ascended Lord Jesus Christ who is seated on the right hand of His Father in glory,
- His finished work of atonement on the Cross of Calvary,
- and the nullification of Satan's power and authority through His resurrection from the dead.

He said to those Jews who had believed on Him, *"If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you shall know the truth, and the truth will make you free."* (John 8:31-32) Like Jesus, this is what Paul also said to young Timothy. For being girded with truth means not only having a mastery of truth, but also and more importantly, having been mastered by it! (2 Timothy 2:15)

Having put on the breastplate of righteousness: Righteousness is the knowledge of being legally and morally right with your heavenly Father. This is an impenetrable and protective coat of mail (flexible armor composed of small overlapping metal rings, loops of chain or scales) against any of Satan's condemning thoughts against you, or about someone else. Anyone who is in Christ has a perfect standing before God. (Romans 4:22-5:2) In His presence now, your heavenly Father sees you in the righteousness of His beloved Son and His perfect obedience to the Law. At the moment of your new birth you were clothed completely with Him in your spirit. *"He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."* (2 Corinthians 5:21) You are to keep a clear conscience now by not compromising it in any way. Should you sin, be quick to confess it honestly before your heavenly Father. Being faithful and just, He will immediately forgive you of that sin and cleanse you from all its unrighteousness (everything not in conformity with His will.) In this way, you will be maintaining your position of righteousness daily through practical uprightness and holiness of life in thought, word, and deed!

Having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace: You are prepared by the gospel of peace that was secured for you by Jesus Christ on the Cross of Calvary: a peace that has healed the estrangement between a sinful man and a holy God. In Christ, you are now at peace with God and your fellow man. Having been reconciled to God, the peace of God will guard your heart and mind. (Romans 5: 10-11; Ephesians 2:13-

16) These sandals of peace are wonderful protection in the midst of rough circumstances and conflict of any kind, especially when you are being afflicted on every side! Be aware that offense is a cunning device of your enemy. Satan will first attempt to use it against you to unsettle you, and then to entice you into fleshly judgments and/or unforgiveness. Should he gain this advantage over you, you will in fact have given him a foothold. He takes this advantage by getting your footing off-balance on the ground of offense in external circumstances. The scriptures clearly say: *"Be angry and sin not; let not the sun go down on your wrath."* and *"Be anxious for nothing...let your requests be made known to God...and the peace of God will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."* (Ephesians 4:26; Philippians 4:6-7) You must learn to forgive immediately, and reconcile quickly if offence comes in. Cast any cares you have upon your Lord. (Colossians 3:12-13; Matthew 11:28-30) In this way, you are appropriating the gospel of peace and your union in Christ, and the tranquility of heart and mind that it evokes in you will guard your heart even in the severest of temptations!

Taking up the shield of faith: True faith comes only by hearing through the Word of Christ and a saving faith means to believe "into." (Romans 10:17) All biblical faith has as its backdrop the saving work of Christ on the Cross. This faith is what takes a person outside of themselves and then puts them into Christ! It is a reliance on Him and on Him alone for all that salvation is. In Christ you have already been justified, meaning acquitted of guilt, before your heavenly Father. Listen to what Jesus said to the Jews who were seeking to kill Him. *"Most assuredly I say to you, He who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has eternal life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life."* (John 5:24) Your faith rests now in a living Person, and then acts through obedience to Him. (Revelation 1:17-18; Colossians 3:23-24) Genuine faith does away with dependence on the self-life and its own strength and efforts. Genuine faith creates and maintains sensitivity to the holy influences of the Holy Spirit within you. As you stay there in spirit, you are "taking up" the shield of faith. Faith will repel and neutralize the power of any demonic suggestions coming in by Satan through the injecting of wicked and unrighteous thoughts into your mind and/or through his misrepresenting words that are spoken to you by another person.

Take the helmet of salvation: The enthroned Christ...unrivaled in majesty, unlimited in power, and unsurpassed by anything outside of Himself...is your head! He has triumphed in His work of atonement on the Cross of Calvary. His salvation is a finished work...a complete provision for your whole man: spirit, soul, and body. Victory over sin, death, and the devil is in your full possession right now, along with its fuller manifestation in the future. By faith you receive the fullness of the salvation He secured for you through His death and resurrection. It includes:

- deliverance from sin and all its consequences
(Romans 8:1-2; 1 Corinthians 15:50-52)

- the bestowal of all spiritual blessings in Christ
(Ephesians 1:1-14; Psalm 103:1-5)
- the gift of the Holy Spirit
(Acts 1:8; Romans 8:15; Ephesians 1:13-14)
- and a life of glory in the future age
(Revelation 21:1-22:5)

As you do this, the helmet of salvation gives you deliverance from danger and apprehension while protecting your mind from fears and insecurities. Jesus Himself announced the beginning of this new era of salvation with these words: *"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."* (Mark 4:15) Receiving the helmet of salvation means living a life of grace under His reign. As you do that, expect the manifestation of God's glory and sovereign rule through His Beloved Son in you to others! (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 2 Corinthians 2:14; Acts 3:6-8)

and the sword of the Spirit: As a soldier in God's army on earth, you are to fence now with the sword of the Spirit by quickly countering the enemy's lie with God's truth. Your weapon is God's Word. Your example is the Lord Jesus Christ who resisted and silenced Satan in a time of manifold temptation in the wilderness. Jesus prefaced His utterance of the Word of God to Satan by addressing him with this declaration: "It is written." The emphasis here is on its oral utterance. Remember the sword of the Spirit is the Word of God spoken by you! *"For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from its sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account."* (Hebrews 4:12-13)

Listen carefully to this excerpt from The Armor of God by Ernest Rockstad: "...it suggests that what is meant is not the word of God as it comes to the believer, but rather the word as it is spoken by the believer, and wielded by him as a weapon to destroy falsehood and evil, and to defend and promote the right. If we would wield the word of God effectively as a sword, we must not merely repeat sentences by rote, but be filled with the Spirit, of which is the utterance, and thus apply it in ways and for the purposes for which it was designed by God."

In this way, having taken up the full armor of God, you are able to overcome and are positioned in spirit with this purpose in mind:

*"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit,
being watchful to this end with all perseverance
and supplication for all the saints."
(Ephesians 6:18)*

Prayer is one of the highest privileges and the purpose for which you are armed! Realize that these pieces of the armor of God work together and do not function independently of each other. As a unit, they enable you to continue to maintain an internal and invincible stance in truth against satanic forces in the unseen realm...whether it is in your own life or someone else's.

"For though we walk in the flesh (earthly bodies), we do not war according to the flesh (fleshly impulses and appetites.) For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds ...bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." (2Corinthians 10:3-5)

Having taken up God's provision of His full armor, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, the Holy Spirit will now guide you in what kind of prayer to be praying to your heavenly Father so the gospel may go forth in its full power in the earth!

The Mind is the Battlefield

This teaching is the practical outworking of taking up the full armor of God. You will be learning that it really does matter what you think...the thoughts you entertain in your mind. For your mind is where Satan and his evil spirits contend against the truth and against you as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ!

The word “mind” literally means “a thinking through.” The mind is a faculty...an ability, capacity, or power to think with. God created man with a mind so he might reason, think, reflect, reckon, and make choices. The human mind is the seat of knowing and understanding. Whatever occupies a person’s mind influences and determines the direction in which they go—what they will or won’t do—for their thoughts will lead them to actions.

As a heavenly citizen, you must decide whether you are going to surrender to the demands of the divine and holy nature within you or to the sinful desires of your own flesh. The warfare in your mind involves arrogant and rebellious thoughts, ideas, and attitudes that will attempt to lift themselves up above the true knowledge of God in your inner man. What you are thinking is indeed vitally important to you! It is in light of this truth that Scripture clearly warns us not to lean on our own understanding, but instead to acknowledge the Lord in all our ways...in all our “thinking through”. As you trust in Him, He then directs your path.

What you must realize as new creation in Christ is that if you habitually choose to live according to the flesh...meaning that you are living more and more in a state of independence from God your Father...you will eventually die out. This is what happens to a light bulb when it loses its ability to produce light. On the other hand, if you are putting to death the fleshly deeds of your body by the inspiration and enablement of the Holy Spirit, the light of life within you will become brighter and brighter and you will live *experientially* in the abundance of that life. Here you will progressively enjoy the full release of the presence, power, and grace of the Holy Spirit within your inner man, with the Lord Jesus Himself manifesting in and through your life. What confident expectation there is in Christ for an ever-increasing life!

“...but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.”

(Romans 8:13)

Always remember: God’s promise to you is that whenever you yield in obedience and service to His Son Jesus Christ through the workings of the Holy Spirit within you, your flesh experiences death by neglect.

What makes this scripture work is the word *if*. *If* indicates a choice you must make. You must choose to co-operate with the Holy Spirit by following through in obedience as quickly as possible to whatever He is telling you to do or not do. That choice is going to depend largely on what has been in your thought life (the direction it has been continuing in) and hence, where your focus has been. In other words, what has your mind, your “thinking through,” been set on? Has it been on:

- the Lord Jesus and His glory,
- the world and what it has to offer,
- fleshly appetites like revenge, lust, coveting, etc.,
- or Satanic thoughts and suggestions?

You are a Christian, a *Christ one*. You are to view and evaluate all your “thinking through” from a heavenly and everlasting perspective. Colossians 3:1-3 says it like this:

“Since then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.”

In verse two of this scripture, the words “set your mind on” mean to...

- exercise your mind
- be mentally disposed in a certain direction
- interest yourself with both concern and obedience
- and be of the same mind

“Keep seeking” and “set your mind” is a repeated emphasis and is an exhortation to you as a *Christ one*. These two phrases are reinforcing for you what you are to do. This scripture is not telling you to seek the things of heaven, but instead to seek to be of the same mind as heaven!

At this point, it is important to remember that the things of the earth are not necessarily evil or sinful in and of themselves, although some definitely are. They will become that to you if you, however, if you continue in thinking on them and/or persist in seeking them in preference to what is above, where Christ is seated!

