

UPDATED JUNE 2015



*I'm Stuck,
But I Want To Be Free*

A Message On Freedom

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"I'm Stuck, But I Want to be Free"

a Freedom Workshop

Galatians 5:1 says "Now that Christ has really set you free, now make sure that you stay free"

...so how do you do that?

Ephesians 4:31 says "get rid of all bitterness, anger and wrath"

...so how do you do that?

Romans 12: 20-21 says "If your enemies are hungry, feed them and do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

...so how do you do that?

1 Thessalonians 5:14 says "ALWAYS be patient with everyone"

...so how do you do that?

1 Thessalonians 5:16-17 says "ALWAYS be joyful and pray without ceasing"

...so how do you do that?



Hi, I am so glad that you are here to find out the answers to these questions... the practical HOW TO. Get ready to hang on for the ride of your life... You may be stuck, but you soon will be free, because God can work with a WANT TO!

May you enjoy your journey,

Debbie Friley

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Materials Used in this Class:

- If you haven't already, please purchase this package below from "Chapel Books"
 - "Freedom Workshop" CD (and begin listening) – also available as an mp3 at the website listed in #2 below
 - CD of Scripture memory verses
 - Recommended for daily reading - New Living Translation Bible is available online at www.biblestudytools.com.
 - This *Freedom Workshop* booklet for class
 - Knock, Knock* booklet

You will need to bring your own index cards (spiral bound is great) for your Scripture Memory Verses, and a journal or notebook.

- There are additional optional resources online at: www.saltandlightgroup.com Any Questions: dfriley@mindspring.com

Memory Verses

Verses are 1st Edition New Living Translation unless otherwise noted.

- 1: **Psalm 77:1** I cry out to God without holding back. Oh, that God would listen to me.
1. **Psalm 27:8** My heart has heard You say, "Come and talk with Me," and my heart responds, "Lord, I am coming."
2. **Romans 8:12-14** So, dear brothers and sisters you have no obligation whatsoever to do what your sinful nature urges you to do. For if you keep on following it, you will perish. But if through the power of the Holy Spirit, you turn from it and its evil deeds, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.
2. **Isaiah 1:18** "Come now, and let us reason together," says the Lord. Though your sins are as scarlet, they will be white as snow; Though they are red like crimson they will be like wool. (NASB)
3. **Romans 12:2** Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will know what God wants you to do and you will know how good and pleasing and perfect His will really is.
3. **Lamentations 3:37** Can anything happen without the Lord's permission?
4. **Romans 8:5-7;11** ⁵ Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. ⁶If your sinful nature controls your mind, there is death. But if the Holy Spirit controls your mind, there is life and peace. ⁷For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will. ¹¹The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you!
4. **Psalm 81:13-14** But OH that My people would listen to Me. Oh that they would follow Me, walking in My paths! How quickly I would then subdue their enemies! How soon My hands would be upon their foes.
5. **Song of Solomon 2:15** Quick! Catch all the little foxes before they ruin the vineyard of your love, for the grapevines are all in blossom.
5. 1 **Peter 2:21-23** This suffering is all part of what God has called you to. Christ, who suffered for you, is your example. Follow in His steps. He never sinned, and He never deceived anyone. He did not retaliate when He was insulted. When He suffered, He did not threaten to get even. He left His case in the hands of God, who always judges fairly.
6. 1 **Peter 4:12-13** Dear friends don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. Instead, be very glad – because these trials will make you partners with Christ in His suffering, and afterward you will have the wonderful joy of sharing His glory when it is displayed to all the world.
6. **Romans 6:16** Don't you realize that whatever you choose to obey becomes your master? You can choose sin, which leads to death, or you can choose to obey God and receive His approval.
7. **Genesis 4:7** If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it.
7. **Psalm 51:6** Behold, You desire truth in the innermost being, and in the hidden part You will make me know wisdom. (NASB)
8. **Deuteronomy 33:26** There is no one like the God of Israel. He rides across the heavens to help you, across the skies in majestic splendor.
8. **Isaiah 30:21** Whether you turn to the right or the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you saying, "This is the way, walk in it." (NIV)

Freedom Workshop Heartwork

WEEK 1

Day 1	Romans 4	Psalm 140
Day 2	Romans 5	Psalm 44
Day 3	Romans 6	Psalm 58
Day 4	Romans 7	Psalm 43
Day 5	Romans 8	Psalm 5
Day 6	Romans 12	Psalm 105
Day 7	Galatians 2	Psalm 27

WEEK 2

Day 1	Galatians 5	Psalm 42
Day 2	Galatians 6	Psalm 77
Day 3	Ephesians 1	Psalm 13
Day 4	Ephesians 2	Psalm 54
Day 5	Ephesians 3	Psalm 145
Day 6	Ephesians 4	Psalm 10
Day 7	Ephesians 5	Psalm 28

WEEK 3

Day 1	James 1	Psalm 31
Day 2	John 8	Psalm 32
Day 3	Daniel 3 (See pg. 15)	Psalm 34
Day 4	Colossians 1	Psalm 60
Day 5	Colossians 2	Psalm 61
Day 6	Colossians 3	Psalm 62
Day 7	Colossians 4	Psalm 64

WEEK 4

Day 1	I Peter 1	Psalm 81
Day 2	I Peter 2	Psalm 85
Day 3	I Peter 3	Psalm 86
Day 4	I Peter 4	Psalm 98
Day 5	I Peter 5	Psalm 116
Day 6	Daniel 6(See pg. 19)	Psalm 141
Day 7	2 Peter 1	Psalm 142

WEEK 5

Day 1	2 Peter 2	Psalm 143
Day 2	2 Peter 3	Psalm 144
Day 3	Acts 6	Psalm 145
Day 4	Acts 7	Psalm 119:1-8
Day 5	I John 1	Psalm 119:9-16
Day 6	I John 2	Psalm 119:17-24
Day 7	I John 3	Psalm 119:25-32

WEEK 6

Day 1	I John 4	Psalm 119:33-40
Day 2	I John 5	Psalm 119:41-48
Day 3	2 Chronicles 20 (See pg. 28)	Psalm 119:49-56
Day 4	I Corinthians 3	Psalm 119:57-64
Day 5	I Corinthians 4	Psalm 119:65-72
Day 6	I Corinthians 5	Psalm 119:73-80
Day 7	2 Corinthians 3	Psalm 119:81-88

WEEK 7

Day 1	2 Corinthians 4	Psalm 119:89-96
Day 2	2 Corinthians 5	Psalm 119:97-104
Day 3	Hebrews 12	Psalm 119:105-112
Day 4	Genesis 37-41 (See pg. 34)	Psalm 119:113-120
Day 5	Genesis 42-45 (See pg. 34)	Psalm 119:121-128
Day 6	Genesis 46-50 (See pg. 34)	Psalm 119:129-136
Day 7	Romans 1	Psalm 119:137-144

WEEK 8

Day 1	Romans 2	Psalm 119:145-152
Day 2	Romans 3	Psalm 119:153-160
Day 3	Matt. 26:36-46 *	Psalm 119:161-168
Day 4	Luke 10:38-42 **	Psalm 119:169-176
Day 5	Romans 10	Psalm 120
Day 6	Romans 11	Psalm 121
Day 7	Psalm 19	Psalm 112

*Read in Context

** Read in NIV

The Truth & Facts about Freedom: As you read from the New Testament, underline all the truths about **freedom** that you see throughout each chapter every day you read relationally.

The Truth & Facts about Honesty: As you read the Psalms each day, write down all the **emotions** that you see throughout each chapter. Write them in the margins beside the chapter you are reading.

Honesty with God

God Desires Truth in the Innermost Being - Psalm 51:6

David's Honesty with God

Taken from *The Search For Significance* by Robert S. McGee

David expressed his anger with the Lord because he felt abandoned by Him:

"I say to God my Rock, why have You forgotten me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?"

Psalm 42:9

At times David was very angry with others, and he expressed his anger to the Lord in terms that reveal the depth of his feelings:

"Break the teeth in their mouths, O God; tear out, O Lord, the fangs of the lions! Let them vanish like water that flows away; when they draw the bow let their arrows be blunted. Like a slug melting away as it moves along, like a stillborn child, may they not see the sun. Before your pots can feel the heat of the thorns, whether they be green or dry, the wicked will be swept away."

Psalm 58:6-9

David wrote of his despair about difficult situations:

"My heart is in anguish within me... the terrors of death assail me. Fear and trembling have beset me... horror has overwhelmed me." **Psalm 55:4-5**

And he communicated his despair to the Lord:

"Why do You hide Your face and forget our misery and oppression? We are brought down to the dust, our bodies cling to the ground." **Psalm 44:24-25**

Sometimes he was confused:

"How long, O Lord? Will You forget me forever? How long will you hide Your face from me? How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and every day have sorrow in my heart?" **Psalm 13:1-2**

Sometimes David communicated his love for the Lord:

"As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?" Psalm 42:12

At times David trusted in the Lord:

"The Lord is my light and my salvation - whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life - of whom shall I be afraid? When evil men advance against me to devour my flesh, when my enemies and my foes attack me, they will stumble and fall. Though an army besiege me, even then I will be confident."

Psalm 27:13

At other times he was filled with praise for God:

"I will exalt You, my God the King; I will praise Your name forever and ever. Every day I will praise You and extol Your name forever and ever. Great is the Lord, and most worthy of praise; His greatness no one can fathom." **Psalm 145:13**

On two occasions, God called David *a man after His own heart*. It is interesting to note that there was not one other person that God spoke about with those descriptive words, not one! There is no one who is showcased as many times as David. Chuck

Swindoll teaches us that "there has been more written about David than about any other Biblical character. Abraham has some 14 chapters dedicated to his life, and so does Joseph. Jacob has 11. Elijah has 10. But David has 66 chapters dedicated to him, which does not even include some 59 references to his life in the New Testament." And one thing for sure is that David certainly sinned more than some other people in the Bible, but they were not described as a *man after God's own heart*.

-- God said Solomon's heart was "not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David." **1 Kings 11:4**

-- God said David "followed Me [God] with all his heart."

1 Kings 14:8

-- The Bible said Jeroboam's "heart was not fully devoted to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his forefather had been." **1 Kings 15:3**

-- The Bible says after Saul's failure, God had "sought him a man after His own heart." **1 Samuel 13:14**

-- God said, "I have found David... a man after My own heart." **Acts 13:22**

There were people who sinned less, and God always blesses obedience, that's for sure. But also, some of the people in the Bible were "rule-followers" instead of "Ruler-followers" (meaning following "The Ruler, God"). I believe that David was a Ruler-follower and that he desired to obey God, but his obedience was motivated by love for God. You may ask how and why? After all, with all the highly emotional conversations David had with God, David clearly took note that God never left him or forsook him. David became very close to God just as a child and parent do when the child comes running to their parent, burying his sobs in the parent's chest, and the parent holds the child until he calms down. When this happens, a bond is built and when it keeps happening, a strong bond is built: a bond of deep love, trust, and approachability. (**Hebrews 4:14-16**) This is what I believe David had with God, and God loved their relationship.

I asked myself the question, "If David was a man after God's own heart, why was that?" I believe God spoke those words about him because as our Parent and Friend, He highly values when we come to Him without holding back, pouring out passionately and honesty from our hearts. I believe God showcased David again and again because He was teaching us, through David's example, how to be men and women after His own heart. Through David's example, seen repeatedly in God's Word, He is inviting us to partake of a deep intimacy with Him, not just a shallow walk, not just *surface* talking, but really pouring out throughout the day. God certainly allows many events, big and small each day, to invite us to come to Him to increase our intimacy. So, embrace, meditate and pay close attention to David's emotionally charged talks with God, as well as his time of praise and thanksgiving to God. Don't miss this important point. All of this is on display to give us the *how to* to live in the

purpose of why God our Father created us....to know Him intimately and minister out of the abundance of that passionate relationship. You can be sure you will hear those *other voices* trying to steer you away from this intimacy. Don't listen. They are not God's voice. But they are a test to train you to choose to only listen to His voice. "My sheep hear My voice, I know them and they follow Me." **John 10:27**

In Conclusion: This explanation and these passages demonstrate that God, who spoke of David as a man after His own heart, wants us to be open and honest with Him about all of our emotions, not just the pleasant ones. It is clear that He is giving us permission to come as we are! Oh the glorious freedom of the children of God!

My heart has heard You say, "Come and talk with Me," and my heart responds, "Lord, I am coming!" **Psalm 27:8** Again... "God desires Truth in the innermost being and in the hidden part You will make me know wisdom." **Psalm 51:6** The New Living translation says "But God, You desire honesty from the heart, so You can teach me to be wise in my inmost being." **Psalm 51:6**

Jeremiah's Honesty with God

Let's look at **Jeremiah 20:7-16**. Here we have another example that we have permission to be honest with God: Read on and see for yourself! Check out how Jeremiah changes his emotions three times in this short conversation with God. The greatest thing is that God allowed this to be in His love letter to us to show us that we have permission to be honest with Him, just like Jeremiah was! Jeremiah clearly understood the "throne of grace" His heavenly Father refers to.

Venting & complaining:

O LORD, You persuaded me, and I allowed myself to be persuaded. You are stronger than I am, and You overpowered me. Now, I am mocked by everyone in the city. Whenever I speak, the words come out in a violent outburst. "Violence and destruction!" I shout. So these messages from the LORD have made me a household joke. And I can't stop! If I say I'll never mention the LORD or speak in His name, His word burns in my heart like a fire. It's like a fire in my bones! I am weary of holding it in! I have heard the many rumors about me. They call me "The Man Who Lives in Terror." And they say, "If you say anything, we will report it." Even my old friends are watching me, waiting for a fatal slip. "He will trap himself," they say, "and then we will get our revenge on him." **Jeremiah 20:7-10**

Now he's focusing on God & praising Him: But the LORD stands beside me like a great warrior. Before Him they will stumble. They cannot defeat me. They will be shamed and thoroughly humiliated. Their dishonor will never be forgotten. O LORD Almighty! You know those who are righteous, and You examine the deepest thoughts of hearts and minds. Let me see Your vengeance against them, for I have committed my cause to You. Now I will sing out my thanks to the LORD! Praise the LORD! For though I was poor and needy, He delivered me from my oppressors. **Jeremiah 20:11-13**

Now he's focused on himself:

Yet I curse the day I was born! May the day of my birth not be blessed. I curse the messenger who told my father, "Good news --you have a son!" Let him be destroyed like the cities of old that the LORD overthrew without mercy. Terrify him all day long with battle shouts, for he did not kill me at birth. Oh, that I had died in my mother's womb, that her body had been my grave! Why was I ever born? My entire life has been filled with trouble, sorrow, and shame. **Jeremiah 20:14-18**

Does that sound familiar? As you can see, we are not alone in our humanness and our frailties and emotions... **but thank You, God**, You have invited us to a throne, and it's not just any throne, it is a throne of grace! You even tell us how we are invited to come to this throne... with boldness and confidence. Then, You assure us of what we will find there "Grace and mercy...to help us in our time of need!" Wow, this is the inheritance of the servants of the Lord!

Asaph's Honesty with God

Psalm 77:1-20:

I cry out to God; yes, I shout. Oh, that God would listen to me! When I was in deep trouble, I searched for the Lord. All night long I prayed, with hands lifted toward heaven, but my soul was not comforted. I think of God, and I moan, overwhelmed with longing for His help. You don't let me sleep. I am too distressed even to pray! I think of the good old days, long since ended, when my nights were filled with joyful songs.

I search my soul and ponder the difference now. Has the Lord rejected me forever? Will He never again be kind to me? Is His unfailing love gone forever? Have His promises permanently failed? Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has He slammed the door on His compassion? And I said, "This is my fate; the Most High has turned His hand against me."

But then I recall all You have done, O Lord; I remember Your wonderful deeds of long ago. They are constantly in my thoughts. I cannot stop thinking about Your mighty works. O God, Your ways are holy. Is there any god as mighty as You? You are the God of great wonders! You demonstrate Your awesome power among the nations. By Your strong arm, You redeemed Your people, the descendants of Jacob and Joseph. When the Red Sea saw You, O God, its waters looked and trembled! The sea quaked to its very depths. The clouds poured down rain; the thunder rumbled in the sky. Your arrows of lightning flashed. Your thunder roared from the whirlwind; the lightning lit up the world! The earth trembled and shook. Your road led through the sea, Your pathway through the mighty waters—a pathway no one knew was there! You led Your people along that road like a flock of sheep, with Moses and Aaron as their shepherds.

Moses' Honesty with God

Numbers 11:10-17:

Moses heard all the families standing in front of their tents weeping, and the LORD became extremely angry. Moses was also very aggravated. And Moses said to the LORD, "Why are you treating me, Your servant, so miserably? What did I do to

deserve the burden of a people like this? Are they my children? Am I their father? Is that why You have told me to carry them in my arms -like a nurse carries a baby -to the land You swore to give their ancestors? Where am I supposed to get meat for all these people? They keep complaining and saying, "Give us meat!" I can't carry all these people by myself! The load is far too heavy! I'd rather You killed me than treat me like this. Please spare me this misery!" Then the Lord said to Moses, "summon before Me seventy of the leaders of Israel. Bring them to the Tabernacle to stand there with you. I will come down and talk to you there. I will take some of the Spirit that is upon you, and I will put the Spirit upon them also. They will bear the burden of the people along with you, so you will not have to carry it alone."

Jesus' Honesty with God

Once again, you will see now in Matthew 26 that God is giving us permission to be honest with Him. Look at Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. As you read you will notice how honest He was with God asking Him "take this cup of suffering" from Him. And note in verse 44 below He asked Him three separate times! Talk about honesty with God about how Jesus was feeling! Do you know what that would have meant? That we would not be in Heaven! But the rest of the story of course is that He said "Not My will but Your will be done." So we see that complete honesty from the heart, leads to HUMILITY ("not my will") which leads to SURRENDER! Read on:

Matthew 26:36-44:

Then Jesus brought them to an olive grove called Gethsemane, and He said, "Sit here while I go on ahead to pray." He took Peter and Zebedee's two sons, James and John, and He began to be filled with anguish and deep distress. He told them, "My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and watch with Me." He went on a little farther and fell face down on the ground, praying, "My Father! If it is possible, let this cup of suffering be taken away from Me. (HONESTY) Yet I want Your will, (HUMILITY) not Mine." (SURRENDER) Then He returned to the disciples and found them asleep. He said to Peter, "Couldn't you stay awake and watch with Me even one hour? Keep alert and pray. Otherwise temptation will overpower you. For though the spirit is willing enough, the body is weak!" Again He left them and prayed, "My Father! If this cup cannot be taken away until I drink it, Your will be done." He returned to them again and found them sleeping, for they just couldn't keep their eyes open. So He went back to pray a third time, saying the same things again."

