

# Freedom in Christ

## Group Study

### Overcoming Fear, Rejection, and Guilt

with  
Security, Acceptance, &  
Significance  
in  
Jesus Christ

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# **INTRODUCTION**

## **THE PROBLEM - FEAR, GUILT, AND REJECTION**

What keeps people from experiencing joy? What keeps Christians from enjoying the peace that passes understanding? What keeps us from having the full life that Jesus spoke of? There are three primary negative emotions that many, if not all of us, struggle with. These primary negative emotions are FEAR, GUILT, AND REJECTION. Satan, the father of lies, is roaming around like a roaring lion and is constantly bombarding our minds with thoughts which cause these feelings, causing us to struggle emotionally and spiritually. It is his way of preventing us from living a fruitful Christ-centered life. How can we serve Christ if we are afraid? How can we serve Christ if we believe we are guilty and worthless? How can we serve Christ if we believe we are rejected and think that no one cares about us?

### **FEAR**

Why do we experience fear? When a baby chick is separated from its mother - its "creator" in a sense, its protector and food provider - what does it do? It cries. Could it be that fear is the result of our being separated from our Creator?

### **GUILT**

When one fails to accomplish what one intends to do, what feelings result? Probably guilt. Especially if one knows he or she was fully capable of doing whatever he or she intended to do. Why did God place mankind on the earth? Was it not to be God's representative on the earth? Was not man made to glorify God just as much as fish were made to swim and birds were made to fly? What happens to a fish out of water or a bird in a cage? What happens to man when he is unable to do what God made him for?

### **REJECTION**

When one is banished from a crowd, a group, a job, a relationship, or from a position, how does that person feel? Rejected! What happens to a person separated from the fellowship of his or her Creator, the almighty God? Can any other person or persons replace this loss?

You may be struggling with the emotions of FEAR, GUILT, AND REJECTION and not even realize it. Satan is a deceiver as well as a liar. Many times the product of these negative emotions do not show up in a form readily recognizable as fear, guilt, or rejection. Sometimes we struggle with other things not recognizing that what we are dealing with is a symptom, not the cause. For example,

- a controlling person often times is struggling with insecurity.
- An over-achieving, driven person may be struggling with guilt.
- A person that desires intensely to please others may be struggling with acceptance.

Just like an abscessed tooth causes pain and fever, treating the pain and fever will never solve the problem. The problem will only be solved when a dentist operates on the tooth and drills out the decayed, infected material and replaces it with a new "filling". The pain and fever automatically go away when this is done.

Our lives sometimes seem to be like a tooth ache. We experience pain and fever. We take aspirin and pain killer hoping to lessen our suffering. While this may allow us to cope, it does not solve the problem. God the Holy Spirit is the Dentist. The cross is the drill. As you go

through this study, ask the dentist to remove the root of the problem. Let God replace the decay of lies in your emotional system with a new “filling” of the truth. Whatever the root problem is, be it fear, guilt, rejection, or something else, God the Holy Spirit knows. Let him operate. Let Him fill you with His powerful feelings of security, significance, and acceptance

The truth is that God made you to be SECURE, SIGNIFICANT, AND ACCEPTED. He made you specifically to fellowship with Him. He created in your being the “instinct” to know Him. God designed us to be secure, significant, and accepted. Apart from God, however, fallen man has been made to be AFRAID, GUILTY, and REJECTED. Adam and Eve suffered from all three of these when they sinned and were separated from God. We suffer from all three.

## **THE SOLUTION- RECONNECT TO GOD**

God intended for us to be connected to Him and not separate from Him. Adam and Eve did not suffer fear, guilt, and rejection until they were separated from God. A baby chick does not cry until it is separated from its mother. No matter how many other chickens are around, the chick will not be satisfied until it is with its own mother. No matter how much we control our environment and surround ourselves with those we feel secure with, we will never feel truly secure until we are in conscious fellowship with our Creator. One feels guilty when he does not accomplish what he intended to do. No matter how much we are accomplishing, we will always feel guilty if we are not doing what God designed us to do.

We only feel rejection when we are forced to be separated from those we want to be with. But no matter how many friends we have, no matter how much others accept us, we will never feel truly accepted until we realize that God has accepted us through Jesus Christ because of what He has done.

The true solution which allows us to completely overcome fear, guilt, and rejection is very simple. Reconnect to God through Christ! He is the way and the truth and the life. He says that the truth will set us free. How can we know the truth unless we are connected to Him. How can we be connected to the Father except through Christ. He said that no one comes to the Father except through Him.

- In Christ we are SECURE.
- In Christ we are SIGNIFICANT.
- In Christ we are ACCEPTED.

No where else can we find fulfillment for these God-given desires. Adam and Eve died spiritually when they sinned. When we accept Christ, we are “born again”. In other words, we are made alive in our spirit. We are born into this world spiritually dead. Jesus came to this world spiritually alive. When we come to Christ, we are made alive in our spirit by His Spirit. We are reconnected to God because He and the Father are One. We can now do what we were designed to do by God. We can commune with God. We can worship God. We can glorify God. We can get our directions from God. We can have all our needs met from God.

If the solution to our struggles is so simple, then why is not everyone experiencing security, significance, and acceptance and the peace, joy, and abundant life that goes with these needs being fulfilled. We have an enemy who is determined that we should not ever be reconnected to God and if we do become connected to God again, he is determined to prevent us from believing and experiencing a vibrant relationship with God. How does he accomplish this? He is a liar and the father of lies. He is constantly bombarding us with thoughts like “You are worthless”, “You are guilty”, “You are no good”, “Not even God likes you”, “How can you call

yourself a Christian and do what you do?”, “How can you have those thoughts if you are really saved?”, “Are you really saved?”, “Do you really believe in Jesus?”, “Did you believe enough to really be saved?”. To make matters worse, after Satan gives you some of those horrendous thoughts, he makes you believe that the thought was your own! You see, if he can give you these thoughts, it is no more difficult to give you another thought- that the thought that you had was your own.

What is the enemy’s purpose? Satan does not want us to glorify God. Satan does not want us to be free to experience a relationship with God. Satan does not want us to spread the gospel. Satan does not want us to fulfill what God has created us to do in Christ. Satan does not want us to be happy. Satan comes to steal, kill and destroy. He comes to steal our peace and happiness. He comes to kill our joy. He comes to destroy our worship.

How do we stop Satan? Jesus said that the truth will set us free. He is the Truth. He will set us free. What is the condition given by Jesus in John 8:31? “If you abide in my word”? Does this mean reading so many chapters of scripture every day? No, even though it is good that one read God’s word. The word “abide” is also translated “to remain”, “to tarry”, “to continue”. In other words, BELIEVE God’s word. Our freedom from Satan’s lies (and lies are all he has remaining since his defeat at the cross), will be directly proportional to how much we believe God’s truth and the words of Jesus Christ.

This is the truth. Satan has been defeated. Jesus not only bore our sins on the cross so that we are forgiven in God’s sight but he also defeated Satan forever. Jesus came to destroy Satan’s work (1John 3:8). Through His death on the cross, Jesus destroyed Satan’s power (Hebrew 2:14) and drove out the enemy referred to before the cross as “the ruler of this world”(John 12:31). Satan now (Praise God!) has been relegated to “the prince of the power of the air” and the “god of this age”. All authority in heaven and on earth have been given to the risen Lord and Savior, our Lord of Lords and King of Kings (Matthew 28:18 and Rev. 19:16). We do not have to wait until we get to heaven to experience His authority in us and freedom from the pull and power of sin and Satan’s lies.

This also is the Truth. In Christ you are SECURE, SIGNIFICANT, and ACCEPTED. If you have accepted Him as your Savior and Lord, there is nothing you have to do except believe this. God, through His Son Jesus Christ has already done it for you. You have been seated with Christ in heavenly places (Eph. 2:6). God will provide all your needs through Christ (Phil. 4:19). Is this not SECURITY?

You have been made a new creation in Christ. You have died to sin when you were saved although you may not have yet realized it (Rom. 6:6). You have been made a new creation in Christ and God has prepared work for you to do (2Cor 5:17, Eph 2:10). Not only has He prepared this work, but He will do it through you. You will not be doing it. He will. That means you will succeed. No one can stop God’s work. Jesus said you would do even greater works than those the disciples saw Jesus do because Jesus will do them through you (John 14:12)! Is this not SIGNIFICANCE?

You have been made a saint. You have become a member of God’s household. As a believer, Jesus and the Father have come to live with you (John 14:23). Is this not ACCEPTANCE?

There is freedom in Christ today. Jesus came not only to die for our sins but also to set us free from Satan’s lies. You can experience this freedom today. You do not have to wait until the rapture or until you die and go to heaven. The righteous will live by FAITH. Believe the words Jesus has said!

SATAN IS A LIAR. In John 8:44, Jesus said that Satan is a liar, and the father of lies.

JESUS IS THE TRUTH In John 14:6, Jesus said , *“I am the way and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me.”*

THE TRUTH WILL SET YOU FREE Jesus said in John 8:32, *“If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you shall know the truth and the truth will set you free”.*

In the Bible when you find a command, obey it. When you find a promise, claim it. And when you find a fact, BELIEVE it! You are a secure, significant, accepted child of God. Jesus said so!

#### **DEFINITIONS:**

Secure - the state of being safe, with all needs provided

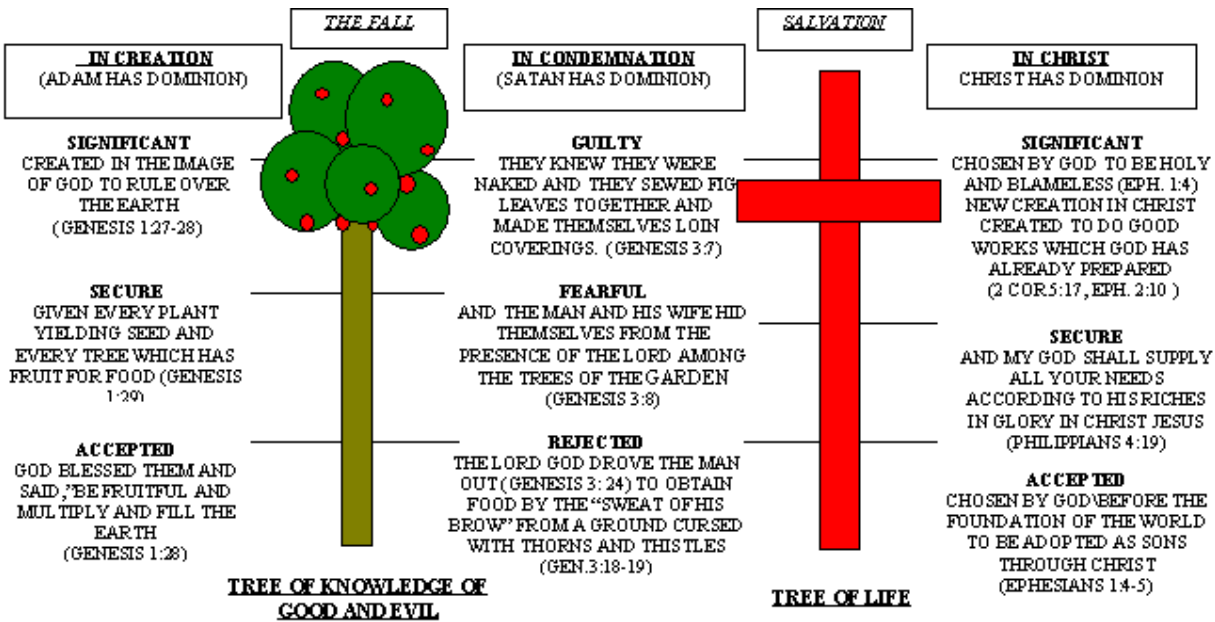
Significant - having value, worth, importance

Accepted - taken in, brought into fellowship with, approved,

Fear - insecurity (often caused by lack of control or feeling out of control)

Guilt - feeling of being insignificant, feeling of having done something wrong or having not done something

Rejection - feeling of not being accepted or wanted



**ONLY ONE POSSIBLE WRONG CHOICE**

**RESULTS: SPIRITUAL DEATH (SEPARATION FROM GOD)**

"From any tree of the garden, you may eat freely; but from the tree of knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day you eat from it you shall surely die" Gen. 2:16-17

Because of the disobedience and action of one man (Adam), sin entered the world, Adam died and all men sin and die because of one man's action. (Romans 5:12)

**ONLY ONE POSSIBLE RIGHT CHOICE**

**RESULTS: SPIRITUAL LIFE (ACCESS TO GOD THROUGH CHRIST)**

..for through Him (Christ) we both (Jew and Gentile) have our access in one Spirit to the Father...and are of God's household (Ephesians 2:18-19)

Because of the obedience and action of one Man (Jesus dying on the cross), there resulted justification of life to all men so that men may be made righteous (Romans 5:18-19)

## Session 1

# Who is Man?

## I. Before the Fall

Have you ever stopped and asked the question, "Why do I exist?". Have you ever wondered, with all the trials of life, "What is the purpose of mankind's existence?" Philosophers and scholars have pondered this question for years but we find the true answer, as well as the answers to all of life's questions, in the Bible, the only book written by the One who truly knows. Man- Who is he? Man is a being created in God's image to rule the earth and glorify God. Who is man? The Psalmist asked the same question-

*O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise because of your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger. When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, **what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet: all flocks and herds, and the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas.** O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! Psalms 8 (NIV)*

We find in the Book of Genesis that man was originally created in the image and likeness of God to rule the earth. Man was not God but like God. God also provided everything man needed for food. He also blessed man. Man was significant, secure, and accepted.

*Gen 1:26-29*

*Then God said, "Let Us make man **in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule** over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. And **God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."** Then God said, "Behold, I have **given you** every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be **food** for you; (NAS)*

### **A. The Characteristics of Man (in God's image)**

What does it mean to be created in God's image. Let's look at three characteristics of man and see how these characteristics compare with the characteristics of God. Again, let us emphasize, Man is not God and never has been God and never will be God. Man was simply, as the Bible says, created in the image and likeness of God. This is truth.

#### **1. Man was significant**

God is sovereign. God rules over all things. Man was created in God's image, in God's likeness to rule over (have dominion over) the earth.



## 2. Man was accepted

God is worthy of blessings. God blessed man. If man had not been accepted by God, God would not have blessed man.

## 3. Man was secure

God is secure. No one is more secure than God. God gave man food from the plants and trees. His needs were provided for.

In summary, we can conclude that man was created to be significant, accepted, and secure in the image of God. Just as God is significant, accepted, and secure man was created to be also. **Man was created in God's image.**

## B. The Composition of Man (in the image of God)

From 1Thes 5:23, we know that man is **body, soul, and spirit.**

*And the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your **spirit and soul and body** be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (ASV)*

### 1. Man has a physical body - Christ has a body.

Man was created in God's image and likeness. Man was created also as a physical being. Man was formed from the dust of the earth by God. This is physical. Man's body is physical. Is God physical? Christ was physical. Christ existed before time began.

In John 8:58

*Jesus said to them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, **Before Abraham was born, I am.** (NAS)*

Jesus also said in John 17:5-

*"And now, glorify Thou Me together with Thyself, Father, with the glory which I had with Thee **before the world was.** (NAS)*

We find evidence of Jesus resurrected body in John 20:25-27.

*The other disciples therefore were saying to him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I shall see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe." And after eight days again His disciples were inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst, and said, "Peace {be} with you." Then He said to Thomas, "Reach here your finger, and see My hands; and **reach here your hand, and put it into My side;** and be not unbelieving, but believing." (NAS)*

### 2. Man has a soul - God has a soul

Man was created by God and became a living soul. (Gen. 2:7). God has a soul. God spoke through the prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 42:1-

*"Behold, My servant, whom I uphold; My chosen one {in whom} My **soul** delights. I have put My **Spirit** upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the nations. (NAS)*

In Matthew 12:18, we find the words of God spoken through the prophet Isaiah again,

Matt 12:18 *"Behold, My Servant whom I have chosen; My Beloved in whom My **soul** is well-pleased; I will put My **Spirit** upon Him, and He shall proclaim justice to the Gentiles. (NAS)*

### **3. Man has a spirit - God is Spirit**

Jesus said in John 4:24-

*God is **Spirit**: and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth. (NAS)*

God breathed His Spirit into man as recorded in Gen 2:7-

*Then the LORD God **formed man** of dust from the ground, and **breathed** into his nostrils the breath of life; and **man became a living being.** (NAS)*

Man was created by God in the image and likeness of God. God is spirit. Man was created with a spirit. God breathed His Spirit into man. No account is given where God breathed His Spirit into the animals. Original man had the Spirit of God in him.

In summary, we can conclude that man was created with a body soul and a spirit in the image and likeness of God. Christ has a body. Christ was with God in the beginning. God has a soul. God is Spirit. Man is body, soul, and spirit. **Man was created in God's image.**

## **II. After the Fall**

While man was created in the image of God, in the likeness of God, Satan deceived man into believing that he could be God. The image of man changed. Man's perfect character and composition became less than perfect. Man was created in the image of God with a body , a soul, and a spirit with God-given characteristics or desires to be significant, accepted, and secure. When Satan, the great deceiver and accuser deceived man, the purpose for which God intended for man was disrupted. Satan then gained rule of the world and ruled until Christ came to take back the rule which Satan stole.