“...for to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.”
(Romans 8:6)

Remember, when your mind is *set on* the things of the flesh (things that are here on earth) you will live according to your flesh. Likewise, when your mind is *set on* the things of the Holy Spirit, (things which are above) you will live according to the Spirit. (Romans 8:5)

Listen to Romans 6:16:

“Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or, of obedience leading to righteousness?”

You are a slave to whoever you obey. Another way of saying that is to say whatever you give your obedience to is your master. If you choose to obey the impulses of your flesh and its commands to sin, then your flesh is your master experientially. Through this choice, you would actually be moving in the direction of eternal death; and if you continue in making this choice, you gradually experience a deathlike existence in this life: an emptiness of life in which you have no peace or joy or hope. However, if you choose to obey the commands of your Lord and Savior and the promptings of the Holy Spirit, then righteousness is your master and you experience His life: righteousness, joy, and peace in the Holy Spirit.

In review:

- To live after the flesh is when you remain passive and your thoughts are being occupied with the desires, emotions, and physical gratifications of the flesh, or the world system, or the powers of darkness.
- To live after the Spirit is when you yield yourself to the Holy Spirit’s influence and enablement, focusing your thoughts, affections, values, and energy on the things of God, all of which are discovered in the Bible.

What you want to know: By consistently setting your mind on things above through the Scriptures, you will walk very naturally after the Holy Spirit by following and responding to truth. As you do that, you neglect the indulging of your flesh; and as you do that, its deeds are being put to death experientially.

Now look at page 44 in your syllabus. As you are looking at the diagram, there is only one mind in the picture. What your mind is set on at any given moment determines the “eyes” you are “seeing” with...where your focus is. As you can see, that depends on where your mind is!

- on the left: whenever your mind is set on things above, your focus (eyes) are on the Spirit

- on the right: whenever your mind is set on the things of earth down below, your focus (eyes) are on the flesh

Have you seen now how your mind is indeed the battlefield? The outcome depends entirely on where you have been setting your mind and what you are occupying your thoughts with. **The mind set on the Spirit is life**: this is ever increasing life. Like an eagle that soars, you are coming up higher now in your walk with your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. **The mind set on the flesh is death**: it breeds hostility towards God and other people. Left unchecked, meaning you are not paying attention to the Holy Spirit's promptings and correction, you will begin to decline in spirit into a mere earthly life.

Listen carefully now to the admonition of Galatians 6:7-8:

"Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life."

Do you see the simplicity of the truth here? It is in the word "whatever". Whenever you sow a thought, contemplating it by mulling it over and over again, you will reap from that thought. This means that your words and actions begin to line up with it. For whatever your thinking is will find its expression in what you do or don't do; and in what you say and don't say.

If you are sowing to the flesh in your thought life, you will reap of the flesh → corruption and death: at this point, you have become separated from your Father's intended purpose for you on this earth. If, on the other hand, you are sowing to the Spirit in your thought life through the Word of God, you will reap of the Spirit → eternal life and peace of mind: at this point, you are enjoying and doing those things that are pleasing to your heavenly Father!

This is the life principle of a seed and a plant. Nobody can reap a harvest where a seed has not first been planted, and its harvest can only be of the very same nature as that seed. In other words, you will only get apples from an apple seed. Jesus said to His questioning disciples,

*"The seed is the word of God."
(Luke 8:11)*

In His high priestly prayer, Jesus said to His Father *"Sanctify them in truth; Your word is truth."* (John 17:17) God's word, the logos, is the seed of truth. Your Father's promise to you is that according to the degree to which your mind is renewed with His word, you will in due time reap a harvest: an abundance of eternal life during your lifetime here on the earth. (John 10:10)

It is your responsibility now as a Christian, having been indwelt by the Holy Spirit at the moment of your new birth, to sow the seed of God's word into your heart by cultivating the holy habit of renewing your mind. This is done by giving quality time and attention to the reading of the Scriptures and in continuing to reflect on what you have read throughout the day. By reading, pondering, and reflecting in the Bible on what is true and lovely about your ascended Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, you will indeed grow up in Him and have a harvest of godliness in your life!

It is at this very point that many lower the bar for themselves.

- Some erroneously think that all that is required of them as a Christian is to listen to God's Word from someone else, like their pastor, a Bible teacher, or a friend.
- Others start to move on and press into God's Word for themselves. However, when opposition or distractions come, or it appears too hard to grasp what the scripture is actually saying, they give into that fleshly impulse to stop. They have forgotten that the Holy Spirit is their Teacher and that He will reward their effort in due time.

In both cases, they fail to increase in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Consequently, they make little progress in the things that are eternal, those things which are above.

*"...each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is."
(1 Corinthians 3:13)*

Do you see? It really does matter what you are setting your mind on today. The thoughts that occupy your mind have eternal ramifications. It really is that important to you! Setting your mind on things above is your heavenly Father's directive to you. It's not a suggestion. It's what you are to do. Know that certainly. You have one choice: whether to obey or disobey His directive to you. In either case, you are building moment-by-moment and choice-by-choice for eternity. Know that certainly. Will you listen, and obey?

Selah!

Beholding

Now let's move along into a deeper understanding of our heavenly Father's provision for the high calling we have in Christ: to reflect Him in the earth with ever-increasing glory.

The "how" of this may be a little overwhelming to you at first, but the answer is discovered in the Bible.

"But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit."
(2 Corinthians 3:18)

Like a key, that unlocks a door so light and air can come into a room, the word "beholding" in this scripture makes what is promised possible for every child of God. Notice that the word is a verb: it is something you do. This "doing" will involve both your co-operation and the holy discipline of your mind in viewing attentively the object of your sight!

To better lay hold of the concept of beholding, think of looking into a mirror. The gaze here involves an earnest inspection on your part that is deliberate and careful and contemplative: it is a "constantly gazing at," a "never losing sight of," an "always keeping in view" that which is set before you. For you as a new creation in Christ, it is keeping your first love in view, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Going a little deeper now, in this scripture beholding is both a conscious and a deliberate choice of your will in union with your heavenly Father's will. You never have to wonder or question that it is His will for you to behold His Son in all His glory! It is your inheritance in Christ, and you may behold Him in the gospel threaded throughout the Bible!

"Beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord": As you practice the spiritual discipline of beholding, it is important to remember what it really means. The thought here is not of reflection in order to be transformed: remember, you already are a new creation in Christ. Instead, it is of beholding until you are transformed in order to reflect. There is a difference!

Now we want to consider and understand the word "transformation." It means...

- to change the outward appearance of that which remains the same
- to assume the appearance of another

In actual transformation, an inward change first takes place in your thinking through the Word of God and the revelatory ministry of the Holy Spirit. The change in your thinking brought about by this ministry of the Word of God and the Holy Spirit will have its outward expression through your demeanor, your words, and your actions: in other words in your conduct and character.

“As in a mirror the glory of the Lord”: As in a mirror, you are to gaze upon the glory of your Lord in the Scriptures until there is such a transformation. This transformation will be effected by the Holy Spirit as you are beholding truth. In turn, you will very naturally reflect the Lord Jesus Christ in His glory and moral excellencies to those around you. Do you see now that as this new creation in Christ, and as you are beholding the One within, you will be ever increasingly an outward shining of His inward Being in you. (Colossians 1:27)

“With unveiled face”: Look again 2 Corinthians above. It says “...with an unveiled face.” This means an open face.

Look *first* at **the lower circle** on page 45 with the words above it: **“eyes of the spirit.”** Every believer in Christ has a set of new “eyes” at the moment of their new birth. Having been joined with Christ in spirit and made alive to God in resurrection life, they are now quite capable of beholding the glory of God--not just the back parts as with Moses, but here in their spirit, face to face. Notice in this circle that there is no “veil”: no obstruction blocking the gaze of the eyes of the new creation. The veil of the Law and self-sufficiency was done away with the moment you turned to the Lord Jesus Christ and believed on Him as your personal Savior!

Now look at **the circle above** with the words: **“eyes of the flesh.”** What we see here are fleshly perceptions that operate in your soul through the unrenewed thinking of your mind. In these areas of unbelief you are unable to experience the transforming power of the Holy Spirit in His holiness, His righteousness, and His love. Blinded in this way, you are blocked in these particular areas to truth, and thus from perceiving and experiencing the glory of the Lord in your spirit.

See the two curving lines in this circle? Much like a thick curtain that goes from one side of the room to the other...or like a finely meshed screen door...these fleshly distortions and misperceptions of truth hinder the Light of life from coming in, as well as block and prevent movement towards each other on either side. We see this principle in the Old Testament where there was a thick curtain between the Holy Place and the Most Holy. That veil was a barrier to anyone coming into the holy presence of the LORD Jehovah, but it also held Him back in His holiness from coming out of the Most Holy into the presence of the people.

Listen once again: It is because of faulty belief structures in your mind, called “veils” in this diagram, that you are hindered in your capacity as a child of God from clearly seeing the glory of His Son.

How then can we behold with an open face? What are we to do?

The answer is in our scripture from 2 Corinthians. It gives you the direction you need. In this scripture, the Word of God is referred to “...as a mirror.” A mirror has the ability to reflect light in order to give a true picture of what is in front of it. That mirror is the Word of God. This is what the mirrors and the water of the laver did for the priests in the Old Testament.

As a Christian, you are positionally righteous in Christ at all times. That never changes before your heavenly Father. The paradox between these two circles, though, is that through your own attempts at righteousness you will fall short of His Son’s glory every time.

“For God, who said, ‘Light shall shine out of darkness,’ is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.”

(2Corinthians 4:6)

As you learn the holy habit of coming to the Bible to open and read it, the Holy Spirit Himself will lead you into the gospel of the glory of Christ. Through the Word of God, He will also illuminate to you your own fleshly thought life: any of those areas of deception and erroneous thinking that include...