Jesus asked God three times to take this cup from Him. I, too, have permission to return as often as need be. Jesus wasn't embarrassed to ask God to take away something that would give the whole world eternal life... because that is how He felt at the moment, but after He dumped that out on God, He surrendered and humility followed. But notice that in this case apparently once was not enough. That tells me that once may not be enough for us either.

Matthew 26:45-46: Then He came to the disciples and said, "Still sleeping? Still resting? Look, the time has come. I, the Son

of Man, am betrayed into the hands of sinners. Up, let's be going. See, My betrayer is here!"

There is always purpose to our pain. When we do things our way the pleasure comes first and the pain comes later. When we do it God's way, the pain comes first and the pleasure comes later. Ask Jesus; He knew this well. We will share in His sufferings. He has set the example for us here in the Garden of Gethsemane. Honesty... humility... surrender ... repeated 3 times!

And then... Jesus even "dumped" again and shared His heart when He was on the cross:

"My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

Matthew 27:46

And remember earlier right after the Garden of Gethsemane when we saw Jesus pouring His heart out to God... He encounters many challenges that follow... we know that He dumped His emotions out to God first in the Garden before these events occurred, which left Him ready to respond the way He did to the disciples and Pilate.

Remember: "God desires Truth in the innermost being and in the hidden part You will make me know wisdom" (**Psalm 51:6 NASB**)

Pray Without Ceasing

The Scriptures tell us to *pray without ceasing*.

1 Thessalonians 5:17

Did you ever wonder how that is even a possibility? I always wondered to myself, how do you really do that? Well, hopefully after realizing that we have permission to dump honestly all our emotions to God and disinfect (don't worry, you can't infect God like you can infect your flesh) you'll understand that pouring your emotions out is all a part of *praying without ceasing*. When you stop having conversations with yourself and instead have them with God... can you only imagine how much you will be talking to God now instead of yourself? You will be praying all the time! *Praying without ceasing!* Get it? Talk with Him instead of talking to yourself. God has not asked you to stop talking, but to just change your audience to Him! Again, can you only imagine how much you will be talking to Him now? Telling God how you feel, dumping it all out and then taking the next step, praying for your offenders or circumstances... so there you have it: *Pray without ceasing!*

"Therefore let us draw near with confidence (boldness) to the Throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in our time of need." **Hebrews 4:16**

Remember, if you are not running to Him, you are running away from Him, right into the arms of the liar, opening yourself up to even more of a mess. That throne of grace looks pretty good right about now!

"For you will know the Truth and the Truth WILL set you free."

John 8:32

Truth is a person, go to HIM! Don't just have conversations with yourself; include Him.

Reading Relationally

Revelations from the Holy Spirit often come from Reading Relationally. This means talking to God about what you are reading while you are reading His Word. For example: Interact with Him as you read, as you would in a conversation with a friend. Ask questions, ask Him to explain and clarify for you, give Him encouraging words of thanks, praise, amazement and exclamation. Remember: "My sheep (that's you) hear My voice, I know them and they follow Me." **John 10:27**

Pray this from **Luke 24:45**: "Lord, open my mind to understand the Scriptures." Ask Him.... Lord, what do You want to say?" and then when He speaks, respond to Him right then. Enjoy!

Imagine you have just invited a friend over for coffee. She has come to hear about the wonderful trip you just took. Your friend kindly lets you know that she has an hour to visit and then she has to pick up her son. At your friend's invitation, you begin sharing in great detail about your trip, the amazing things you saw and did, and the awesome things God taught you. It is obvious that your friend is listening with great interest, but she never comments on anything that you are sharing. Yes, there is eye contact, she is paying attention, but she never asks any questions, expresses wows, or interacts with you over your story. Well, the hour is up, and she politely lets you know that she must go pick up her son. You express how glad you are that she stopped by, and you say good-bye. Hmmm..... You think, I am so glad my friend was here, but I feel empty. My friend never commented or asked questions... I know she was here for an hour, but the lack of interaction leaves me feeling disconnected and wondering if she really cares. Was she really listening? I think this is how we can make God feel when we are reading His Word. When we don't interact & dialogue with Him, I think He misses the interaction too.

Interestingly enough, a mutual friend pulls into the driveway and out your kitchen window you hear your friend that was just leaving, expressing in great detail how wonderful it was to hear about your amazing trip, the incredible things you did and saw, and God's amazing handiwork in all your travels. At that moment I wonder, gee, why didn't she share that with me? Let me suggest this: I believe that this is often what we do to God. Like the friend that was visiting & talking later to your mutual friend, we go talk about God after being with Him, but we don't talk to God in response to what we are reading in His Word as we are reading. We spend perhaps an hour with Him, we listen and maybe even take notes, but we never really engage the Author of the Bible that we are reading. I spent too many years reading as an observer rather than meeting with our Savior personally for the relationship for which I was created. Miraculously, He desires to have an interactive conversation with us, literally, talking with us out of the pages of His Word (**Hebrews 4:12**). We must remember to engage with Him at that moment while we are in His Word:

1. Ask questions as we go.

2. Respond in amazement to a particular character's actions.
3. Say "Thank You."
4. Express wows in response to what we just read.
5. Confess right then that you aren't doing what you are reading about but would love God to give you a want to.

These are just a few suggested examples of how we interact and there are assuredly many more! The point is, it is not just that you are reading the Bible but "how" you are interacting with the Author and "that" you are interacting while you are reading. He doesn't want us to "just read" and gather information and go perform it. He wants us to realize that He wants to be involved in the process with you as you are reading. He wants us to talk with Him while He is talking to us through His Word. We know how to do this because we naturally do it all the time with friends. And He wants us to do that with Him, our Companion and Friend. God doesn't complicate something so important to Him. He wants us to realize that we cannot do one thing written in His Word alone, because "apart from Him, we can do nothing." (**John 15:5**) But He wants us to realize that "we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us." (**Philippians 4:13**) He is just waiting for us to ask -- and ask as we are reading, not just when we are finished reading.

Interact with Him as you would a friend over coffee. He doesn't want to be treated like a business interaction or a mere acquaintance. Let's face it, there is no other book in the whole world that you can interact with the Author while you are reading. This is called Reading Relationally. But you can do that with the Bible because it is the Living Word! I believe that God is merciful, but I believe He feels just like the person in my story who poured her heart out to her friend and then received no response or interaction during the course of their hour together. Let's delight and bring abundant pleasure to the Lover of our souls and talk with Him throughout the pages of His Word as we journey with Him each morning in His love letter to us! Let's not just talk about God, but let's talk to Him as we are reading! Hang on for the ride of your life because He has treasures He wants to share from His heart to yours when you interact with Him! Try it... you will see! My Bible is full of my writing down God's responses to my questions and amazing insights that only He can give. As you experience relationship with God, nobody will have to tell you to talk about God and His words... You will be looking for an audience automatically out of the overflow of your relationship with God. Not only are you blessed but so are many others! Your genuine enthusiasm is contagious and makes people hungry to go and hear from God like that themselves! Now I must say, it doesn't get any better than that!

So here is an example of Reading Relationally from **Psalms 84**. Keep in mind that when you are in a conversation with someone, as you are listening, you don't comment on every

sentence they utter. In the same way, as you are reading God's word relationally, you don't comment on every line you read, but when you have a question, comment etc., that's when you engage. Our conversation (sometimes silent, sometimes audible) follows each verse:

Psalm 84:1 "How lovely is Your dwelling place, O Lord Almighty." (Lord, what is Your dwelling place like anyway? ("My child, you are My dwelling place, keep it clean and keep it lovely").

Psalm 84:2 "I long, yes, I faint with longing to enter the courts of the LORD. With my whole being, body and soul, I will shout joyfully to the living God." (Lord, I so want to worship You constantly this way. I notice that when I am in a crisis that I am much quicker to cling to You and pour out to You with my whole being, body and soul. And as much as I don't want to admit it I really do thank You for allowing difficulties in my life and caring enough to train me by allowing challenging things. Please help me to remember there is purpose to my pain as a part of the work of Your kingdom. ("My child, as I teach this truth to others through you, listen, for it is a reminder to you too.")

Psalm 84:3-6 "Even the sparrow finds a home there, and the swallow builds her nest and raises her young— at a place near Your altar, O Lord Almighty, my King and my God! How happy are those who can live in Your house, always singing Your praises. Happy are those who are strong in the LORD, who set their minds on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. When they walk through the Valley of Weeping, it will become a place of refreshing springs, where pools of blessing collect after the rains!" (Oh Lord, only You can turn weeping into refreshing springs! And if that weren't enough, You bless us, not with "puddles", but with "pools" of blessings! Wow Lord, thanks for that amazing insight You just gave me, what a wonderful picture! You are awesome! What kind of God are You that can love like this?! I thank you for the privilege of knowing You and being trained by You. ("My child, may you sense My pleasure over your love for Me. It's important to Me that you know that.")

Psalm 84:7-10a "They will continue to grow stronger, and each of them will appear before God in Jerusalem. O LORD God Almighty, hear my prayer. Listen, O God of Israel. O God, look with favor upon the king, our protector! Have mercy on the one You have anointed. A single day in Your courts is better than a thousand anywhere else!" (Oh Lord, may I learn to become more and more intimate with You; that this is the continual cry of my heart. Lord, what are Your courts really like? ("My child, I love that you are asking. Keep reading the Psalms and I will reveal the answer to your question.")

Psalm 84:10b-12: I would rather be a gatekeeper in the house of my God than live the good life in the homes of the wicked. For the LORD God is our light and protector. He gives us grace and glory. No good thing will the LORD withhold from those who do what is right. O LORD Almighty, happy are those who trust in You," (Father, I know that I am not trusting in You right now over the decisions that I have to make which is why I

am not content and happy. But right now I am asking You to give me a want to, to trust You in every aspect of this decision. I am choosing right now to trust You and to stop trying to figure things out myself. I so desire to keep Your dwelling place clean, surrendered and lovely! I love You and thank You for being so real and speaking to me today! ("And My child, I love that you are real with Me.")

Sacrificial Preaching

from *Daily with the King* by W. Glyn Evans

Lord, am I a Christian by indoctrination or revelation? If I am merely parroting truths that have been dictated to me, woe is me and woe is any person or group that listens to me. When Christ met Paul on the Damascus road, He revealed Himself to His former enemy. Afterward Paul did not confer with flesh and blood but escaped into the desert to receive further revelation. (**Galatians 1:15-17**) Later, when he emerged to preach Christ, it was an incarnational message he preached, not one learned at the foot of a teacher.

All divine knowledge is received inwardly. Christian education has its place, but only to make Christ's revelation to me "possible". It cannot make that revelation "actual". Too many Christians are around today who have taken on the culture of Christ without taking in His person. What is worse, too many spokesmen for Christ in the world are like the disciples before Pentecost- surrounded by Christ but not invaded by Him. After Pentecost the disciples did not need to be taught; they only needed opportunity to release what had been revealed. What had formerly been meaningless words now became truths that seared their hearts. If Jesus did not dare to speak from Himself, (**John 7:17**) how dare I?

If Jesus spoke only what was revealed to Him by the Father, (John 7:16) how can we possibly preach anything unless it is revealed to us? What we need in our pulpits and in the body of Christ are followers of Christ who talk about God based on firsthand knowledge. God revealers will never lack an audience. I will do what Habakkuk did: "Station myself on the (watch) tower, and watch to see what He will say to me." (**Habakkuk 2:1**) It is what God says to me that becomes the message people longingly desire.

"Then the Lord stretched out His hand and touched my mouth, and the Lord said to me, 'Behold, I have put My words in your mouth.'" **Jeremiah 1:9**

Eating and Drinking with God

from *Daily with the King* by W. Glyn Evans

One of the sure signs that a disciple is reaching a mature relationship with God is in the matter of relaxation. "They saw God, and did eat and drink." (**Exodus 24:11**) People who claim that God must always be approached with holy fear do not really know God.

If I am awkward in the presence of God, I do not know Him too well. He wants me to become familiar enough with Him to "eat and drink" in His presence. He wants to call me His "friend" as He called Abraham, Moses, and the twelve disciples. Familiarity is not a sign of flippancy, nor does it always breed contempt.

Does God say of me as He said of Abraham, “I *know* him” (**Genesis 18:19**)? God knows everyone, but does He know me as an intimate friend in whom He confides?

Jesus elevated His disciples from “servants” to “friends” (**John 15:15**). To be a servant of Jesus is a high calling indeed; but to be a friend means to be in on His plans, thoughts, feelings, and purposes. How amazing that many Christians never know at a given moment how Jesus feels. They know His *general* purposes from the Word, but they do not know His heart and mind concerning a particular situation. Elisha *knew* when God was going to take his leader, Elijah, from him into heaven (**2 Kings 2:3**), because he was more than a servant; Elisha was a friend of God.

To be relaxed in God’s presence means that there is no fence between us. Trust and love have replaced fear and timidity. Awe has given way to acceptance. It is no light matter to have arrived here, and God is very careful about whom He admits to this intimacy. May God count me worthy! What an honor to be “comfortable with God!

“Whom have I in heaven but You? And besides You, I desire nothing on earth. My flesh and my heart may fail; but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever” (**Psalms 73:25-26**).

Conformed or Transformed?

by Charles F. Stanley Adapted from “Winning the War Within” (1988)
<http://changingtimes.info/conformed-or-transformed/>

The world constantly pressures us to adopt a way of thinking that is contrary to God’s Word. Unless you and I make some effort to combat this onslaught of propaganda, we will fall victim to its debilitating poison. Satan wants us to accept his lies uncritically and, as a result, fall victim to temptation. One of the best ways to counter the Devil’s attack is to fill your mind with Scripture. You need an arsenal of memorized verses, deeply rooted in your heart, to effectively combat his agenda (**Ps. 119:11**). If you have to dig up verses out of the caverns of your mind in a moment of temptation, they will do you no good. They need to be fresh in your thinking, and flowing from the core of who you are. The process of Bible memorization is never effortless—like most worthwhile things, internalizing God’s Word costs us something. Here are a few pointers to make it easier for you:

Learn to exchange Satan’s lies for God’s truth. Choose verses that focus on the areas in which you are most tempted. Everyone, for instance, should have several verses memorized that have to do with lust or immorality. We are bombarded at every turn with the promise of pleasure through illicit sex. What a lie! Yet all of us have the potential to buy into that way of thinking and fall into sin. I also believe we should memorize verses about the dangers of gossip (**James 1:26**) and a Christian’s duty to obey the government (**1 Peter 2:13-15**). When we know specific Scriptures to combat Satan’s lies, his logic will fall apart under the scrutiny of God’s Word.

Set small goals at first. One verse a week is enough to begin. Don’t set out to memorize an entire book of the Bible, because there’s a good chance you will fail and then give up completely. Remember, the ultimate goal is not to memorize Scripture, but to live a godly life because you have God’s Word *hidden in your heart*.

Review the verses you memorize so that they become part of your long-term memory. Use index cards to keep all your verses together. When you have a few moments between appointments or tasks, you can pull your cards out and review them. Verses that correspond with the temptations you face will stick most readily in your mind. For verses you don’t use as often, implement a review system.

Personalize the Scripture you memorize. Where appropriate, substitute your name or a personal pronoun to make the verse apply to you. For instance, say, “Lord, I choose to set my mind on things above and not on things on earth, for I have died and my life is hidden with Christ in God.” Or, “Lord, I am casting all my cares on You, for I know You care for me.”

Quote the verses audibly when you are tempted. Why? First, I do not believe Satan and his host can read our minds. He can put ideas there, but Scripture does not indicate he can read your thoughts. In terms of challenging the Devil and putting him in his place, I am not convinced that mentally reviewing verses does as much good as voicing them.

Second, it shifts the tension from an internal conflict to an external one. We tend to latch on to temptation emotionally and think, *This is the way I am. Otherwise, why would I feel this way?* When you speak the truth, it reminds you that your enemy is the Devil. He roams around like a lion looking for someone to devour (**1 Peter 5:8**). Satan would rather have you internalize the battle so he can remain anonymous. Even when we have made bad choices and become “our own worst enemy,” it is extremely helpful to pronounce the truth out loud.

The last reason to express the truth audibly when tempted is that Jesus did so. There are times when you will have to whisper, and other times you can speak at a normal volume. You may feel silly the first time you try this, but you will notice an immediate difference when you do. As I begin speaking the truth aloud, I often feel a sense of courage and conviction sweeping over me. Usually, this turns to joy, and what started out as a bad thing becomes a time of praise and rejoicing. Christians get bombarded by daily pressures to adopt the standards of this world. When we memorize God’s Word, we realign our thoughts with the Lord’s values and standards. Refreshing your mind with the His perfect, eternal perspective will help you resist the temptation to conform to the world (**Romans 12:2**). Then you won’t fall prey to Satan’s lies.