Adam, the first man had many choices. He could eat from any tree in the Garden of Eden. He only had one choice as far as his choice of food that he could make that was wrong. God only gave him one commandment regarding anything that he was to not do.

*Gen 2:16-17 And Jehovah God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.(ASV)*

God had previously given man commandments of things that he should do in Genesis 1:28.

*And God blessed them: and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.(ASV)*

Guess what! Satan, the deceiving serpent, convinced the woman God gave to the man to eat and she gave to the man and he ate, disobeying the first the LORD God had given him.

*Gen 3:6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and she gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat.*

Notice now what happened after they were disobedient.

*Gen 3:7-8 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And they heard the voice of Jehovah God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of Jehovah God amongst the trees of the garden.*

Thus the man that God created to rule over the earth began a lifestyle different from that he had ever known, a lifestyle filled with fear, guilt and rejection.

What went wrong? It is easy to see that the woman did what she had been told not to do. But was that her first mistake? Why did she ever listen to the serpent? God had commanded the man and woman to rule over every living creature that moves on the earth. The serpent was in this category. He was subject to her. When he spoke words contrary to what God had told them, that she would not die, the woman should have exercised her authority and dealt with the serpent in the way a sovereign ruler should deal with a disobedient servant. Had she done so, she would not have been deceived by the serpent's crafty persuasion.

We are told by James, brother to Jesus, in James 4:7-

*Be subject therefore unto God; but resist the devil, and he will flee from you.(ASV)*

In Christ Jesus, we have authority over Satan just as the woman had authority over the serpent. We are to resist him and he will flee. There is no reason to dialogue with him. There is no reason to try to outsmart him or argue with him. There is no reason to listen to Him. Simply command him to leave in the name of Jesus. Jesus Christ resisted him when the devil tempted Him in the wilderness. He defeated him, drove him out, and rendered him powerless at the cross. All authority in heaven and earth have been given to the risen Jesus (Matthew 28:18). Take you stand in Christ. You have the authority. Christ rules. You share in that rule. You are a part of the Kingdom of Heaven.

## **A. Man's Security Becomes Insecurity**

The woman did not resist the serpent. Instead, she listened to him. She ate of the forbidden fruit. She disobeyed again. Then she gave some to her husband. Instead of being a helper, she became a hindrance. He disobeyed and ate also. Immediately, "the eyes of them both were opened and they knew they were naked;" Here we see that the man God made to be secure was insecure. How insecure would you feel if someone took your clothes and you had to go out in public without any clothes. The man and woman "woke up" stark naked in full view of each other in a world without any clothes whatsoever? Is this not the ultimate insecurity?

**Man's security had just become insecurity.** The first characteristic that God had placed in man, the characteristic of being secure, had just become unfulfilled. Man was no longer secure. The characteristic God had given man to be secure became a need to be secure. Man now began to try to fulfill the need in him to be secure with his own accomplishments. The man and woman sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons. What a change! The man God made to look after the garden, to rule over the earth and subdue it became preoccupied not with what God had given him to do but instead with meeting the needs of his own emotions. He was trying to cover his shame and insecurity with the works of his own hands

We can never cover our insecurity with our own hands. Only God can cover our insecurity and shame in Christ. Try as hard as you can, you will never cover your shame or fears with your own work.

Notice also that the covering man and woman had made out of fig leaves only covered the loins (Gen. 3:7). In reality, man and woman were naked and sinful from the bottom of the feet to the top of the head. They only tried to cover the part of the body which when exposed gave them the greatest shame. Do we not tend to do the same thing? We only deal with the sins that in our eyes cause the most shame. We do not seem to provide covering for what we consider "lesser sins". In God's eyes sin is sin. What we call a little sin is just as much sin as what we call a great sin. Both require the Blood of Christ for removal. Adam and Eve should have covered their entire sinful body in the presence of God. (They did, in a way by trying to hide.) We too should carry every aspect of our life to Christ and let him remove the lesser things we struggle with as well as the more shameful ones.

We also find that the man did not trust his own work of a fig leaf apron. Later after making the apron of fig leaves, he heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the Garden and the man hid! He was afraid! **The man that the LORD God had made to be secure was also obviously fearful.**

## **B. Man's Significance Becomes Insignificance (Guilt)**

As the man and woman made covering of fig leaves, they were experiencing a demotion in occupation. They had gone from being ruler of God's creation to sewers of fig leaves. What a contrast in significance! Adam, the "king of creation" was now a seamstress. Eve, once queen, was now just the lowly wife of a tailor, and probably a poor tailor at that. **The man the LORD God had made significant became insignificant.** The second characteristic that God had placed in man, the characteristic to be significant, had been replaced by a need- the need to be significant. This need was now unfulfilled. Instead of doing God's work, something of real significance, his sole purpose in life now was to cover his guilt and shame in any way he could think of.

Why had Adam changed occupations? He had just died spiritually. God had told him that he would die the day he ate of the forbidden tree. He did not die physically at that time but he died spiritually. The Spirit Whom God had given him when He breathed into him had been removed. No longer could Adam know God. No longer could Adam hear God's voice in his spirit. No longer could Adam commune with God. (*Remember, Jesus said - God is Spirit and must be worshipped in spirit*).

The apostle Paul describes this condition, spiritual death, as the condition of every person before he or she comes to Christ in Ephesians 1:1-2: *As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. (NIV).* A dead person cannot know the will of God. A dead person cannot hear God. A dead person cannot do what God intends for him to do. A dead person cannot do what God has prepared in advance for Him to do. Man was created to glorify God and commune with God. Both are impossible unless one hears the voice of God in his spirit. Man is dead spiritually until God makes him alive (Ephesians 2:1,5). Adam had been separated from God in his spirit. God speaks to us through our spirit. The only hearing Adam had now was physical hearing. He could not hear God through his spirit anymore. The only feeling he had was physical feeling from his body. He knew he was no longer significant. He was an insecure, insignificant, lowly

sewer of fig leaves. He was ashamed, insecure, and guilty. All he wanted to do was to cover his shame and guilt. This in itself disqualified him from doing God's work. He was too concerned with his own guilt.

How can we or anyone do God's work while being concerned with covering our own guilt? The first man could not and we cannot either. When we at any time become concerned with covering our guilt and shame with accomplishments, no matter how good or "Christian" they seem to be, we will be ineffective in doing God's work. No amount of Christian teaching, writing, volunteering, giving, preaching, singing, or other work will cover the guilt of past sins. Only Jesus can do this because of the Blood He shed at the cross. Satan is deceptive. He tells us (without us knowing it is him telling us) that we can overcome guilt through "Christian" accomplishments. What a lie! It is impossible. We can no more overcome guilt through "Christian" accomplishments than we can through "worldly" accomplishments. Not only is it impossible, it is a sin to try to do so. It is Phariseism. Jesus spoke against this in the Gospels. Our guilt and shame can only be REMOVED (not just covered) by the Blood of Christ (Hebrew 9:14)

### **C. Man's Acceptance Becomes Rejection**

Man had disobeyed God's Commandment. God had told him that he would die the day he ate of the forbidden tree. Satan lied and said man would not die. What happened? Man died immediately when he disobeyed God. He did not die physically that day but he died spiritually. How do we know? His desire to serve God, communicated through his spirit, his inner most part, was gone. No longer was he connected to God. He was now only able to function with his soul (mind, will, and emotions) and body. Everything he did, he had to learn. There was no divine guidance. His intimate knowledge of God was lost. His understanding of God was gone. He now felt only guilt, fear, and insecurity. He was soon to experience rejection. How do we know he had lost all knowledge of God? He thought he could hide from God! How silly a thought! Who can hide from God?

*Gen 3:9-12 And Jehovah God called unto the man, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.*

Man tried to put the blame on someone else. He admitted eating but he explained that it was not really his fault. The woman made him do it. Also, he reminded God that He, God, had given him the woman so in a way God was responsible. How silly! Does the God that made us not know our hearts? Does He not see all? Of course He does. As believers, we know these truths because we have been made alive spiritually, through the Holy Spirit that dwells within us. Adam was dead, however. He had just died when he ate from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. He was now about to experience the death of the third characteristic which God had placed in him, the characteristic to be accepted. He had already experienced the death of his security. It had become insecurity,(he was naked and fearful). He had already experienced the death of his significance. It had become fear and guilt. Now he was no longer going to be accepted in the garden where God had placed him. He was going to suffer rejection. He was going to be cast out of God's presence forever.

*Gen 3:16-24 Unto the woman he said, **I will greatly multiply thy pain and thy conception; in pain thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.** And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of*

*thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: **cursed is the ground for thy sake; in toil shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread,** till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. And the man called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living. And Jehovah God made for Adam and for his wife coats of skins, and clothed them. And Jehovah God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: therefore Jehovah God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. **So he drove out the man;** and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden the Cherubim, and the flame of a sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.(ASV)*

Man was driven out of the garden to live a troubled life full of pain and thorns and thistles. His significance of being ruler of the earth was destroyed and he now found himself an insignificant person striving to produce enough food for him and his woman from the thorny ground from which he was made. His security was now insecurity. God had made him clothes but he could not eat anymore from the trees of the garden. He now had to “earn his living” by the “sweat of his brow”. On top of all this, he was rejected. His Creator and Maker had banished him from His presence. Man’s acceptance had become rejection. What a sad story! What an emotional cripple he must have been. He was insecure, guilty, fearful, and now rejected. He had had it all, but now had nothing. He had known God in his spirit, but now only functioned with his mind, his will and his emotions. He could only “walk in the flesh”. This he learned to do.

### **III. Spiritual Death - Our Inheritance from Adam**

**Sin entered the world through Adam. Man, who was body, soul, and spirit now became spiritually dead. The part of him that communed with God and directed his life, his spirit, died. He was dead spiritually. All mankind inherits this dead nature.**

*Rom 5:12 Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned:--(ASV)*

*Eph 2:1-2... ye were dead through your trespasses and sins, wherein ye once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the powers of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience;(ASV)*

We previously saw that when Adam sinned and died spiritually, he could no longer commune with God in his spirit. He only functioned with his mind, his will and emotions. He could not “walk in the Spirit”. He could only “walk in the flesh”. “Walking in the flesh” was all he could do so he passed this pattern of life down to his children and they passed it down to their children and it has kept being passed down to each father and mother’s children until this day. Apart from Christ, you and I struggle with insecurity or guilt, fear, and rejection. We try to overcome it in ways similar to Adam. Our emphasis is focused on our physical body. We make aprons of fig leaves so no one will see the guilt embedded in our souls. Of course they are not real aprons of fig leaves. They may be stylish clothes, fancy houses, new cars, things that impress others. These aprons of fig leaves may be good works for humanity. It may be aprons of fig leaves in the form of a great position, a powerful job, a position of status in the community. No matter what our aprons of fig leaves consist of, we know in our heart that they are not adequate. We know that nothing we can do can satisfy that desire to be significant that God placed in us- that desire to rule the earth as God intended us to do. And we also know that

when we hear God coming, we are afraid because we know our fig leaves are worse than filthy rags and we, like Adam and Eve will run and hide. Apart from Christ we are nothing and can do nothing!

We suffer from fear, guilt, and rejection. Like Adam, we know we are unworthy and unacceptable. Adam knew this. He was no good. Likewise, his children were no good. He impressed this upon them as they were growing up. God's standards were unattainable. The only standard to try to meet was the standard set by man, not God. Man began to compete with each other. If one could be better than everyone else in his own eyes, then he would not be rejected. He would be accepted by all (he thought). It was every man for himself. (It remained this way until Christ came and still is for those who do not understand). Climb to the top. Step on anyone to get there. If someone is better, destroy him, then you will be the best. That is exactly what Adam's oldest son, Cain, did to Abel. And he taught his son by the life he modeled and his son taught his son and so on so that the same system is being used today. Oh we may not always kill people. Often times, we can slander them or place accusations against them which will in effect render them ineffective to compete with us. Thus we climb to the top on the bodies of others so that when we get there we can say, "I am acceptable". But guess what ! When we get there we know in our heart that we are not acceptable in God's eyes. We still are wearing fig leaves. How futile life is. As King Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes, it is like trying to catch the wind.

God created man in his own image with a body, a soul, and a spirit. Man was instilled with the God given and desire and capacity to be significant, to be secure, and to be accepted. When man sinned and his spirit died, as God had warned him, he still was left with the needs to be significant, secure, and accepted. There was a great problem, however. How can one be significant without doing the task for which he had been made for, specifically to do what God asked him to do? And how could one do what God asked if one were disconnected from God? Man's spirit was dead. It died the day Adam sinned. Man can only hear God's voice through his spirit. Jesus tells us that God is Spirit and must be worshipped in spirit. How can one obey a master if he cannot hear that master? How can a sheep follow a shepherd that he cannot hear? How can one perform a significant work if he cannot know what that work is? He can't! That was the problem! The man created to be significant could not be significant.

There was also another problem. Man was created to be secure. God's plan was for man to do God's work and God would abundantly provide for man's needs. This was ultimate job security. This was ultimate relational security. Everything was perfect. Then sin happened and security became insecurity. No longer could man and woman simply pick fruit and eat. Now man had to grow wheat and grain from the thorny, thistle filled ground not ever knowing for sure if the crop planted would ever survive climatic conditions and insects, birds, and other plant destroying pestilence. Man could never be sure he would have food for the next day or week. With God he had been secure and sure. Now, he was insecure. Before, he was connected to God and God was in control. If man needed to know what was going to happen, he just needed to ask. Now things were different. Man was not in control and he no longer knew the God who was in control. His life was a life of fear. In the garden nothing could harm him. Out of God's presence many things could harm him. Wild animals could devour him. Disease could kill him. He could starve. The security of God had become fear and insecurity. The man God made to be secure was insecure and full of fear.

The third problem was one of rejection. Man had gone from walking and talking to the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe to absolute obscurity. Man had gone from being blessed by God and the ruler of the world to being another source of food for the wild animals he was originally to rule over. In the presence of God, disease had no power over man. Man was the ruler. Now man was not in charge. Satan, the archangel of God who had rebelled, now ruled the

earth. Disease spread and Satan used it whenever he could to accomplish his purposes. Satan cared nothing for man. He hated man. He hated God more but man was God's creation. Man was the apple of God's eye and Satan hated anything God loved. His purpose after he was cast out of heaven was to deceive and lead men astray, then accuse them and disparage their character. By doing so, he was disparaging the character of God, because man had been created in God's image. One of his favorite tactics was to entice men to accuse, attack and disparage the character of each other. Little did man realize that it was Satan planting the evil thoughts in his head. Man thought that the thoughts were his own. As men were attacked by each other, they probably did not realize it was actually Satan responsible for the attack so they blamed each other. Men grew skeptical of each other. The smallest incident of conflict could lead to distrust of one another. Men isolated themselves and rejected anyone who was different from them. Those around them, they tried to make conform to their own ideas. All others they rejected. This was all they knew because they had learned rejection from their parents. They did not intend to teach rejection. They had never experienced unconditional acceptance from their parents. How could they model something they had never experienced? No matter how hard he tried to overcome the feelings, the man God made to be accepted was still rejected by God and he knew it.

The same negative emotions of fear and rejection are seen today. It is called by various names. One name is racism. Another name is denominationalism. We find the results of these negative emotions in society. We find it in the Church. It exists in neighborhoods. It exists in local churches. Neighbors distrusts neighbors. Christians criticize other Christians.

What a miserable state man was in. Insignificant, Guilty, and Rejected. But the Creator God of the Universe, the Sustainer of life, had another plan. Perhaps it had been His plan all along. Who can know the mind of God? His way and His will are perfect. Certainly He knew us before He created the world. He knew what we would do. God is never surprised. He never makes a mistake. He had a plan.

First, let's look at modern man's condition. We have looked at Adam, the first man. We have seen his guilt or insignificance, his fear or insecurity, and his rejection. Let's look at the state of modern man prior to salvation.

*And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. Ephesians 2:1-3*

Here we see all three primary negative emotions in the apostle Paul's description of unsaved people in his letter to the Ephesian church: **1. Rejection, 2. Guilt or Insignificance, 3. Insecurity or Fear**



## **A. Rejection Is Inherited From Our Natural Parents**

The primary negative emotion of *rejection* is described in Ephesians 2:1. “You were dead in your trespasses and sins”. What does this mean? Physical death? Of course not. What then? Spiritual death! The death that Adam suffered the day he ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Death of the innermost part of man that communes with God. Being separate is ultimate rejection. How can a dead person be accepted?

If we are dead, then how can we be made alive? Simply by being born again spiritually. The great teacher of Israel, Nicodemus came to Jesus one day and asked Jesus questions. Jesus told him that only by being “born again” could one see the kingdom of heaven. Jesus said, “That which is born of flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit”. What did He mean? Human flesh can produce other human beings if God allows it. Human flesh cannot produce spiritual things. Things of God are spiritual. Things of flesh are fleshly. The two are not the same. God cannot be worshipped “in the flesh”. God must be worshipped “in the spirit”. God cannot be communicated with in the flesh. God can be communicated with only through a spirit that has been made alive by the infusion of God’s spirit in that person.