- ☐ lies
- ☐ distortions
- ☐ amplifications
- ☐ faulty ideas
- ☐ and imaginations

...that you have believed concerning God, yourself, or others along with any present or past actions or character faults that you need to confess as sin to your heavenly Father. (1John 1:9 AMP)

Upon your contrite and honest confession to Him, He immediately forgives you for that sin and at the same time, the sprinkled blood of His Son Jesus Christ cleanses you from all unrighteousness in that area. The Holy Spirit then comes into that area to bear

witness to this cleansing. It is at this very turning point, as you were beholding, that you had a transforming liberty! There has been an actual emancipation from that past bondage (to your erroneous thinking) into the actual liberty (of the Spirit of Christ.) It was at this point that the fleshly “veil” was removed. Now you may behold His glory; and now you are able to be a doer of the Word and not just a hearer! (Ephesians 4:20-24; James 2:18)

Here a new belief structure will begin to take place in the spirit of your mind through the continual washing of the water of the Word as you read it. Through this washing, as you continue to behold His glory, your mind and your spirit will unite as one. In this way you reflect with ever-increasing glory the Christ within you into the earth. You have indeed seen Christ in His glory as in a mirror!

As you continue in this journey of transformation with your Lord through beholding His glory, be encouraged now to pray whenever you open your Bible and start to read, *“Lord, show me Your glory.”* He will be delighted to do so!

Compromise

We learned in our last treasure of truth that in the process of beholding and transformation it is actually the risen and glorified Christ who is reproduced in us! This is the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit within every new creation. It is His ministry to each one of them, enabling them to enter more fully into the complete victory that has already been won for them by Jesus Christ on the Cross. With this in mind, we are ready now to look into: “Compromise: A Deception of the Believer.”

The word compromise means to settle for peace by making concessions. Much like bartering, it involves a give and a take: I’ll give you this, if you’ll give me that. Through compromise, you will be tempted as a Christian to take the easy way out by making peace with what God has already purposed for destruction...your flesh.

We can understand this more when we look at the Israelites when they were about to enter the promised land of Canaan. It was at that time that the Lord pointed out to them what they would be prone to forget, or even be tempted to disregard, as though they had not heard Him speaking to them through Moses. His great concern here for His people and their future generations is found in Deuteronomy 7:1-7. Here you will see the way in which God instructed His people to destroy any enemy that came their way. You will also see their greatest temptation: to attempt to secure the land that God had promised to them without having to stand up and fight for it!

The Lord clearly alerted and warned them about passivity and the deception of compromise. He said to them, “...*make no covenant with any of your enemies and show them no favor.*” What God knew was that for His people to love Him with an undivided heart, they could not accommodate themselves to any of the idolatry or the wicked lifestyles in the world around them. If they did, they would be robbed of the very inheritance that God was ready to give them. This He did not want to happen to them! For He knew that if they were to either tolerate or spare their enemy in any way through compromise, they would turn from following Him; and in that turning, they would then open the door of idolatry for themselves...and their future generations as well. This He also did not want to see happen to them!

Beware: Deception is the deliberate concealment and misrepresentation of the truth; and its intention is always to mislead you into error and disadvantage.

Know this: compromise of any kind is a deception for you as a new creation in Christ.

Compromise, through deception, is a tactic of Satan your enemy. He is always looking to gain an advantage over you. He uses this particular tactic of compromise because your flesh is especially susceptible to it. This is the example God gave us through Samson with his head in the lap of Delilah! Compromise is subtle and insidious, and so it is very

difficult at times to recognize it for what it truly is. Beware - whenever it is yielded to, your heart and soul will be exposed to grave danger; and when you leave it unchecked, you will forfeit what God had in His mind for you during your life-time here on earth.

The Deuteronomy passage in chapter 7 comes into sharper focus in the New Testament through 2 Corinthians 10:3-5. Listen to what it has to say to you:

“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.”

In this scripture, you see the Holy Spirit using language much like in Deuteronomy. The language in both scriptures is strong and forceful and pointed. He is using this language here to direct your focus and get your attention to what needs to be done by you.

First, let's look at the similarities in language.

In Deuteronomy:

- ☐ do not desire their gold or silver
- ☐ smite them
- ☐ destroy their images
- ☐ cut down their groves
- ☐ burn their images

In 2 Corinthians:

- ☐ the weapons of our warfare
- ☐ pulling down strongholds
- ☐ casting down arguments
- ☐ bringing every thought into captivity

Do you see the similarities? Through this pointed language, the Holy Spirit is bringing attention to your stance before Him: what your attitude must be in heart and thought. Much like that of a trained athlete, you are to be positioned in spirit at all times to do your part in being ready at any moment to put forth every effort necessary to overcome your opponents...the flesh, the world system, and Satan.

With this in mind, look now at the diagram in your syllabus on page 47.

As you look at this diagram, you see that God's primary focus in your life as His child now is in the sanctification and transformation of your soul. Do you see the two kinds of circles in the soul? Some are blank and others have crosses over them. Much like the

Israelites who took their promised land of Canaan one step at a time, this overview is showing you that your sanctification is a progressive work.

You can also see from this diagram that much like the Israelites, the majority of your struggles trace themselves to those parts of your mind, will, and emotions that you have not yet fully surrendered to the Word of God and the ministry of the Holy Spirit. It is in these pocket areas - the small blank circles in the soul - where there needs to be a renewal in your thought life according to the Word of God and a healing by His grace.

Now look at the word **“strongholds”** to the left of the circle and the bold arrow. Each pocket area is a stronghold in your soul. Each is a stronghold of sin: entrenched patterns of lies and half-truths that were woven into the fabric of your soul when you believed them. Consequently, they distort clear thinking and thus your perceptions, as well as your understanding of God’s Word in the Bible. Each blank circle is influenced through your flesh, the world system, and the demonic realm. These strongholds operate like an aggressive salesman selling his products through a conversation directed at compromise to a listening ear. Through lies and deception, your enemies will sell you a bill of goods: including distortions, faulty ideas, erroneous thinking, amplifications, imaginations, resentments, bitterness, and fleshly thinking patterns. These enemies of your soul, Satan will fuel; and can even hold you in bondage to them out of your ignorance of his schemes or of God’s Word.

A closer look: As a saint...a born one of God...you must understand the process now of overcoming strongholds. In simplicity,

- The blank circles are where you have not known *and* applied the truth. Notice that it is both. Therefore, in this area of your soul, your victory in Christ has not been gained by you experientially.
- The circles with the crosses on them are where you have known *and* applied the truth. Consequently, in this area of your soul, your victory in Christ through His Cross has been gained by you experientially.

The question: In this diagram, you need to know that the victory Jesus Christ won for you on the Cross is eternally yours. The question, though, is this: “How are you going to gain and maintain that victory experientially in your soul?”

The Lord has not left you without resources, and the answer is to the right of the diagram. In Christ, you have been given spiritual weapons and they are available to you at all times. These weapons when properly used by you will overthrow and demolish any of these strongholds of demonic deception and sin...whether yours or someone else’s.

These weapons are powerful and effective because God Himself is their source! Much like being in a court of law, with these weapons you may refute...prove to be false...any reasonings, speculations, arguments, or amplifications that exalt themselves above the true knowledge of God; and lead them away like a prisoner of war into the obedience of Christ.

*"If you continue In My word, then you are disciples indeed;
and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
(John 8:31-32)*

Now your stance: Your stance in the kingdom of God must always be an active one. That active stance is one in which you bring, as quickly as possible, any contrary thoughts...whether they are fleshly or demonic...into alignment with God's word. If you leave them unchecked, they will lead you quickly into the deception of compromise; and you will find yourself walking like a mere man in the earth. (Colossians 3:3)

Your primary weapon against the deception of compromise is a deep commitment within your heart to truth of God's Word. Your primary weapon against the deception of compromise is the truth found in the Bible and your commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord. Now, as you learn to walk in the light of that commitment and the truth of the Bible, the other weapons mentioned in this list will naturally activate and be set in motion for you.

Look now to the right of the circle at some of the weapons of your warfare that have the power of God within them to demolish any strongholds. All your weapons are spiritual and thus, very powerful. They are yours to use at all times and in all seasons. They include, but are not limited to:

- truth (John 14:6)
- prayer (Philippians 4:6; 1 Peter 5:7; Hebrews 13:15)
- purity (Proverbs 22:11)
- peace (Ephesians 2:13-16)
- agape love (1 Corinthians 13:4-7 AMP)
- forgiveness (Ephesians 4:32)
- endurance (Romans 5:3-5)
- faithfulness (Revelation 2:10)
- joy (Nehemiah 8:10)

Notice what is at the top of the list here. Know for certain that there is only one truth, and that truth is God's revelation of Himself in the Lord Jesus Christ: all that He is and all that He has done for you. The truth there will set you free indeed! It is *the lie* that has been destructive to you for it is Satan's lie that brought you into captivity and its slavery to deception. It is *the truth* that sets you free for it is always redemptive and freeing to you as you take it up in your heart.

If in reading this teaching, you realize that you have succumbed in some way to the deception of compromise in any area of your heart, you may return to the Lord in repentance by picking up another one of your weapons on the list: forgiveness.

“If we freely admit that we have sinned and confess our sins, He is faithful and just (true to His own nature and promises) and will forgive us our sins (dismiss our lawlessness) and continuously cleanse us from all unrighteousness - everything not in conformity to His will in purpose, thought, and action.” (1 John 1:9 AMP)

After having acknowledged and confessed your sin to Him, receive now by faith His forgiveness *and* cleansing with the blood of Jesus Christ. His grace is abundantly available to you now. Freely forgive others as you have been forgiven. Take up your next weapon prayer and, like Paul, pray Ephesians 3:14-19. Continue in your stance of fighting the good fight of faith with the Divine weapons of righteousness in your left hand and in your right. Move on in your walk with your Lord, by faith following after righteousness, godliness, love, patience, and meekness. Lay hold on eternal life, and when necessary bring any and all opposing thoughts into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

Remember: The condition for experiencing the ever-increasing life of Christ in your soul always remains the same...NO COMPROMISE...either with your flesh, the world system, or Satan. For in this process of His grace upon grace in your life, your heavenly Father is indeed deeply committed to seeing you all the way through to spiritual maturity. For He has promised to complete in you the good work He began in you at the moment of your salvation...right up until the day of Christ's return!