Who I am in Christ

• **I am a child of God.** But to all who have received Him, those who believe in His name, He has given the right to become God's children. John 1:12

• **I am a branch of the true vine, and a conduit of Christ's life.** I am the true vine and My Father is the gardener. I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in Me--and I in him--bears much fruit, because apart from Me you can accomplish nothing. John 15:1, 5

• **I am a friend of Jesus.** I no longer call you slaves, because the slave does not understand what his master is doing. But I have called you friends, because I have revealed to you everything I heard from My Father. John 15:15

• **I have been justified and redeemed.** But they are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Romans 3:24

• **My old self was crucified with Christ, and I am no longer a slave to sin.** We know that our old man was crucified with Him so that the body of sin would no longer dominate us, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. Romans 6:6

• **I will not be condemned by God.** There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Romans 8:1

• **I have been set free from the law of sin and death.** For the law of the life-giving Spirit in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death. Romans 8:2

• **As a child of God, I am a fellow heir with Christ.** And if children, then heirs (namely, heirs of God and also fellow heirs with Christ); if indeed we suffer with Him so we may also be glorified with Him. Romans 8:17

• **I have been accepted by Christ.** Receive one another, then, just as Christ also received you, to God's glory. Romans 15:7

• **I have been called to be a saint.** To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be saints, with all those in every place who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours. 1 Corinthians 1:2 (See also Ephesians 1:1, Philippians 1:1, and Colossians 1:2.)

• **In Christ Jesus, I have wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.** He is the reason you have a relationship with Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption... 1 Corinthians 1:30

• **My body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who dwells in me.** Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you? 1 Corinthians 6:19

• **I am joined to the Lord and am one spirit with Him.** But the one united with the Lord is one spirit with Him. 1 Corinthians 6:17

• **God leads me in the triumph and knowledge of Christ.** But thanks be to God who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and who makes known through us the fragrance that consists of the knowledge of Him in every place. 2 Corinthians 2:14

• **The hardening of my mind has been removed in Christ.** But their minds were closed. For to this very day, the same veil remains when they hear the old covenant read. It has not been removed because only in Christ is it taken away. 2 Corinthians 3:14

• **I am a new creature in Christ.** So then, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; what is old has passed away -- look, what is new has come! 2 Corinthians 5:17

• **I have become the righteousness of God in Christ.** God made the one who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we would become the righteousness of God. 2 Corinthians 5:21

• **I have been made one with all who are in Christ Jesus.** There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3:28

• **I am no longer a slave, but a child and an heir.** So you are no longer a slave but a son, and if you are a son, then you are also an heir through God. Galatians 4:7

• **I have been set free in Christ.** For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not be subject again to the yoke of slavery. Galatians 5:1

• **I have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.** Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms in Christ. Ephesians 1:3

• **I am chosen, holy, and blameless before God.** For He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world that we may be holy and unblemished in His sight in love. Ephesians 1:4

• **I am redeemed and forgiven by the grace of Christ.** In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace. Ephesians 1:7

• **I have been predestined by God to obtain an inheritance.** In Christ we too have been claimed as God's own possession, since we were predestined according to the one purpose of Him who accomplishes all things according to the counsel of His will. Ephesians 1:11

• **I have been sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.** And when you heard the word of truth (the gospel of your salvation) when you believed in Christ, you were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit. Ephesians 1:13

• **Because of God's mercy and love, I have been made alive with Christ.** But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even though we were dead in transgressions, made us alive together with Christ; by grace you are saved! Ephesians 2:4-5

• **I am seated in the heavenly places with Christ.** And He raised us up with Him and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus. Ephesians 2:6

• **I have been made complete in Christ.** You have been filled in Him, who is the head over every ruler and authority. Colossians 2:10

• **I am God's workmanship created to produce good works.** For we are His workmanship, having been created in Christ Jesus for good works that God prepared beforehand so we may do them. Ephesians 2:10

• **I have been brought near to God by the blood of Christ.** But now in Christ Jesus you who used to be far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ. Ephesians 2:13

• **I am a member of Christ's body and a partaker of His promise.** The Gentiles are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus. Ephesians 3:6 (see also Ephesians 5:30)

• **I have boldness and confident access to God through faith in Christ.** ...In whom we have boldness and confident access to God because of Christ's faithfulness. Ephesians 3:12

• **My new self is righteous and holy.** Put on the new man who has been created in God's image, in righteousness and holiness that comes from truth. Ephesians 4:24

• **I was formerly full of darkness, but now I am light in the Lord.** For you were at one time darkness, but now you are in the Lord. Walk as children of the light. Ephesians 5:8

• **I am a citizen of heaven.** But our citizenship is in heaven, and we also await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ. Philippians 3:20

• **The peace of God guards my heart and mind.** And the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:7

• **God supplies all my needs.** And my God will supply your every need according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:19

• **I have been raised up with Christ.** Therefore, if you have been raised with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Colossians 3:1

• **My life is hidden with Christ in God.** For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. Colossians 3:3

• **Christ is my life, and I will be revealed with Him in glory.** When Christ (who is your life) appears, then you too will be revealed in glory with Him. Colossians 3:4

• **I have been chosen of God, and I am holy and beloved.** Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with a heart of mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Colossians 3:12

• **God loves me and has chosen me.** We know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that He has chosen you ...
1 Thessalonians 1:4

The more we embrace these truths from Scripture about who we have become in Christ, the more stable, grateful, and fully assured we will be in this world.

God ALWAYS has the answer:

You hear: "It's impossible."

God says: All things are possible. (Luke 18:27)

You hear: "I'm too tired."

God says: I will give you rest. (Matthew 11:28-30)

You hear: "Nobody really loves me."

God says: I love you. (John 3:16 & John 3:34)

You hear: "I can't go on."

God says: My grace is sufficient. (2 Cor. 12:9 & Psalm 91:15)

You hear: "I can't figure things out."

God says: I will direct your steps. (Proverbs 3:5-6)

You hear: "I can't do it."

God says: You can do all things through Me. (Philippians 4:13)

You hear: "I'm not able."

God says: I am able. (2 Corinthians 9:8)

You hear: "It's not worth it."

God says: It will be worth it. (Roman 8:28)

You hear: "I can't forgive myself."

God says: I forgive you. (1 John 1:9 & Romans 8:1)

You hear: "I can't manage."

God says: I will supply all your needs. (Philippians 4:19)

You hear: "I'm afraid."

God says: I have not given you a spirit of fear. (2 Timothy 1:7)

You hear: "I'm always worried and frustrated."

God says: Cast all your cares on ME. (1 Peter 5:7)

You hear: "I'm not smart enough."

God says: I give you wisdom. (1 Corinthians 1:30)

You hear: "I feel all alone."

God says: I will never leave you or forsake you. (Hebrews 13:5)

My Sheep Hear My Voice

"My sheep recognize My voice; I know them, and they follow Me." John 10:27

"After he has gathered his own flock, he walks ahead of them, and they follow him because they recognize his voice.

They won't follow a stranger; they will run from him because they don't recognize his voice." John 10:4-5

As you go through the week, write in each of these columns:

What am I Hearing?

What is God Saying?

Now go back and confess those things that you heard from the enemy that you engaged in, because it breaks your fellowship with God.

"...if we confess our sins to Him, He is faithful and just to forgive us
and to cleanse us from every wrong." 1 John 1:9

Choose This Day Who You Will Serve

The line down the middle of this chart represents my free will. If you talk to yourself about situations, you become part of the problem to the problem and you go to the left side of the chart, representing your sinful nature. If you talk to God, you become part of the solution to the problem, you go to the right side on the chart, representing your new nature filled with the Holy Spirit. **Referring to Romans 8:12:** On the **Left Side** of the chart: "Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things," The **Right Side** of the chart: "but those who are **controlled by** the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. **Left Side:** "If your sinful nature controls your mind there is death. **Right Side:** But if the Holy Spirit controls your mind, there is life and peace." **Left Side:** "For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will. That's why those who are still under the control of their sinful nature can never please God." **Right Side:** "But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Holy Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you!"

Those who choose to listen to the voice of the sinful nature:	But... those who choose to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit
1. focus on the failures of others.	1. are overwhelmed with a sense of their own spiritual need.
2. have a critical, fault-finding spirit; look at everyone else's faults with a microscope, but their own with a telescope.	2. are compassionate; can forgive much because they know how much they have been forgiven.
3. are self-righteous; look down on others.	3. esteem all others better than themselves.
4. have an independent, self-sufficient spirit.	4. have a dependent spirit; recognize their need for others.
5. have to prove they are right.	5. are willing to yield the right to be right.
6. claim rights; have a demanding spirit.	6. yield their rights; have a meek spirit.
7. are self-protective of their time, their rights, and their reputation.	7. are self-denying.
8. desire to be served and to be a success.	8. motivated to serve others, be faithful and make others a success.
9. have a drive to be recognized and appreciated.	9. have a sense of their own unworthiness; are thrilled that God would use them at all.
10. are wounded when others are promoted and they are overlooked.	10. are eager for others to get the credit and rejoice when others are lifted up.
11. feel confident in how much they know.	11. are humbled by how much they have to learn.
12. are self-conscious.	12. are not concerned with self at all.
13. keep others at arms length and are quick to blame others.	13. are willing to risk getting close to others, take the risks of loving intimately, accept personal responsibility, and can see where they are wrong in a situation.
14. are unapproachable or defensive when criticized.	14. receive criticism with a humble, open spirit.
15. are concerned with being respectable, with what others think; work to protect their own image and reputation.	15. are concerned with being real; what matters to them is not what others think but what God knows; are willing to die to their own reputation.
16. find it difficult to share their spiritual struggles.	16. willing to be open and transparent with others as God directs.
17. want to be sure that no one finds out when they have sinned; their instinct is to cover up.	17. once broken, don't care who knows or who finds out; are willing to be exposed because they have nothing to lose.
18. have a hard time saying "I was wrong; will you forgive me?"	18. are quick to admit failure and to seek forgiveness when necessary.
19. tend to deal in generalities when confessing sin.	19. are able to acknowledge specifics when confessing their sin.
20. are not concerned about the consequences of their sin.	20. are grieved over the cause, the root of their sin.
21. are not remorseful over their sin, sorry that they got caught.	21. are truly, genuinely repentant over their sin, evidenced in the fact that they forsake that sin.
22. wait for the other to come and ask forgiveness when there is a misunderstanding or conflict in a relationship.	22. take the initiative to be reconciled when there is a misunderstanding or. conflict in relationships; they race to the cross; they see if they can get there first, no matter how wrong the other may have been.
23. compare themselves with others and feel worthy of honor.	23. compare themselves to the holiness of God and feel a desperate need for His mercy.
24. don't think they have anything to repent of.	24. realize need of a continual heart attitude of repentance.
25. don't think they need revival, but are sure that everyone else does.	25. continually sense their need for a fresh encounter with God and for a fresh filling of His Holy Spirit.

Daniel 3 Worksheet

- ♦ What are these major players like in **Daniel 3**? Whose *voice* are they listening to? What is the result?
- ♦ Describe their characters.
- ♦ Note Scriptures for your answers.

Shadrach, Meshach & Abednego:

Unbelievers:

King Nebuchadnezzar:

God's Character

“Study to show yourself approved unto God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed,
handling accurately the Word of Truth.” **2 Timothy 2:15**

“The thief’s purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give life in all its fullness.” John 10:10

According to Psalm 139, God is.....

The thief is.....

Look for the Good in Others

from *Daily with the King* by W. Glyn Evans

I will acknowledge that to be easily hurt, offended, intimidated, alarmed, or upset is really a manifestation of the self-life; it is because I am not getting my own way, or I am not accorded the place I think I deserve, or I am not given the share I think I am entitled to. To "feel" forever cheated, deprived, alienated or isolated is to taste what the unregenerate man will taste forever – hell.

Christ died not only to forgive my sins but to break sin's hold on me. Why should He bind the strong man only to release him to renew his attacks on me? **To indulge sin is to forfeit one of God's richest privileges, the power of the cross in my life!** The power of the cross and the power of sin are mutually exclusive; one or the other dominates me.

I will look for good in others, but I will not be surprised if I find imperfection. If I find imperfection, I will not feel personally slighted, as in the case of a friend who has failed me, or someone who has not lived up to my expectations. To feel slighted or hurt in such cases is an expression of the self-life. I will accept human beings as I find them: persons capable of redemption but just as capable of imperfection; and I will accord them the same treatment as Christ did. He did not rely on them, but neither did He exclude them. He was not personally hurt by rejection, only sorry for the rejecter. He was not vengeful or vindictive toward those who hurt Him. He gladly forgave and kept offering forgiveness. When He saw a glimmer of faith and love, He rejoiced.

The glory of Christian discipleship is to see the miracle of the emerging person, the *new man in Christ*, and to realize by God's divine intervention and by being His vessel, I have had a part in his newness under the hand of God. Then I am able to say with Christ, "I and the children God has given me" (Hebrews 2:13, Berkley).

Help for Your Marriage

by Elaine Creasman

It won't be too much longer until Steve and I celebrate our 25th wedding anniversary. Married life hasn't been easy. We both entered our marriage wounded, and too often we've wounded one another. Wouldn't it be easier to go the way of the world and consult a lawyer instead of the Lord? I've wondered. But every time we have cried out to God, there was only one answer He would give, "Stay married." Today we are reaping the blessings of obedience.

When I've asked Christians why they divorced, they gave answers like, "It was an impossible situation." Consider the verse that says, "nothing is impossible with God" (**Luke 1:37**). Others said, "I didn't have the strength to go on in the marriage," "I can do everything through Him who gives me strength," came to my mind.

After asking the "Why did you divorce?" question many times over, I became convinced the reason Christians decide to file for divorce is because most often they believe lies - many of the same lies I was tempted to believe. Also, they are not well acquainted with the truths of the Scriptures - the weapon God has given us to combat those lies.

The following are more excuses people have given for divorce, and some I have entertained, coupled with truth from Scripture. Even if you have been divorced because you, or your ex-spouse, or both embraced lies in the past, there is still great benefit in embracing truth right where you are.

The next time one of these lies or others tempt you, don't turn to a friend who's divorced or the latest books which attempt to give Christians biblical loopholes for divorce. Turn to God and to His Word - not just for an answer for your current marriage crisis but to build an intimate relationship with Him. He will make you into the wife or husband He wants you to be - one who is capable of loving a less-than-perfect spouse. And don't forget to pray for faith - faith to believe that God's promises in Scripture apply to you - and your marriage.

Man's Lies	God's Truth
1. God told me to get a divorce.	1. Malachi 2:16 - "I hate divorce," says the Lord God of Israel...
2. I have done everything in my power to get this marriage to work.	2. Zechariah 4:6 - "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit," says the LORD Almighty.
3. I tried to fix things - stitch things together, but it didn't work.	3. Colossians 1:17 - In Him all things hold together.
4. I couldn't respect my husband/wife.	4. 1 Peter 2:17 - Show respect for all men - treat them honorably.
5. I had to protect my sanity.	5. Psalm 32:7 - You are my hiding place; You will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance.
6. Divorce was the only way.	6. 1 Corinthians 12:31 - And yet I will show you a still more excellent way - one that is better by far and the highest of them all love.
7. It was my last chance for happiness	7. Proverbs 16:20 - And whoever trusts in the LORD, happy is he.
8. The Lord brought another person into my life; my heart tells me that he/ she's the only one for me.	8. Jeremiah 17:19 - The heart is deceitful above all things.
9. I couldn't bear it anymore.	9. Colossians 3:13 - Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another.
10. We were constantly at war.	10. Ephesians 6:12 - For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.
11. What my husband/wife did was unforgivable.	11. Colossians 3:13 - Forgive as the Lord forgave you.
12. My husband/wife didn't meet my needs.	12. Philippians 4:19 - And my God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus.
13. I hurt too much.	13. Psalm 15:1, 4 - Lord, who may dwell in your sanctuary? ... those who... keep their promises even when it hurts.
14. My lawyer (pastor, counselor) told me it would be the best thing.	14. Ps. 32:8 - I will instruct and teach you in the way you should go.
15. Our problems were too hard to solve.	15. Genesis 18:14 - Is anything too hard for the LORD?
16. I couldn't wait any longer for my husband/wife to change.	16. Psalms 27:14 - Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart...
17. I just needed to be free.	17. John 8:32 - Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.
18. I thought divorce was the best	18. Isaiah 65:2 - I have spread out my hands all the day to a rebellious people, who walk in a way that is not good, after their own thoughts.
19. I just knew it was the right thing to do.	19. Proverbs 14:12 - There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.
20. I talked and talked, and he wouldn't listen.	20. 1 Peter 3:1-2 - ...they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives.
21. There was no help for my marriage.	21. Psalms 46:1 - God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.
22. I couldn't trust my spouse.	22. Proverbs 3:5 - Trust in the Lord with all your heart.
23. My spouse said such cruel things to me.	23. Ps. 91:1, 5 - He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High...will not fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day.
24. I didn't love him/her anymore.	24. 1 Corinthians 13:8 - Love never fails - never fades out or becomes obsolete or comes to an end.
25. I was empty. I had nothing left in me to go on in the marriage.	25. Psalms 81:10 - Open wide your mouth and I will fill it.
26. I felt like I was dying inside.	26. 1 Corinthians 15:31 - I die daily - that is, that I face death every day and die to self.
27. There was no hope for our marriage.	27. Romans 15:13 - May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Daniel 6 Worksheet

- ◆ What are these major players like in **Daniel 6**? Whose *voice* are they listening to? What is the result?
- ◆ Describe their characters.
- ◆ Note Scriptures for your answers

Daniel:

Administrators, Prefects, Princes, Advisors, Officials:

King Darius:

“Study to show yourself approved unto God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed,
handling accurately the Word of Truth.” **2 Timothy 2:15**

God's Words on Trials, Temptations and Suffering

"Don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through as if something strange were happening to you."

1 Peter 4:12-13

Remember when you are reading these Scriptures, nothing can touch His beloved unless He allows it, and if He allows it He is looking for our response to be according to His Word where He has instructed us and has "fully equipped us" as to how we should respond. As **2 Corinthians 10:3-5** says: "...we use God's mighty weapons." Remember Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, Joseph, Esther, Paul, Stephen, and at the top of the list would be JESUS!

Don't look at the tempter, look at the Tester!