## **B. Guilt or Insignificance Is Inherited From Our Natural Parents**

The results of the primary negative emotion of *guilt or insignificance* is described in the next verse, Ephesians 2:2- “you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience”. What does walking according to the course of this world mean? It means attending to the things that pertain to the flesh. It means making aprons of fig leaves to cover up our guilt. It means trying to overcome guilt by worldly accomplishments. It is trying to fill up the sea of need to be significant that was placed within us by God with a river of our own achievements such as positions of influence, status, money, prestige, possessions. Still the ocean is not filled but the enemy, Satan, tells us to keep on trying, do something else, surely that will satisfy, and we believe the lie. We think it is our idea. So we keep on trying. Solomon, the wisest man that ever lived saw this and wrote about it in Ecclesiastes. He described it to being similar to trying to catch the wind. He tried to stimulate his body with wine, he built great works, he made gardens and parks and lakes for himself, he bought great numbers of slaves, great herds, collected silver and gold, had many wives and concubines. What did he discover. Let his own words tell you.

Ecc 2:10-11 I denied myself nothing my eyes desired; I refused my heart no pleasure. My heart took delight in all my work, and this was the reward for all my labor. Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind; nothing was gained under the sun.

Ecc 2:17 So I hated life, because the work that is done under the sun was grievous to me. All of it is meaningless, a chasing after the wind.

Ecc 2:25-26 for without him [God], who can eat or find enjoyment? To the man who pleases him, God gives wisdom, knowledge and happiness, but to the sinner he gives the task of gathering and storing up wealth to hand it over to the one who pleases God....(NIV)

Ecc 3:12-15 I know that there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live. That everyone may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all his toil-- this is the gift of God. I know that everything God does will endure forever; nothing can be added to it and

nothing taken from it. God does it so that men will revere him. Whatever is has already been, and what will be has been before; and God will call the past to account.(NIV)

“One life to live that soon shall pass. Only that done for God will last” someone once wrote. How true! Significance cannot be obtained by doing something that the human mind thought up. Anything the flesh conceives is of the flesh. Only things conceived of by the Spirit are of the spirit and are God’s tasks. Jesus knew this. He did not go about just doing good things for the poor, healing the sick, casting out demons as he desired. He only did what He saw the Father doing (John 5:19). The enemy Satan does not care what we do as long as it is not what God desires us to do. He does not care if we get involved in church activities as long as we are doing it of our own ideas and volition and not what God has told us to do. He knows we will soon wear out doing it on our own. He knows, just as Solomon discovered that only what is done by God using us will last forever. If Satan can keep us real busy with things God did not tell us to do, we may not hear God when He speaks to us. Nothing we can do outside of what God tells us to do can overcome the feelings of guilt and insignificance we will always experience when we are outside of God’s desire for us.

### **C. Insecurity Is Inherited From Our Natural Parents**

The results of the last primary negative emotion, *insecurity*, is found in the third verse of Ephesians 2- “Among them we too all formerly lived in the lust of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.” We all have lived in the lust of the flesh before we were saved. Adam’s first indulgence in a desire of the flesh was to eat of the forbidden tree. “It was good for food and a delight to the eye and was desirable to make one wise.” Notice this only involved the physical part of the person, not the spiritual. What they overlooked was that the food was not good for the spiritual part of the person, the spirit. This is still true. While our physical components have needs, there a God ordained fulfillment for each need. The term “lust” means strong desire and in itself is not wrong. Jesus “lusted” to eat Passover with the disciples. Indulging in lust of the flesh to satisfy the flesh outside of God’s will is sin and grieves the spirit within a believer.

The unsaved, however, does not have the Spirit of God within. He is simply trying to find a cure for insecurity. He is trying to find where he is safe. He is trying to find someone to be safe with. He is looking for love in all the wrong places. There is a God given desire deep within that craves security and he wants it. If everyone likes him then obviously he will not be afraid to be around them. Surely the one he got drunk with would not harm him. Surely if someone slept with him they would love and not hate him. Is not this security, he thinks. Think again! The master of liars, Satan has struck again.

Interestingly, from Galatians 5:19-21 the first three deeds of the flesh, immorality, impurity, and sensuality as well as drunkenness, and carousing seem to be directly related to pleasure of the flesh. That is a satisfying of physical needs. Eating, drinking, drugging, sexual immorality would be examples of these. These acts could be indulged in to gain security among those who were also engaged in this action.

Idolatry and sorcery are deeds which when practiced may give an individual a sense of power or control from sources other than God. The source of this power or knowledge is demonic. Insecurity manifests itself in the form of fear. Individuals which tend to be controlling are almost always insecure or fearful.

Jealousy is an obvious symptom of insecurity.

The remaining acts of the flesh given in Galatians, enmities, strife, outburst of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, and envying can be symptoms of an individual's struggle to gain power to overcome insecurity.

Fear, guilt, and rejection characterizes the spiritually dead. What a miserable state! If this was all there is to life, surely man is a miserable being. But as we said previously, God had a plan. He is never surprised. He knew what would happen in the Garden of Eden before the world was created. He had a Son, an only begotten son. He had a body prepared for Him. He was the Savior. He would accomplish what none other could do. He would take on the enemy and defeat him forever- first in the wilderness and then at the cross. Satan never had a chance with the Son of God, Jesus Christ.

## Session 2

# A New Life From God- Our Inheritance From Christ

*Romans 5:17-19 For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous. (NAS)*

## I. The Consecration of Man (in the Image of Christ)

*Romans 8:29 For whom he foreknew, he also foreordained (to be) conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren: (ASV)*

### **A. Every Man Enters the World Physically Alive But Spiritually Dead.**

We have previously seen where we came into this world spiritually dead, disconnected from God, unable to meet our God-given desire and purpose to be accepted, significant and secure. If spiritual death results in man being and feeling rejected, guilty, and insecure, then it makes sense that in order to overcome this fear guilt and rejection, one must be made alive. We must be "born again", not physically but spiritually. Our problem is not that we are dead physically. Our problem as unsaved people is that we are dead spiritually. It is a problem that we cannot solve. Flesh can only give birth to flesh. We cannot make anything alive spiritually. Apart from God, we are spiritually dead. Dead people can do nothing. Dead people cannot give life to anything. Only God can give life. And praise be to God because of His great love and mercy to us.

### **B. Because of God's Great Love and Mercy, We Are Made Spiritually Alive.**

Paul describes it this way- *But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved) (Eph. 2:5).*

John, the "disciple that Jesus loved" said it in a similar way- *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, what whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life"(John 3:16).*

It is God, through the work of Christ, that makes us alive. It is God that gives His Spirit through Christ that makes us alive spiritually. We must be "born again" in order to be made spiritually alive. This new spiritual life is called eternal life. It is forever.

This is exactly what the Disciple John wrote in John 1:12-13- *Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God--children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. (NIV)*

This is exactly what Jesus told Nicodemus in John 3:3-6-... *Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again." "How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!" Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. (NIV)*

### **C. This New Birth by the Holy Spirit Reconnects Man to God**

It is this new life that reconnects man to God just as Adam was connected before the fall. It is this new life that provides the fulfillment of the purpose for which God created us. It is in Christ that we become accepted, not guilty, and secure. It is what he has done and is doing that gives us the peace that passes understanding, the abundant life, the yoke that is easy. The kingdom of God is not the kingdom of Satan. The kingdom of God is about security, significance, and acceptance. It is not about fear, guilt, and rejection. Fear, guilt and rejection will never be overcome outside of the kingdom that God has provided for us NOW. We simply have to be born again spiritually. We do not have to die physically, as many believe and as Satan would have us think, to experience the fulfillment of our God-given desire to be secure, significant, and accepted. We can experience it here on earth where God intended us to experience it. It is found in Christ, the second Adam. It is through this One that many are made alive again to God. (See Romans 5:16-19)

Every living person born into the world since Adam and Eve has been born physically alive but spiritually dead. Only three people began life on this earth spiritually alive. These people are Adam, Eve, and Jesus. God breathed into Adam and he became spiritually alive. Eve was taken from Adam and was spiritually alive. Jesus was the Son of God. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit, spiritually alive at birth and was never separated from His Heavenly Father. Prior to His time on the cross when He cried "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?", He never experienced rejection of His heavenly Father. He was never insecure. He was never insignificant. He was never guilty of doing what He should not do nor did He fail to do what He should. He did what His heavenly Father was doing and only what He saw His Father doing. His Father loved Him and showed Him all that He was doing. Jesus was alive on this earth not only physically but also spiritually. Jesus never died a spiritual death through sin as the first Adam. Unlike Adam, who only had one wrong choice available and chose it, Jesus had many opportunities to sin but never chose sin. He was tempted in all ways but never sinned. It is from this "second Adam", as Jesus is sometimes called that we regain that which our first father, Adam, lost in the Garden. It is through Christ that we pass from being "dead in our trespasses and sins" to being made a new person within, created to do good works which God has prepared in advance for us to do. It is through Jesus Christ that we become alive and can hear the voice of God, to commune with God, to feel His presence. It is Christ within us that makes us truly a child of God. It is the Holy Spirit within us that is melded in some miraculous way to our own spirit that will live forever (1 Cor. 6:17). Our fleshly bodies are not the real "us". The real "us" is the new spiritual person inside each "born again" person's body. Like the prodigal son in Luke Chapter 15, we once, without the spirit of God, were dead but now have begun to live. We were lost but now have been found. Praise God! Jesus said "I am going away but I will not leave you as orphans. The father will send the Holy Spirit to be with you. Actually He will be Me and the Father. We will live with you and make our home with you. You will do even greater things than I have done. Whatever you ask for in my name, you will receive. We will convict the world, guide you, teach you, and reveal all things to you. In the world you will still have trouble but I have overcome the world. I have authority over all flesh. The enemy, Satan is now condemned. Whatever you go through, I am with you going through it with you. My Father and I are in control. Do not fear. (my paraphrase from John chapters 14-17).

“We will live with you and make our home with you”! Is this not acceptance? What more acceptance could there be than to have the Maker and Creator of the Universe living within you!

Not only does being born again by the Spirit of God make us acceptable. It also makes us significant. “You will do even greater things than I have done”! Is this not significance? How more significant can we be than to do greater things than Jesus!

Being born again also makes us secure. “What ever you ask for in my name you will receive”! How much more secure could one be than this? Anything we ask for in the name of Jesus, we will receive! Is this not like the Garden of Eden? One caution, however. We communicate with God through the Spirit. We must make sure we ask in the Spirit and not in the flesh. Our flesh cannot communicate with God. To be outside God’s will for our life is to be in disobedience to God. Just because we are doing something “spiritual” does not mean we are following God’s will. Jonah may have been going to Spain to prophecy to the Spaniards. This did not matter. God told him to go to Ninevah and what God said to do eventually got done after three days and nights in the belly of a fish. Jonah learned the hard way. The spirit that works in the sons of disobedience is always around looking for a believer to devour by deception and lies. Get eaten by a fish while doing good things for God that he did not tell you to do and you will be miserable. Make sure you hear God’s voice.

## **II. New Spiritual Life in Christ Gives New Characteristics to Man**

Previously, we looked at the condition of modern man in Ephesians 2. In Ephesians 2:1-3, we see our life before we came to Christ as a life of rejection, insignificance, and insecurity. In verse 4, however, we see what God did to remove this problem of living in this rejection, insignificance, and insecurity (also known as rejection, guilt, and fear).

*Ephesians 2:4-5 But because of his great love for us, God who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.*

God made us alive when we were dead! What does that mean? Were we dead physically? Of course not! We were dead spiritually. Just like Adam after he died spiritually, we were separated from God, dead spiritually. We were the “natural man” of 1 Corinthians 2:14. We were without the Spirit, unable to accept or understand the things from God. God made us alive spiritually. We now have the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2:16). We have received the Spirit who is from God so that we may know the things freely given to us by God (1 Cor. 2:12). We can now know God and communicate with Him through Christ who lives within our spirit.

Why did God make us alive spiritually? There is one reason- because of His great love. What did we do to obtain this ? Absolutely nothing except to believe. When each one of us confessed with our mouth Jesus as Lord and believed in our heart that God raised Him from the dead, we were saved (Romans 10:9-10). At that point, we died to sin and were freed from it so that we no longer would be slaves to sin. While we were once alive to sin (following the ways of the world), we are now dead to sin but alive to God (Romans 6:4-11). We did not do any great works in order that God would make us alive. This is emphasized in Ephesians 2:8-9-

*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith-- and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God--not by works, so that no one can boast.(NIV)*

It is a free gift of God. It is nothing we did ourselves. It is through faith. God simply made us alive because He loved us and He is rich in mercy.

What happened when we were made alive? Actually, we became a new creation inwardly (1 Cor 5:17). Our outside (flesh) did not change. It is our responsibility to control our flesh with the divine power of the new creation within us.

### **A. First Characteristic- Secure in Christ**

When God made us alive spiritually, He also made us to be secure. Ephesians 2:6-7 says,

*And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.*

Where can we find anymore security than being seated with Christ in the heavenly realms? We are now abiding with Christ in eternity. In eternity, time will not exist. In eternity, there is no beginning or end. Eternity always exist. If we will ever be with Christ in eternity (and we will), we are there now. We are presently seated with Him.

### **B. Second Characteristic- Significant in Christ**

While we are seated with Christ and are secure in eternity, we are still here on earth in a time-space creation where God has placed us. Why has He placed us here? Ephesians 2:10 tells us.

*For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. (NIV)*

God has prepared something for us to do. Just like Adam was created to rule over the earth, God has a divine purpose for us as long as we are here on earth. This is where we truly find our significance. This is where we are truly fulfilled. This is the only work that we can do that will last for eternity. This is not just some work we can think of ourselves. It is work that God has already prepared for us to do. It is also not work that God has prepared for someone else to do. It is work that God prepared just for us.

How can we know what God has prepared for us to do. Before we were made alive spiritually, it would be impossible for us to know. But now that God has made us alive, we can understand the things that are from God. His sheep hear His voice (John 10:27). He tells us what to do. It is so important to know what God has prepared for us. Jesus said He could only do what He saw the Father doing (John 5:19). We can do nothing ourselves. We can only do what Christ does as He lives within us, those things that God has prepared for us to do and is doing through Christ within us. We have the mind of Christ now but we must be led by Christ and not our flesh.

### **C. Third Characteristic- Accepted in Christ**

We have already seen in Ephesians 2: 4-10 that we are secure and significant. In the following verses we find that we also have been made accepted. Once we were without hope and without God (Eph 2:12).

*Eph. 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.*

*Eph 2:18-19 For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, (NIV)*

Glory to God! We have been made a part of God's family. Both the Jews and Gentiles are now been made one group and the walls separating us have been broken down. We are one group and of one household- the household of God. How can we be anymore accepted? Jesus said He was going to prepare a place for us in His father's house and now we see in Ephesians that we will be fellow citizens with all the saints in God's household. Is this not true acceptance? If God accepts us, why should we let the enemy defeat us by reminding us of all those who reject us. If God accepts us, who is greater than God! Whose presence would you rather be in than God's.

In this world we sometimes are the recipient of rejection. Sometimes we are the one who rejects others. We form our own groups to meet socially. We form our own groups to meet religiously. We join civic clubs. We join professional organizations. Some of these groups are good. Some of these have a purpose that is noble and honorable. Often times, however, we use them for the wrong reason. We exclude those from joining who are different in some way. Perhaps we feel that if we allow different people in our group, then we will be rejected when the majority becomes different from us. We want to surround ourselves with people like us. Why can't we accept people as Jesus accepts them? Why can't we love people unconditionally as Jesus loves them? Could it be that we truly have not comprehended the fact that God accepts us into His family as we are? All those who have been made alive in Christ will spend eternity together. Why not get use to each other while we are still here on earth? Why not work together as one body before Christ returns to take His bride, the Church. Perhaps if we truly see our significance, our security, and our acceptance in what God has done for us we will be able to love our fellow brothers and sisters as Christ loves us. We do not have to impress anyone anymore. We don't have to behave or do a certain thing to be accepted anymore. We do not have to fear anyone or anything but God. Our future is secure. Our significance is being taken care of by Christ. We belong to God. Do we really need anything else?



### Session 3

## What is Eternal Life?

We have previously learned that we were created by God to be secure, accepted, and significant but because of the disobedience of one man, Adam, we lost that portion of our inheritance. We were condemned, separated from God. But because of God's great love for us, His creation created in His image and likeness, He sent His only Son, Jesus Christ. It is through Christ that we are given a new life by being born again by the Holy Spirit and thus regain in Christ our security, our acceptance, and our significance. Because of the obedience of one man, Jesus, all who believe are made right with God again. Paul stated it this way in Roman 5:18-19:

*Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. For just as through the disobedience of the one man [Adam] the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man [Jesus] the many will be made righteous. (NIV)*

What is this new life from God? What does it mean to have eternal life? What exactly is eternal life? Is it important that we understand what we have in this new life?