TRIAL....TRUST....TRAVEL

There is a big difference between the shadow of an object and the object itself. Knowing the difference, Paul wrote these words for us in 2 Corinthians 4:11:

"For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh."

In the light of this truth, it especially behooves Christians to seek to understand from God's point of view...His perspective...and to have a mindset of what He is doing and not doing in the midst of any kind of fiery trial, whether it be their own or someone else's. Jesus said, *"In the world you will have tribulations...."* (John 16:33) Paul also understood these words, for he said: *"...through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."* (Acts 14:22)

The word tribulation actually means "a pressing together" by a lot of pressure on what is free and unfettered, much like the crushing of grapes in a wine press or of olives in an oil press. This kind of pressure is from without and is due to circumstances and/or the antagonisms of people that will cause:

- stress
- anguish
- distress
- affliction
- and even oppression at times

As we will be learning here in "Trial....Trust....Travel" there is a hidden wisdom and purpose in the mind of God in daily delivering us over to these kinds of tribulations which are also called trials.

TRIAL

Each trial is in fact a test from God. Like a test, it is uniquely designed and engineered by Him as your heavenly Father; and therefore, each one is intended for your good as His child. *"It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline?"* (Hebrew 12:7)

Do you see here that tribulations in your life are actually God's statement that He approves of you as a son! Since He sees you in Christ, your outward condition (behavior) is being daily brought under His control in order that He may conform you to the image of His Son and your perfect standing in Him!

It is with all of this in mind that Peter wrote these words: *"Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you."* (1 Peter 4:12)

Now we can see more clearly here that every trial is in fact a test from God's point of view.

- A test because He sees and knows of your initial faith in His Son
- A test that is purifying that faith from any impurities of sin by stripping and taking away from it whatever is of pretense and false.
- A test that then surfaces and gets you in touch with whatever is lying buried in your heart: faults which He can see but you don't recognize. The sin that so easily besets you is unmet needs that you are trying to meet on your own out of hidden motives, unbelief, attitudes, idolatry, and pride.
- A test that will then reveal and measure your true spiritual stature:
 - where you still need to grow
 - where you have indeed grown
 - where you think you have grown, and have not

What you must remember: Scriptures teach us that trials are not only a part of every Christian's walk with their Lord, but indeed are very necessary and vital to it. What this means is that it would be impossible for you to grow into your Christian life without them! Be encouraged though, like the three Hebrew boys who were thrown into the fiery furnace, God Himself is in the midst of every fiery trial you may find yourself in. For He is the One who, like any wise instructor, initiates and is engineering the testing of you, His child. It is also especially important and comforting to know during these times that nothing can touch you as His child until it first passes through His hand. (Job 1:2; Luke 22:33)

What is God doing in these tribulations called trials? God is very purposefully using the arrangement and intensity of the circumstances within each trial to transform you into the likeness of His Son. He is moving you now from childhood into adulthood, from an external form of your Christianity into its internal reality: the image of Christ now in your soul. Paul said it this way: *"To live is Christ."* (Philippians 1:21; 2:12-13)

In every trial God is going ever deeper in your heart rooting out whatever is of your flesh so more of His Son can be seen in your whole person. He is especially using the intensity of these trials to unveil for you any faulty conceptions you may have of Him:

- whatever you have created Him to be or not to be in your own imagination
- whatever has taken root in your own thought life through your unbelief

God desires to use the intensity of these trials to press you more deeply into Himself through His word. For only in His word can you be pressed more deeply into truth, and only in His Word can He awaken you to righteousness. (Romans 13:11) God's word will be a living word to you: one that is alive, active, piercing, and discerning. (Hebrew 4:12-13)

What you must understand: Through His word, and only as you open it and read it, will you get to...

- know the trial
- the reason for it
- and with what aspect of truth your mind needs to be renewed

Only as you stay with the Lord Jesus in this trial and the particular truth into which the Holy Spirit leads you, will you be able to trust more deeply in your heavenly Father while having your mind renewed with truth.

TRUST

What you can be assured of is that no matter the intensity of your trial, God's Word consistently affirms for you His faithfulness in the midst of it. He will never forsake you in it because of His great love for you. He is working on your behalf fulfilling His great and marvelous and ultimate purpose of having created you in Christ Jesus: that you be glorified in His Son and He in you!

There are many wonderful and specific promises to you from God in the midst of any trial you may find yourself in. One of those promises is that you as His very own child and He as the God of all grace, after you have suffered for a little while, will Himself settle, confirm, strengthen, and establish you more deeply in truth, thus settling you down in Christ who is your true foundation of glory. (1 Peter 5:10)

TRAVEL

Knowing these things in the midst of any trial will help you to stay focused on your Lord and Savior. (Philippians 3:12) As you continue reflecting on the truths in the Scriptures towards which the Holy Spirit is pointing you, you will then begin to see through the eyes of faith rather than through the eyes of your flesh. Only with the eyes of faith will you be able to come into agreement with God your Father in the trial, putting your trust in Him and walking with Him in a deeper confidence in who He is,

understanding and knowing Him more personally in His purpose and ways now; and thus, He has drawn you near to Him:

- to receive mercy and to find grace to help you
- and you, being more willing now to respond “Yes, Lord” in this trial,
- ready now to rely on Him and obey Him...
- *“this is the way, walk in it” (Isaiah 30:21)*

In this way you enter into His rest, and you will be at peace with Him throughout the duration of the trial. You can start now to act in a believing way. It is through your obedience to Him in the trial that you actually begin to travel with Him through it! For in every response of obedience to Him in the trial, you are being moved along so you may grow in faith while being transformed into the image of Christ in increasing glory.

PRODUCES :

Whatever the duration or the intensity of the trial, as long as you look to the Lord Jesus Christ and trust in Him and remain committed to Him, God your Father will use the trial to produce in you:

- the peaceable fruit of righteousness
- patience
- proven character
- hope
- purity of soul
- a sincere love for the brethren
- and His love for the lost

...thus reflecting and manifesting His Son more and more through your soul and body. This is God’s kindness and power and wisdom to you in every trial!

As the Holy Spirit brings you into a greater understanding of how God the Father very purposefully and strategically manages and orchestrates every trial for you, and how it then becomes beneficial to you if properly yielded to, your response to Him in the trial will change from...

non-compliance		giving thanks to the Lord
murmuring		
discouragement	to	counting it all joy
hopelessness		and greatly rejoicing in Him!

...even while in the midst of the suffering. This brings great joy to your heavenly Father's heart, for it says that you are indeed trusting Him in the midst of it.

YOUR RESPONSE

Can you see more readily now the why of such a response? Can you see that it is God your heavenly Father who is actually training you through the trial to depend more firmly on Him and to receive and trust His word more willingly and more quickly? As you see this more clearly, you will also come to understand that the quicker you can acknowledge Him in the trial, the quicker He can move you into His Word and the leaning of your entire personality on Him in absolute trust and confidence in His power, wisdom, and goodness. The quicker you can do that, the quicker you will be able to travel through the trial and be out on the other side of it transformed into the image of Christ.

What you need to know now is that in any trial of any kind, you must guard against the temptation of removing yourself out of it and/or from turning your back on following the Lord.

Look again at the picture on page 49. See the curved line at the bottom? Each cross here indicates a juncture in your walk with the Lord where you have properly yielded yourself to the Holy Spirit in His work of sanctification in you. As you were beholding Jesus Christ in His glory in the midst of that trial, and as you persevered in the reflection of that aspect of truth that the Holy Spirit brought you into, there has been a real death in your flesh and an actual transformation into the image of Christ. What this means is that more of Him is being reflected and manifested through you now so that others can see and know Him. (Romans 8:29) This is what the Christian life is all about: these kinds of adjustments. This is how you travel through a trial; and this is, in fact, what will fulfill you!

WHY

Always remember: God's glory is the highest goal of every trial you may find yourself in; and Christ glorified in you is God's glory!

Remember also that there is a personal and eternal reward for you in every trial: whatever has been conformed to the image of Christ in you during that particular trial will remain yours eternally. In the midst of your suffering, God has been seeking your highest good so you will actually be able to share in the new order of things that will be ushered in at the return of the Lord Jesus Christ when He sets up His kingdom here on earth!

As you come to understand these things more deeply, you will learn to more readily embrace the Cross as Jesus did; and be encouraged in the midst of it to endure its suffering and remain faithful to Him while persevering in your walk with Him!

Remember now that God is attempting to move you from shadow into substance so you may obtain as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your soul! In light of this, remember then His point of view of what to do: “...*let us press on to maturity*” (Hebrews 6:11)

In closing, consider these words from J.O Frazer: “We must press on to maturity. We must attain to ‘the measure of the full stature of Christ’, and not remain in God’s kindergarten indefinitely.”

So I say to you again in the words of Paul: “...*press on to maturity.*”

The Two Foundations

Saving faith is always a living faith that not only confesses Jesus Christ as Savior, but also obeys Him as Lord. Our own state before God is always Jesus' deepest concern. While here on earth He concluded His sermon on the mountain with a very solemn and pointed parable that began with this question: *"Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord', and do not do what I say?" (Matthew 7:21-27; Luke 6:46-49)* Jesus makes it very clear to us here that genuine faith in Him is never a matter of lip service.

Indeed there is a Divine law of spiritual growth for all Christians: a principle that not only instructs each one of us in how to grow in grace, but the standard by which that growth is measured. As we will soon learn in this Treasure of Truth, the strength and beauty of a Christian's life is discovered and seen through this one word: obedience.