Trials

"Those who are willing to suffer for Christ have decided to stop sinning." **1 Peter 4:1**

"Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. Instead be very glad, because these trials will make you partners with Christ in His suffering, and afterward you will have the wonderful joy of sharing His glory when it is displayed to all the world." **1 Peter 4:12-13**

"Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith, of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire, may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed." **James 1:2-7**

"Yes he was a righteous man who was distressed by the wickedness he saw and heard day after day. So you see, the Lord knows how to rescue godly people from their trials, even while punishing the wicked right up until the Day of Judgment. He is especially hard on those who follow their own evil, lustful desires and who despise authority. These people are proud and arrogant, daring even to scoff at the glorious ones without so much as trembling." **2 Peter 2:8-10**

"They strengthened the believers. They encouraged them to continue in the faith, reminding them that they must enter into the Kingdom of God through many tribulations. Paul and Barnabas also appointed elders in every church and prayed for them with fasting, turning them over to the care of the Lord, in whom they had come to trust." **Acts 14:22-23**

"These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage, I have overcome the world." **John 16:33**

"Be devoted to one another in brotherly love, give preference to one another in honor, not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in prayer, serving the Lord, rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality." **Romans 12:10-13**

"Because of our faith, Christ has brought us into this place of highest privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing God's glory. We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know they are good for us – they help us to endure. And endurance develops strength of character in us, and character strengthens our confident expectation of salvation." **Philippians 3:10**

"And God, in His mighty power, will protect you until you receive this salvation... because you are trusting Him. It will be revealed on the last day for all to see. So be truly glad! There is wonderful joy ahead, even though it is necessary for you to endure many trials for a while. These trials are only to test your faith, to show that it is strong and pure. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold – and your faith is far more precious to God than mere gold. So if your faith remains strong after being tried by fiery trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world." **1 Peter 1:5-7**

"Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial, for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him." **James 1:12**

Suffering

"Those who are willing to suffer for Christ have decided to stop sinning." **1 Peter 4:1**

"For God is pleased with you when, for the sake of your conscience, you patiently endure unfair treatment. Of course, you get no credit if you are beaten for doing wrong. But if you suffer for doing right and are patient beneath the blows, God is pleased with you. This suffering is all part of what God has called you to. Christ, who suffered for you, is your example. Follow in His steps. He never sinned, and He never deceived anyone. He did not retaliate when He was insulted. When He suffered, He did not threaten to get even. He left His case in the hands of God, who always judges fairly." **1 Peter 2:19-23**

"So, humble yourselves under the mighty power of God and in His good time He will honor you. Give all your worries and cares to God, for He cares about what happens to you." **1 Peter 5:6-7**

"Be careful! Watch out for attacks from the Devil, your great enemy. He prowls around like a lion, looking for some victim to devour. Take a firm stand against him, and be strong in your faith. Remember that your Christian brothers and sisters all over the world are going through the same kind of suffering you are." **1 Peter 5:8-9**

"In His kindness, God called you to His eternal glory by means of Jesus Christ. After you have suffered a little while, He will restore, support, and strengthen you, and He will place you on a firm foundation." **1 Peter 5:10**

"The apostles left the high council rejoicing that God had counted them worthy to suffer dishonor for the name of Jesus." **Acts 5:41**

"If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. But if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name." **1 Peter 4:14-16**

"...that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death." **Philippians 3:10**

"But even if you suffer for doing what is right, God will reward you for it. So don't be afraid and don't worry." **1 Peter 3:14 (NLT)**

"But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. And do not fear their intimidation, and do not be troubled." **1 Peter 3:14 (New American Standard)**

"For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ. And our hope for you is firmly grounded, knowing that as you are sharers of our sufferings, so also you are sharers of our comfort." **2 Corinthians 1:5,7**

"If we endure, we will also reign with Him." **2 Timothy 2:12**

"...but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation." **1 Peter 4:13**

"Through suffering, these bodies of ours constantly share in the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus may also be seen in our bodies." **2 Corinthians 4:10**

"We give great honor to those who endure under suffering. Job is an example of a man who endured patiently. From his experience we see how the Lord's plan finally ended in good, for He is full of tenderness and mercy." **James 5:11**

"...and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him." **Romans 8:17**

"So then, since Christ suffered physical pain, you must arm yourselves with the same attitude He had, and be ready to suffer too. For if you are willing to suffer for Christ, you have decided to stop sinning. And you won't spend the rest of your life chasing after evil desires, but you will be anxious to do the will of God." **1 Peter 4:1-2**

Persecution

"Those who are willing to suffer for Christ have decided to stop sinning." **1 Peter 4:1**

"Indeed, all who desire to live godly lives in Christ Jesus will be persecuted." **2 Timothy 3:12**

"Submit yourselves to God (first), resists the devil (second) and he will flee from you. God blesses those who are persecuted because they live for God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs." **James 4:7**

"God blesses you when you are mocked and persecuted and lied about because you are My followers." **Matthew 5:11**

"Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted, too." **Matthew 5:12**

"And Jesus replied, 'I assure you that everyone who has given up house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or property, for My sake and for the Good News will receive now in return, a hundred times over, houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, and property – with persecutions. And in the world to come they will have eternal life. But many who seem to be important now will be the least important then, and those who are considered least here will be the greatest then.'" **Mark 10:29-31**

"Do you remember what I told you? 'A servant is not greater than the master.' Since they persecuted Me, naturally they will persecute you. And if they had listened to Me, they would listen to you!" **John 15:20**

"But Oh, that My people would listen to Me. Oh that they would follow Me, walking in My paths. How quickly I would then subdue their enemies. How soon My hands would be on their foes." **Psalms 81:13-14**

"And God will provide rest for you who are being persecuted and also for us when the Lord Jesus appears from heaven. He will come with His mighty angels." **2 Thessalonians 1:7**

"Since I know it is all for Christ's good, I am quite content with my weaknesses and with insults, hardships, persecutions and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong." **2 Corinthians 12:10**

"But God will use this persecution to show His justice. For He will make you worthy of His Kingdom, for which you are suffering." **2 Thessalonians 1:5**

"Let this encourage God's holy people to endure persecution patiently and remain firm to the end, obeying His commands and trusting in Jesus." **Revelation 14:12**

"Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you. Draw close to God, and God will draw close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, purify your hearts, you hypocrites. Let there be tears for the wrong things you have done. Let there be sorrow and deep grief. Let there be sadness instead of laughter, and gloom

instead of joy. When you bow down before the Lord and admit your dependence on Him, He will lift you up and give you honor." **James 4: 7-10**

"Blessed are you when men hate you, and ostracize you, and insult you, and scorn your name as evil, for the sake of the Son of Man." **Luke 6:22**

Temptation

"Those who are willing to suffer for Christ have decided to stop sinning." **1 Peter 4:1**

"But remember that the temptations that come into your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you can't stand up against it. When you are tempted, He will show you a way out so that you will not give in to it."

1 Corinthians 10:13

"God blesses the people who patiently endure testing. Afterward they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love Him. And remember, no one who wants to do wrong should ever say, 'God is tempting me.' God is never tempted to do wrong, and He never tempts anyone else either. Temptation comes from the lure of our own evil desires. These evil desires lead to evil actions, and evil actions lead to death. So don't be misled, my dear brothers and sisters. Whatever is good and perfect comes to us from God, who created all heaven's lights. Unlike them, He never changes or casts shifting shadows. In His goodness He chose to make us His own children by giving us His true Word. And we, out of all creation, became His choice possession."

James 1:12-18

God causes all things to work together for good... clearly Joseph understood this, and consider all he went through! Joseph here is speaking to his brothers who abused him: "But as for you, you intended evil against me, but God intended this for good to bring about this present result, the saving of many lives." **Genesis 50:20**

"For if the Son has set you free you are free indeed."

John 8:36

With freedom comes responsibility! That is... "Our response to His ability."

How to Walk in Victory

"But Oh, that My people would listen to Me. Oh that they would follow Me, walking in My paths. How quickly I would then subdue their enemies. How soon My hands would be on their foes." **Psalms 81:13-14**

1. We listen to Him.
2. We follow Him.
3. We walk on His path.
4. We stop trying to subdue our own enemies and leave that to Him.
5. We take our hands off our foes and leave the "handiwork" to God.

6. According to this verse when we take our hands off our enemies, and turn to Him and follow Him, then He subdues our enemies.

You see, while *our* hands are on our foes, God just turns up the heat, which gives us greater need to run to Him, which is what He is after in the first place! Only *His* hands should be on our foes. Our hands were not made to handle our foes. Only *He* should be subduing our enemies as we are turning to Him for help and for His protection. As new creatures in Christ, who are no longer *victims* but *Victors*. We no longer have to protect ourselves, because *He* is our Protector... (**Psalms 91**) that is why we run to Him!

"Yes, this is the inheritance of the servants of the Lord!" (**Isaiah 54:17**) But remember *partaking* of the protection He offers is quite often based upon my turning to Him. Until I do that, He *turns up the heat*... A great motivation to get my hands off the situation! And it is also true that when we least expect it, His grace comes and delivers us out of a multitude of situations, even when we forget to ask! Amazing Grace! Oh the sweet, sweet love of Jesus!

A note to remember... We are all in process. The greatest failure is not *falling off the bicycle*, but not calling upon God to help you back on to try again. It's the Heart of the Matter. Remember, you can always press the *Restart* button! Isn't this how we teach our children as we help them learn and grow? And we are called the *Children of God*! Looks like He is doing the same with us! Oh How He Loves You and Me! His patience is motivated by His extravagant love!

This Thing is From Me –

by Laura Barter Snow

My child, I have a message for you today; let Me whisper it in your ear, that it may gild with glory any storm clouds which may arise and smooth the rough places upon which you may have to tread. It is short, only five words, but let them sink into your soul and use them as a pillow upon which to rest your weary head.

Have you ever thought of it, that all that concerns you, concerns Me, too? For "he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of Mine eye." Zechariah 2:8. "You are very precious in My sight." Isaiah 43:4. Therefore, it is My special delight to educate you.

I would have you learn when temptations assail you, and the "enemy comes in like a flood" that this thing is from Me, that your weakness needs My might, and your safety lies in letting Me fight for you.

Are you in difficult circumstances, surrounded by people who do not understand you, who never consult your taste, who put you in the background? This thing is from Me. I am the God of circumstances. "Thou earnest not to thy place by accident, it is the very place God meant for thee." Have you not asked to be made humble? See, then, I have placed you in the very school where this lesson is taught; your surroundings and companions are only working out My will.

Are you in money difficulties? Is it hard to make both ends meet? This thing is from Me, for I am your purse-bearer, and would have you draw from, and depend upon Me. My supplies are limitless. **Philippians 4:19.** I would have you prove My promises. Let it not be said of you, "in this thing ye did not believe the Lord your God." **Deuteronomy 1:32.**

Are you passing through a night of sorrow? This thing is from Me. I am the "Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." I have let earthly comforters fail you, that by turning to Me you may obtain everlasting consolation. **2 Thessalonians 2:16-17.**

Has some friend disappointed you? Was it one to whom you poured out your heart? This thing is from Me. I have allowed this disappointment to come that you may learn that: The best friend to have is Jesus, He will hear you when you call, He will keep you lest you fall. The best friend to have is Jesus.

I want to be your confidant. Has someone repeated things about you that are untrue? Leave them to Me, and draw closer unto Me, thy shelter, out of reach of "the strife of tongues." For "I will bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday." **Psalms 37:6.**

Have your plans been all upset? Are you bowed down and weary? This thing is from Me. You made your plans, then came asking Me to bless them, but I would have you let Me plan for you and then I take the responsibility, for "This thing is too heavy for thee, thou art not able to perform it thyself alone." **Exodus 18:18.** You are only an instrument, not an agent.

Have you longed to do some great work for Me, and instead been laid aside on a bed of pain and weakness? This thing is from Me. I could not get your attention in your busy days, and I want to teach you some of My deeper lessons. "They also serve who only stand and wait." I want you to learn to sing:

I am not eager, bold or strong, All that is past;

I am ready not to do, At last; at last!

Some of My greatest workers are those shut out from active service, that they may learn to wield the weapon of all-prayer.

Are you suddenly called upon to occupy a difficult and responsible position? Launch out on Me- I am trusting you with the "possession of difficulties," and "for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou putteth thine hand unto." **Deuteronomy 15:10.**

This day I place in your hand this pot of holy oil; make use of it freely, My child. Let every circumstance as it arises, every word that pains you, every interruption that would make you impatient, every revelation of your own weakness, be anointed with it. The sting will go as you learn to see Me in all things. Therefore, "Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day . . . for it is not a vain thing for you; because it is your life, and through this thing ye shall prolong your days in the land." **Deuteronomy 32:46-47.**

Displayed by God

from *Daily with the King* by W. Glyn Evans

Whether I like it or not (and I like it!), I am in "show business." The Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on earth" (**Job 1:8**) Disciples are for display, saints are for spectacle. God the Master Artist does not ply His talents to a raw sinner for nothing; He wants His chief enemy, Satan, to observe and understand what happens to a man when he becomes pliable in God's hands... the very opposite of what Satan was when he sinned. But God must display me; I cannot display myself. The chief end of His masterpiece in me is not only for the eternal ages (**Ephesians 2:7-10**), but also for now in the midst of this "crooked & perverse generation" (**Philippians 2:15**). The bumper sticker "Please be patient, God isn't finished with me yet" is true, but only partly true. There are elements of a finished product within me, and God wants those elements displayed for others to see.

Remember Daniel? The den of lions was not for Daniel's benefit, but for the king's. "Daniel... has your God... been able to deliver you from the lions?" (**Daniel 6:19-20**) Looking into the den, the pagan king Darius saw a servant of God displaying the victory over the lions that his faith had made possible. He was astonished and impressed, so much so that he issued a decree: "the God of Daniel... is the living God (who) delivers and rescues and performs signs and wonders." (**Daniel 6:25-27**) Daniel was an actor in a living drama, and the result was applause to Almighty God. Have you seen my servant_____? Dare I put my name here as one whom the Lord can display? I see now what Paul meant when he called himself God's exhibition and God's "spectacle" to the world. (**1 Corinthians 4:9**) What a glory to be a chosen showpiece of God! "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them" (**Ephesians 2:10**)

There is always purpose to our pain.

Gethsemane Leads to Calvary

from *Daily with the King* by W. Glyn Evans

Gethsemane not only shows me how to overcome fear, but how to succeed in my Christian life. In Gethsemane, Jesus prayed a prayer, "Not My will, but Thine be done" (**Luke 22:42**) and on Calvary, Jesus shouted in triumph, "It is [satisfactorily] finished [completed]!" (**John 19:30**). It was in Gethsemane that Jesus sowed the seeds of victory on Calvary. I will be faced with countless Calvaries, and the only way I can prepare for them is to go through Gethsemane.

I must be a Gethsemane disciple. Gethsemane was not an isolated experience for Jesus; He went there "as was His custom." (**Luke 22:39**) Spiritually, His whole life was a Gethsemane; He was constantly facing the enemy's alternatives, He was continually deciding to do the Father's will. The more selfish a person is, the less he will experience of Gethsemane. He has no crisis, no agony, and therefore no

victory. Believers who live in the atmosphere of Gethsemane constantly reap victory.

Gethsemane divides disciples into three groups: those who decide to *ignore* God's will, those who decide to *consider* God's will, and those who decide to *do* God's will. Victory comes only to the one who chooses to enact God's will.

I can avoid Gethsemane if I choose to do so, but I cannot avoid Calvary. The tragedy is that if I avoid Gethsemane, I will be in poor condition indeed to face my Calvary. The glorious sequence of Calvary, resurrection, and ascension starts in Gethsemane. Lord, let me say honestly, 'I'll go with Him through the garden!' Then Christ will respond by saying, "To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with Me on My throne, just as I overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne." (**Revelation 3:21 NIV**)

"Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will" (**Hebrews 13:20-21**)

The Bible is a Fire and a Hammer

from *Daily with the King* by W. Glyn Evans

I must understand that the Bible is not only my source of comfort, but also my source of bruising. "Is not My Word like fire?" declares the Lord, "and like a hammer which shatters a rock?" (**Jeremiah 23:29**). If I have never felt the scorching of the Bible's heat or the shattering of the Bible's blow, I am not making much progress as a disciple. The Bible is a sharp instrument; it pierces, divides, discerns, and reaches into the depths of my personality, down to the thoughts and motives of my nature. (**Hebrews 4:12**)

I must beware the man who preaches a sugarcoated faith. Faith in God is not an Aladdin's lamp that grants my every wish. I must avoid, as I would the plague, the man who preaches "peace, peace" continually. There are times when the Bible will not give me peace; times when to comfort and assure me would be absolutely damaging to me.

The false prophet is easily discovered. He is the man who offers nothing but honey, peace, joy, security, and tranquility. He does that of course, because it is what the natural man craves; it provides him a ready audience, a guarantee of success. A counselor who offers me a rosy goal but never mentions the painful, torturous road to it is not my friend. Jesus Christ is my true Friend. He offers me a rewarding future, but "with persecutions" (**Mark 10:29-30**). He wants to deliver me safe, sound, and holy. That is why His Word must sometimes make me ache with soreness and weep with bitterness. He knows where it all is leading to manhood and womanhood tinged with glory. I respond with Mary's sincere humility: "Behold, the bond slave of the Lord: be it done to me according to your word," for "my soul exalts the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior." (**Luke 1:38, 46-47**)

"Therefore, I love Thy commandments above gold, yes, above fine gold. Therefore I esteem right all Thy precepts concerning everything, I hate every false way". (**Psalms 119:127-128**)

Nailprints in the Heart

from *Daily with the King* by W. Glyn Evans

The strength of my devotion to Jesus Christ is not measured by my speech, but by my sufferings. When Paul urged the Colossians on to greater zeal for God, he did not argue, he pointed. "Remember my bonds [prison chains]," he wrote to them (**Colossians 4:18, KJV**). If his sufferings for Christ could not convince them, nothing could. Would Paul himself not know? What started him thinking about Christ, Stephen's speech or his death? (**Acts 7:6-8:1**)

Paul has left us many memorials of his devotion to Christ - letters, travels, sermons, miracles - but he left nothing greater than his chains, the symbol of his sufferings for Christ's sake. The measure of a person's devotion to any cause, right or wrong, is the depth of the suffering he is willing to undergo for it. That is why Paul could say, "I bear on my body the brand marks of Jesus." (**Galatians 6:17**)

What scars do I bear for Christ? Scars are not an end in themselves, but signs of an inward commitment. Nor must I seek scars of the *body*, but what are more important, scars of the *spirit*. The scars of the spirit are the sacrifices of self-dependence and self-direction that I make for Christ's sake. Whether or not I ever wear physical scars for Christ is not essential; it is absolutely essential that I wear spiritual scars for Him.