### I. Eternal Life is Having Every Thing We Need

As a young boy growing up in the early sixties in an area where the 5<sup>th</sup> Special Forces trained in the field prior to going to Viet Nam, I had the opportunity to spend many weekends and some summer vacation days living and "fighting" with these specially trained soldiers during their final field training exercises. There were two groups that "fought" against each other during this training exercise. The first group were the "guerrillas". This group lived in the forest and walked everywhere they went. The second group were the counter-insurgents. They had trucks, airplanes, and helicopters and lived in a base camp of rented houses in the country (rural area). I served as a guide for the first group because growing up in the country, I knew the terrain and the unmapped trails. One day during an extremely wet week, I came into the guerrilla camp to spend a few days with them and found two soldiers trying to start a fire in the rain. They had been trying to get a fire going since the night before the morning I arrived in camp. They had burned "C" ration boxes, paper, and were finally down to what they considered a last resort -burning medical bandages which they had in their possession. (At least one of them was a medic). They had experienced no success the previous night and were having no success that morning with all their "man made" materials. It had rained the day before as well as all the previous night. It was also raining then. The amazing thing about this situation is that they had slept cold and wet beside a huge pitch pine log and were in fact trying to build the fire in front of the log. They were actually sitting on the log to build the fire. I took a knife and cut a few slivers of wood from the log (which was saturated with pine tar that was in the pine tree when it had died years before). Immediately a roaring fire was started in a matter of minutes. The two soldiers had been thoroughly trained in the ways of the world of Viet Nam but they had not been trained to live in the rain in the Uwharrie Forest in North Carolina. They had suffered and shivered all night and morning while sitting and shivering, cold and wet on the best source of heat available in the entire forest.

Many believers today are trying to accomplish something by their own methods not realizing that God has already placed in their possession all that is required to live a holy, godly life.

Many believers are struggling trying to overcome something but unable to do so because of a lack of knowledge of what they have in Christ. They are trying to start a fire in the rain with man made materials while possessing everything they need to set a city on fire for Jesus. They do not recognize that God has already provided everything that is needed. Peter wrote in 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.(NIV)*

## **II. Eternal Life is a Life of Abiding, not Struggling**

In Christ, God has given us all we need to live godly lives as secure, accepted, and significant people. We have eternal life. We simply need to understand what we have as it is taught by the word of God and then believe it! The righteous will live by faith- faith in what God has done and provided. We must study the words of God, “abide” in the words of Christ! Jesus said,

*If you abide in my word, then you are truly disciples of mine and you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free. (John 8:31-32) NASB*

Abide in the truth of what Christ has done! Most people believe “abide in my word” means we have to do something extraordinary. They automatically think “I have to learn all the commandments and obey them”. That is not what Jesus was saying. He did not say in that verse “Obey my commands”. He said “Abide in my word”. He meant for us to “remain in the truths I am teaching you”. Abide is not an “action” word. It is a “resting” word. The word abide could be interpreted “rest”. Jesus has already defeated our enemies- the world, the flesh, and the devil. He has given us the power through His Spirit Who lives within us and He will do everything that needs doing if we will let Him. We have a new divine life within us. He taught the disciples this. Hold onto His teaching. We cannot rely on feelings. We must rely on facts. If we rely on feelings, the enemy will constantly lead us around by our nose and we will be defeated and frustrated. As you study what our inheritance is as believers, ask God to tear down those strongholds where the enemy has blinded you from understanding the truth of the gospel of Christ (2 Cor. 4:4).

## **III. Eternal Life is Behaving by Believing**

It has been said, “We do what we do because we believe what we believe, not what we say we believe”. If we believe we have everything we need to live holy lives, we will live holy lives. If we believe we are saints, new creations in Christ, we will act accordingly. If we believe we are sinners we will act like sinners. Just because we act a certain way does not make us what we act.

As a small child, I had a pet duck named “Hole-Bill”. He thought he was a chicken. He thought his mother was a chicken because the duck egg from which he was hatched was placed under a “setting hen”. When the rest of the chicken eggs hatched, Hole-Bill hatched too. He followed the chickens around the yard thinking he was a chicken. He did not know any other life. The chickens scratched. He scratched. He was not a chicken, though. He was a duck. He did not know it. (He did not have a mirror). The other chickens knew it. They could tell by looking at him. They actually pecked at a spot on his bill and made a small hole in it. Guess how he got his name? Yes. He had a hole in his bill. Hole-bill acted like a chicken but he was no more a

chicken than you or I are. He was a duck. God had made him a duck. Nothing can change what God does unless God allows it.

If you have accepted Christ as your Savior, you have been “born again”, you have been “saved”, you have been made alive in your spirit with the Holy Spirit. You have eternal life. Nowhere did Jesus say you have “temporary” life. You have eternal life and you have been made a saint. At the moment you were saved you became no longer a sinner. You became a saint. You may say “I don’t feel like a saint”. “I don’t act like a saint”. Well, you are just as much a saint as Hole-Bill was a duck. You are no more a sinner than Hole-Bill was a chicken. “Why do I act like a sinner?” you may ask. Possibly because you think you are a sinner and that is the only way you know to act. Hole-Bill acted like a chicken because he thought he was a chicken. He grew up acting like a chicken. That is all he ever knew. That is all he ever saw modeled for him by his adoptive parent, the chicken. All the other chickens around him acted like chickens too. Before you were saved, you were a sinner. You lived the life of a sinner. Perhaps everyone around you were sinners. That is the only life you knew. That is the only behavior you knew. When you were made a new creature in your spirit, God gave you Himself to live with you. He did not erase your memories. He did not erase the learned behavior you had acquired over the years of living as a sinner. He gave you Himself in the form of His Son to live with you, to be in you, to guide you and empower you. You may not believe this. You may say you believe this but you may not really believe it. What would you have done differently today if Jesus had been standing beside you? Anything? Was He not in you? Did you ask Him for advice before you did what you did (if in fact you did behave inappropriately)?

Hole-Bill had webbed feet. He was a duck. Hole-Bill had a water-proof set of feathers. He was a duck. But Hole-Bill never went to the water hole. He did not know that God had given him every thing he needed to live as a duck. He did not know that God had given him the ability to float and swim with his set of feathers and webbed feet. Perhaps many of us do not know or forget we are saints because the god of this age, Satan, has blinded our minds to the truth and we have not been able to believe what we are. We do not believe that we have been made holy by what Christ did. He lives within us. He cannot sin. That part of us that is part of Him, our spirit, cannot sin either. We don’t believe that. When we operate “in the flesh” according to the learned behavior and sin with our physical body, the enemy accuses us with “See, you are a sinner, you are not a child of God”. Internally, our spirit is sad. Our spirit is grieved. Why? Because in our spirit, we know what we did was wrong. Our spirit did not agree with what we did. This proves that it was not really the new creation that sinned; it was the flesh that sinned. Paul experienced this and described it in Roman 7:15-25

*I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature[flesh]. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do-- this I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God-- through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in the sinful nature [flesh] a slave to the law of sin. (NIV)*

Paul is saying that he struggled with sin in his flesh, that part of him that had not been redeemed and made holy. He says that although he knows what is right and wants to do what is right, he does wrong. Do you feel that way? Did that mean that Paul was not a saint? Did

that mean that Paul was a sinner? Did that mean that God would in some way reject Paul because he sinned? No, of course not. Paul was still Paul. He was still the saint God had made him. He had not changed. He could not change. Only God can change people. On the other hand, does that mean that Paul could simply say "It was not me that sinned, it was my flesh"? No! We have a responsibility to make sure that our flesh is brought into line with what God has told us to do. This IS NOT accomplished by learning laws and rules. Laws and rules can only be enforced by the flesh. The flesh cannot bring the flesh into obedience with God's requirements. The nation of Israel proved this. For fifteen hundred years, they had the Ten Commandments and the Law of God. Did they succeed? No. Can we succeed using rules and laws? No. How do we succeed? By living "in the Spirit". When we try to be obedient by the power of our own strength, the flesh, we fail because our flesh is too weak. It is weak because in our flesh are thoughts that have been contaminated by our old learned habits and beliefs. The flesh is opposed to things of the Spirit. We must get our orders from the Spirit as well as the strength to obey these orders. Remember, Jesus lives within us. He overcame the flesh when He lived on earth. He will lead us and guide us and overcome the flesh we live in. We must walk by His Spirit and not the flesh and we will not carry out the desires of the flesh. Paul describes this victory over his flesh in Romans 8:1-13 -

*Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature[flesh], God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man, in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature[flesh] but according to the Spirit. Those who live according to the sinful nature[flesh] have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; the sinful mind [mind of the flesh] is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature [flesh] cannot please God. You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature [flesh] but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness. And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you. Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation-- but it is not to the sinful nature[flesh], to live according to it. For if you live according to the sinful nature[flesh], you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live,(NIV)*

It is the Spirit of Christ that will set us free. The Law that God gave to Israel could only operate using human effort. It was weak because the flesh is weak and prone to sin. What God did in Christ was give us His Spirit with His power so that the flesh can be brought into obedience to God.

Does that mean we will not sin in our flesh? We have the power to not sin but if we do sin, God provided the cure in 1 John 1:9

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all righteousness.(NIV)*

No one born of God can sin in his spirit, however. It is only with the flesh that we sin.

*1 John 3:9 No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God. (NIV)*

What happens if one continues to sin in the flesh. Paul addresses that in Romans 7. He says if we live according to our flesh or sinful nature, we will die. Does this mean spiritual death? No. It means physical death. Sin is a killer. All sinful behavior leads to death. Anger, worry, drugs, alcohol, hatred, sexual immorality, sensuality(absence of restraint), strife, bitterness, and all the deeds of the flesh listed in Galatians 5:19-20 will lead to death. We can never die again spiritually if we are born again. Jesus said we have eternal life, not temporary life.

How do we live by the Spirit? First we must believe the truth of what God has done and what His Word tells us concerning this. In *The Handbook for Spiritual Warfare*, page 71, Dr. Ed Murphy writes regarding Romans 8:

This is why Paul insists that everything we need to overcome the evil within (the flesh), the evil without (the world), and the evil from above (evil supernaturalism) is ours in union with our Lord (Ephesians 1:3-2:10; 3:14-21; Col. 1:13-3:4) through the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:1-17a). He also insists, however, that nothing is automatic or magical. If a believer does not know who he is in Christ and the Spirit and what Christ is to him as He indwells by His Spirit, that believer will be defeated most of his Christian life.

Our acceptance before God has nothing to do with our performance as Christians. It has nothing to do with the stage of victory over the flesh we are now in. It has only to do with being "in Christ Jesus". All that needs to be done to bring us to God has already been done. No personal merit brings us to God. No personal demerit can keep us from God. If we are in Christ, we are "accepted in the beloved." For us there is no condemnation.

Dr. Murphy goes on to state the "no condemnation" in Romans 8:1, is not referring to the guilt and penalty of sin. It is referring to sin's power. The power of sin is no match for the power of the Spirit. The penalty for sin has already been paid for and Paul has dealt with this in the previous chapters of Romans.

On page 70, Dr. Murphy states,:

Jesus is not only my Savior and Lord, He is my life. The Holy Spirit not only indwells me to seal me until the day of redemption, but He also fills me with the person of God's Son. Through His gifts He empowers me for holy living and effective ministry. While many stress the one and ignore the other, the normal Christian life is both holy living and power in ministry. Both come from the indwelling Spirit of God's dear Son (Gal. 4:6).

This condition is truly security, acceptance, and significance. Eternal life is now. We do not have to wait till we die or are raptured. We fail to experience what God has made available to us because either we do not know or we do not believe it. Perhaps if we look in detail at what this eternal life is we can understand better and thus be able to believe what God has done for us.

## **IV. Eternal Life is Available Only Through Christ**

### **A. Only God's Work Lasts Forever**

Modern man has accomplished many great feats. He is able to build great and towering buildings. He is able to build bridges across great bodies of water. He is able to build machines that transport people and things over great distances in a short period of time. As you look around at what man has done, however, you will see that everything man makes is temporary. To be used, constant maintenance is required. Eventually, even constant maintenance cannot keep what man has made in a proper condition to be used. Great buildings deteriorate and fall if they are not replaced. Trains wreck. Cars wear out. Planes crash. Nothing that man makes is totally dependable. Only that which God makes is everlasting.

If man could attain in some way a new life, an eternal life of his own works that would be a mighty accomplishment. Even so if he could do this, it would not be permanent. Nothing that man accomplishes is permanent. Only that which God does will last forever.

Perhaps one lie that the enemy uses against us is that in some way, we have to earn eternal life. If we believe that, we also know that everything we have ever done is neither perfect, permanent nor even complete. So we see ourselves as saved incompletely and temporarily because it is the work of ourselves. This lie from Satan is not true. Ephesians 2:8 says that our salvation is a GIFT from God, NOT a result of our WORKS. God's work and gifts are perfect. God's gift of salvation is perfect and permanent. It comes through what Jesus Christ did and what God did in raising Him from the dead. If our salvation was from what we did or do, then we can never feel secure. Because it is from God, however, we can feel secure.

How do we know that our salvation comes from God through Christ? Acts 4:12 tells us that there is salvation in no one else. What must we do to be saved? We must believe (Acts 16:31). How do we believe? By faith, we declare it to be so. Those who believe are saved. The saved are set free from the wrath of God and experience eternal life (Romans 5:9). In Romans 1:18, Paul tells us that the wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness. Jesus tells us in John 16:33 that in the world we will have trouble, but in Him we will have peace.

Because this salvation is through Christ, it is permanent. No one can snatch us out of the hand of Jesus (John 10:27-28). Jesus overcame the world (John 16:33), the flesh (John 17:2), and the devil (John 14:30, Hebrews 2:14). When we trust Jesus, we are SECURE! Jesus calmed the sea. He had authority over the winds and storm. Jesus told Peter where to cast the net. He could call the fish and they obeyed. He told Satan to leave and Satan left. Jesus has complete control over all things. All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to him (Matthew 28:18). What God does through Jesus is perfect. What man does is imperfect. Trust Him. Don't trust yourself or anyone else. You will never find security in what you do.

## **B. Christ Came Because God Promised He would Come**

Another lie the enemy uses to blind us to the truth of the gospel is "Jesus was just another good man, a prophet like all the other prophets. Well maybe he was greater than all the other prophets, but he was still just a prophet." Notice the subtlety of this lie. It is acknowledging that Jesus is special and deserves honor but it denies the deity of Christ. It denies that he is the Son of God. It undermines and attempts to take away from our knowledge of the character of God. It disparages His character. (Satan's temptations, beginning with the temptation of Eve, always attempt to take away from the greatness of God's character.) The effectiveness of this lie, if we were to believe it, is that we would be trusting in a mere man to save us. We all know from our own experience that when we trust any man or woman, we may be disappointed.

The person may fail to do what we trusted he or she to do, not of his or her own fault, but through circumstances that he or she could not control.

Jesus was not a mere man. He was the Son of God. He was born of a woman but conceived of the Holy Spirit. Jesus was God's promise to the world. God had promised through the prophets of Israel that He would send Jesus. In Isaiah 59, God said He would bring salvation by "His own arm" and would come like a rushing stream. He promised a redeemer would come to Zion and her children.

Isaiah 59:16-21 [The LORD] saw that there was no one, he was appalled that there was no one to intervene; so his own arm worked salvation for him, and his own righteousness sustained him. He put on righteousness as his breastplate, and the helmet of salvation on his head; he put on the garments of vengeance and wrapped himself in zeal as in a cloak. According to what they have done, so will he repay wrath to his enemies and retribution to his foes; he will repay the islands their due. From the west, men will fear the name of the LORD, and from the rising of the sun, they will revere his glory. For he will come like a pent-up flood that the breath of the LORD drives along. "The Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who repent of their sins," declares the LORD. "As for me, this is my covenant with them," says the LORD. "My Spirit, who is on you, and my words that I have put in your mouth will not depart from your mouth, or from the mouths of your children, or from the mouths of their descendants from this time on and forever," says the LORD. (NIV)

In Isaiah 42:5-7, He promised to send Jesus as a covenant to the people. He would send Him as a light for the Gentiles, to open blind eyes, to set captives free.

*This is what God the LORD says-- he who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and all that comes out of it, who gives breath to its people, and life to those who walk on it: "I, the LORD, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles, to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness. "I am the LORD; that is my name! I will not give my glory to another or my praise to idols.(NIV)*

The Lord promised also to send Jesus in Isaiah 61:1-2:

*The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn,(NIV)*

### **C. Jesus Came as Promised to Set the Captives Free**

In Luke 14:16-20, we find in the first recorded teaching of Jesus from the synagogue at Nazareth, Jesus acknowledged that He was the one that God had promised through the prophet Isaiah:

*He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read. The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant*

and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him, and he began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." (NIV)

"Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing". Jesus was declaring himself to be One Who God promised to send to save the world, to make a new covenant with the people He had created in His image and likeness.

The prophet Jeremiah had written of the new covenant in Jeremiah 31:31-34:

*"The time is coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them," declares the LORD. "This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the LORD. "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."(NIV)*

At the last supper the night before Jesus was crucified, He told his disciples that his blood was the new covenant God had promised by the prophet Jeremiah. The Gospel of Matthew says-

*While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. Matt 26:26-28 (NIV)*

The Apostle Paul speaks of Jesus words in 1 Corinthians 11:23b-25-

*The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."(NIV)*

The writer of Hebrews (See Heb. 9:14-15) also confirms that Jesus was the mediator of the new covenant of God.