As we start getting into this study we can see by its very title, "The Two Foundations," that it has to do with the idea of building: meaning to construct as a permanent part of, or to give form to, according to a definite plan. In any building process perspective is necessary. A Christian's perspective is to be from God's desire for each one of His children. His desire for Christ-like growth is that each one make consistent and unmistakable progress toward the goal of one day seeing the Lord face to face, blameless and pure. (1 John 3:2-3)

We all know that one can build wisely or foolishly. Paul admonishes us in 1 Corinthians 3:10-11 that as Christians we are to take heed and build carefully on the foundation of the Rock, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Lets look now at the words on page 50.

- On the left: **building upon the sand**
 - a man heard Jesus' words and did not put them into practice
 - through a mindset that was temporal
 - he built his house with the world in mind
 - when the storm came it fell and was completely destroyed
 - he had built foolishly

- On the right: **building upon the Rock**
 - a man heard Jesus' words and put them into practice
 - through a mindset that was heavenly
 - he built with eternity in mind
 - when the storm came it stood the test and remained
 - he had built wisely

Now we can look *more closely* at the two diagrams: The gold “I” **always** speaks of your true identity as a new creation in Christ which never changes. However...

If you are building upon the Rock: the “I” in the spirit means that you are drawing your true identity, purpose, and life from God

If you are building upon the sand: the “I” means that you are drawing a false sense of identity, purpose, and life independently from God - through your soul and/or body (e.g. your intellect and/or your own physical strength or appearance)

Look at the difference in the soul

On the left side (building upon sand) :

- the old lifestyle is being continued
- with the soul that is corruptible...in a state of decline and deterioration short of destruction

On the right side (building upon the Rock):

- with your newly created capacity for obedience to God by the Holy Spirit’s power within you
- love is being perfected, and character is being built in the soul...just like you do with building blocks: in faith you are supplying moral virtue, and in moral virtue, knowledge, and in knowledge, self-control, and in self-control perseverance, and in perseverance, godliness, and in godliness, brotherly kindness, and in brotherly kindness, love

“For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true (fuller) knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (2Peter 1:8)

Notice now what lies between building upon the sand and building upon the Rock: it’s the word choose. Your choice here is to either obey or disobey God. Much like reading a thermometer, your choices will be a gage for you as to where you are actually drawing your identity and purpose and life: whether from God or yourself. I have discovered that a good question to ask myself along the way in daily living...like lifting the hood of your car to check the motor oil...is “Where am I drawing life from right now in making this decision? Is it from God...or my own resources?”

- For the reality is that through the choices you and I make, we are building moment by moment for eternity.

- Jesus certainly understood this when He said these words: *"By your endurance you will gain your souls."* For it is only through faith in Him and your subsequent obedience to Him that you gain in time the salvation of your soul. (Luke 21:19; 1 Peter 1:9)

In the same way that your choices demonstrate where you are drawing your identity from, so do your trials. In fact, a trial is actually a test that is measuring true spiritual growth in every child of God. Trials, when rightly faced, will produce in your soul a harvest of righteousness as well as the development of perseverance and proven character.

When facing a trial your perspective and your attitude is paramount. In his epistle, James tells us that the proper attitude for any Christian in meeting any adversity is to count it all joy. Why joy? Joy is not an emotional reaction, but a deliberate intelligent appraisal from God's perspective...of viewing the trial as a means of moral and spiritual growth.

Listen carefully now to James' words in James 1:12. *"Blessed, happy, to be envied is the man who is patient under trial and stands up under temptation, for when he has stood the test and been approved he will receive the (victor's) crown of life which God has promised to those who love Him."*

The reality here is that your faith in Christ can only reach full maturity when faced with trials and opposition. Trials in fact serve as a heavenly scouring pad, a discipline that if properly yielded to will purge your faith of any kind of dross, stripping away from it the false way of pretense so that what remains is pure. (Psalm 119:28-32)

Just as a coin has two sides, every trial of your faith also has two sides. On one side is a test and on the other side are temptations. Remember, it is one trial with two sides! This means that in the midst of the trial, you will experience both a test and temptations. You must gird your loins with this truth so you are assured in your understanding that God is the One who actually oversees and manages both sides of the trial since He is Lord of all. (Job 1:8-12)

Now let's gird our loins with even more truth for various trials as we look first at the left side of the page and then the right side:

On the left side > **Temptations**... (James 1:13-15)

The word temptation refers to some form of pressure in our lives, whether it is from the world or from Satan, which God uses to prove our faith and to develop in us perseverance and godly character.

"Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am tempted from God...' " [v.13]

God's very nature in the Scriptures demonstrates to you that He can never be a source of temptation...an enticement to evil...to anyone. His perfect holiness puts Him entirely beyond the reach of such a low tactic.

Satan is the external source of all temptation in any kind of trial. For as your adversary, he desires your downfall. In the midst of any trial, he looks specifically for any kind of unrenewed thinking, vulnerabilities, strongholds, or uncrucified flesh in you. His goal in temptation is to solicit you to evil, much like that smooth salesman who will stand at your door and try to sell you a bill of goods. (1 Peter 5:8)

What you must realize is that the inward nature of temptation lies within your own flesh. You can be assured, though, that no new creation in Christ has to fall into sin because of temptation! (1 Corinthians 10:13)

"But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed." [v.14]

What will happen when you leave the enticement unchallenged?

- In passivity...a do nothing attitude...you will then start to succumb to that unrenewed thinking and those fleshly desires, and you will be carried away by them.
- If left unchecked here, you will increasingly be enticed by lusts that are springing from a delusion...a false belief in spite of invalidating evidence...which are making their appeal to your unhealed emotions.
- If left unchecked at this point, you will begin to conceive a stronghold in your thinking as you entertain and dwell on those thoughts...forming in your mind a belief structure in which you are holding to your own opinion...your own judgment.
- When left unchecked here, sin is actually birthed, having been brought into existence. When it is fully matured, that sin will bring forth its own fruit: DEATH. You reap for yourself corruption in your soul, and the eternal result will be that you have built with wood, hay, and stubble.

Now on the right side > **Trials & Tests**... (James 1:2-4)

As you undergo various trials and their testing, the pressures of that trial will surface the impurities of sin for you. This is God's wisdom and design. His desire and purpose

is to bring healing and restoration to your soul through the trial, thus making you strong, firm, and steadfast in faith.

“...knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.” [v. 3]

A test is a standard of measurement. Testing has in mind the idea of proving genuineness or quality as well as growth. The testing of your faith in God’s hand will actually do both: proving the genuineness of your faith in Christ *and* where you have grown spiritually or where you have not. God’s desire through the various testings within a trial is to eventually promote you, lifting you up above the circumstances as He is establishing you in truth and building you up in Christ. (1 Peter 4:11; Psalm 91:14-16)

What happens in a trial when you are properly submitting to God:

- The attitude in which you take any test is crucial. The first test in any trial then will be your attitude towards it. This requires a true knowledge of God and His perspective in the circumstances. This phase of the trial often requires many adjustments and much patience! Only when you are seeing the circumstances from God’s point of view can you start to respond to the trial and its suffering by making necessary adjustments to Him with joy.
- As you undergo the testing through the various pressures of the trial, the Holy Spirit will use Scriptures you read to apply truth to your areas of weakness or vulnerability. The truth of God’s Word will make its appeal to your mind, and then begin to quiet any fleshly emotions. Truth has to become more settled and established in your mind in order for you to walk in it. This takes time spent in these scriptures. Jesus said, *“If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you shall know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” (John 8:31-32)* As you reflect on the truth of Scripture, you will find yourself becoming empowered more and more to walk by faith; and thus, you become more established in your walk with the Lord.
- At the same time the truth of God’s Word will be surfacing and exposing the impurities of any sins that are yet in your heart. (Hebrews 4:12) This is both God’s faithfulness and mercy to you. As you start to recognize these sins for what they really are:
 - You learn to respond quickly to the Holy Spirit’s conviction of any impure thoughts, motives, and/or behaviors...
 - by humbling yourself quickly, and genuinely repenting of and confessing your sins to your heavenly Father...

- and then learning to persevere in your walk with His Son as you continue diligently in taking thoughts captive to the obedience of Christ and pursuing a holy lifestyle that is pleasing to Him.
- As you are responding to truth, you will in fact be found enduring in the midst of the trial. From the Greek, the word “endure” means to stay or remain under, to undergo, to take patiently. As you remain under the trial, undergoing the testing and taking patiently the correction it brings to you, you will in time be developed in patience and grow in maturity in your walk with the Lord. This is LIFE. The eternal result will be that you will have built with gold, silver, and precious stones.

Whether you are facing the left or right side of the trial one principle is sure for both:

- The thought you sow is the act you will reap.
- The act you sow will be a habit you reap.
- The habit you sow will be the character you reap
- The character you sow is the destiny you will reap

God’s desire for you in any trial is to restore you and make you strong, firm, and steadfast in faith. So don’t be deceived in any way: there is no fence to sit on here.

Choose life: choose to obey God. Now really does count for eternity!

The Carpenter's Tools

Introduction: "If the life of a Christian is to be pleasing to God it must be properly adjusted to Him in all things. Too often we place the emphasis in our own lives upon the application of this principle to some single detail of our behavior or of our work for Him. Often we fail therefore to appreciate either the extent of the adjustment called for or, at times, even the point from which it should begin." Sit, Walk, Stand, by Watchman Nee.

Getting God's Perspective:

Have you noticed that the theme of suffering is threaded throughout the Bible, both in the Old and New Testament? Getting God's perspective on this subject must be especially important to us, and as we will learn in this treasure, it is a key for every Christian in their walk with the Lord!

Perspective, the vantage point from which one is able to view something, is what makes it possible for someone who doesn't understand to make sense out of something that makes no sense... like a sailor in the crow's-nest near the top of the ship's mast..."I see it!"

Having a perspective is also much like what happens when you are making a puzzle with all the pieces scattered in front of you. As you are connecting the pieces and they all come together you see now...from above...the whole.