A Christian once said, "There are no nail prints in my hands." Perhaps not. But a more pertinent question is: Are there nail prints in your heart? Paul rejoiced in his scars, because then, he said, "the power of Christ may rest upon me."

(**2 Corinthians 12:9, KJV**); He was willing to trade scars for the privilege of bearing fruit. So will everyone who follows the Lamb wherever He goes.

"In all their afflictions He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them; in His mercy He redeemed them; and He lifted them and carried them all the days of old" **Isaiah 63:9**.

The Refiners Touch

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

Malachi 3:3 "He will sit as a Refiner and Purifier of silver."

There was a group of women in a Bible study on the book of Malachi. As they were studying chapter three they came across verse three which says, "He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver." This verse puzzled the women and they wondered what this statement meant about the character and nature of God.

One of the women offered to find out about the process of refining silver and get back to the group at their next Bible study. That week the woman called up a silversmith and made an appointment to watch him at work. She didn't mention anything about the reason for her interest in silver beyond her

curiosity about the process of refining silver. As she watched the silversmith, he held a piece of silver over the fire and let it heat up. He explained that, in refining silver, one needed to hold the silver in the middle of the fire where the flames were hottest so as to burn away all the impurities.

The woman thought about God holding us in such a hot spot - then she thought again about the verse, that He sits as a refiner and purifier of silver. She asked the silversmith if it was true that he had to sit there in front of the fire the whole time the silver was being refined. The man answered that yes, he not only had to sit there holding the silver, but he had to keep his eyes on the silver the entire time it was in the fire. For if the silver was left even a moment too long in the flames, it would be destroyed.

The woman was silent for a moment. Then she asked the silversmith, "How do you know when the silver is fully refined?" He smiled at her and answered, "Oh, that's the easy part -- when I see my image reflected in it."

If today you are feeling the heat of the fire, remember that God has His eye on you and will keep His hand on you and watch over you until He sees His image in you. Everyone needs to know and embrace the Truth that God is watching over them, just like the silversmith watches the piece of silver. Whatever we are going through, embracing this Truth assures us that we'll be a surrendered servant of the Lord Jesus Christ in the end.

Living For God:

"So then, since Christ suffered physical pain, you must arm yourselves with the same attitude He had, and be ready to suffer, too. For if you are willing to suffer for Christ, you have decided to stop sinning. And you won't spend the rest of your life chasing after evil desires, but you will be anxious to do the will of God. You have had enough in the past of the evil things that godless people enjoy" **1 Peter 4:1-3**

Only one life it will soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last.

"For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified." **1 Corinthians 2:2**

A Refiner by C.H. Spurgeon

We cannot show courage unless we have difficulties and troubles. Therefore, rejoice in your trials, for they give you opportunities to exhibit a believing confidence, to glorify the name of the Most High. This is the believer's view of affliction: it is "the Lord (who) has chastened me severely". (**Psalms 118:18**). The enemy struck to make me fall, but my gracious God used him to chasten me, that I might not fail. The enemy was moved by malice, but God worked through him to love my soul. It is good to have grace enough to see that trials come from God. He fills the bitter cup as well as the sweet goblet. Trouble does not spring out of the dust, and affliction does not grow from the ground. The Lord Himself kindles the fiery furnace. He is like a refiner's fire. He will purify and He will

purge you as gold and silver. (**Malachi 3:3**) Do not dwell on the part played by the devil, as though he were a power equal with God, for he is a creature, and fallen. The devil's existence depends on the will and permission of the Most High. His power is borrowed and can only be used as God's infinite omnipotence permits. The devil's wickedness is his own, but his existence is not self-derived. Blame the devil, and blame all his servants as much as you wish, but still believe that in the truest sense the Lord sends trials to His saints.

from *Beside Still Waters...* Words of Comfort for the soul. Copyright 1999 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.

Accepting God's Plan

by Charles R. Swindoll (<http://daily.insight.org>)

Read Job 24:1-25.

David, in **Psalms 139:6**, makes the appropriate comment, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is too high, I cannot attain to it." If David lived today, he would write, "This blows my mind." The vastness of God's inscrutability has a way of doing that to us, and so it should.

If nothing else, the study of Job reveals that we don't fully understand God's ways. We cannot explain the inexplicable. We cannot fathom the unfathomable. So let's not try to unscrew the inscrutable.

If only the men who considered themselves Job's friends had acknowledged that. It would have been so much more comforting to Job, sitting in such enormous misery, longing for an arm around his shoulder and someone honest enough to say, "We're here, but we don't understand why this is happening any more than you do. God knows, but we're here to be with you through it. God is doing something deep and mysterious, but it is so beyond us we cannot understand it either."

May I go one step further? God doesn't have a "wonderful plan" for everybody's life. Not here on earth, for sure. For some lives His plan is Lou Gehrig's disease. For some lives (like Job's) His plan is a life of pain. For others, heartbreak and brokenness, blindness or paralysis, or congenital complications. For many, His plan is to answer no to their requests for healing. But we don't like that. Some won't accept it. In fact, they go so far as to say, "If you believe that, you lack faith." On the contrary, I say if you believe that, you believe the Bible!

The Bible describes the lives of people who don't get well, who don't quickly get over their problems, who don't easily overcome accidents or illnesses. God's Word pictures its heroes, warts and all. They hurt. They fall. They fail, and on occasion, by His grace, they succeed.

How well do you accept the unfolding plan of God for your life?

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40 Brave Soldiers for Christ

In the first century, when Hadrian was emperor of Rome, he waged war against the Christians in the empire. A group of 40 believers gathered together to worship in Northern Italy. Soldiers surrounded them and said, 'Upon order of the Emperor, your worship of this so-called King of the Jews must cease immediately, or you will be executed.'

'Do what you will,' answered the 40, 'even if it costs our lives.' So the Roman soldiers took them into a mountainous region. It was wintertime, and the small lake in the area was completely frozen over. The captain of the guard said, 'Here is one more opportunity for you to deny Jesus Christ – or we will place you on that lake all night until your bodies freeze.'

It is better to freeze for a night than to burn in hell for eternity, answered the brave believers. So the 40 believers took off their clothes and sat naked on the ice. With teeth chattering and knees knocking, they sang, '40 Brave Soldiers for Christ' as the Romans looked on and mocked them. Occasionally, the captain would call out, 'Come to your senses, men. Deny Jesus just for a moment. Come and be warmed by the fire and be saved.' But the believers would not budge, and kept singing '40 Brave Soldiers for Christ, 40 Brave Soldiers for Christ.' After an hour or so, one Christian stood up, able to endure the pain no longer. He ran towards the soldiers, saying, 'I deny Jesus the Christ.' And he was welcomed to be warmed by the fire. He couldn't pay the price, and he turned his back on Jesus the Christ.

What about us? What would happen if suddenly we were absolutely forbidden to name the Name of Jesus Christ? Would you be willing to suffer, to be tortured, to die?

Remember the 40 believers on the lake in Northern Italy? After one of their brothers left and turned away, they still sang, only they changed their song to, "39 Brave Soldiers for Christ". One of the Roman soldiers observing this scene was so moved that he stripped off his clothes, ran out upon the lake and said, 'No, 40 Brave soldiers for Christ. 40 Brave Soldiers for Christ.'

He that finds his life shall lose it and he that loses his life for My sake shall find it. **Matthew 10:39**

So then, since Christ suffered physical pain, you must arm yourselves with the same attitude He had, and be ready to suffer too. For if you are willing to suffer for Christ, you have decided to stop sinning. **1 Peter 4:1**

If the mountain were smooth, you couldn't climb it. When you are down to nothing, God is up to something!

And all of us have had that veil removed so that we can be mirrors that brightly reflect the glory of the Lord. And as the

Spirit of the Lord works within us, we become more and more like Him and reflect His glory even more.

2 Corinthians 3:18

But this precious treasure – this light and power that now shine within us – is held in perishable containers, that is, in our weak bodies. So everyone can see that our glorious power is from God and is not our own. **2 Corinthians 4:7**

...[they] were watching me and they knew that the Lord was speaking to them through my actions. **Zechariah 11:11**

The Soldier's Will Is the Key

from *Daily with the King* by W. Glyn Evans

I will be soldierly at all times. The chief requirement of the soldier is the surrender of his will. Other things are irrelevant. The disposition of his time, his duties, and his responsibilities is entirely in the hands of his commander, and they are not his business. If Christ has my will, He will also have my body, my mind, my strength, my ambitions, my inclinations, my attitudes, in short, my all. The will is the key. When I am tempted, it is in the will that the victory will be won or lost. Temptation gives me alternatives: I can submit and lose or resist and win. There is ample power for either. Christ gives me power to resist; my old nature gives me power to submit. But the key is the will. If I will to resist, Christ will empower me as He has promised; if I will to submit, I only need to let the old nature take over. Whoever has my will is my master. I therefore must decide daily, hourly: shall Christ have my will, or shall it be some other master: The decision is instantaneous; the results are eternal.

My hope is based on the twofold action of God: "God... is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure."

Philippians 2:13 While God does not make up my mind, He strengthens my resolve. Even more, He brings my resolution to a finished product "for His good pleasure." Thus, I can honor the Lord's intent and say, "It can be done."

"Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus."
(2 Timothy 2:3)

Acts 6 & 7 Worksheet

- ◆ What are these major players like in **Acts 6 & 7**? Whose voice are they listening to? What is the result?
- ◆ Describe their characters.
- ◆ Note Scriptures for your answers.

Stephen:

The Council:

Unbelievers:

“Study to show yourself approved unto God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed,
handling accurately the Word of Truth.” **2 Timothy 2:15**

2 Chronicles 20 Worksheet

- ◆ What are these major players like in **2 Chronicles 20**? Whose *voice* are they listening to? What is the result?
- ◆ Describe their characters.
- ◆ Note Scriptures for your answers.

Jehoshaphat:

The Believers:

The Enemy:

“Study to show yourself approved unto God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed,
handling accurately the Word of Truth.” **2 Timothy 2:15**

How Do I Begin to Walk in Freedom?

The Bible says in **Galatians 5:1**: "Now that Christ has really set you Free, make sure you stay free and don't get tied up again in slavery to the law." So how do you do that? Here's the *how to*:

How to come *out of the darkness* of listening to the wrong voices *into the light* of following God's voice:

"So, dear brothers and sisters, you have no obligation whatsoever to do what your sinful nature urges you to do. For if you keep on following it, you will perish. But if through the power of the Holy Spirit you turn from it and its evil deeds, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God." **Romans 8:12-14**

"And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." **John 8:32**

"So Christ has really set us free. Now make sure that you stay free, and don't get tied up again in slavery to the law." **Galatians 5:1**

"Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will know what God wants you to do, and you will know how good and pleasing and perfect His will really is." **Romans 12:2**

"So I advise you to live according to your new life in the Holy Spirit. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves." **Galatians 5:16**

1. God, please show me when I'm hearing any voice but Yours.

"Lead me in the right path, O LORD, or my enemies will conquer me. Tell me clearly what to do, and show me which way to turn." **Psalms 5:8**

"So, dear brothers and sisters, you have no obligation whatsoever to do what your sinful nature urges you to do." **Romans 8:12**

"... sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it." **Genesis 4:7b**

2. When You show me that I'm hearing a different voice other than Yours, please empower me to turn and talk to You.

"So, dear brothers and sisters, you have no obligation whatsoever to do what your sinful nature urges you to do. For if you keep on following it, you will perish. But **if through the power of the Holy Spirit you turn from it** and its evil deeds, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God." **Romans 8:12-14**

"So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus." (**Romans 8:1**) God's voice would never condemn!

3. Lord, help me to cry out to You without holding back, no matter how large or small it is.

"I cry out to God without holding back." **Psalms 77:1**

"My heart has heard You say, 'Come and talk with Me.' And my heart responds, 'LORD, I am coming.'" **Psalms 27:8**

"Come, now, let us reason together," says the Lord." **Isaiah 1:18**

"Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank Him for all He has done." **Philippians 4:6**

4. Lord, remind me that while I'm talking to You, You are following right behind clearing the temple.

"If we confess our sins He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to **cleanse us** from all unrighteousness." (**1 John 1:9**)

He is clearing and cleansing the temple as we talk it out and over with Him.

Then Jesus entered the Temple and began to drive out the people selling animals for sacrifices. He said to them, "The Scriptures declare, 'My Temple will be a house of prayer,' but you have turned it into a den of thieves." **Luke 19:45-46**

"However, the Most High doesn't live in temples made by human hands." (**Acts 7:48**) We are His house now.

5. Lord, help me not to leave my conversation, pouring out to You, until I experience life and peace.

"Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things. But those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. If the sinful nature controls your mind, there is death. But if the Holy Spirit controls your mind, there is **life and peace**." **Romans 8:5-6**

"Be anxious for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God and the peace of God that surpasses all comprehension shall guard your heart and mind in Christ Jesus." **Philippians 4:6-7**

"I will show you what it's like when someone comes to Me, listens to My teaching, and then obeys Me. It is like a person who builds a house on a strong foundation laid upon the underlying rock. When the floodwaters rise and break against the house, it stands firm because it is well built. But anyone who listens and doesn't obey is like a person who builds a house without a foundation. When the floods sweep down against that house, it will crumble into a heap of ruins." **Luke 6:47-48**

6. Lord, thank You that now I can join the Father and the Son in prayer about the circumstance that just happened or what I just heard... now praying in the power of the Spirit with the mind of Christ... because after pouring out

to God we have been cleansed. (1 John 1:9) Pray without ceasing!

"Keep alert and pray. Otherwise temptation will overpower you. For though the spirit is willing enough, the body is weak!" **Matthew 26:41**

"I have never stopped thanking God for you. I pray for you constantly." **Ephesians 1:16**

"He prayed more fervently, and He was in such agony of spirit that His sweat fell to the ground like great drops of blood." **Luke 22:44**

"Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank Him for all He has done." **Philippians 4:6**

"He always prays earnestly for you, asking God to make you strong and perfect, fully confident of the whole will of God." **Colossians 4:12**

7. Conclusion:

A. Pouring out, talking to God in Prayer.... This is the work of God's kingdom.

"So we have continued praying for you ever since we first heard about you. We ask God to give you a complete understanding of what He wants to do in your lives, and we ask Him to make you wise with spiritual wisdom. Then the way you live will always honor and please the Lord, and you will continually do good, kind things for others. All the while, you will learn to know God better and better. We also pray that you will be strengthened with His glorious power so that you will have all the patience and endurance you need. May you be filled with joy." **Colossians 1:9**

B. How do you pray without ceasing? With all your inner conversations, change your audience to God. He is not asking you to stop talking, but to change your audience to Him... talk to Him all the time instead. This is how you pray without ceasing. Can you imagine if you are not talking to yourself... how much you will be talking to Him? Again, this is how you pray without ceasing!

"Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart." **Colossians 4:2**

C. This is how God uses us in Kingdom work to be a solution to the problem.

"Be sure to carry out the work the Lord gave you." **Colossians 4:17**

D. This is how intimacy with God is nurtured and how it develops.

"My heart has heard You say, come and talk with Me and my heart responds, Lord, I am coming." **Psalms 27:8**

"And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to live in obedience to Him." **Colossians 2:6**

An Illustration by Adrian Rogers

The Amazon River is the greatest River in the World. More water flows through the Amazon River than the Mississippi and the Nile and the Andes rivers put together. As that fresh water flows from the Amazon River, it flows with such force that there is a current felt as far out as 200 miles all the way out in the South Atlantic Ocean. One time there was a boat sailing past the mouth of that Amazon River, and they had run out of water aboard that boat. The sailors were dying of thirst, and they signaled to another ship that they saw and they said, "Please can you share some water with us, can you give us some water? Our sailors are dying!" And they sent back a message across the water and said, "Let down your buckets where you are." And they said, "No, you don't understand, we need water to drink."

They sent back the message again, "Let down your buckets where you are!" And finally the third time they understood. They were sailing in a sea of fresh water and perishing for thirst. And I am afraid that is where some of us are today. Sailing in a sea of fresh water and perishing for thirst. Oh how God loves you! Don't perish. Just let down your buckets where you are! This is what Jesus died for. He has cleansed you and washed you and set you free! The past is past! That is why it is called *past*! You are a new Creature in Christ! Drink deeply of that fresh living water that will never stop flowing over you, around you and through you! Are you dying of thirst? Are you parched because you are believing lies and you don't know your position in Christ? Listen: "If the Son has set you free, you are free indeed." (**John 8:36**)

Oh, won't you let God transform you by changing the way you think... embrace the Truth that you are not controlled anymore by the sinful nature or the evil one. Romans tell us that God has broken the power they have over us. Yes, they are still there, but they are on God's leash and they can do nothing without God's permission. We belong to Him now! They will only serve His purposes: for example when God is testing us by allowing the watching world to see how we respond as victors to a given difficulty.

When God allows us to be tempted, He is testing us. He is training us to see if we will choose to apply what we read in the Scriptures by walking in Victory regardless of the opposition. Why? Because we have the power of God! "Greater is Jesus Christ in us than the enemy is in the world" (**1 John 4:4**) And greater is Jesus in us than our flesh is! Again, the power that the enemy and our flesh had over us has been broken at the cross. Please get this! This **is** our position!

Now you, through the power of the Holy Spirit have power over them to say no! Capture that thought, submit it to God by pouring out exactly how you feel, like David taught us in the Psalms. Stay filled with His Holy Spirit by pouring out to God any poison that you allowed to enter your mind. This is a "how to" to enable you to walk in Freedom!

More Great Verses to Memorize

Genesis 50:20 But as for you, you intended evil against me but God intended it for good to bring about this present result, the saving of many lives.

1 Kings 18:21b ...How long will you hesitate between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal follow him....