Jesus came because God promised He would come. Jesus is the one God promised would defeat the enemy, Satan, and take back the kingdom that Adam had allowed Satan to take from him. Jesus is the author and perfecter of our salvation, the giver of eternal life. He is the one God promised, the Messiah, the Savior. We know this because Jesus Himself said so, The Holy Spirit says so, and God confirmed He was the One when He, God, raised Jesus from the dead and seated Him with Himself. We can know that when we trust in Jesus, we are trusting in someone who is capable and able to do all that we need Him to do. He is the Son of God. All authority in heaven and earth have been given to Him. (Matt. 28:18). He reigns now and He will reign forever. We reign with Him. In Him we find eternal life and the security, acceptance, and significance that we need. We were made to be secure, accepted, and significant by God and only through His Son will we ever completely have these needs met.

## **V. Eternal Life is Given By Jesus and is the Work of the Holy Spirit**



If someone gave you a gift, what are the conditions that apply to your receiving and keeping that gift? Do you have to continually perform or do something in order to keep that gift? Can something given to you be legally taken away? If it can, it was never given. It was only loaned conditionally. God never says that the gift of eternal life is a loan. He never says we have to pay anything for it. We receive eternal life by believing. God even gives us the faith to believe when we ask. There is no work involved on our part when we receive eternal life.

*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith-- and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God--not by works, so that no one can boast. - Ephesians 2:8-9*

John, who referred to himself as “the disciple whom Jesus loved”, tells us that those who receive eternal life by believing in His name are not born by a human decision but by God.

*Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God-- children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. - John 1:12-13 (NIV)*

In John 3:5-6, Jesus said, , *"I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. (NIV)*

In John 6:63, Jesus also said- *The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. (NIV)*

In John 5:19-21, regarding eternal life-

*Jesus gave them this answer: "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, to your amazement he will show him even greater things than these. For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. (NIV)*

Eternal life is a gift from God. It comes not from human effort or human decision. This is not to say that a person must not choose to accept. He must. But once the decision to trust and believe God is made, the Holy Spirit does all the work.

Now the enemy may come to you and accuse you with something like, “What a terrible person you are! How can you do that or think like that and call yourself a Christian? You have made God angry. You have disappointed God. You might as well quit trying. There is no chance that you can please God now.” If you think eternal life is something you have to earn, then you may believe these lies. But if you believe what the word of God says, that eternal life is a gift from God and not something you have earned, you will not fall victim to Satan’s attempt to lead you away from experiencing the unconditional love of God.

The truth is this- You can never disappoint God. Why? Because God knows everything you are going to do before you do it. God is all-knowing. He knows everything that is past, everything that is happening now, and everything that will happen in the future. How can He be disappointed if He knew what would happen before hand? When you were dead in sin He loved you and raised you up giving you eternal life. He knew everything you had done and still Christ loved you and died for you. Guess what else? He knew everything you will do before you die, every sin great and small that you will do, and still He died for you. Is not that amazing love? Does that not take the pressure off to have to live up to some standard? Does that not make you want to be obedient, though? Does this fact not give you inner strength to withstand the enemy’s accusations and temptations? Does this fact not set you free?

The songwriter, Graham Kendrick, in the song “Amazing Love”, wrote-

My Lord what love is this that pays so dearly  
That I the guilty one may go free  
Amazing love, O what sacrifice the Son of God given for me  
My debt He pays and my death He dies that I might live

Never doubt that eternal life is given by Jesus. It is the work of the Holy Spirit. Nothing can undo what God has declared to be eternal. Nothing shall ever separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing (Romans 8:38-39).

## **VI. Eternal Life Means We Are Not Only Forgiven But Also Made Alive**

### **A. A New Creation in Christ**

Perhaps the greatest truth that Satan hides from many believers is the truth that have a new life in Christ. They are actually made new creatures.

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!  
2 Cor 5:17(NIV)*

God has placed His Spirit within you. His Spirit and your spirit are one spirit (Corinthians 6:17). You are new. When you were baptized into Christ by the Holy Spirit the instant you first believed, your old self, the spirit within you that followed the ways of the world was crucified with Christ. You are no longer a slave to sin but now a slave of righteousness. You have been raised with Jesus to live a new life empowered by His Holy Spirit within you. Instead of desiring to sin, you now desire to do that which is pleasing to God. You may be side tracked by the world, the flesh, and the devil sometimes from doing so but still you desire to do so. The fact that you are at this Bible Study is proof that you desire to not sin.

Being a slave of righteousness does not mean you must struggle to do righteous deeds. It means that you desire and are empowered by God and compelled of your own choosing to do righteous deeds. We desire to do righteous things now just as much as we desired to sin prior to coming to Christ. (See Romans 6:2-18)

Why does Satan not want us to know what divine power God has given us when He gave us His Spirit? He knows that He is no match for the Spirit of God within each believer. The Person in you, the Holy Spirit, is greater than Satan (1 John 4:4). If you ever fully comprehend the surpassing greatness of God's power within you, much damage will be done to Satan's kingdom of darkness. Truly you will proclaim the gospel, make disciples, and set captives free. Those you set free will set others free and those set free will free others. It will never end until Christ returns and sets up His kingdom on earth. We will reign with Him then also. (See Revelations 20:4-6 for this fact of significance?).

It has been said that Christians are the greatest reasons that people are saved. Also, Christians are the greatest reason people are not saved. Nothing draws people of the lost world to Christ as much as a former sinner made a saint living a transformed, godly, holy life. People of the world notice things like this. They recognize the miracle. Likewise, nothing turns

a non-believer from desiring to come to Christ as much as a believer living life in sin. This life may not be what the believer would call sin. It may be a life of bitterness, misery, and failing to love his or her neighbors. Satan knows this. He does not want Christians to lead a normal Christian life. He wants Christians to lead abnormal Christian lives, lives of sin. How can he accomplish this? He knows that we have the power to live godly, holy, normal lives. The only way to prevent our using that power is to blind us from the truth that we do have it. Just like the duck that thought he was a chicken, we were trained a certain way and never experience anything else. We can never experience a normal Christian life until we believe that we have everything we need to experience it. Just like the soldiers sitting on the pitch pine log trying to start a fire, Satan does not want us to know what we have in our possession available for us against him. If we do, he knows he will be defeated in our lives every day.

The enemy is clever. He knows that we are not so gullible that we would believe that Jesus died for nothing. So he is content to let us believe that we are forgiven of our sins and one day we will be in heaven and will no longer sin. Then we will enjoy an abundant life, a life of peace and joy. So we are blinded from the fact that we have been raised with Christ and given a new life empowered by God. I often think of the cross as having two sides. On one side there is death. Jesus had to die. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins. It was at the cross that Jesus' blood was poured out for the forgiveness of sins. On the other side there is the resurrection. This is the victorious side. This is the side in which God proclaimed Jesus to be His Son by raising Him from the dead. It is on this side that victory is found. It is the fact that Jesus has risen and is sitting at the right hand of God that we can rejoice. It is the fact that we have been raised with Him that we can rejoice and experience the power of His Spirit within us. God provided a blood sacrifice for the Israelites to atone for their sins but it was not sufficient until Christ came. Likewise, being forgiven of our sins does not give us new life. It just removes the guilt of our sins. It is the resurrection that gives us power from sin. Because we are resurrected, we have new life.

## **B. Justified and Made Alive**

The eternal life that is provided through Christ includes two things: (1) justification, and (2) new life. Justification means that we as believers are acquitted of our sins because Jesus paid the price for all the sins of the world when He died (1 John 2:2). Justification and forgiveness are not the same. Forgiveness must be asked for and there are conditions given for us to receive forgiveness. Both forgiveness and justification are made possible because of the fact that Jesus paid the price for all the sins of the world. Attainment of eternal life does not require us to be forgiven of all our sins. The debt of our sin was paid by Christ and God accepts this payment for our sins. There is no sin that Jesus did not pay for. Individual forgiveness for each of our sins is important because unconfessed sin gives the enemy access into our life. A failure to obtain forgiveness, however, does not keep us from receiving eternal life. Nor does it keep us from spending eternity with God. If a believer should die without confessing a sin that occurred during the last five minutes of life, he or she would not be denied access to heaven. This is because the sin has been paid for and the believer's right to heaven is not based on what he does but on what he is- a child of God born of the Holy Spirit. Our access to eternity with God is based on our justification, not our being forgiven (although when we are justified, God looks at us as if we were forgiven.)

Justification is a state which every believer attains the instant he is saved. It is not based on what the believer does. Because the believer has faith, he or she is justified and considered holy and righteous because of what Jesus did. We are "in Christ" and because Christ is holy and righteous, God looks on us as being holy and righteous. We are justified with Christ because of His blood. Nothing can take away our justification except that Christ would loose his holiness and righteousness and that is not possible. Therefore, nothing can take what we

have in Christ. We are forever justified, both for past sins and any future sins we would commit "in the flesh".

Justification removes the guilt of sin. My mother used to pray for the "sick" and "sin-sick". The guilt of sin is like a sickness. It is a sickness that will lead to death unless it is cured. God cannot tolerate sin. He will separate the "sin-sick" from Himself just as he separated Adam and Eve from His presence after they sinned. The condition of "sin-sickness" or guilt of sin results in spiritual death (separation from God).

This is the status of all of us when we were "dead in our sins" (Eph. 2:1). In order to raise us to life, God had to do two things. He had to cure the disease that killed us. He also had to give us life. If it were possible to raise a person physically dead to life today, unless the disease that killed him was removed, he would simply die again after he was raised. We were justified by the blood of Christ (Romans 5:9). The disease of sin was cured. We are now dead to sin. It can not kill us because we have been justified. Jesus died to sin one time and we died with Him when we were baptized into Christ. We are now to consider ourselves dead to sin and alive to God. Sin is not our master (Rom. 6:3, 10, 11, 14).

Curing a disease by removing all the germs from a body would not give that body life. Likewise, removing the guilt of sin in our lives by justification would not bring us back from the dead. We would just be justified dead people. God took care of the second aspect of eternal life. God not only justified us when we came to Christ, He also raised us when He raised Christ from the dead. Because Christ lives in us and at the right hand of God, we also live. We were reconciled to God (justified) by the death of Jesus and we are saved (from sinning) by His life being lived out within us.

*Romans 5:9-11 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation. (NIV)*

Adam sinned, died and the whole world was condemned to a life of sin. Jesus, the Son of God, came to earth, did not sin, but was crucified for our sins and the sins of the whole world. Through Him we are justified and made alive. There is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1).

### **C. The Symbolism of the Lord's Supper - Forgiven and Made Alive**

Jesus gave us a ceremony to commemorate what He did at the last Passover supper just before He was crucified. It is recorded in Matthew 26:26-28 as follows:

*While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. (NIV)*

The cup of wine represents forgiveness. It is because Jesus paid the price of all sin that we can ask God and He will grant forgiveness. It is also because of the blood of Christ that we are justified. Because the penalty for our sin was taken by Christ, we are acquitted when we believe in Him. We are found "not guilty" by God. John the Revelator refers to us having been washed our robes in the blood of the Lamb (Revelation 7:14).

The bread refers to the body of Jesus. "Take and eat" he tells us. How do we do that. When we are given eternal life, the person of Christ in the form of the Holy Spirit comes to live within us. Just as we take food into our body to maintain our strength, Christ in us, the hope of glory, allows us to do all things necessary for the kingdom of God. It is not ourselves. It is Christ in us that does what God desires and not we ourselves. Can we live a holy life in our own strength? No. If it were possible, Christ would not have had to come and die. Can we live a holy life being led by Christ in the form of the Holy Spirit within us. Definitely.

When God brought the Israelites out of Egypt, they had two important needs that needed to be supplied in order for them to be successful in their journey to the Promised Land. God provided for both these needs with a Passover lamb. First of all, the Lord was going to pass through Egypt and kill the first born of each family unless the blood of a lamb was applied to door posts of the home. Second, there was a long hard journey to travel from Egypt to the promised land, especially during the first few days when God knew Egypt would pursue the escaping Israelites. It was important that the Israelites not be weakened by hunger.

John the Baptist called to the crowd when Jesus approached him, "Behold the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Jesus is our Passover Lamb. He was crucified at the feast of the Passover. Just as the blood of the lamb was put on the door posts of the houses of Israel and God "passed over" and did not destroy the first born man and beast (Exodus 12), the blood of Jesus protects us from the wrath of God because of sin. The blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin (1 John 7, Romans 5:9-10). Not only does the blood of Christ save us from eternal death and the wrath of God but the body of Christ, His person within us in the form of the Holy Spirit gives us strength to live a holy life just as the body of the Passover lamb gave the Israelites strength to march through the desert toward the Red Sea.

In Exodus 12, the Israelites were told to pick a lamb the proper size, to share with another family if necessary. They were to use all of the lamb, placing the blood of the lamb on the door posts and eating all the flesh of the lamb. They were not to leave any of the lamb till morning. When we receive eternal life, we receive all of Christ. We do not receive part. We do not have to earn part. We have all of Him. His blood washes away our sin and because His Spirit lives within us, we have all the divine power we need pertaining to life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3). We need to believe this and allow Him to work through us.

The words of Jesus in John 4 and 6 reveal that He was going to provide forgiveness by His blood and give life through His spirit.

*John 4:14 but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."*

*John 6:47-48 I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life. I am the bread of life.*

*John 6:51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."*

*John 6:53-58 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. **For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him.** Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your forefathers ate manna and died, but he who feeds on this bread will live forever." (NIV)*

Truly, the blood of Christ is real drink which leads to eternal life. Salvation requires the forgiveness of sin. Man cannot save himself. In the eyes of God, no other sacrifice than Christ Himself is sufficient to take away our sins. Except through Christ, we cannot find the refreshing peace and tranquillity of being forgiven. This is true drink.

Truly the body of Christ is real food. Try as hard as we might, we cannot overcome the temptations of the world, the flesh and the devil without Him. We do not have the strength. But with Him, we are more than conquerors (Romans 8:37). Greater is He Who is in us than he who is in the world (1 John 4:4). We are strengthened, not by food, but by real food, Him within us guiding and directing our life.

What do we have in Christ? Real food and real drink. Strength to live holy lives. Forgiveness of sins. What reminds us of it? The Lord's Supper. Wine is for His blood. Bread is for His body. Blood represents forgiveness. His body represents strength.

Almost all believers will tell you that they believe Jesus came to provide forgiveness for our sins. Others may acknowledge it but do not truly believe that He also came to set the captives free. Remember, the enemy is desirous that we only see forgiveness in Christ. He does not want us to the power of Christ in us. The first half of the gospel is this - Jesus came to die for our sins. The second half of the gospel is this - Jesus came that we may have life, eternal, powerful, overcoming, abiding, and abundant life. Let's believe all the gospel, not just half. Let us move as believers to the resurrection side of the cross. Let us not stay on the death side of the cross because we are no longer dead. Christ is no longer dead. He is alive and we are alive with Him. Let us be thankful for what He did. Let us never forget the suffering He went through but let us rejoice in the fact that He has been raised by God and declared the Son of God with power and we have been raised with Him. Let us no longer struggle under the whip of the lying taskmaster who has deceived us into believing that we have to die or be raptured to experience the peace and abundant life that Jesus promised. To not take advantage of what Christ purchased for us is a shame. He came to set the captives free so we help set others free and make disciples. To stand before Jesus one day and say, "Lord, I did not know that you gave me all that to enable me do what you prepared for me to do" is possibly just one step removed from an unbeliever standing before God and saying, "I did not know Jesus died for me". Believe all the gospel, not just half. Jesus came to provide forgiveness for our sins AND to empower us with a new life. Had He just died for our sins, Satan would not have been defeated. Sin would have been paid for but there would be no one to rule. Jesus died and was raised. The tomb is empty and Christ sits at the right hand of God. Praise the Lord and spread the word. You are a new creature in Christ created to do good works which God has prepared for you to do. You are a part of the family of God. You are secure, accepted, and significant in Christ. Act like it! Enjoy it! Rest and abide in this truth. He will take care of everything else. You will bear much fruit.

#### **D. The Apostle Paul's Model Prayers for Revelation of Truth**

Paul prayed the following two prayers for the Ephesians. Study especially the underlined portions. Paul knew that the first century believers struggled with the same truth (or lack of truth) that we struggle with today. We should pray the same prayers for each other.

*For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him*

*from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way. Eph 1:15-23 (NIV)*

*For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name.*

*I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge-- that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen. Eph 3:14-21 (NIV)*

## Session 4

# Putting It All Together

## I. Believe the Truth- Not the Lie

### **A. Man was created to rule the earth but Adam lost it.**

God made man to be His representative on the earth. The Hebrew word for man is *adam*. God created the man, Adam, to rule the earth as God intended. He was to rule over the earth and subdue it. Man was created in God's image. Man was created to be secure. He had all he needed for food. Man was accepted. God blessed him. Man was significant. Adam, the first man, was God's representative on earth. He was created in the image and likeness of God. The first man, Adam, was alive spiritually and communed with God. God spoke with him.