God's perspective on everything is always an eternal one...and the most important one as well. The Lord Jesus certainly had His Father's perspective from above as He went to the Cross. Hebrews 12:2 tells us it was for the joy set before Him that He endured the Cross. From this perspective, Jesus saw what lay beyond His suffering on the Cross...His resurrection and ascension to the throne of God and His exaltation... and all the souls that would be reached through His sacrificial death for their sins. Paul also had a similar and proper perspective for his own sufferings as well as ours. Listen very carefully to his words now from Romans 8:18: *"For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us."*

In the light of eternity, all suffering comes into its proper perspective. It is only here that your final glorious salvation at the second coming of Christ can come into the forefront of your thinking, and your trials can then fade back into their proper place of being temporal. It is in the light of this reality that you can rejoice and have joy and confident expectation...even while suffering! (1 Peter 1:3-8)

From the Scriptures we discover that God's infinite wisdom in overseeing the sufferings of the righteous is on a grand scale way beyond the present and what our finite minds can think of. There is indeed something very precious being accomplished through this vehicle we know as suffering...

- not only expediting God's purposes on an eternal dimension,
- but also making known to you His infinite love and wisdom.

Ephesians 2:7 says it like this: *"...so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace toward us in Christ."* This is God's eternal perspective, and as you look from His vantage point you will be able to see with the eyes of faith that suffering is indeed worth its weight in gold!

As we start to move along now into "The Carpenter's Tools" we are going to gain more perspective and understanding of how God actually uses suffering as one of His choicest and most effective tools in accomplishing for us what He had in mind all along...from before the foundations of the earth!

You will learn in this treasure of truth, God's conforming hand is actually most active experientially in your life in the midst of tribulation, for it is then that He is pursuing you and desiring to change a particular erroneous belief about Him. This will in turn affect the way

- you think and see yourself,
- and live and interact with other people.

Understanding God's Purpose:

The goal or aim for which something exists is known as its "purpose." For you to grasp more deeply God's purpose in suffering, you will need to understand these very foundational principles:

- God measures everything in you from start to finish by the perfections of His Son
- your Christian faith does not lie in the removal of weakness and suffering, but in the manifestation of divine power in the midst of them (1 Corinthians 10:13; 2 Corinthians 4:11)

At the very moment of your salvation, the Holy Spirit set you apart for obedience and holy living. Nothing in your life is hidden from God: no weakness, no strength, no flaw in character, no motive (whether pure or impure), and no sin. Everything is open and

naked before Him. The Father's aim in your life since your new birth in Christ is to press you more deeply into the image of His Son, so that His Son might have first place in everything. (Hebrews 4:13; Romans 8:29; Colossians 1:18)

This indeed is God's work from before the foundation of the earth. In the midst now of this transforming work of the Holy Spirit there are two key points that you must remember...to keep carefully in your thinking...your memory:

- The purpose for which suffering exists in a believer's life is outside of himself. It is the joy of knowing Christ! (Philippians 3:7-10)
- In any suffering, you are not alone! Think on this: Christ has already suffered what you are presently experiencing...and overcame. At the right hand of God now, He has all the resources of heaven to do whatever is needful for you in the midst of your tribulation and suffering. He is not only able to sympathize with you, but is also presently with you in it. (John 16:33; Hebrews 2:18 & 4:14-16)

It is also important that you know why you are suffering. There are three kinds of afflictions you will suffer in your walk with the Lord:

- For sin: (2 Samuel 12:12-15)
- For transformation: (Romans 8:28-30)
- For righteousness: (1 Peter 2: 20-23)

Affliction and suffering can vary in intensity, depth, and duration. Yet in the hands of God, and when properly submitted to by you, suffering actually acts for you. It is a refining agent that is actually purifying your faith in Christ from anything that is hindering the reflection of Him in your life. At the same time it develops in you consistency in godly thinking and living. In this way, God pursues you. He is loving you and moving you right along into being fully developed in Christ...growing you into love's complete perfection...a faith that lacks nothing.

Finding God's Promises:

God's promise is His word to you, unfailing and unchangeable. God has very specific and personal promises for you in the midst of any fiery trial or affliction. In order to have them in the midst of the suffering you will have to open your Bible. As you are reading His Word, the Holy Spirit will direct you to specific promises for that trial, and through them lead you through the affliction. As you continue to read and meditate on them, you will be strengthened in faith to believe God in the trial, as well as receive His wisdom for it.

Listen again to this wonderful promise that we looked at in “Trial...Trust...Travel.”

“And the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will Himself restore you and make you strong, firm, and steadfast.” (1 Peter 5:10 NIV)

- restore you: to render fit...indicating the close relationship between character and destiny, perfectly joined
- and make you:
 - strong: established in the truth which is in you
 - firm: enabled to be strong in grace, increased in strength
 - steadfast: to conceive in your heart a resolve

This is God’s wonderful and gracious promise to you no matter how challenging and overwhelming the circumstances you are facing may appear to be. Like light at the end of the tunnel, this promise will enable you by faith to partner with Him in the trial in spite of its suffering, as you are being pressed more and more deeply into Him. For you are God’s workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works, that He prepared beforehand so that you would walk in them. (Ephesians 2:10; Hebrews 13:20-21)

Overview:

By looking at the diagram on page 55, you can see the intensity of the pressure that comes upon you in a fiery trial. In the same way, Paul talked about being afflicted on every side. (2 Corinthians 7:5) This is what makes it a fiery ordeal...there is pressure on every side...and there appears to be no end in sight...it just keeps coming at you. In spite of the way it may feel, keep the apostle Peter’s perspective from 1 Peter 4:12 in mind...not to be surprised at the fiery ordeal as though something strange were happening to you.

Your perspective in a particular trial will be crucial. What is God refining in you? As you read the Scriptures, the Holy Spirit will lead you to the truth for that particular refining and strengthening. Then, as you take the time to reflect and meditate on this truth, faith will come. (Romans 10:17) With faith you can step out now in this truth and begin to walk as His child in a new way. As you keep walking by faith, little by little “this new way of walking” becomes a holy habit for you; and in time, there will be an actual manifestation of this truth in your life.

The Carpenters Tools:

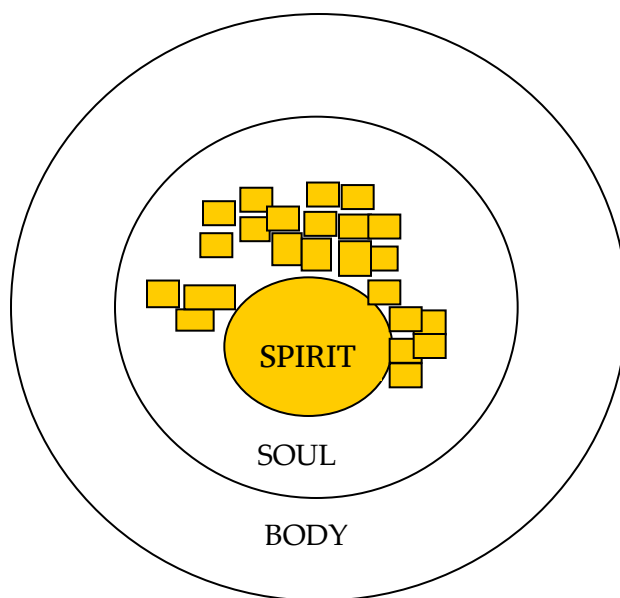
Suffering and the Refining process...why the intensity of the suffering?

- “What I am suppose to be learning is what I am in fact resisting.” It is in the fiery crucible of tribulations, trials, and afflictions that the impurities of your sin surface for you. When you see them for what they are, then you can genuinely repent of them and be forgiven and cleansed and filled afresh with the Holy Spirit, and now go in the right direction. This is God’s kindness to you! (2 Corinthians 7:9; 1John1:9; Acts 3:19)
- Tribulation when properly submitted to will bring about endurance. Endurance or perseverance is the ability to undergo pressure. Your flesh wants an avenue of escape from the trial...and a quick one at that. The beauty of remaining under the pressure of the trial, as you seek the Lord and are submitting to Him and making your adjustments to Him, is that you are learning to deny your flesh the pleasure of its sin. As you do that, your flesh is actually experiencing death and you are becoming more developed in Christ-like character through right choices by walking after the spirit...as well as being established in confidence and the rejoicing of hope. (Romans 5:3-5; Hebrews 6:19-20)

Endurance, Affliction, and Perseverance...what good comes from it?

- In the middle of page 55, look now at the little square-like bricks in the soul. When properly submitted to, perseverance will bring about a transformation in the soul. The soul in the diagram has actually been unified with the spirit...now aligned and in harmony with it.

Now look at the diagram below and see this transformation of the soul from God’s perspective...a heavenly one...from above.



THESE MORAL GRACES

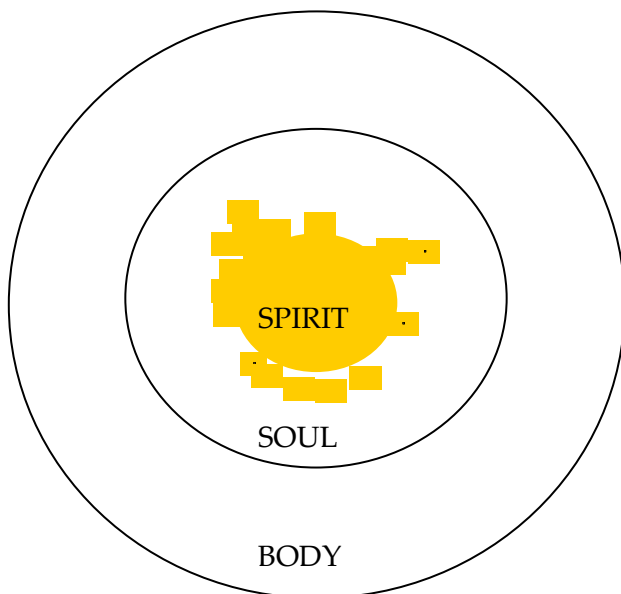
(2 Peter1:3-8)

Like little mirrors - each gold “brick” is an area of eternal transformation experientially. It is where faith has been exercised with a view to God’s righteousness in His Word. Faith, having brought union with God in Christ, producing now the fruit of God’s will in your soul...proven character that exemplifies -

Christ in You!