Psalms 142:2 I pour out my complaints before God and tell Him all my troubles.

Proverbs 4:20-22 Pay attention My child to what I say. Listen carefully. Don't lose sight of My words. Let them penetrate deep within your heart, (your mind) for they bring life and radiant health to anyone who discovers their meaning.

Proverbs 30:5 Every Word of God proves true. He defends all who come to Him for protection.

Isaiah 7:9b ...You do not believe Me? If you want Me to protect you, learn to believe what I say

John 3:30 He must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less. (He must increase, I must decrease - NASB).

1 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 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.

Galatians 5:1 So Christ has really set us free. Now make sure that you stay free, and don't get tied up again in slavery to the law.

Philippians 2:13 For God is working in you, giving you the desire to obey Him and the power to do what pleases Him.

Philippians 4:6-7 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:8-9 Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things. The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

Hebrews 4:12-16 For the Word of God is full of living power. It is sharper than the sharpest knife, cutting deep into our innermost thoughts and desires. It exposes us for what we really are. Nothing in all creation can hide from Him. Everything is naked and exposed before His eyes. This is the God to whom we must explain all that we have done. That is why we have a great High Priest who has gone to heaven, Jesus the Son of God. Let us cling to Him and never stop trusting Him. This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for He faced all of the same temptations we do, yet He did not sin. So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive His mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it.

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, God is faithful and righteous to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 5:4 For every child of God defeats this evil world by trusting Christ to give the victory.

2 Peter 1:3 His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness.

1 Peter 4:1b For if you are willing to suffer for Christ you have DECIDED to stop sinning.

John 10:27 My sheep hear My voice and I know them and they follow Me.

Preparation for Communion

"As they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread and asked God's blessing on it. Then He broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, 'Take it, for this is My body.' And He took a cup of wine and gave thanks to God for it. He gave it to them, and they all drank from it. And He said to them, 'This is My blood, poured out for many, sealing the covenant between God and His people.'" **Mark 14:22-24**

Food for Thought: a Commentary on Romans 6

By Jon Courson (amended)

Romans 1-5 tell us we are dead *in* sin.

Romans 6-8 tell us we are dead *to* sin, meaning that sin no longer has any authority over us; it can no longer dictate to us what to do.

Chapters 1-5 tell us that we are free from the *penalty* of sin. Chapters 6-8 tell us we are free from the *power* of sin.

Chapters 1-5 tell us that salvation is accomplished apart from works. It's done. It's finished! The work is complete.

Christians try to fight sin by preaching, "don't do this, don't do that!" God's Word teaches us to say "**Know** His Heart & Truth".... **know** that you have a new identification with Jesus Christ. (**Romans 6:3-5**) We are set free through Jesus' Cross!

In **Romans 6:6**, the word crucified or destroyed in this verse in Greek is *Katargeo*. It means *rendered inactive or paralyzed*. It doesn't mean annihilated. Therefore when your old sin nature screams at you to do the old things, Paul says in essence that although he can yell, he is powerless to act since the Cross paralyzed him from the neck down.

Romans 6:7-9 The work of the Cross is complete.

Romans 6:9-11 Paul is saying know this that when Jesus died on the Cross, your old sin nature was with Him, count on it! That is why **Communion** has two elements, for when you take the cup, you celebrate the fact that you are "free from the penalty of sin". And when you take the broken Body, you acknowledge the fact that you are "free from the power of sin." The word healed in Greek in this passage is *Sozo*. It speaks not only of physical healing, but of the fullness of salvation...being set free from sin, and insulated from all oppression! This explains why Jesus received those lashes, and why His body was pierced, why He went through what He did – for besides the shedding of blood which provides forgiveness from sin, the breaking of His body provides victory over sin. The power of sin IS broken! Believe it by faith. Sin's dominion is not broken through clever counseling or talking it through. It is broken through one thing only: the work of Calvary... Christ's death on the Cross.

Whatever we struggle with or whatever temptation we are wrestling with, it is powerless in light of the Cross. When we finally have had enough, when we at last have our fill of the venom which we have allowed to infect us and those around us, when we finally determine that we don't want to be under sin's dominion any longer, know this; you can be free at that moment. No support group needed, no counseling is necessary. Just say, "Lord, now I understand. You told me that the Old Man was paralyzed on the cross. I believe it." That settles it, and with the spike of the Cross, and the hammer of the Word, you nail it right there and walk away free. It is that simple!

Scriptures to Renew Your Mind

Selections from Romans 5

Faith Brings Joy

³We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they are good for us--they help us learn to endure. ⁴And endurance develops strength of character in us, and character strengthens our confident expectation of salvation. ¹⁷The sin of this one man, Adam, caused death to rule over us, but all who receive God's wonderful, gracious gift of righteousness will live in triumph over sin and death through this one man, Jesus Christ.

Selections from Romans 6

⁶Our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin. ⁷For when we died with Christ we were set free from the power of sin. ¹²Do not let sin control the way you live; do not give in to its lustful desires. ¹⁶Don't you realize that whatever **you choose** to obey becomes your master?

¹⁸Now you are free from sin, your old master, and you have become slaves to your new master, righteousness.

¹⁹Before, you let yourselves be slaves of impurity and lawlessness. Now **you must choose** to be slaves of righteousness so that you will become holy. ²⁰In those days, when you were slaves of sin, you weren't concerned with doing what was right. ²²But now you are free from the power of sin and have become slaves of God. Now you do those things that lead to holiness and result in eternal life

Romans 7:4: The law no longer holds you in its power, because you died to its power when you died with Christ on the Cross. And now you are united with the One who was raised from the dead. As a result, you can produce good fruit, that is, good deeds for God.

Selections from Romans 8

²For the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you through Christ Jesus from the power of sin that leads to death. ³God destroyed sin's control over us by giving His Son as a sacrifice for our sins. ⁵Those who are dominated

by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. ⁶If your sinful nature controls your mind, there is death. But if the Holy Spirit controls your mind, there is life and peace. ⁷For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will. ⁸That's why those who are still under the control of their sinful nature can never please God. ⁹But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. ¹¹The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. ¹²So, dear brothers and sisters, you have no obligation whatsoever to do what your sinful nature urges you to do. ¹³For if you keep on following it you will perish, but if through the power of the Holy Spirit you turn from it and its evil deeds you will live. ¹⁴For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. ¹⁵So you should not be like cowering, fearful slaves. You should behave instead like God's very own children, adopted into His family --calling Him "Father, dear Father." ¹⁸Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory He will give us later.

³¹What can we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us? ³²Since God did not spare even His own Son but gave Him up for us all, won't God, who gave us Christ, also give us everything else? ³³Who dares accuse us whom God has chosen for His own? Will God? No! He is the one who has given us right standing with Himself. ³⁴Who then will condemn us? Will Christ Jesus? No, for He is the one who died for us and was raised to life for us and is sitting at the place of highest honor next to God, pleading for us. ³⁵Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean He no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or are hungry or cold or in danger or threatened with death?

³⁶(Even the Scriptures say, "For your sake we are killed every day; we are being slaughtered like sheep.") ³⁷No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us. ³⁸And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from His love. Death can't, and life can't. The angels can't, and the demons can't. Our fears for today, our worries about tomorrow, and even the

powers of hell can't keep God's love away. ³⁹Whether we are high above the sky or in the deepest ocean, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord

Selections from Galatians 5

Freedom in Christ

¹ So Christ has really set us free. Now make sure that you stay free. ⁷ You were getting along so well. Who has interfered with you to hold you back from following the truth? ⁸ It certainly isn't God, for He is the one who called you to freedom. ¹³ For you have been called to live in freedom--not freedom to satisfy your sinful nature, but freedom to serve one another in love.

Living by the Spirit's Power

¹⁶ So I advise you to live according to your new life in the Holy Spirit. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves. ¹⁷ The old sinful nature loves to do evil, which is just opposite from what the Holy Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are opposite from what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, and your choices are never free from this conflict. ¹⁹ When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, your lives will produce these evil results: sexual immorality, impure thoughts, eagerness for lustful pleasure, ²⁰ idolatry, participation in demonic activities, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, divisions, the feeling that everyone is wrong except those in your own little group, ²¹ envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other kinds of sin. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God. ²² But when the Holy Spirit controls our lives, He will produce this kind of fruit in us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, and self-control. Here there is no conflict with the law. ²⁴ Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to His cross and crucified them there. ²⁵ If we are living now by the Holy Spirit, let us follow the Holy Spirit's leading in every part of our lives. ²⁶ Let us not become conceited, or irritate one another, or be jealous of one another.

Genesis 37-50 Worksheet

- ◆ What are these major players like in **Genesis 37-50**? Whose *voice* are they listening to? What is the result?
- ◆ Describe their characters.
- ◆ Note Scriptures for your answers.

Joseph:

Brothers & Others:

Potiphar:

“Study to show yourself approved unto God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed,
handling accurately the Word of Truth.” **2 Timothy 2:15**

Worship & Video Resources

Video clips displaying Freedom (just google the title and the links will come up):

Humpback Whale Set Free

Battle at Kruger (Water Buffalo)

One Time Blind-Trash

John 3:16 Focus on the Family

That's My King S.M. Lockridge

Worship Songs Online (search YouTube for videos with lyrics):

You are More - Tenth Ave North

Made to Thrive - Casting Crowns

Voice of Truth - Casting Crowns

By His Wounds - Third Day

Lord, I Need You - Matt Maher

Greater - Mercy Me

Freedom Song - Mandissa

Overcomer - Mandissa

Hello My Name Is - Matthew West

Shackle - Mary Mary

Wanted - Darla McQueen

Beautiful Things - Gungor

Every Praise - Hezekiah Walker

Need You Now - Plumb

By Faith - Kristin Getty

Overcome - Jeremy Camp

Revelation Song - Kari Jobe

Let Jesus Do It for You - The Imperials

In Christ Alone - Getty

Stubborn Love by Kathy Troccoli

Caught again, Your faithless friend
Don't You ever tire of hearing what a fool I've been?
Guess I should pray but what can I say?
Oh, it hurts to know the hundred times I've caused
 You pain
Though 'Forgive me' sounds so empty when never
 change
Yet You stay and say, "I love you still"
Forgiving me time and time again
It's Your stubborn love that never lets go of me
I don't understand how You can stay
Perfect love embracing the worst in me
How I long for Your stubborn love
Funny me, just couldn't see
Even long before I knew You, You were loving me
Sometimes I cry, You must cry too
When You see the broken promises I've made to You
I keep saying that I'll trust You though I seldom do
Yet You stay and say, "You love me still"
Knowing someday I'll be like You
And Your stubborn love, it never lets go of me
I don't understand how You can stay
Perfect love embracing the worst in me
How I long for Your stubborn love
It's Your stubborn love that never lets go of me
I don't understand how You can stay
Perfect love embracing the worst in me
And You never let me go, I believe I finally know
I can't live without Your stubborn love

Old Man's Rubble – The Imperials

Are you living in an old man's rubble
Are you listenin' to the father of lies
Are you walking' with unnecessary burdens
Are you trying to take them upon yourself
If you are then you're living in bondage
And you know that's bad for your spiritual health
And are you trying to live by your emotions

(continue next page)

Are you puttin' your faith in what you feel and see
 Then you're living just to satisfy your passions
 And you better be careful, 'cause you're being
 deceived
 Are you living in an old man's rubble
 Are you listenin' to the father of lies
 If you are then you're headed for trouble
 If you listen too long, you'll eventually die
 Are you living in an old man's rubble
 Are you listenin' to the father of lies
 If you are then you're headed for trouble
 If you listen too long, you'll eventually die
 Are you puzzled by the way that you're behavin'
 Do you wonder why you do the things you do
 And are you troubled by your lack of resistance
 Do you feel that something's got a hold on you
 Well, deep within' you there's a spiritual battle
 There's a voice of the darkness and the voice of the
 light
 And just by listening you've made a decision
 'Cause the voice you hear is gonna' win the fight
 Are you living in an old man's rubble
 Are you listenin' to the father of lies
 If you are then you're headed for trouble
 If you listen too long, you'll eventually die
 If you're living as a new creation
 If you're listening to the Father of light
 Then you're living in a mighty fortress
 And you're gonna' be clothed in power and might
 But are you living in an old man's rubble
 Are you listenin' to the father of lies
 If you are then you're headed for trouble
 If you listen too long, you'll eventually die
 If you're living as a new creation
 If you're listening to the Father of light
 Then you're living in a mighty fortress
 And you're gonna' be clothed in power and might
 But are you living in an old man's rubble
 Are you listenin' to the father of lies
 If you are then you're headed for trouble
 If you listen too long, you'll eventually die
 But if you're living as a new creation
 If you're listening to the Father of light
 Then you're living in a mighty fortress
 And you're gonna' be clothed in power and might

Praise The Lord – The Imperials

When you're up against a struggle
 That shatters all your dreams
 And your hope's been cruelly crushed
 By Satan's manifested scheme
 And you feel the urge within you
 To submit to earthly fears
 Don't let the faith your standing in
 seem to disappear

Praise the Lord
 He can work through those who praise Him
 Praise the Lord
 For our God inhabits praise
 Praise the Lord
 For the chains that seem to bind you
 Serve only to remind you
 That they drop powerless behind you
 When you praise Him

Now Satan is a liar
 And he wants to make us think
 That we are paupers
 When he knows himself
 We're children of the King
 So lift up the mighty shield of faith
 For the battle must be won
 We know that Jesus Christ is risen
 So the works already done

Praise the Lord
 He can work through those who praise Him
 Praise the Lord
 For our God inhabits praise
 Praise the Lord
 For the chains that seem to bind you
 Serve only to remind you
 That they drop powerless behind you
 When you praise Him

Resources

1. Changed from the Inside Out by Max Lucado

"No prison is as endless as the prison of perfection. Her inmates find work but never find peace. How could they?" Following is what we look like when we come out of the prison of the old life and begin our new life in Christ! When you believe in Christ, Christ works a miracle in you. You are permanently purified and empowered by God Himself. The message of Jesus to the religious person is simple: It's not what you do. It's what I do. I have moved in. And in time you can say with Paul, "I myself no longer live, but Christ lives in me." (**Galatians 2:20**)

If I'm born again, why do I fall so often? Why did you fall so often after your first birth? Did you exit the womb wearing cross-trainers? Did you do the two-step on the day of your delivery? Of course not. And when you started to walk, you fell more than you stood. Should we expect anything different from our spiritual walk? But I fall so often, I question my salvation. Again, we return to your first birth. Didn't you stumble as you were learning to walk? And when you stumbled, did you question the validity of your physical birth? Did you, as a one-year-old fresh flopped on the floor, shake your head and think, I have fallen again. I must not be human? Of course not. The stumbles of a toddler do not invalidate the act of birth. And the stumbles of a Christian do not annul his spiritual birth.

Do you understand what God has done? He has deposited a Christ seed in you. As it grows, you will change. It's not that sin has no more presence in your life, but rather that sin has no more power over your life. Temptation will pester you, but temptation will not master you. What hope this brings! Hear this. It's not up to you! Within you abides a budding power. Trust Him!

Think of it this way. Suppose you, for most of your life, have had a heart condition. Your frail pumper restricts your activities. Each morning at work when the healthy employees take the stairs, you wait for the elevator. But then comes the transplant. A healthy heart is placed within you. After recovery, you return to work and encounter the flight of stairs—the same flight of stairs you earlier avoided. By habit, you start for the elevator. But then you remember. You aren't the same person. You have a new heart. Within you dwells a new power. Do you live like the old person or the new? Do you count yourself as having a new heart or old? You have a choice to make. You might say, "I can't climb stairs; I'm too weak." Does your choice negate the presence of a new heart? Dismiss the work of the surgeon? No. Choosing the elevator would suggest only one fact—you haven't learned to trust your new power. It takes time. But at some point you've got to try those stairs. You've got to test the new ticker. You've got to experiment with the new you. For if you don't, you will run out of steam.

Religious rule keeping can sap your strength. It's endless. There is always another class to attend, Sabbath to obey. No prison is as endless as the prison of perfection. Her inmates find work but never find peace. How could they? They never know when they are finished. Christ, however, gifts you with a finished work. He fulfilled the law for you. Bid farewell to the burden of religion. Gone is the fear that having done everything, you might not have done enough. You climb the stairs, not by your strength, but His. God pledges to help those who stop trying to help themselves. "He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." (**Philippians 1:6**) God will change you from the inside out.

2. Whereby Shall I Know?

From *My Utmost for His Highest* by Oswald Chambers (Debbie's additions in parentheses)

"I thank Thee, O Father... because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, & hast revealed them unto babes."

In spiritual relationship with God we do not grow step by step; we are either there or we are not. God does not cleanse us more & more from sin, but when we are in the light, walking in the light, we are cleansed from all sin. It is a question of obedience, (obedience to God's Voice...not sinful nature) and instantly the relationship is perfected. Turn away for one second out of obedience (to God's Voice), and darkness and death are at work at once. (God Always Blesses Obedience! And Obedience always cancels the voice and plans of the enemy!)

All God's revelations are sealed until they are opened to us by obedience (to God's Voice). You will never get them open by philosophy or thinking. (Because this is done apart from God and not His voice). Immediately when you obey (God's voice), a flash of light comes. Let God's Truth (His Voice) work in you by soaking in it, not by worrying into it. The only way you can get to know is to stop trying to find out and by being born again. Obey (God's Voice) in the thing He shows you, and instantly the next thing is opened up. One reads teachings on the work of the Holy Spirit, when one five minutes of drastic obedience (to God's Voice) would make things as clear as a sunbeam. "I suppose I shall understand these things some day!" You can understand them now. It is not study that does it, but obedience (to God's Voice). The tiniest fragment of obedience (to God's Voice) and heaven opens, and the profoundest truths of God are yours straight away. God will never reveal more truth

about Himself until you have obeyed what you know already (Truth that you have heard from God's Voice, not the voice of the enemy.) Beware of becoming *wise and prudent*.