### **B. Satan deceived God's appointed and became ruler of the earth.**

The enemy, Satan, stole the rule that God gave to Adam by deceiving the woman God gave to Adam. Satan became the ruler of the world.

### **C. Through His Son, Jesus Christ, God has restored the rule that Satan stole.**

God intended for man to rule the earth, even if He had to become man himself and restore the rule Satan stole. God came in the form of man, Jesus Christ, and defeated Satan. By His death He rendered Satan powerless (Hebrews 2:14). His purpose in coming was to destroy the works of Satan (1 John 3:8). When Jesus was crucified, the ruler of this world was driven out (John 12:31). All authority in heaven and on earth has now been given to the risen Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18). As disciples of Christ, we share in that authority in order to make more disciples and set captives free. Jesus Christ is now doing through us what God intended Adam to do. He is still destroying the works of Satan through us. We are to subdue the earth. We are taking back what the thief, Satan, stole. As we reach out to a hurting and lost world of humanity, Christ is seen as He lives in us. He is using us to finish what He started. The fruit is only produced in the branches. We are the branches. The vine itself does not produce fruit. The vine gives life to the branches and the fruit is produced in the branches. The fruit we bear is the work of Christ.

Before you accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior, you were dead spiritually. When you accepted Him as your Lord and Savior, your spirit and the Holy Spirit became one. He quickened or made alive your spirit with His spirit. This is how Jesus is continuing His work on earth. Greater things will you do because He lives within you. If you have not accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior, do so now. Ask Him to make you alive and reveal Himself to you. He can do so. When Jesus died, He satisfied the sin debt that was against you. Not only are you now justified, but you are now made alive spiritually. You are a new creature in Christ by faith and not because of anything you have done. Your purpose in life is to hear God's voice and do what He has prepared for you to do. If you are not experiencing the power of God within your life, ask Him to reveal the truth to you, any truth that you do not accept. Renounce any false teaching that you have believed. Even though you do not know what that teaching is, God knows. Ask Him to reveal the deception in your life.

### **D. Satan is defeated and the only power he has is in the lie.**



The day you were born into this world in your physical body, you were born into a world of trouble. Jesus said that in the world we would have trouble, but in Him we would have peace. He has overcome the world (John 16:33). The day you were born again spiritually, you were born into a spiritual world of conflict. Jesus has been victorious over Satan but those who do not know Christ are still in chains and darkness. The prison door is open but they do not know the way out. Just as the angel led Peter out of the prison in Acts 12, these people need someone to lead them out. The chains have fallen off already but the people do not know it. The gates will swing open as you lead the people out. Satan, the god of this age, knows this. His only hope is to have you believe that he has not been defeated, that you are not a new creature, and that the Holy Spirit does not dwell within you and that you do not have the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit. He would have you believe that those in darkness, in prison, in chains of sin cannot be set free and that you of all people are not worthy to be used, are not able to be used, and cannot be used by Jesus. Satan is a liar. This is a lie. As long as a person believes a lie, he or she will behave according to that lie.

I grew up in a rural area of North Carolina. The house I was born in and raised in was situated about one hundred yards from the highway in a valley. Approximately 400 yards south of the driveway leading to my home, there was a gigantic oak tree at the top of a hill. In the afternoon when the sun was going down, the shadow would be on the side of the tree facing the driveway. At approximately eight to ten feet high, the tree had some very large scars and knots where limbs had been cut off to keep them from growing over the highway. Just below these knots, which looked like a head, there were some limbs that had started growing down that resembled giant arms. For some reason (perhaps it was because of the King Kong movies that I had heard of though never seen), I was terrified of gorillas. When riding my bicycle late in the afternoon I would look at the tree and as I stared at it I was convinced it was a gorilla. The hair on my neck would stand up and I would pedal to the house as fast as I could. At times, I would not ride out to the highway where the tree could be seen unless someone was with me. When I went to town or church with my parents as we rode by the tree, I would observe it intently from the safety of my parent's car. It was obviously a tree. It looked like a gorilla from a distance but when we came up directly in front of it, I could plainly see that it was a tree. Later, however, when I was alone riding my bike 400 yards away in our driveway, I became convinced again that it was a gorilla. One day I told my mama, "Mama, there is a gorilla at the top of the hill. She walked out to the highway with me and when I pointed it out to her she said, "It's not a gorilla, it's a tree!"

I do not remember when I stopped believing that the tree was a gorilla. Eventually, however, I did believe the truth and I was no longer fearful of the tree. Eventually my feelings reflected the truth. The tree was a tree. It was not a gorilla. It could not move. It could not harm me. It was planted right where God had placed it. It had no teeth. It had no great muscular strength with which to bend steel bars and break into houses. It was a tree. It could not even move except when the wind moved its branches. It was a tree and not a gorilla. As long as I believed the tree was a gorilla, however, the hair on the back of my neck would stand up and I would "fly" back to the house on my bicycle and not go back out to the road that day. When I finally believed the truth, I could ride my bicycle where I wanted to without fear. Until I believed the truth, that the tree was a tree, I was limited in what I could do without fear.

#### **E. In Christ, every believer has authority over Satan**

When we finally believe the truth - that Satan is defeated, that we have authority over Him in Christ, that we are new creations of God created to do that which He has prepared for us to do, that He has empowered us with His Spirit within us, that He is with us always, and that we are now seated with Him and are now abiding with Him - the kingdom of darkness being sustained

by the lies of Satan will fall. Until we believe the truth, we will act as our enemy wants us to act. We will not take advantage of all that Jesus has done for us. This will not negate what He has done but it will make what He has done less effective in our lives.

Interestingly, I never saw the tree as a gorilla in the morning because the light from the sun was shining on it and I could clearly see it was a tree. Likewise, Jesus is the light of the world and he gives light to every person in the world (John 1:9). Through the light Jesus gives us, we can see the truth. He gives us his word. He tells us in John 8:31-32 that if we abide in His word, we will know the truth and the truth will set us free.

Satan has been defeated. The only weapon he has remaining is the lie. But a lie is a powerful weapon if it is believed. The gorilla I saw was as powerful in my mind as the King Kong that destroyed Hong Kong and I acted accordingly. If I believe Satan rules the world, I will obey him. If I believe Jesus rules the world, I will obey Him. If I believe that the two are engaged in a huge cosmic struggle I will probably try to hide and not to get involved.

Satan is not the ruler of this world. He has control over certain people. Actually, he has control over all of us to the extent that we do not believe the truth. He has no authority, however. He only has control. How can this be? Let's suppose a bank robber goes into a bank to rob the bank. Does he have any authority? Of course not. Supposed he pulls out a .357 revolver and shoves it in the teller's face. Do you think he has control over the teller? Of course he does, if the teller knows what a handgun is. Still he has no authority. The money does not belong to the bank robber and he has no authority to take it.

Let's give the bank robber a name. His name is Satan. Jesus said he was a thief and a liar. If he is a liar, he must lie. The lie that he has today is in his hand. The handgun is not really a .357 revolver. It is a plastic replica of a .357! Does that matter to the teller if he or she thinks the gun is real? No. As long as the teller believes the gun is real, he or she will hand over the money. If the teller knew the truth, that the gun was a harmless toy, would the money be handed over? Probably not. What could prevent Satan from having control at the bank? The truth. Where do we get the truth? From the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth. From the word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit. The truth is what sets one free. The lie is what keeps one in bondage. Know the truth by remaining in what God has told us. We are now in Christ, secure, accepted, and significant. He will provide for all our needs. He is with us always. We can do all things in Christ Who strengthens us. Jesus said if we abide in His word, we will know the truth and the truth will set us free (John 8:32). Remain in his word, in the truths that He tells us that He has done and will do.

The teller is an unsaved person or struggling believer. The money being handed over to the bank robber, Satan, is that person's life. It consists of all the talents, skills, and resources that God has given that person. Instead of being used for God's purposes, that person has been deceived into using them for other purposes, to serve self or Satan.

You are the one that Jesus has intended to stop the thief. You are a believer. As a believer, you have the badge of Jesus Christ. You are an undercover officer that just happens to be in the bank making a deposit. As an enforcer of Jesus Christ, you not only have the badge of Christ representing the authority of Christ, but you also have a really powerful weapon to use on the robber, Satan. It is a real gun. It is like a 9 millimeter pistol loaded with hollow points. It will blow Satan away. It is the word of God, the Holy Bible. It is powerful. It will destroy the power of the robber. He is afraid of it and he will always flee when you show it to him. His lies cannot compete with the word of God because the word of God is truth. The truth will set the teller free.

## **II. The Armor of God**

When Jesus ascended to heaven after the resurrection, He did not leave us alone nor did He leave us unprotected.

He left us protection against the lies of Satan and the kingdom of darkness. Paul described this protection in Ephesians 6:10-18 -

*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. 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. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.(NIV)*

We are to be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. How can we be strong apart from the Lord? How can we do anything apart from the Lord? We can't. The Lord is the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 3:18). He is with us. He is not just someone we will one day see. He is not someone watching from heaven. He is with us and in us. It is He Who makes us new. It is He that is in us that gives us our present and our future. He never leaves us nor does He forsake us. He is with us always, even to the end of the earth. Jesus told us that it was better for us that He go away (John 16:7), because if He did not go away, the Holy Spirit would not come. Jesus could not do all that is being done today by the church if He was still walking on this earth in a physical body. He could not reach all the people being reached today by those who are His disciples. He could not heal all those that are being healed today by Him if He were limited to one body. You are one of the many bodies Christ is using today. You are significant. Perhaps Christ wants to use you more. All that is required is faith, faith to believe the truth. If you need faith, just ask God to give you faith. He will not withhold from His children anything that we need. It is the Holy Spirit that gives us strength and power. Be strong.

Being strong in the Lord is like putting on armor. Our battle is not against physical enemies. Our battle is against spiritual enemies. We use spiritual weapons and spiritual armor against the enemy. The enemy is Satan, the prince of the power of the air, the god of this age, the great deceiver.

### **A. Belt of Truth**

The first thing we are told to put on is the belt of truth. The belt of a first century soldier was the piece of equipment that held other pieces of the armor in place. The belt held the sword when it was not being used. The belt supported the breastplate. The truth is first article of war we put on as we go into spiritual battle. It is the truth that sets us free to be warriors. It is the truth we hear and believe so that we are made righteous. It is the truth that we hear that gives us faith. It is the truth that reveals the gospel to us. It is the truth that gives us salvation. It is the truth that God answers prayers that enables us to pray against the enemy. The truth is the basis for all faith, all righteousness, salvation, the gospel, and prayer.

Satan hates the truth. Jesus said there is no truth in him (John 8:44). If Satan could change the truth, he could destroy the gospel, your faith, your salvation, your righteousness, and your prayers. Thanks be to God, he cannot change the truth. The truth is the truth whether we believe it or not. Jesus died for our sins. That is the truth. Jesus was raised for our justification. That is the truth. We are new creatures in Christ. That is the truth. We have within us all that is needed to live holy lives. That is the truth. Not believing the truth will not change the truth. It will just make us ineffective soldiers. We will be in a battle with the enemy without armor. We cannot fight without truth just as a first century soldier could not fight without his belt of truth.

## **B. Breastplate of Righteousness**

The second thing we are told to put on as we become strong in the Lord is the breastplate of righteousness. The breastplate protected the vital organs of the body from the neck to the waist. The breastplate kept enemy arrows and swords from penetrating the body in the location of the vital organs. Likewise we have a breastplate of righteousness covering ourselves. It is not a righteousness which we have obtained by our good behavior. Our behavior had nothing to do with us getting it. It was obtained by faith when we believed in Christ. We have already seen in our studies that we are completely righteous and holy in God's eyes because we are justified. This justification is by faith and not works. It is based on the fact that we are "in" Christ and He is righteous and holy and we share what He has done.

Satan can try to penetrate our bodies with his darts and arrows of accusations but he cannot do so when we have the armor of God on. Nothing can destroy our righteousness unless the righteousness of Christ were destroyed and that is impossible. We are righteous forever. There is no condemnation for those in Christ. The accuser, Satan, can try as much as he might, but our righteousness is secure forever. Why? Because the belt of truth, God's word, hold this righteousness in place. It cannot be removed.

Sometimes we can get a hole in our armor through the sin of our fleshly body. So that we do not give Satan an opening to attack our flesh, it is important that that hole be repaired before great damage is done by him. 1 John 1:9 tells us to confess our sins and God will cleanse us of all unrighteousness. Our armor is made like new when we confess our sins. The "unrighteous" holes in the armor are repaired by God.

## **C. Shoes of the Gospel of Peace**

The shoes of the first century soldier were designed with sharp spikes that enabled the soldier to climb places where a "toe hold" may mean the difference between life and death. One slip in combat on the bloody, slippery ground could result in sudden death during hand-to-hand combat. Spiritual warriors need something to enable them to stand firm also. God has provided this with shoes of the gospel of peace.

What is the gospel of peace? Literally, what is the good news of peace? Romans 1:18 tells us that "The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness". Romans 3:36 tells us that those who believe in the Son, Jesus Christ, have eternal life and are no longer under the wrath of God. Jesus tells us in John 16:33 that we will find peace in Him. The gospel of peace is the truth that we are no longer a condemned race. We have been made sons of God, heirs with Christ. God is not angry with us. He loves us with a never ending love. We have a peace that passes understanding that allows us to stand firm when Satan says, "God is angry with you now! You should not have done that". The first half of the good news is that Jesus died for us and we have no sin held against us. The second half of the gospel is that Jesus rose and is

seated at the right hand of God and we have been raised and seated with him, made new creatures in Christ, holy and blameless, eternally before God! How's that for something to allow you to stand firm against Satan's accusations.

Not only can we stand against Satan, but we can also stand against the temptations of the world to become significant, accepted, or secure by our own means. We can live at peace with people around us who we at one time tried to impress. We don't need to impress anyone in order to become significant. God has made us significant. We don't need to crave the love of those who do not love us because God loves us and we are accepted by him. We don't have to be in conflict with those around us who threaten us because we are secure in Christ. He controls all. We can live at peace with all men (as much as they will live at peace with us). We do not need to surround ourselves with people like us. We can throw away prejudice- prejudice against race, religion, or denomination. We can spread the peace of God through Christ to a world that has never known peace. It is by our love that men will know we are disciples of Christ, not our Bible knowledge. We are able to love because we are at peace with God and ourselves because God has made us secure, accepted, and significant.

#### **D. Shield of Faith**

The shield of a soldier in the first century was large enough for a soldier to place most of his body behind. The shield was covered with skins of animals. If water was available and time allowed, the soldier would soak his shield in water to saturate the animal skin coverings. When the enemy shot arrows dipped in a flammable substance and ignited, the flaming arrows would be extinguished when they struck the shield.

Our enemy is constantly attacking us with his fiery darts or flaming arrows of accusations. He tells us things like, "You are no good. You are worthless". "Nobody cares about you". "Even God does not love you because of your behavior". "Things are not going according to what you planned". "Perhaps God does not care what happens to you". What defense do we have against these accusations? Faith! Faith in God's love and how it was shown through Christ when he came to die and save us. Faith in God's mighty power to accomplish all that He desires and knowing that He loves us with a never ending love. Faith in the fact that we are secure, accepted, and significant because God says so in His word to us. Faith in the fact that God loves us so much that He lives with us. Faith in the fact that God can make a way out of "no way" - He can open a door that doesn't even exist.

#### **E. Helmet of Salvation**

The ancient soldiers had a helmet, usually made of metal to protect the major portion of the head against a blow from a sword, a stone, a heavy object or arrow. The head is a critical part of the body. If the head is wounded, the whole body is probably put out of action.

The battle against the forces of darkness always takes place in our mind. The mind is located in the brain which is in the head. That is the battleground where we are told to take every thought captive. Satan comes with his bag of tricks, half truths and lies. How can we resist when He tells us that our behavior is un-Christ-like if we have truly been un-Christ-like? If we know we have done something wrong, how can we respond with the truth if what Satan has told us is mostly true? Because we have salvation. Nothing can take that away. Satan can point out our sin, but that does not take away our salvation. Every sin that we have ever committed, Jesus paid for. Every sin that we will commit between now and eternity, Jesus paid for. It does not matter as far as our eternal destiny is concerned. We have salvation. We have eternal life. Nothing can take that away. It is from God, by God, and kept by God. It will last as long as God exists and that is forever.

## **F. Sword of the Spirit**

The sword was the soldiers offensive weapon. The armor that he previously put on was defensive armor. The sword is a weapon the soldier uses against the enemy to subdue or destroy him.

God has given us an offensive weapon with our armor. It is the sword of the Spirit, the word of God. This weapon is more than a match for Satan's weapons. He cannot stand against this weapon. It is the truth put into words and it destroys his lies. Jesus used this weapon when Satan attacked Him after His forty day fast in the wilderness. Each time, Satan was driven back.

Each time we use the word of God against Satan, he flees from us. He cannot stand the truth. He hates the truth. Nothing is more effective against his fiery darts of lies and accusations than the word of God. When the devil continually attacks a weakness in our emotional system, be it fear, guilt, or rejection, nothing will defeat him quicker than a scripture quoted aloud.