In the midst of every trial God is teaching you to know His grace...in a way that you have never known before...and to cleave to Him in a way that never would have happened otherwise. He is helping you to overcome sins that have previously mastered you in your experiences of inadequacy and imperfection. He is exercising you His child – His set apart one – in His ways of adult godliness through steps of obedience to His Word...from infancy into an experience that is more adult and mature in Christ.

Now look at the diagram below...



TRANSPARENCY (1 Thessalonians 5:23 AMP)

All the gold...the inter-mingling of your spirit and soul...Christ the King now in first place in your spirit *and* soul...the Glorious One formed in you with the outshining of His radiance...His resurrection life and absolute perfection through you...the miracle He has worked here is Christ in you - spirit, soul and body...the hope (confident expectation) of glory!

Having already secured an eternal inheritance for you in Christ, in the midst of the fiery ordeal your heavenly Father is now actually fitting you for it. Out of the forging and shaping that is happening in the midst of the fiery ordeal comes...

- a new partnership with Christ
- with new loyalty to Him
- and fellowship

... much closer to God now than in the beginning of the affliction and its suffering. Now can you see how affliction and suffering is indeed worth its weight in gold?

In the Light of all this:

"Therefore, gird the loins of your mind for action, be sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ!" (1 Peter 1:13)

To God Be His Glory!

Salvation of the Soul

As we begin this treasure of truth, it behooves us to have an understanding of the first word in our title. In the holy Bible, the word “salvation” involves...

- deliverance from those factors which constrain and confine
- freedom from limitation
- victory over one's foes

It ultimately means to bring into a spacious environment. With all of this as a proper framework, salvation has its fullest expression throughout the Old and New Testaments in deliverance from sin and all its consequences...for whom the Son sets free is free indeed!

When anyone puts their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, the Holy Spirit immediately becomes the seal of Jesus' perfect work of atonement on the Cross for them. As the seal of their redemption, the Holy Spirit is the One who guarantees the authenticity of their salvation throughout all eternity, including...

- the past: their human spirit came alive through His work of regeneration
- the present: now there is His ongoing work of sanctification in their soul
- the future: their bodies will put on immortality by His quickening power at the Lord's return

Paul had this truth in mind when he wrote the following words to the church at Corinth...

*“...you are God's field, God's building.”
(1 Corinthians 3:9)*

As you ponder this scripture, you will begin to understand that your life is no longer your own. Like a field that is purchased with something in mind, God has made an investment in your soul through His own Son's death and resurrection. For the life blood of the Lord Jesus Christ shed on the Cross of Calvary was the ransom that cancelled your debt.

Now let's retrace our steps for just a moment. Do you remember from our first treasure of truth, “The Model of Man,” how God created man? When He created man in His image and likeness, he was created as a triune creature composed of spirit, soul, and body. This has never changed. Genesis 2:7 then brings us additional light. There it is written, “*And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a **living soul**.*” Much like an integrated circuit board, we see here the perfect union of the soul and body through the breath of God that

was breathed into him. Man then became a living soul. With a closer look, you will understand the intrinsic value of the soul in the eyes of God its Creator. For the soul of man with its own faculties is immortal...deathless...it will continue forever. By God's design, it was to be filled and flooded throughout with God's own fullness. This purpose has never changed either.

During His earthly lifetime, Jesus brought the point home of the soul's value to his disciples, realizing the great price that would be paid for it through His own suffering and sacrificial death. After openly rebuking Peter, knowing that they had not yet come into the knowledge of...

- the true character of His Father in heaven,
- or of the worth of a man's soul,
- or of the reality of the age that was to come,

...He spurred them on with an eternal perspective from above by asking them these two pointed questions: *"For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? For what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"* (Mark 8:37)

What Jesus knew: Each soul is indeed very precious, for each soul is created by God with an eternal value in mind and an eternal destiny. Knowing that personal achievements and material possessions are only temporary...and can never truly satisfy the soul's thirst for living waters...Jesus looked beyond to the state of a man's soul at death. He knew that it would be entirely possible for someone at the end of their earthly life to have gained nothing eternally and to have lost everything. One's soul does indeed have eternal ramifications!

With this in mind: Look now at the diagram on page 58 in your syllabus. The *inner* circle is your human spirit in union with the Holy Spirit. It is alive to God. The *outer* circle is your soul made up of your mind, will, and emotions. It is now a work in progress, for on-going salvation begins to take place experientially in your soul from the moment of your new birth in Christ...

- through the sanctifying truth of God's word in the Bible...(John 17:17)
- and through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit...(John 16:13)

What you see: Like any field, your soul has wonderful potential for fruitfulness; and like any field, it is in need of cultivation! Your heavenly Father brings about a harvest of righteousness in your soul much like a farmer does in his field...the land is plowed, seed is sown, then watered, and in time, a crop comes forth. (Hebrews 4:12-13; Acts 2:42; Hebrews 12: 4-11; 1 Peter 2:2)

The Holy Spirit's work of sanctification in your soul however, requires your co-operation. (Philippians 2:12-13) As you depend on Him and as you yield to Him in His sanctifying work in your soul and He begins the process of removing any self-centeredness from within...the more you will grow in respect to your salvation. When you look at the two circles together, it looks like any well cared for garden: it is flourishing! The soul is being productive and fruitful and prospering in God's intended purpose for its creation.

Do you see the little boxes in the soul on the diagram? These "cultivated" areas are actually functioning under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and are being lived in the power of the Holy Spirit. Like mirrors, each one of these areas...and all of them together...are reflecting the glory of His grace, love, and wisdom. For God the Father is a rewarder of those who seek Him!

Jesus taught His disciples this same principle of kingdom prosperity:

*"He who loves his life loses it,
and he who hates his life in this world will keep it."
(John 12:25)*

Matthew 16:25 says it this way: *"For whoever desires to save his life will **lose** it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will **find** it."*

On the left of the circle: whoever loves his soul...his present temporal life here on earth and gives it first place...being caught up with the cares and the concerns of the world...taking precautions to secure it for themselves...will sadly never attain it - and will fall short of actually experiencing eternal life within their soul, while also standing in danger of losing their soul eternally.

On the right of the circle: whoever hates his soul...is not caught up by the world and what it has to offer...whose mind is set instead on things above through the scriptures...willing to suffer affliction for the sake of the gospel...and living their life to honor God - they find something far more valuable, and far beyond what they had ever thought possible...a higher life...a spiritual life actually springing up within their soul.

The reality: Eternal life is already yours in Christ (smaller circle.) Your heavenly Father's will is that you might possess it experientially in your soul (larger circle with boxes.) Any trial that comes into your life is an opportunity for you to go deeper into truth in the Bible that will bring a renewing of your mind in this particular area. This is how God uses trials for the sanctification of your soul...now setting it apart from sin for Him!

Reflect upon Ray Stedman's words under the diagram: "Our souls are thus being saved as we live day-by-day in relationship to the Son of God. That saved soul is what we have left after this life, and only that. All else is wood, hay and stubble to disappear in the judging flame of God."

The contrast:

- Through your continued co-operation in the Word of God and with the Holy Spirit, your soul over time will become fruitful...
- but through complacency and the passivity of your flesh, it will remain stagnant and non-productive.

The way you live your life today...whether it be on the left side of the circle or the right side...really will make an eternal difference. For when your days have been completed here on earth and your physical body dies, you immediately enter into eternity wherever you were in this life...in whatever state your soul is in.

Remember...

- whatever you built with in this life that was eternal...gold, silver, precious stones...it will remain yours at the judgment seat of Christ...you will receive a reward.
- whatever you built with in this life that was temporal...wood, hay, stubble...it will burn at the judgment seat of Christ...you will suffer loss, but be saved

That day is surely coming upon all of us...there is no escaping it. (2 Peter 3:10-14) The question is, "Do you live your life as though you believe it?" Understand that you will be tempted over your life-time here on earth to neglect so great a salvation as this and your eternal interest in it... an accounting that will entail the sum of gain and of loss!

Remain focused: keep looking to Jesus as the author and finisher of faith so you don't fall away from your steadfastness in the faith and become shipwrecked! Remember that in your perseverance and obedience there is great reward...not only in your lifetime here, but also in the future age to come. In spite of sacrifices that are going to be required of you, it is well worth the living of it!

If the Holy Spirit is convicting you of having turned away from your Lord, and your soul has become dry and empty as a result...repent and come back to Him with a full surrender in that area. Whether there was a need for repentance or not, continue now in putting the interests of the Lord's kingdom into first place in your life. As you do that,

your soul will be enjoying the fullest possible experience of kingdom life now. (Galatians 5:22-23; John 17:3)

Finally now take to heart this charge of the apostle Peter in his second letter in his first chapter verses 10-11 to those he so dearly loved:

“Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

Journey at a Glance

Both the charts that you are about to look at in your syllabus on page 60 and 61 are actually a brief synopsis of the previous 22 chapters of Unless a Grain of Wheat! Together they are a panoramic view of your salvation and new life in Christ. One (page 60) uses the children of Israel's journey out of Egypt through the Wilderness and into the Promised Land as a backdrop for the Christian's journey of transformation into Christ; while the other (page 61) magnifies the truth that through Christ He surely brought you OUT to bring you IN.

This teaching then is meant to reinforce what you have already learned about what it means to be saved, and how to abide in Christ as a new creation...thus making freedom in Him a reality for you!

As we begin to look more in depth at the diagram on page 60 each of the six circles in the chart, remember that the **I** represents your true identity. The position of the **I** in any one of these circles, however, shows you the source from which you are actually drawing your life, identity, and purpose...whether from God or your own resources.

We will be moving now from left to right across the top of the page, and then in the same manner at the bottom of the page.