3. Do Christians have to keep asking for forgiveness for their sins?

A frequent question is “what happens if I sin, and then I die before I have an opportunity to confess that sin to God?” Another common question is “what happens if I commit a sin, but then forget about it and never remember to confess it to God?” Both of these questions rest on a faulty assumption. Salvation is not a matter of believers trying to confess and repent from every sin they commit before they die. Salvation is not based on whether a Christian has confessed and repented of every sin. Yes, we should confess our sins to God as soon as we are aware that we have sinned. However, we do not always need to be asking God for forgiveness. When we place our faith in Jesus Christ for salvation, all of our sins are forgiven. That includes past, present, and future, big or small. Believers do not have to keep asking for forgiveness or repenting in order to have their sins forgiven. Jesus died to pay the penalty for all of our sins, and when they are forgiven, they are all forgiven. (**Colossians 1:14; Acts 10:43**)

What we are to do is confess our sins: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” (**1 John 1:9**) What this verse tells us to do is *confess* our sins to God. The word *confess* means to *agree with*. When we confess our sins to God, we are agreeing with God that we were wrong, that we have sinned. God forgives us, through confession, on an ongoing basis because of the fact that He is *faithful and just*. How is God *faithful and just*? He is faithful by forgiving sins, which He has promised to do for all those who receive Christ as Savior. He is just by applying Christ's payment for our sins, recognizing that the sins have indeed been atoned for.

At the same time, **1 John 1:9** does indicate that somehow forgiveness is dependent on our confessing our sins to God. How does this work if all of our sins are forgiven the moment we receive Christ as Savior? It seems that what the apostle John is describing here is *relational* forgiveness. All of our sins are forgiven *positionally* the moment we receive Christ as Savior. This positional forgiveness guarantees our salvation and promise of an eternal home in heaven. When we stand before God after death, God will not deny us entrance into heaven because of our sins. That is positional forgiveness. The concept of relational forgiveness is based on the fact that when we sin, we offend God and grieve His Spirit. (**Ephesians 4:30**) While God has ultimately forgiven us of the sins we commit, they still result in a blocking or hindrance in our relationship with God. A young boy who sins against his father is not cast out of the family. A godly father will forgive his children unconditionally. At the same time, a good relationship between father and son cannot be achieved until the relationship is restored. This can only occur when a child confesses his mistakes to his father and apologizes. That is why we confess our sins to God—not to maintain our salvation, but to bring ourselves back into close fellowship with the God who loves us and has already forgiven us.

4. Community

“Community is a group of people who associate because of common beliefs, relate intimately, and communicate deeply while contributing to and participating in one another's lives.” - Dave Legg, Director of the Navigators

“The Bible uses collective pronouns to describe the Christian life because our spiritual journey is not intended to be a private matter.” - Dave Legg

“Community is God's intended environment for spiritual growth and the context for ministry.” - Dave Legg

“The formation of community is the intricate, patient, painful work of the Holy Spirit... We can only offer ourselves to become community.” - Eugene Peterson

The giant sequoias are the largest living organisms on the planet, but they do not stand alone. Their root systems are connected, because their bulk is so great that alone, they would blow over in a strong wind.

The 4 biggest hindrances to Community:

- Independence (attitude of self-sufficiency)
- Task Orientation (focusing on goals at the expense of relationships)
- Unreconciled Relationships (unforgiveness)
- Busyness (unavailability)

[Others: fear, lack of margin, cost, group size, lack of proximity]

Biblical community is often referred to as an environment of grace, a place where you feel free to be who you really are and where your value is not based on performance... True community gives us freedom and safety to be honest about what is true about us so we don't relate on the basis of performance and hide our sins.

5. Sensitivity in Relationships

For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. **Romans 12:3**

Pride is too sensitive. It easily gets its feelings hurt, because pride has a very high opinion of itself. Indeed, those who are overly sensitive believe they are beyond questioning or criticism. When someone asks for clarification or questions their actions, the proud move quickly to a defensive and/or attack frame of mind. Self-focus causes hyper sensitive people to easily get their feelings hurt. Proud people have a protective process of projecting an image of perfection. Are you vulnerable and open to other opinions? Or, is your mind made up and no one can persuade you to think differently? Furthermore, how can we think soberly about ourselves? Sober mindedness is a healthy blend of humility and confidence in Christ. Humility sees even in our imperfection, we are loved by a perfect Savior. Confidence in Christ means we can be assured where He calls us, He will empower us. Humility is sensitive to the Spirit and not to self.

My heart is not proud, Lord, my eyes are not haughty; I do not concern myself with great matters or things too wonderful for me. But I have calmed and quieted myself, I am like a weaned child with its mother; like a weaned child I am content. **Psalm 131:1-2**

There is a calmness that accompanies our heart when it is content and void of conceit. Our spirit is quieted under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Our sensitivity to the Holy Spirit gives us compassionate sensitivity to other souls. The Spirit's influence keeps us from being consumed with ourselves. We quickly admit our offenses, own them and ask others for forgiveness. We laugh with others at our goofy remarks or silly mistakes. Humility is not easily offended. Lastly, look to the Lord for affirmation, approval and acceptance. His nod of approval, His smile of affirmation and His hug of acceptance still your spirit. Your Heavenly Father has given you the faith to forge ahead for Him. Many will support your efforts, some will be indifferent and a few will resist. Regardless, do not take the feeling of rejection personally. Remember, like Jesus stay focused on bringing glory to God. It is not about you, but Him. Be sensitive to the Spirit. *"You save the humble, but Your eyes are on the haughty to bring them low."*

2 Samuel 22:8

Prayer: Heavenly Father, lead me to be sensitive to Your Spirit and not to selfish desires. *"Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor, him I will destroy; No one who has a haughty look and an arrogant heart will I endure."* **Psalm 101:5** *"Return to your rest, O my soul, For the LORD has dealt bountifully with you."* **Psalm 116:7** *"For the LORD of hosts will have a day of reckoning against everyone who is proud and lofty and against everyone who is lifted up, That he may be abased."* **Isaiah 2:12** *"For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God."* **Romans 8:14** *"Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation."* **Romans 12:16.** *But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law."* **Galatians 5:18**

(taken from Wisdom Hunters online devotional by Boyd Bailey www.wisdomhunters.com)

6. Making Choices on Sensitive Issues

All of us make hundreds of choices every day. Some of those choices have no right or wrong attached to them...but perhaps what is best. But we always face "decisions" that carry a little more weight. We don't want to do wrong, and we don't want to cause others to do wrong, so how can we make such decisions?

Here are some good questions to ask with Scriptures to validate those questions.

- If I choose this course of action... does it glorify God? **1 Corinthians 10:31**
- If I choose this course of action... will it cause someone else to sin? **1 Corinthians 10:32**
- If I choose this course of action... does it help my witness for Christ? **1 Corinthians 9:19-22**
- If I choose this course of action... am I motivated by a desire to help others know Christ?
1 Corinthians 9:23;10:33
- If I choose this course of action... does it help me do my best? **1 Corinthians 9:25**
- If I choose this course of action... is it against a specific command in Scripture and would thus cause me to sin?
1 Corinthians 10:12
- If I choose this course of action... is it the best and most beneficial choice or course of action?
1 Corinthians 10:23, 33
- If I choose this course of action... am I thinking only of myself or do I truly care about the other person?
1 Corinthians 10:24
- If I choose this course of action... am I acting lovingly or selfishly? **1 Corinthians 10:28-31**
- If I choose this course of action... does it glorify God? **1 Corinthians 10:31**

One Liners

1. We're better together.
2. We're not victims, we're victors. We don't work for the victory, we work from the victory. We don't have to work for something we already have but we do have to work at maintaining it.
3. Get feisty, ladies!
4. You're hosting royalty.
5. Don't look at the tempter, look at the tester.
6. Possess your possessions.
7. We're not damaged goods.
8. Don't feed the dogs.
9. It all starts in the mind.
10. Satan, the sinful nature, and the foxes (messengers of Satan) are all on God's Holy leash.
11. You don't have to play Christian anymore.
12. We're not doing baggage maintenance anymore, we're doing temple maintenance.
13. Don't have a feeding frenzy; instead, fellowship with the Father.
14. Obedience always cancels the plans of the enemy, and God always blesses obedience.
15. Hang on for the ride of your life.
16. Praise paralyzes the enemy.
17. God's not asking you to stop talking, but to change your audience to Him.
18. Don't rehearse conversations with yourself; instead converse with the Father.
19. Jesus is not a part-time lover; He never divorces His bride.
20. The sinful nature is a sorry loser and it stalks you.
21. Is what you're doing working for you?
22. The sinful nature never has your best interest at heart, but God ALWAYS has your best interest at heart.
23. After a good teacher teaches you, she tests you.
24. God is not a cruel commander; He doesn't put you on the front lines without taking you through a Holy boot camp or a spiritual gym.
25. Every time you are tempted (hear that other voice) God is asking you, "Do you know what I did for you on that cross?"
26. We broke up with our sinful nature and now we're going with God.
27. God has an amazing plan for your life: even though you may have ruined plan A, He has an extravagant plan B for you.
28. Quick, catch all the little foxes!
29. Satan always fascinates, and then he assassinates.
30. We may not have it all together, but together we have it all.
31. The sinful nature is paralyzed from the neck down.
32. Don't have an affair with your old sinful nature.
33. The message of the cross can be summed up in 3 words: Come to Me.
34. Dump your truck.
35. Okay, God, this is how I feel...
36. We have 100% of the Holy Spirit.
37. God doesn't do anything halfway.
38. Keep short accounts with God.
39. You have a sinful nature, but it doesn't have you.
40. Ask God to show you when you're hearing any other voice but His.
41. God, please show me when I'm having conversations with myself.
42. David dumps.
43. Nothing can happen without God's permission.
44. It's the Lord who allows us to hear those other voices for the purpose of getting us to turn to Him.
45. Everyone is trying to change their behavior. God's way is to change our mind according to His truth, then the right behavior will follow.
46. You can't make yourself clean. If you could, why did Jesus even need to come here?
47. It's not just about you feeling better after you pour out to God regarding someone who has offended you, but it's about you being about the work of His Kingdom and praying for that person that offended you.
48. When Satan knocks on your door, just say, "Jesus, it's for You."
49. Your behavior shows others who you are listening to. Others' behavior shows you who they are listening to.
50. We have too much junk in our trunk.
51. Don't cope, have hope.
52. Either you are listening to the father of lies or the Father of Light.
53. Listening to lies is loving the loser, listen to the Lord and live.
54. Every time you hear those other voices that God allows, Jesus is asking you "Do you know what I did for you on the cross?" If you know, you will choose His voice over the others.
55. All of life is a course on forgiveness, and it started with My forgiving you.
56. Only the guilty laugh.
57. Do you want to get well? John 5
58. God rides across the Heavens to help us.
59. This is a time in our world for Christians to shine.

60. Hell is giving to men what they have wanted all along... freedom from Him.
61. God doesn't call the equipped, He equips the called.
62. God is not interested in your ability, but your availability.
63. If the mountain were smooth, you couldn't climb it.
64. God speaking: "You do know that your issue is not with that person. Your issue is with Me because I am the one allowing this. So do you have an issue with Me?"
65. God says, "Just because you don't see Me working doesn't mean that I'm not." (Hebrews 11:1)
66. God is just WAITING for you to ask.
67. When you are down to nothing, God is up to something.
68. God can work with a *want to*.
69. Never forget that Jesus WASHED the feet of those who would fail Him in His darkest hour.
70. The Task ahead of us is never greater than the POWER BEHIND US.
71. EVANGELISM is not a passion for souls. But it IS A PASSION FOR GOD!
72. Nothing we do or say in this LIFETIME will matter as much as the way we have LOVED one another.
73. It is far better to Forgive and Forget than to Resent and Remember.
74. The two most powerful warriors are patience and time.
75. Faith is continuing to run the race, assured that you will get your second wind.
76. When we wait on God, no time is lost.
77. We are measured by what we finish, not by what we start.
78. You can save a lot of time waiting on God.
79. Information without application leads to frustration.
80. God has plans that would minimize yours in comparison.
81. Life without God is like an unsharpened pencil... it has no point.
82. Rest in Me weary one, for this is a form of worship.
83. Apologizing does not always mean you are wrong and the other person is right. It just means you value your relationship more than your pride and ego.
84. God's grace has released us from selfishness -- why return?
85. God never gives us discernment to criticize, but to intercede.
86. Words which do not give the light of Christ increase the darkness.
87. Hurt me with the Truth, but never comfort me with a lie.
88. One who runs from God in the morning will scarcely find Him the rest of the day.
89. We are in trouble when *expectations* of a person exceed *appreciation* of that person.
90. God, before I ask You for anything, I want to thank You for everything.
91. God gives the best only to those who leave the choice with Him.
92. You may not know *what* the future holds, but you do know *Who* holds the future.
93. Live your life in such a way that when your feet hit the floor in the morning, Satan shudders and says "Oh no! She's awake!"
94. He who kneels before God can stand before anyone.
95. If you can't pray a door open, don't try to pry it open...wait on Him.
96. You may say, "I am waiting on God" but perhaps God is waiting on you.
97. You will always have time for that which you put first.
98. Where prayer is focused, power falls!
99. If God is your co-pilot, swap seats.
100. We don't have a hopeless end, we have endless hope.
101. Faith is not belief without proof, but trust without reservations.
102. Patience is a virtue that carries a lot of *wait*.
103. Enjoy Him, because He sure enjoys you!
104. Lord, what do YOU want to say?
105. Jesus Christ ministered out of the abundance of His relationship with the Father.
106. No passion ... no power.
107. God has not called us to anything but Himself... and everything else flows from that call.
108. You can't pour from an empty cup.
109. Start small... go deep... and think big!
110. If your output exceeds your intake, then your upkeep becomes your downfall!
111. More is caught than taught.
112. I can't brag about my love for God because I fail Him daily. But I can brag about His love for me because it never fails. (**Lamentations 3:22-23**)
113. Too blessed to be stressed.

Team Leader Resources

Team Leaders (Spiritual “Moms”)

Our goal as team leaders is to be spiritual “moms” to the ladies at our table for the 8 weeks they are in the Freedom Workshop. We want to connect with them, encourage them, shepherd them, disciple them.

1. **PRAY** for the ladies on your team. Ask God how to pray for them. Pray the Scriptures for them. Be purposeful and practical. You will have no more than 7 ladies on your team. Pray for one per day.
2. **CALL** each of the ladies on your team. Make a personal connection with each of your ladies. Again, be purposeful and practical. Since you will have no more than 7 ladies on your team, call one per day or whatever works for you.
3. **REMIND** your team each week before class. Send an email or text to your whole team to remind them of class and that you are looking forward to seeing them.
4. 48 Hour **FEEDBACK**: Each week a group email for team leaders will be sent. When you receive the email, “reply all” and answer the questions listed below. Please respond within 48 hours.

- How did you see God moving at your table?
- Do you have any questions or concerns?
- What was your favorite moment of the evening?
- Do you have any prayer requests for your group?
- What is going on in your life? How are you doing? And, how can we pray for you?
- How are you doing with your weekly phone calls to your girls?
- Women in attendance:
- Women Missing:

Weekly Schedule

6:00-6:15 Team Leader Prayer

6:15-6:30 Welcome

6:30 Praise and Worship

6:45-8:45 CLASS

8:45-9:00 Prayer (write on index cards, pray, and exchange with a partner)

Practicals

1. Roster & weekly attendance 2. Name tags 3. Index Cards

Team Leader Questions

Being a team leader and facilitating small groups is not officially teaching, but is a position of leadership and influence over those in your group.

God calls us all to purity.

1 Thessalonians 4:3 God’s will is for you to be holy, so stay away from all sexual sin. **4** Then each of you will control his own body and live in holiness and honor— **5** not in lustful passion like the pagans who do not know God and His ways.

1 Peter 1:13 So think clearly and exercise self-control. Look forward to the gracious salvation that will come to you when Jesus Christ is revealed to the world. **14** So you must live as God’s obedient children. Don’t slip back into your old ways of living to satisfy your own desires. You didn’t know any better then. **15** But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God who chose you is holy. **16** For the Scriptures say, “You must be holy because I am holy.”

Even more so for leaders.

1 Timothy 3:1 This is a trustworthy saying: “If someone aspires to be an elder, he desires an honorable position.”

Will you please take a few minutes to answer some questions? In the times we live in these are necessary and cannot be assumed.

If you are married, answer the following questions:

- Have you discussed with your husband your commitment to lead a team at the 8 week Freedom Workshop? Is he fully supporting you serving in this way?
- How long have you been married? What is your current living situation?
- Are you upholding a commitment to purity in your relationship with your husband? Are you involved with anyone other than your husband in any way that would compromise your relationship or give an appearance of evil (physically or emotionally)?

If you are single, answer the following questions:

- Are you upholding a commitment to purity unto the Lord by abstaining from sex or sexual

- behavior or the appearance of evil?
- What is your current living situation? (Do you live alone? Do you have a roommate?)
- Are you in a relationship? Are you living with this person?

Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions honestly and completely.

Freedom Workshop Class Schedule Notes

The following notes are suggested lesson plans. Please pay attention to the needs of your particular class and be led by the Spirit. Don't be discouraged if you run out of time for some of the activities. You can make a note of it and reschedule that content for another night.

WEEK 1

Have each of the ladies select a partner and exchange contact information including each participant introducing herself.

Introductions might seem like a formality but is a very important part of week 1. This can be done in teams or as a whole class depending on class size. You, as the leader, should start the sharing which will "set the tone" for the others to share. Have them share their name, where they work or have worked in the past, something about their family and why they are in the class. As you share, be transparent about what the Lord has done in your life. It will allow the ladies to be more comfortable when they share. Some might simply say their name and where they work. As they share, you will learn a lot about your class and they will begin to connect with each other. It helps them to not feel alone in the journey.

Partners

They will take turns calling each other to encourage, pray, and practice memory verses in between classes. Have your team leaders keep track of who is partnered with whom, so that if anyone drops out during the 8 weeks, they can pair them up with someone else. Some are not so comfortable with this at first, but by the end of the 8 weeks some great connections have been made.