## **G. Prayer in the Spirit**

We have another offensive weapon in our arsenal in addition to the word of God. It is prayer. God desires us to pray. We pray for protection. We also pray for offense against the enemy. Satan attacks us constantly. We should attack him. The more we attack him, the more he will be concerned with defending himself and his possessions and he will have less time to go on the offensive. Pray! Attack him! Bind him so that his house can be ransacked and the captives set free. Jesus said that the gates of hell can not prevail against the church that he is building. Gates are something people hide behind. Attack with prayer with such a fury that the Gates of hell cannot stand. God desires this. He needs us to ask. Lack of prayer will never nullify what God has done at Calvary, but lack of prayer will nullify its effectiveness. Pray in the spirit.

## **III. Putting the Armor to Use**

In some earlier lessons we looked at Satan's attack on Eve in the Garden. This was a battle mankind lost. Let's now look at another attack that Satan made against Jesus in the wilderness. The account is given in Luke 4:1-14, Matthew 4:1-11, and Mark 1:12-13. The outcome of this attack was different.

### **A. Satan attempts to get us to question the truth.**

I believe that Satan's attacks almost always begin with an attempt to cause a questioning or doubting of the truth. With Eve, the serpent said, "Did God really say..?" as if God would not have said what is believed or to imply that God was wrong. When the devil attacked Christ, the first thing he said was "If you are the Son of God..." implying that either Christ was not the Son of God or trying to place doubt in the mind of Christ that He was the Son of God. Satan knew that Christ was the Son of God. He certainly had heard the reports of the voice coming from heaven a few days earlier- "This is my beloved Son with Whom I am well pleased".

How did Jesus respond? Did he contemplate on what the devil had said and begin to wonder about it? No! Jesus knew who He was. He was alive spiritually. He knew in His spirit that He was the Son of God and His Spirit confirmed it. He knew the truth and the belt of truth of His armor served Him well. He also used a shield of faith. He knew that He was God's Son and

that God would provide for His needs. He had faith that God would provide for Him. He could have turned stones into bread if He had wanted to but He would not do that unless His Father told Him to. He only did what the Father told him to do (John 5:19). Then Jesus used an offensive weapon, the sword of the Spirit, against the devil. He quoted scripture to the devil. This ended that attack immediately.

## **B. Satan attacks us in our area of need.**

When Satan attacked Eve in the garden, he appealed to her need to have food. Actually, Eve had all the food she needed but Satan enticed her to desire what she did not need. In the case of Jesus, he had more reason to give in to the temptation of Satan. He had been 40 days without food. His time of fasting was over. It was time to eat. What would be wrong to eat after he had finished fasting? He deserved a break today. He was worth it. He was hungry.

Sin has been defined as “having your needs met outside of God’s will”. God had not willed that Jesus turn stones into bread. Jesus did not give in. He resisted Satan using the truth, His faith in His Father, and the word of God. Eve failed. She listened to Satan’s lies and was enticed into sinning.

## **C. Beware of thoughts beginning with “if”.**

The word of God tells us to take every thought captive. Anytime you have a thought that begins with a question, be careful. Especially if it begins with “If God..”. There is no “If” in the character of God. There is no “If “ in the attributes of God. God is God. God is absolute. The person behind the questioning of the character or attributes of God is always Satan. The same person is usually behind the questioning of your character. Have you ever had thoughts like, “If you were a real Christian you would do this”? “If you were a real Christian, you would not do that”. Where do these thoughts come from? The enemy. How about this one. “I would be significant if.....” or “I would feel secure if....” or “I believe I would be accepted if...” or “If I had this I would be happy” or “ If I could do this , I would be happy or secure or worthy of praise.” What is your response? Use the shield of faith. Believe that God’s word is true. God will supply all your needs through Christ Jesus. You do not need anything nor do you need to do anything that God has not told you that you need. God will supply your needs. You are secure. You have been made significant by God - you are His Child. You are accepted as a member of the household of God. When the enemy attacks you with thoughts beginning with “if”, tell him the truth using the word of God about who you really are.

## **D. Satan likes to attack when we are weak.**

Always remember that while Satan can attack anytime, he likes to attack when you are weak. A time of need is often the time when he will tempt you into meeting your needs apart from Christ. Many times he tempts you to meet a need that is legitimate by your own way that is not God’s way. Abraham had a need for a son. God had promised a son so that Abraham would be the father of a great nation. Abraham was tempted to have a son through his hand maiden, Hagar. He had Ishmael, the father of the Arab race. The Jews and Arabs have been at war for over four thousand years because of Abraham’s action to have his needs met independent of God. Wait on God as Jesus did. The angels came and ministered to Him. He did not have to turn the stones to bread. God provided for Him.

While the first attack on Jesus given in Luke was in the area of security (having something to eat), the second area was in the area of significance. Satan told Jesus that He could have all the kingdoms of the world if He would just bow down to Satan. Satan thought this would work. Jesus did not give in to being tempted in the area of security. He surely would desire to be king

of the world. After all, Eve fell for a line similar to this. Satan had told Eve she could be like God. She wanted this. Jesus did not give in. Jesus knew that He was the Son of God. The Son is heir to all that the Father owns. Jesus knew that He would one day have what His Father owned. Besides, what Satan was asking was contrary to the word of God. Jesus did not argue with Satan. He used again His shield of Faith in Who He was and Who God was and did not give in to temptation to be something before God ordained it. He used the sword, the word of God again on Satan and told him to worship only the Lord God. Jesus was eventually given all authority over heaven and earth after His resurrection. This was God's timing. Jesus would not settle for the world when He was going to be given heaven and earth (Matthew 28:18). Do not settle for what Satan offers. God's rewards are much greater.

If Satan cannot get you to sin using insecurity or significance, he will try to get you with rejection. He tried this with Jesus. He questioned Jesus' relationship with the Father. "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself off the temple and angels will bear you up. The word of God says so." Satan knows scripture. He probably knows more than you and I. He probably knows the entire Bible. He does not believe it but he knows it is true. Is that possible? Don't we know a lot of things to be true but do not believe them. Do not we know, as a truth, that the Spirit of God lives within each believer but according to our action, we sometimes do not believe it.

Again Jesus knew who he was. He was the Son of God and He did not have to prove it to anyone, especially Satan. He did not give in. He did not question a truth of God. Again Jesus used the truth, His faith, and the word of God to resist Satan. Satan left him to wait for a better time.

This study is almost over. Do you know who you are? Do you know that you are a child of God, made significant, accepted and secure because of what Christ has done? If you know the truth, you will be set free from the snares of Satan. You will not have to prove anything to the world. You will not have to earn the approval of anybody. You will not have to worry about anything. All that you are and ever hope to be you owe it all to God. "To God be the glory, great things he has done", the songwriter Andre Crouch once wrote. How true!

#### **E. Satan uses others, especially those close to you, sometimes to attack.**

Satan's next attack on Jesus was after Peter had confessed that Jesus was the Messiah, the one God had promised would save the world from Satan. This time Satan did not directly confront Jesus directly in person. He used another person, the person who had just declared Him to be the Christ, the Son of the living God. Satan told Jesus, through the mouth of Peter, "You can't let them crucify you". Jesus recognized this attack also. He knew His Father's will. He was alive spiritually and He knew that it was His Father's will that He die for the sins of the world. Nothing would stop Him. Not even the counsel of a trusted friend. He did not use any recorded old testament scripture to resist Satan here.

*Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men." Matthew 16:23 (NIV)*

James 4:7 tells us to submit to God, resist the devil, and he will flee from us. That is exactly what Jesus did. Since Jesus spoke these words, they are now also the word of God. We can use the same words to resist the devil, "get behind me, Satan!"

Possibly nothing is more effective in tempting us than the words of a trusted friend. We sometimes think that we can let our guard down when we are around those who love us. Neil Anderson often says "It is never safe to take off the armor of God". Satan is always around. He can use the words of those we trust to deceive us. He can hijack their thought and lead us into temptation. Our friends may not mean to deceive us. They may think they are giving us wise counsel. We should always do as Jesus do. We should take the thought captive.



Compare it to the word and will of God. It is true? If it is not, guess who is responsible for it. The devil.

#### **F. Jesus always overcame Satan and He will enable us to overcome also.**

Jesus was tempted many more times by the devil as He walked on the earth. He did not fail. He kept His eyes fixed on what God had sent Him to do. He did only what the Father told Him to do. In doing so, Jesus overcame the world, the flesh, and the devil. Possibly the greatest temptation was on the cross. People were taunting Him, "If you are the Son of God, come down". "You saved others but you can't save yourself". His significance was questioned by others but it was never questioned by God nor did Jesus question His own significance.

Jesus was rejected by those who had followed Him. They ran away. Peter denied ever knowing Him. Jesus felt rejection when He cried, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" Jesus knows what we are going through when we feel rejection. He promises that He will never forsake us. He won't. Always remember that. Jesus always accepts us. Because Jesus accepts us, the Father accepts us.

Jesus knew what it was like not to have a home, even as the foxes have their holes and the birds of the air have their nests. But Jesus also knew that His heavenly Father would provide all that He needed and He did. We can trust Him also.

Keep your eyes on Christ. There is nothing you will ever need apart from Him. There is nothing you cannot do that He has told you to do if you do it with Him. Nothing will ever separate you from His love. Great things will you do as He works through you. You have been born again if you believe in Him. You can hear Him speak to you through your spirit that has been made alive by His Spirit. Learn to hear His voice. Listen to Him. Let Him care for you and provide all that you need. You will be blessed.

## Session 5

# **PROTECTION AND HEALING BY SERVING OTHERS**

In the last lesson we studied the principal way Satan attacked Eve and Jesus. He used the same method each time. He tried to create doubt regarding a truth of God. If he can get you to listen, he will then get you to thinking about yourself. He will use your emotional system to remind you of something that happened to you, how you were mistreated, how you are having to suffer beyond what should be expected, etc. He will almost always use a primary negative emotion - fear, guilt, or rejection- that you are prone to struggle with. He will enhance this negative emotion with lies until you see yourself as pitiful. You will then become depressed, despondent, or angry. Very likely, you may attack a person or person whom you see to be mistreating you or causing you problems. Satan will lead you right into sin. This will not happen, however, until Satan has enticed you into focusing on yourself. That is what he did to Eve. That is what he tried to do to Jesus. That is what he does to us. Whether or not we give in to sin is really determined by how much we become self-centered. The more self-centered we are, the more we will be tempted to sin. The more we truly serve others with little thought to our own needs, the less we will be tempted.

We can learn so much about dealing with our emotions if we study the word of God. Remember, Jesus said if we abide in His word, we will know the truth and the truth will set us free. Being free is not only being able to defeat Satan, but it is also being free as much as possible from his constant attacks. In this lesson we will find that we can use the word of God to prevent Satan from causing us to sin.

### **I. Put Others First- Put Self Last, Just As Jesus Said**

The truth of God's word when put into action that prevents Satan from causing us to sin is simple - Put others first, put self last. Do not be self centered. Eve did not do this and she gave in to Satan's temptation. Jesus did not give in to Satan's temptation to turn the stones into bread, to gain the kingdoms of the world, or to test God by jumping off the temple to make sure God loved Him. Jesus did not sin.

The words of Jesus that we are to abide in to be free are the same words Jesus told the disciples in Mark 9:35, *"If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all."* He told them this after they had been arguing on the road about which of the disciples were greater. Jesus knew that being self centered gives Satan control of our emotions. Peter had just found that out when he had tried to talk Jesus out of going to Jerusalem to be crucified. He was being self-centered. He did not want Jesus to do what God had intended Jesus to do. He wanted Jesus to set up an earthly kingdom so that he, Peter, could be an important person in that new kingdom. Jesus had looked at Peter and saw that Satan had control of him. That is why He spoke at Peter and said,

*"Get behind me Satan. You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but mans"(Matthew 16:23)*

Later, when James and John came to Jesus and asked Him to let them set on each side when He set up His kingdom, Jesus called the disciples to Himself and told them,

*"You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become*

*great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." - Mark 10:42-45 (NIV)*

When He told them this, they had already become indignant because of what James and John had asked Jesus. They had become focused on themselves. Why should James and John get more than we get, they may have thought. The enemy was causing the disciples to feel insecure, rejected, or insignificant and causing a quarrel among them as they focused on their own perceived needs and desires.

Have you ever looked at your own life and thought "How deprived am I?" "Why can't I be like so-and-so?" "Why do I have to do this while so-and-so does that?" "Why has God put me in this situation?" Have you ever felt like life's circumstances were not fair? Who do you think gave you this thought? The enemy, of course. The truth is that we are significant, accepted, and secure in Christ and what He has done. Sometimes we do not feel this. We do not feel this mostly when we are focused on ourselves and seeing what we think are needs. We are ignoring the truth that God supplies all our needs at just the right time. When we become humble, submissive to God, focused on serving others, Satan cannot entice us by our own strong desires (James 1:14) because our desire is not on ourselves. Our desire is to serve others.

Paul exhorts us in Philippians 2:5-11-

*Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (NIV)*

Jesus also told his disciples which is recorded in Luke 9:23-25 -

*Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self? (NIV)*

When we focus on others, we don't have time to focus on ourselves. Is not this what Christ did as He walked on the earth? Is He not our example? When we focus our attention on others, Satan is not allowed a foothold in our lives. Remember, Satan cannot attack us unless God allows it. Just as Satan had to get permission to "sift" Peter (Luke 22:31), he must get permission to attack you. While God may use the enemy to discipline us, He never allows it except that it works for good (Romans 8:29). Often times, the situation we are in is one that we put ourselves in and God allowed us to go into it. He is faithful, and He will lead us through anything, even though it was not His desire that we be where we are. God is true to His word and if He promises us something, He will keep His promise.

## **II. Be Healed As You Serve Others - Just As God Said Through Isaiah**

Jesus knew that as long as we serve others, we will not give the enemy a foothold in our life. There is protection from the enemy's attacks when we serve others. But there is also another benefit from serving other that we all have need of. When we focus on others and serve them, God allows healing in our life. This promise is found in Isaiah 58, along with the condition for this healing and specific ways what we are to serve others. The condition for this promised healing is that we serve others. I believe this healing is an emotional healing. The specific ways in which we are to serve others underlined below in the scripture. Other promises in addition to healing are also underlined.

*Isaiah 58:6-12 "Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter-- when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard. Then you will call, and the LORD will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I. "If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk, and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday. The LORD will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail. Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins and will raise up the age-old foundations; you will be called Repairer of Broken Walls, Restorer of Streets with Dwellings. (NIV)*

I believe God's message through the prophet Isaiah was essentially this: You fast and do all these things to become humble. You know something is wrong with the fellowship between you and I. You want that fellowship restored but when you fast, your attitude is terrible. You are so concerned with your self that you fight and quarrel with others. What I want you to do is to take your eyes off yourself and get them on others. There are oppressed people that need setting free. Not only set them free but break the yoke that has made them captives. There are hungry people that need feeding. Feed them. There are people without clothes. Put clothes on them. There are people without shelter. Give them shelter. When you do this, you will shine. People will see the result of a Holy God in your life. You will be healed. You will be a light for others. Your front side will be protected with righteousness. The glory of the LORD will be your rear guard. (In other words, Satan cannot touch you). You will be guided by the LORD and all your needs will be satisfied.

As we serve others and become concerned with other's needs, we forget about ourselves. God is faithful to provide all our needs, but sometimes we have "wants" that are not needs. These wants often, if not always, come from the negative programming of our emotional system. Before being born again, we learned to get our emotional needs met in sinful ways, apart from God. While we are being transformed by the renewing of our minds (Romans 12:2), this process of renewing is not instantaneous. Our habits of living independent of God were not formed overnight and most times are not removed overnight. While we have been made new in our spirit, our emotional system is part of our "flesh" and it has not been made new (Romans 8:23). God has given us his Spirit and we are to use His power in us to bring into obedience our flesh. There is a battle going on between our flesh (empowered by Satan) and our spirit (empowered by God) as Satan uses our emotional system with thoughts he has given us to gain our own significance, security, or acceptance in the ways of the world. These desires can seem to be very strong when he comes at us.

When we are focused on serving others, he has no access into our life unless we are serving in a selfish way. What is a selfish way? If we serve others in order to gain recognition or gratitude from those we are serving, we are not putting others first. We are still trying to become significant by our own work. If we think serving others will gain us acceptance or the friendship of those we are serving, we may be surprised. We will never gain acceptance by our own work. If we do mighty works of God with the expectation that we will be surrounded by many people who will support our work and thus gain security, we may be disappointed. The world did not accept Christ. He tells us that the world will not accept us. The Christian church may not accept you in the way you want to be accepted. God accepts you, no matter who on this earth accepts you, and "great is your reward in heaven". To stand before Christ and for Him to say in front of all the angels, "Well done, my good and faithful servant" will surpass any honor man can give you on this earth. You will never feel on earth more secure, accepted, or significant than you will on that day in heaven.

God is also telling us in Isaiah 58 that He will make us significant on earth. He will heal us and our light will shine. He will make us secure on earth. We will be protected by Him. He will make us accepted on earth. When we call on Him, He will answer. Significance, security, and acceptance on earth, all from serving others!