We can start now with the first circle:

Egypt (Treasures 1-2)

At first glance, we see here the tri-unity of man as the LORD God originally created him in the beginning: made up of a human spirit, a soul, and a physical body. A triune creation, man was made in God's image and was given dominion in the earth. Tragically, Adam succumbed to the wile of his enemy Satan. Through disobedience, he rebelled against his Creator's will to walk by faith in a loving and dependent relationship with Him. Through this sin, Adam fell from his high and noble estate in God. He immediately experienced the penalty for his sin: death...his spirit was now empty of God's life within it!

With a closer look, we see the entire nature of man without the Holy Spirit...the human spirit is empty of life and so, dead to God. This is the moral condition of every person who is born into this earth. Just as the Israelites were born into slavery in Egypt and lived under Pharaoh's rule, you and I were born into this world with a sin nature inherited from Adam. Consequently, we were slaves to sin and lived under the rule of Satan, the god of this world.

Notice where the **I** is in the circle. It is over the soul and the body. Being dead in trespasses and sins, they are separated from God in spirit. Without the light of the life of Christ within their spirit, they are in fact walking in spiritual darkness. Independent of God their Creator, their life can only revolve around their soul and their physical body. With these as “drivers”, they are actually living alone in the futility of their own thinking and their own ways and according to the course of this world. It is through the blindness of their own hearts that they function only by what “I think”, what “I decide”, and what “I feel” in their soul or their body. Thus, the essence of who they are is soulical. Sadly, this is as high and as far as they can go in their lifetime on this earth.

Red Sea - Salvation (Treasures 3-5)

This circle is a picture of the new creation in Christ where the spirit is alive to God. Their human spirit has been regenerated by the Holy Spirit, having been born of God from above. He or she is now a son of God, clothed in Christ, and an heir of salvation. No longer of this world, they are forever a member of God’s household and a citizen of heaven. While here on earth, they are a sojourner...a traveler...who from this point onward will be on a personal journey of transformation into the image of Christ.

In the Old Testament, the Israelites were spared the judgment of death on the first born only when...through their faith in the LORD...they sacrificed an unblemished lamb and then applied its blood to the lintel of each of their households. In much the same way, you and I are freed from sin’s penalty of death when we put our faith into God the Father through the shed blood of His only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Having been liberated from Egyptian bondage, the Israelites crossed over into the wilderness through the Red Sea. Even so, anyone who puts their faith into the Lord Jesus Christ immediately passes out of death into eternal life. For at this very moment of total dependence on Him for their salvation from sin, they are delivered from this present evil age and are no longer under the dominion (authority) of Satan. They have been transferred into the kingdom of Christ forever!

Notice where the **I** is in the circle. It is in the spirit. The spirit is now the new creation’s center of operation. It is from here that they are to draw their life, identity, and purpose. It is from here that resurrection life is to flow through them, having been set apart from sin *and* set apart to God through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. The One who is motivating them in life now is Christ Himself...whether they are aware of it or not. He is the center of their being! They are no longer to live for themselves, but for the One who died and rose again for them. From this point on, what qualifies them as spiritual is that their human spirit is now eternally alive to God their Father.

The Wilderness (Treasures 6-7)

In this circle, we come into the understanding that a war wages over the soul of every new creation in Christ. In spite of their very best intentions to do what is right, every child of God begins to discover a different principle operating in the members of their bodies...one that will wage war against the principle of God in their inner man. This internal war is a struggle within them in which the believer is tempted...just like Adam...to walk away from their devotion to Christ and live independently of God.

After the LORD's mighty and miraculous deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt and the destruction of Pharaoh and his armies in the Red Sea, then the Israelites entered into various testings in the wilderness so they could see how their faith would stand up under pressure...how dependent and how confident they really were in their God. Sadly, due to pride and unbelief, their faith was found to be lacking. They spent the next 40 years wandering around in the desert instead of entering the Promised Land...only a 3 days journey away. Their wanderings were indeed a time of futility for them...for like us when we go around in a circle...they got nowhere!

Having been born of the Holy Spirit, what we see here in this circle is that fleshly lusts begin to war up against the soul of every believer in Christ. It is an attempt of the flesh to have its own way by having its expression in the soul and through the body. By looking again at the circle, you can clearly see that this conflict comes in through the unrenewed mind of the believer. This is the battleground. There are yet identity issues, character issues, and control issues that the flesh will attempt to exploit here for its own gain. Christians often wander around in these vulnerabilities through pride and unbelief; consequently, they never enter into the fullness of what God has for them in Christ while here on earth.

The Jordan (Treasures 8-10)

Dropping down to the circle on the left, you see now the Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Cross says that what is true about Him is also true about anyone who has received Him as Lord and their personal Savior. The Cross here takes you out of the way...and then into a deeper understanding of your identification with Jesus both in His death to sin and His resurrection to new life in God His Father. That identification with the Lord says that what happened to Him in His death, burial, and resurrection actually happened to you at the moment you believed into Him: your old man was put to death, and the new man was raised up into newness of life whether...you know it or not. Christ *is* your life! You are now dead to sin indeed and alive to God in Christ! With the revelation of this truth you can then reckon on it...count it...as true. You are now able

to enter more fully by faith into all the benefits of having died and risen with your Lord and Savior!

In the Old Testament, after having wandered around in the wilderness for 40 years through the futility of their own thinking and their own ways...their own self-strength...a new generation of Israelites came to the Jordan River. This river lay between them and the Promised Land. In order for them to enter the Promised Land, they would have to cross that river by stepping out in faith and walking through it one step at a time to the other side.

The Jordan River typifies what is to happen for every believer after having been born again. Having already been placed...immersed... into Christ at their new birth and in this way united with Him on the Cross in His death and in His resurrection, there is now to be a process of growth into that reality: an entering into the life of Christ Himself experientially.

This is a progressive experience and one which will unfold for you as you continue in the renewing of your mind with the word of God and reckoning on the truth that as a new creation in Christ you are now dead to sin and alive to God. This must be coupled with the holy practice of placing your faith into this completed work of His Cross, actually walking now in your new and true identity in Him. As you do this, the Holy Spirit will be putting to death the deeds of your flesh.

The Conquest of Canaan (Treasures 11-18)

In this circle, we can see that a believer's victory in Christ must now be worked out within their soul. This is because their soul (made up of the mind, the will, and the emotions) is the site of what are called "strongholds." Strongholds, like a highly walled fortress, are belief systems of deeply entrenched patterns of thought. They manifest in a person through values and behaviors that have been built up over time and are contrary to God's will and ways as revealed in the Bible. In fact, they are dark systems buried in areas of the conscious or subconscious thinking that have been...or are being...heavily influenced by the flesh, the world, and/or Satan.

After the new generation of Israelites crossed over the Jordan River into the Promise Land, the males renewed their covenant with God through circumcision so they could once again eat the Passover. They then faced the thick walled city of Jericho. This apparently impenetrable city stood between them and the Promise Land. On the other side of that city there would also be "giants" who would then oppose their efforts to enter and settle in the land promised to them by the LORD. Faced with these challenges, the men of Israel had to be willing to take a stand on what God had already said to

them; and then fight for what had been promised to them, without any compromise on their part.

In your walk with the Lord, Satan and his demons will attempt to exploit these strongholds...or build new ones...in his bid to oppose the finished work of Christ on the Cross in you. The crosses over the circles within the soul in the circle indicate where there has been a deeper work of circumcision in the flesh, along with a demolishing of a stronghold...a strong structure of unbelief.

You maintain your victory in Christ, through an exercise in faith...your true identity in Him...while taking captive those thoughts that are exalting themselves above the true knowledge of the Lord, and your union with Him in His death, burial, resurrection and ascension. For in these little circles where His Cross has been held up against your flesh and a stronghold demolished, it is no longer your self-life who lives; rather it is Christ now living in you!

Possessing the Land (Treasures 19-22)

In the circle at the bottom far right, you see now the progress that is taking place in a believer's life. They have taken up the cross of discipleship and are living from their seated position in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Do you see the little "boxes" in the soul area? They represent areas in a believer's soul where there has been a sustained obedience to truth and an actual death to their flesh...where former fleshly impulses and lusts no longer shape and control their lives while sojourning here on the earth. As a result, their soul is becoming like a fruitful garden that has been tilled and cultivated. Instead of remaining barren, the soul in these areas is experiencing the eternal life of Christ. Through faith and obedience to God's Word coupled with a full reliance on the Person and power of the Holy Spirit within them, these areas in the soul have now come into actual union with their spirit and are filled with the resurrection life of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself!

Reality for the Israelites was that the land promised to them by God was theirs; however, they would have to move forward in order to take possession of it. They would only come into actual possession of Canaan through their obedience to Him by faith in what He had already instructed them to do and not to do while in the land. The Lord had said to them that every place they put their foot to tread upon would be theirs experientially. The word "tread" here has the thought of a path that one habitually treads. It would be as they continued to hold fast to their Lord and walk by faith in obedience to Him, that their enemies would actually be defeated and they would in fact possess their inheritance. As they took possession of Canaan in this way, it would be necessary for them to remain vigilant at all times in order to remain separated from any of the idolatry around them.

Look again at the circle and see the words within the innermost circle, *the spirit*. Here you read "law of faith." The law of faith is the principle of faith...how faith works...what it produces...not a set of do's and don'ts. Your initial faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is not the end of your salvation: it is the beginning of the transformation of your soul into His image. As you yield ever more increasingly to the promptings of the Holy Spirit by grace, what is being worked out for you in your soul is what is already true of you as a new creation in Christ. These "boxes" of transformation are areas in the soul that have actually come under the authority of God's word experientially through faith and obedience to truth, and are being lived out now in the power of the Holy Spirit. Here there is actual victory and rest - here the soul has been purified - here there has been the perfecting of your truest, deepest, and eternal identity - and here...like a prism that reflects light...others see what God originally had in His mind when He created man in His image and in His likeness...the reflection of His glory!

Amen