Team Rosters

Team leaders should make a roster with contact information for all the ladies on their team and keep attendance each week. *(See team leader guidelines for more on how to follow up with your team and responsibilities)

Freedom Message Presentation

You will spend a longer time on the first week presenting the Gospel message, the "Freedom Message" since some or all of them will not be familiar with this message. Listen to the teaching CD or online prior to teaching to have things fresh in your mind. Use Scriptures to speak this life giving message of the Cross.

Heartwork

Have the class turn in their booklets to the heartwork reading chart. Explain to them the truth and facts about "freedom" and the truth and facts about "honesty" when you are assigning their heartwork. There is a lot to "soak in" on the first night so your team leaders can follow up to see if they have any questions. As you follow the Lord's leading, there will be times where things don't go exactly as planned. Have your team leaders follow up with their ladies in case the heartwork is varied from the Class Schedule.

WEEK 2

Freedom Message Excerpts

This is your time to share your "freedom" stories from the week. Be honest with them and share your victories and even your struggles. Use this time to continue teaching the message as it applies to real life.

Reading relationally

Introduce the class to reading relationally. Give them the vision of what it is. "You aren't just reading the Bible, you are interacting with the Author of the Bible".... They will be reading the complete article on reading relationally in the coming week. You can invite another leader to help you model what this looks like and then have them practice reading **Psalm 27** with a partner.

Memory verses

Each week you will review memory verses as a large group. Lead the group in reciting each verse twice. The first time you will recite it with them and the second time you will drop out so they can practice on their own. Start with the address (book, chapter, verse), the verse, the address, then repeat. Once you have reviewed all the verses, introduce the two new verses for the week. You can take a few minutes to explain the verse and share the freedom message or a personal story that relates to the verses. Once you have reviewed as a group and introduced the new verse, give them some time to write their new verses on index cards and continue reviewing old verses with a partner. This is also a time that they can share how God spoke to them in their heartwork. This can be done with a partner on some weeks and some weeks have them do it in their team as time permits.

Honesty With God

Take a few minutes to review their extra reading from the previous week- "Honesty with God." Talk to them about what types of things David expressed to God.

Encourage them that they, too, can express themselves completely to God just as David and others did all throughout the Bible. Let them know that there is nothing that you can't tell God about. **Psalm 77:1**
Expose "fruit of lies believed" in teams, write on whiteboard

After you have shared more of the freedom message and talked about listening to the wrong voice vs. listening to God's voice, have them write down as a team the fruits of listening to those lies in teams. So, when we listen to "the liar" instead of God's voice, what types of things are produced in our life? This might include things like immorality, drunkenness, greediness, depression, anger, rage, jealousy, despair, hopelessness, suicidal thoughts, etc..... Have someone from each team come up and write their list on the whiteboard. If you do not have a whiteboard, have each team leader share some of their list. The point of this activity is to expose the lies and show what is produced from listening to the liar instead of the Lover of our soul. A great resource to show is TENTH AVENUE NORTH-YOU ARE MORE (perfect for this activity). This is a good time to remind them of their new verse. **Romans 8:12-14** NO OBLIGATION! This is a great time to introduce part of their heartwork for the week. **My Sheep Hear My Voice.** As they ask God to show them when they are hearing any voice other than His, use this chart to expose the lies. Then, they can ask God what He is saying, what is His truth? They can then write the truth across from the lies. You will be going over this next week in class. You may want to give them a personal example.

WEEK 3

My Sheep Hear My Voice

Give time to finish this activity during class. They should have at least started it during their heartwork. On the left side of the page they are writing what they are hearing and then asking God what He is saying to write down on the right side of the paper. Have them circle anything on the left side that they listened and "engaged" in. The things that they circled are things that they should confess to the Lord and repent of to restore their fellowship with God. This time of repentance can be done with a partner, praying for one another or individually. This activity is very powerful and something that they will want to do again and again to expose the lies of what they are hearing and ask God what He is saying.

Amplify Isaiah 1:18

Have each team read **Isaiah 1:18** and amplify it.

- This is done by taking some of the words in the verse and finding synonyms for those words. For example the following word synonyms might be:
 - Come: appear, arrive, be accessible, show up.
 - Now: immediately, instantly, at once, promptly, pronto
 - let: authorize, enable, approve, permit the word
 - us: you and me, together
 - reason: argue, discern, rationalize, work it out, etc...

Once each team has had enough time take the white board and write the scripture words across the top. Now write below each word the list of synonyms the teams came up with. When you are done, read the verse aloud with the amplification. Wow!

WEEK 4

God's Character Chart

Have the class turn to the God's Character (pg. 16) chart in their booklet. Explain that they will read **Psalm 139** in their teams. They will write the characters of God that they see from the Psalm in the left column. They will also write down the verse they found it in. On the right side they will write down the "character" qualities of the thief. When you have allowed them enough time to complete this, have someone from their table come up to the whiteboard and add their list. You will have duplicate answers, so they will not have to write every word they came up with. If you do not have a whiteboard or chalkboard, ask God to give you another way to effectively share with the whole group.

Daniel 3

Have the class turn to the Daniel 3 worksheet (Pg. 15). They will work in teams as they go through the chapter. They will write down what the major characters in Daniel 3 are like and who they are listening to. Have them write down the scripture reference where they found it. Once you have given them enough time, discuss with them their answers and how God is speaking through this chapter. Share with them what God showed you. You can call on some of the ladies to "fill in the blanks with their team's answers. Emphasize who Daniel is listening to and how he was ready for this trial/test because of his relationship with God.

Other Reading

It is always a good idea to point out what their other reading is for the week. Even though it is listed on the class schedule, it helps to actually mention it. Again, team leaders can follow up with them if there are any changes.

WEEK 5

If time permits, turn to page pg. 38 & 39, read and discuss Sensitivity In Relationships.

TRUTH CARD

The **TRUTH** card was developed as a tool to help in the process of getting “unstuck” and staying “unstuck”. **Turn** helps us to understand that we can only turn away by the power of the Holy Spirit, not by our own efforts.

Recognize identifies that the voice we are listening to did not originate with God and it did not originate with me, the new man in Christ. Recognize is understanding the power in the name of Jesus and who we are turning to. It has really helped me to understand that the other voice didn't start with me, that I am a new creation in Christ, it couldn't be me and I don't have to listen.

Unload is part of the process that those of us who are technicians might try to skip. It is probably the most important part, unloading to Him. God puts obstacles in our way so that we will come to Him. The gospel is summed up in three words, “Come to Me”. Pouring out to the Lord as David did in the **Psalms** is key to walking in freedom. (It is a relationship!) **Truth**- We need to understand our position in Christ and what He did for us on the cross, that He broke the power of every “other” voice when He died on the cross. He is totally in control of everything including allowing me to hear the other voice as part of my training. He is training us to be more intimate with Him. **Humility**-At first we had trouble coming up with a word for H. Hallelujah? Once we turn from the other voice, recognize God's power and where it originated, unload to the Lord how we feel and stand on His truth, we have life and peace. That would be reason to say Hallelujah, right? Yes, however, H stands for **humility**. This process is not just about us getting to life and peace. Once we have life and peace, now we can be about the work of His Kingdom, prayer. Once I have life and peace, I can pray in the power of the Holy Spirit for those who have offended me and those who have my same struggles but do not know this wonderful message of the Cross.

Opposite of Romans 8:12-14

Have each of the ladies write the opposite of **Romans 8:12-14**. I usually write mine out ahead of time, but you can do it while they are doing their cards if you prefer. Then ask, those who are willing, to read what they wrote. What is the point of this? The point is to expose the lies of the other voice. To show everyone how sick it is when we listen to the “liar”. When everyone has shared that wants to, have everyone tear up their card. We don't need to hang on to the lies. Some people have struggled with this exercise because they were purposely changing

the Scriptures. Please **be very clear in explaining this** ahead of time to explain why you are doing this and how important it is to expose the lies and turn to Jesus by the power of His Holy Spirit. We are exposing what we do every time we listen to that other voice.

Daniel 6

This activity has the same instructions as Daniel 3. (week 4)

WEEK 6

You may want to shorten praise and worship for this week to 10 minutes to allow time to finish everything. Acts 6 & 7

This activity has the same directions as Daniel 3 & 6. Have them work in teams to fill out the charts writing Scripture references. Have each team share some of their answers as you discuss. Talk with them about who Stephen was listening to and even though Stephen was not rescued from the situation, God delivered him. Talk about the fruit of who you are listening to as it relates to this account.

Knock-knock

During class you will leave enough time to have your team leaders go through questions 1 through 8 in the booklet. Even if they did not do their heartwork to read and answer prior to class, there will still be time to do this together. Have your team leaders lead the ladies through all of the Scriptures and all of the answers. They can take turns around their circle in their team, reading and answering. Even if everyone in a team is already saved, we want to completely discuss the Scriptures and answers to these questions. There may be some who have attended church for years but are not truly saved. There will be some who have never received Christ. Those who do know Christ need to see this model to use for a tool to evangelize. After they have gone through questions 1 through 8, the leader will then go through the bridge illustration and give an invitation to receive Christ. The leader will want to highlight repentance as talked about in the booklet. The leader will highlight the parable of the sower which they read in the booklet and have team leaders discuss to get feedback. You may also have your team leaders present the bridge and give the invitation to each team if you choose. Make sure that you follow up with those who pray to receive Christ.

WEEK 7

2 Chronicles 20 Worksheet

Same directions as Daniel 3, 6 Acts 6 & 7

Role-play

You may not have time to complete this activity. IF you have time, make three paper signs (New man, sinful nature, Holy Spirit) Make these signs ahead of time and bring safety pins. Only the team that is performing their skit will need to pin them on. You can have teams put together "skits" using three people to act it out. They come up with a situation where the New Man is fighting to turn away from the sinful nature and listen to the Holy Spirit's voice. The "Holy Spirit" will quote Scriptures and gently draw the "New Man" while the "Sinful Nature" will continue to say lies and try to get the "New Man" to listen to him. The "New Man" is faced with a decision to make. Share one or two skits for the whole group. This all depends on your class size and how much time you have available. You may want to save some or all skits until the last class. Ask the Lord to direct your steps.

Emphasize preparation for final week

1. Read "Preparation for Communion" (pg. 32) 2. Write, email (to team leader), then print (to bring on the last night) their testimony of "How God has spoken to them during the Workshop". The testimonies can be compiled (anonymously) and posted or kept for encouragement to those who will be interested in taking the workshop in the future. 3. Bring food to share. Some will not have time to cook and some will not have \$ to purchase anything. We always tell them to bring something if they are able to and would like to. There has always been plenty!

WEEK 8

You may choose to have a "regular" class followed by dessert on your final night OR a full potluck type dinner. If you choose to have the dinner, use the time while the ladies are eating to share their testimonies with their team at their tables. Have your team leaders keep the conversation "on task". Have a few ladies share their testimonies with the whole class. You can schedule your worship time during the final class later in the evening after the dinner portion. Your teaching time will focus on Communion.

Sign up for "Salt and Light"

The most important thing is to get their commitment to come. Make sure to have your team leaders continue with their weekly phone calls following the last class to encourage the ladies to continue in discipleship.

NOTES:

Freedom Workshop

Hang on for the ride of your life!
Wouldn't it be nice to know how to be FREE even in the little things?

Please Print Clearly

Name: _____ Married? _____

Ages of Children _____ Your Age _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Phone # (H) _____ (C) _____ Best time to reach you? _____

E-Mail _____

How long have you been a Christian? _____ Still seeking? _____

How long have you been a growing Christian? _____

Where do you work? _____

What do you do there?

What do you enjoy doing?

Are you Stuck? But You Want To Be Free? What do you Struggle with? Please explain:

CUT THIS PAGE OUT ALONG THIS LINE

“Out of the Darkness into His Marvelous Light”

Before – what did your life look like before you gave your life to Christ?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

How – Specific event of how you actually came to Christ.... or perhaps you are still seeking...just identify where you are. (You have to start where you are to get where you want to go).

Now – what does your life look like now since you have given your life to the Lord?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellences of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light”.

1 Peter 2:9

CUT THIS PAGE OUT ALONG THIS LINE

TRUTH CARD

"And you will know the **T R U T H** and the TRUTH will set you free". John 8:32

TURN

Rom. 8:12-14, if by the power of the Holy Spirit you TURN from it (the voice of the sinful nature) and its evil deeds you will live.

RECOGNIZE

JESUS, I recognize the power of who You are.

Phil. 2:10 At the name of **JESUS** every knee shall bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth.

JESUS, I know that's not Your voice

John 10:10 The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. Your (God's) purpose is to give life in all its fullness.

JESUS, that thought did not originate with You and it did not originate with me, the new man.

2 Cor. 5:17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away, behold the new has come.

Romans 8:12-14 I have **NO OBLIGATION** whatsoever to do what my sinful nature is urging me to do.

UNLOAD

JESUS, this is how I feel.....

Psalms 77:1 I cry out to God without holding back.

Psalms 27:8 My heart has heard You say, come and talk with Me and my heart responds, Lord, I'm coming.

Isaiah 1:18 Come now & let us reason together says the Lord.

TRUTH

JESUS, You broke the power of the "other" voice when you died on the cross.

Romans 6:6 Our old sinful selves have been crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives.

JESUS, You would NEVER talk to me that way. Your voice would NEVER condemn.

Romans 8:1 So now, there is NO condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus.

Romans 8:31 ...If God is for us, who can ever be against us.

Deut. 33:26 There is no one like the God of Israel. He rides across the heavens to help you, across the skies in majestic splendor.

JESUS, nothing happens without Your permission. Lam. 3:37

The devil, demons, and my sinful nature are on Your Holy leash. You are allowing me to hear the other voice because You are training me to be more intimate with You. You want me to know what You did for me on the cross.

HUMILITY

PRAY

2 Chronicles 7:14 Then if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and heal their land.

Matthew 5:44 But I say love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you!

James 4:6.....He shows favor to the humble.....

1 Thessalonians 5:17 Pray without ceasing.

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James 4:6.....He shows favor to the humble.....

1 Thessalonians 5:17 Pray without ceasing.

Freedom Workshop Class Schedule

<p>Week 1 In Class: Welcome to class Announcements & Housekeeping: teams select partners, exchange contact info Praise & Worship Leader Testimony Each participant introduces herself (in small group) Freedom message presentation Explain Heartwork, assign and write memory verses Heartwork: Heartwork reading chart – week 1 pg 4 Memory Verses: Psalm 77:1, Psalm 27:8 pg 3 Other: Honesty with God pg 5-7, listen to Freedom Message CD/online</p>	<p>Week 5 In Class: Praise & Worship Read 1 Peter 2 relationally with partners Review memory verses as a large group Write new verses, review old verses & Heartwork Introduce <i>Knock, Knock</i> booklet Introduce TRUTH CARD Write the opposite of Romans 8:12-14 individually Daniel 6 worksheet in teams pg 19 Heartwork: Heartwork reading chart – week 5 pg 4 Memory Verses: Song of Solomon 2:15, 1 Peter 2:21-23 pg 3 Other: Read and complete <i>Knock, Knock</i> booklet</p>
<p>Week 2 In Class: Praise & Worship Review memory verses as a large group Write new verses, review old verses & Heartwork Review last week's Heartwork & Honesty with God pg 6-8 Intro to Reading Relationally pg 9-11 – then practice this by reading Psalm 27 with a partner Freedom Message excerpts Expose “fruit of lies believed” in teams Heartwork: Heartwork reading chart – week 2 pg 4 Memory Verses: Romans 8:12-14, Isaiah 1:18 pg 3 Other: Reading Relationally pg 8-10 My Sheep Hear My Voice pg 13</p>	<p>Week 6 In Class: Praise & Worship Read 1 Peter 4 relationally with partners Review memory verses as a large group Write new verses, review old verses & Heartwork with partner Acts 6 & 7 Worksheet in teams pg 27 Discuss <i>Knock, Knock</i> booklet Heartwork: Heartwork reading chart – week 6 pg 4 Memory Verses: 1 Peter 4:12-13, Romans 6:16 pg 3 Other: God's Words on Trials, Temptations & Suffering p20-26</p>
<p>Week 3 In Class: Praise & Worship Read Romans 12 relationally with partners Review memory verses as a large group Write new verses, review old verses & Heartwork Freedom Message excerpts Amplify Isaiah 1:18, share with large group Share from My Sheep Hear My Voice pg 13 in teams, confession and prayer with partners Heartwork: Heartwork reading chart – week 3 pg 4 Memory Verses: Romans 12:2, Lamentations 3:37 pg 3 Other: Read Who I Am in Christ pg 11-12 Choose this Day Whom You Will Serve pg 14</p>	<p>Week 7 In Class: Praise & Worship Read Psalm 51 relationally with partners Review memory verses as a large group Write new verses, review old verses & Heartwork with partner 2 Chronicles 20 Worksheet pg 28 in teams Role-play: Applying Freedom Message Heartwork: Heartwork reading chart – week 7 pg 4 Memory Verses: Genesis 4:7, Psalm 51:6 pg 3 Other: How Do I Begin to Walk in Freedom pg 29-31 Preparation for Communion pg 32-33 Write, email and print for next week: How has God spoken to you in this workshop? Bring snacks to share next week</p>
<p>Week 4 In Class: Praise & Worship Read Romans 8 relationally with partners Review memory verses as a large group Write new verses, review old verses & Heartwork Freedom Message excerpts Complete God's Character page 16 with partners Daniel 3 worksheet in teams pg 15 Heartwork: Heartwork reading chart – week 4 pg 4 Memory Verses: Romans 8:5-7,11; Psalm 81:13-14 pg 3 Other: Look for the Good in Others pg 17 Help for Your Marriage pg 17-18</p>	<p>Week 8 In Class: Praise & Worship Read Psalm 19 relationally with partners Review memory verses as a large group Write new verses, review old verses & Heartwork Genesis 37-50 Worksheet pg 34 in teams Celebrate Communion Share Freedom Testimonies For an alternative Week 8 plan, see notes Heartwork: Heartwork reading chart – week 8 pg 4 Memory Verses: Deuteronomy 33:26, Isaiah 30:21 pg 3 Other: Join a Salt & Light group; continue your journey!</p>