God tells us in Isaiah 58, that He will continually guide us and satisfy our desire in scorched places and give strength to our bones. The scorched dry places in many of us is in our emotional system. We have felt fear, guilt, and rejection in our past. God will satisfy the need to be safe, significant, and accepted. He will heal us. All we have to do is trust Him, abide in Him and His word. Look to see, just as Jesus, what the Father is doing and join Him (John 5:19). You do not have to strain or struggle to do this. Just watch. He will bring someone to you today that is oppressed and needs freeing. He will bring someone to you that is hungry. He will bring someone to you that is homeless or needs clothing. Put others first, self last. Do not give Satan an opportunity.

Be led by the Spirit of God. Make it a habit of doing something for someone everyday. Call someone who needs encouraging. Write a letter to someone who is struggling. Visit the sick. Visit those in prison. Ask God to send you anyone that He desires you to serve. Ask Him to give you the eyes of Christ that you could see the hurting. Ask Him to give you the heart of Christ that you can love the unlovable as Christ loved us. He will. And as you deal with those hurting, you will be thankful that God has spared you the pain He has allowed them to go through. Your problems, which are not really problems but things that Satan has led you to believe are problems, will seem like nothing at all. You will be healed! You will use your struggles and experiences to help others. What Satan meant for bad, God will use for good. The truth will set you free. The truth of serving others will heal you and set you free.

Fear, rejection, and insignificance are overcome in our lives as we are transformed into the image of Christ. You were made to be secure, accepted and significant. Enjoy it as you find and enjoy God's will for your life.

**LESSON 1**  
**SECTION 1**  
**IN THE IMAGE AND LIKENESS OF GOD**

**Characteristics of Man (in God's Image): Significant, Accepted, Secure**

Study the following scripture: Genesis 1:26-31, Psalm 8, Isaiah 43:7, and Revelation 4:11

1. What is man? (Why was he created and what is his purpose for being?)
  - 2a. How was the man, as God first made him, **significant**?
  - 2b. Man is not God! But in what way was man "created in God's image" or "after God's likeness"?
  - 2c. In your opinion, does man rule over "the fish of the sea, ...the birds of the heavens,...the cattle, and over all the earth and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth? Give reason for your answer.
3. What proof can you find that God **accepted** man and that man was special to God?
4. What reason can you find to know that the man God first created was **secure** and did not need to worry about food for survival?

**Composition of Man (in the Image of God): Body, Soul, and Spirit**

Study 1 Thessalonians 5:23, John 8:58, 17:5, 20:25-27, Isaiah 42:1, Matthew 12:18, John 4:24, 20:22, Genesis 2:7

5. According to 1 Thessalonians 5:23, what are three components of man? \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What Person of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit has a physical body?
7. According to Isaiah 42:1 and Matthew 12:18, does God have a soul?
8. According to John 4:24, what is God, according to Jesus?
- 9a. According to John 20:22, what did Jesus do?
- 9b. Could this be symbolic of Genesis 2:7?

**LESSON 1**  
**SECTION 2**

## **THE FALL**

### **Failure to Follow Instructions**

Read Genesis 1-3, James 4:7

10. What was the first commandment given to man when God created him?
11. What command are we given in regard to Satan in James 4:7?
12. In what way did the temptation of the serpent appeal to the desire of the woman to be secure, accepted, or significant?
13. What did God tell the man not to do and what did he tell him would happen if he disobeyed (Genesis 2:17)?

### **Security Becomes Insecurity**

14. From Genesis 3, how did the man and woman's action show that they were insecure or fearful?
15. How did they try to deal with this insecurity or fear?

### **Significance Becomes Guilt**

16. From Genesis 3, how did the man and woman's action show that they were insignificant?
17. How did they deal with this insignificance? (If you can find any way)

### **Acceptance Becomes Rejection**

18. From Genesis 3, what happen to the man and woman which would cause them to feel rejected?

### **Rejection, Insignificance, and Insecurity is Passed on to Following Generations**

Study Ephesians 2

19. From Ephesians 2:1, what is spiritual death?
20. From Ephesians 2:2, describe a person struggling with insignificance or guilt?
21. From Ephesians 2:3, describe a person struggling with insecurity or acceptance?
22. From Galatians 5:19-20, list the desires of the flesh and write beside each one what you feel it is caused by- insecurity (or fear), rejection or guilt (insignificance or feeling worthless).
23. How has God spoken to you through this study in these questions or in the last group meeting.
- 24a. (PERSONAL) In what area of your life this week did you see the biggest struggle regarding fear, guilt, or rejection?
- 24b. Were you victorious over this attack and if so, how? `

## **LESSON 2**

### **A NEW LIFE FROM GOD**

#### **SOLOMON TRIED TO FIND FULFILLMENT IN HIS WORKS**

1a. Read Ecclesiastes 1:1-2:11. In what ways did King Solomon attempt to find fulfillment in life by his own accomplishments?

1b. What was his conclusion in 2:11 to all his activities?

1c. In 1:7, Solomon speaks of the rivers always flowing to the sea but never being able to fill up the sea. Do you believe that the many “rivers” of our own works will ever fill up our “sea” of need to be safe, secure, and significant? Why?

1d. Solomon was possibly the wisest king that ever ruled the earth as well as the richest (2 Chronicles 1:12). What did he say about enjoyment in Ecclesiastes 2:25?

1e. What do you believe is necessary to have peace and joy? (What are the things needed?)

#### **WE MUST BE MADE ALIVE SPIRITUALLY TO BE FULFILLED**

2. According to Ephesians 2:1, what is the condition of an unsaved person?

3. According to 1 Corinthians 2:14, can a spiritually dead person hear or understand or know the things of God?

4a. When Nicodemus asked Jesus what one must do to enter the kingdom of God, what did Jesus say must happen to him in John 3:5?

4b. When did the kingdom of God begin? (See Matt 12:28, Mark 1:15, Mark 9:1)

4c. According to John 6:63, Who gives life?

4d. Read John 1:12-13 first. What do you think Jesus is saying in John 3:6? Give your own paraphrase.

4e. According to Ephesians 2:5, What did God do for us?

5a. According to Romans 10:9-10, what must one do to be made spiritually alive?

5b. According to 1 Corinthians 6:17,19, what is the relationship of a believer’s spirit to the Holy Spirit?

#### **OUR OLD SELF DIES AND WE ARE MADE NEW**

6a. Study Romans 6:2-11. When we are saved and baptized into Christ by His Spirit, what happens to our old self?

6b. What happens to our relationship to sin? (v.7, 11)

6c. Who have we been made alive to? (v. 11)?

6d. According to 2 Corinthians 5:17, what are we now?

Do you believe this?

#### **LESSON 2**

6e. What have we received according to 1 Corinthians 2:12 and what are we now able to do according to this verse which will give us a sense of security and acceptance? (See also 1 Cor. 2:9)



6f. In Romans 6, we see that we have been crucified with Christ. According to Galatians 2:20, how can we now be significant?

7a. According to Galatians 3:1-5, 11, can a person be sanctified by his own work of obeying the Law of God?

**WE ARE SECURE, ACCEPTED, AND SIGNIFICANT BECAUSE OF GOD'S GIFT TO US**

7b. Study Ephesians 2:4-9. Why did God save us (make us spiritually alive)?

7c. According to Ephesians 2:4-9, did we do anything to earn this salvation? Can we boast?  
What does this mean to you in regard to security, acceptance, or significance?

8. From Ephesians 2:4-22, list reasons with verses that we are now -  
SECURE SIGNIFICANT ACCEPTED

9. From John 14, list reasons with verses that we are now -  
SECURE SIGNIFICANT ACCEPTED

10. What phrases in John 15:16 show that you are-  
SECURE SIGNIFICANT ACCEPTED

11a. Study Luke 4:1-13. How did Satan tempt Jesus in the area of-  
SECURITY SIGNIFICANCE ACCEPTANCE

11b. (PERSONAL) How does Satan tempt you in these areas? Write under each answer how you can respond with the truth as Jesus responded. Remember- His spirit is within you!  
SECURITY SIGNIFICANCE ACCEPTANCE

12. How has God spoken to you this week through this study? In what areas have you been attacked in the area of security, significance, or acceptance? Were you victorious? If so, how?

## **LESSON 3**

### **WHAT IS ETERNAL LIFE?**

#### **ETERNAL LIFE IS AVAILABLE ONLY THROUGH CHRIST.**

- 1a. Study Acts 4:10-12. Through whom does salvation come?
- 1b. Read Acts 16:31. Whom must one believe on in order to be saved?
- 1c. Read John 3:36. What is given to those who believe in Christ? What is the condition of those who reject the Son?
- 1d. Read John 10:27-28. Who has eternal life and what promise can you find here regarding them?

#### **CHRIST CAME BECAUSE GOD PROMISED HE WOULD COME.**

- 2a. Read Acts 26:15-18. In verse 18, what did Jesus tell Paul was the purpose for sending him to the Jews and Gentiles?
- 2b. Read Isaiah 42:6-7. What did God promise to do through Christ?
- 2c. Read Luke 4:14-21. Why did Jesus say He had come?
- 2d. Read Hebrews 9:15, Matthew 26:27-28, Jeremiah 31:31-34, 1 Corinthians 11:24-25, Isaian 42:6. Who is the mediator of the new covenant of God?

#### **ETERNAL LIFE IS GIVEN BY JESUS AND IS THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

- 3a. Read John 1:12-13. From whom does eternal life (being made a child of God) come? From whom does it not come?
- 3b. Read John 3:5-6. Who is responsible for the birth of the new spirit born within each believer that is the beginning of eternal life?
- 3c. Read John 6:63. Who gives life?
- 3d. Read John 5:19-21. Who raises the dead and gives life to whom He wishes?

#### **TO HAVE ETERNAL LIFE MEANS WE ARE NOT ONLY FORGIVEN BUT ALSO MADE ALIVE.**

- 4a. Read John 1:29. Who did John the Baptist say would take away the sin of the world (enabling us to be forgiven by God)?
- 4b. Read 1 John 2:2. What sin did Jesus not die for?
- 4c. Read John 6:32-35, 6:53-58 with Matthew 26:26-28. What symbol did Jesus use to represent that which would allow forgiveness of sins?
- 4d. What did He say would give life to the world in John 6:33?
- 4e. What do you think Jesus meant in John 6:54 when He said “eat my flesh”?
- 4f. What do you think Jesus meant in John 6:54 when He said “drink my blood”?
- 4g. What do you think Jesus meant in John 6:55 when He said “my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink”?
- 4h. Read Romans 5:9-10. What phrases refer to us being forgiven and able to again have fellowship with God?
- 4i. What phrases refer to us being saved from eternal death?

- 4j. Read Romans 6:3-5. What can we now do because we have been baptized into Christ?
- 4k. Read Romans 6:11. What does the new life in Christ make us dead to?
- 4l. According to Romans 6:14, what shall not be our master?
- 4m. According to Galatians 3:11, how is the truth in Romans 6:14 appropriated?  
Can we rely on our feelings to determine whether or not the word of God is true?  
Is the word of God true only if we feel and experience it?

**THE WORK OF CHRIST ALLOWS US TO NOT ONLY BE FORGIVEN BUT ALSO GIVES US AN INHERITANCE AS SAINTS, HOLY AND BLAMELESS CHILDREN BEFORE GOD.**

- 5a. According to Acts 26:18, what two things did Jesus say we would receive?
- 5b. What did Peter say about our inheritance in 1 Peter 1:4?
- 5c. Read 1 Peter 1:5-6. How is our salvation protected even though we experience trials and difficulties?
- 5d. Study 2 Peter 1:3-4. What have we been granted according to verse 3?
- 5e. What have we become partakers of and what have we escaped?
- 5f. What did God the Father choose us to be according to Ephesians 1:4 and 1:5?
- 5g. What do we have and Whom have we been given as a pledge of this according to Ephesians 1:11, 13?
- 6. Write beside each of the following verses what we are, what we have, or what we have been made in Christ Jesus:

Romans 3:22 \_\_\_\_\_ Ephesians 1:11 \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 6:4 \_\_\_\_\_ Ephesians 2:6 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Cor. 15:22 \_\_\_\_\_ Ephesians 4:23 \_\_\_\_\_

2 Cor. 5:17 \_\_\_\_\_ Ephesians 4:24 \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 3:13 \_\_\_\_\_ Colossians 3:10 \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 1:1 \_\_\_\_\_ 1 John 2:12 \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 1:4 \_\_\_\_\_ Ephesians 1:5 \_\_\_\_\_

- 7a. Which of the above do you find hardest to believe?
- 7b. What can you do to stand firm in faith and believe what God says is true?

**LESSON 4-PART 1**  
**CASE STUDY 1 OF SATAN'S ATTACKS**

**Satan's Common Attack Modes As Shown in First Attack on Eve (Genesis 3:1-13)**

**Attack Mode 1 - Cause a questioning or doubting of the truth.**

- 1a. According to Genesis 3:1, what were the serpent's first four words spoken to Eve?
- 1b. What do you think he was trying to create in Eve's mind?

**Attack Mode 2 – Enhance the doubt with a lie.**

- 2a. What did the serpent tell Eve in Gen. 3:4 that was a direct lie to what God had told Adam in Gen. 2:17?

**Attack Mode 3 - Enhance the lie with a promise of PERSONAL gain.**

- 3a. Whom did the serpent tell Eve she could be like in Genesis 3:5?
- 3b. What did this appeal to - her significance, her acceptance, or her security?
- 3c. What three characteristics did Eve see in the fruit according to Genesis 3:6?
- 3d. Read Genesis 2:16-17. Did Adam and Eve need additional food?
- 3e. If having enough to eat is part of our security, do we need additional security above what God has provided?
- 3d. Was her decision to eat the forbidden fruit based on a need to please God or to please herself?

**Defensive Strategy Against Satan's Attack Modes**

**Mode 1 - Do not doubt when the enemy tries to create doubt.**

- 4a. Read Mark 11:22-24. What does Jesus say about doubt?
- 4b. Read Romans 8:28. Do all things or just some things work together for good for believers?  
Explain your answer.
- 4c. Read 1 Corinthians 8:6, Colossians 1:16, Matt. 6:25-34. Can God do anything He has promised to do?
- 4d. Will He do it? Why should we never worry or doubt that God will provide all we need?
- 4e. When did you last worry? Who was responsible for it, God or Satan?

**Mode 2 - Follow the Truth when the enemy gives you a lie.**

- 5a. Who is the Counselor according to John 14:16-17?
- 5b. Read John 14:6. Who is the Truth?
- 5c. Read John 14:26. What does the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth who lives within every believer do?
- 5d. Read John 16:8 and 16:13. What does the Spirit of Truth also do?
- 5e. According to John 17:17, what also is truth?
- 5f. How does one follow the truth?
- 5g. (Personal) When did you last hear God speaking to you? (John 10:27)

**Mode 3 - Put God and others first; put self last**

- 6a. Read Matthew 20: 25-28. What does Jesus tell us to be?
- 6b. Read Philippians 2:5-9. What example did Jesus set for us?
- 6c. Read Mark 9:35. Where should we place our own motives and priorities - before or after those of God and others?
- 6d. What must you deny to be a follower of Jesus according to Luke 9:23-27?
- 6e. (Personal) What in your life needs to be denied in order for you to take up your cross and follow Jesus?

**LESSON 4 - PART 2**  
**CASE STUDY 2 OF SATAN'S ATTACKS**

Satan was victorious over Eve when he attacked her in the Garden of Eve with deception. He was soundly defeated in the wilderness when he attacked Jesus. This account is found in Luke 4:1-14, Matthew 4:1-11 and Mark 1:12-13.

**Time of the attack: When the one attacked had unmet legitimate needs.**

- 1a. According to Luke 4:2, how long had Jesus been without food?
- 1b. According to this verse, was His 40 day fast completed?

**Attack Mode 1: Satan again tries to create doubt or a questioning of the truth**

- 2a. Satan always attacks in the area of some need which is usually, if not always, related to our need to be significance, acceptance or secure. In what area (significance, acceptance, or security) did Satan tempt Jesus in Luke 4:3?
- 3a. What doubt did the devil imply in his statement to Jesus in Luke 4:3?
- 3b. Did Jesus directly answer to correct the devil's false implication?
- 3c. How did Jesus answer the devil regarding the devil's temptation for him to have his needs met by His own power?
- 3d. Read Deuteronomy 8:2-3. Why did The LORD lead Israel in the desert for forty years according to verse 2?
- 3e. According to Matthew 4:1, why was Jesus led to the wilderness by the Spirit?
- 3f. What did the LORD want Israel to understand regarding bread according to Deut. 8:3?
- 3g. What does Jesus want us to understand about bread according to John 6:33?
  
- 3h. Did Jesus overcome the devil's temptation in regard to food?
- 3i. According to Matthew 4:11 and Mark 1:13, who do you think provided Jesus with food?
- 3j. What offensive weapon listed in Ephesians 6:17 did Jesus use against the devil when He quoted Deuteronomy 8:3b?

**Personal Application - Apply the methods of Jesus to your own spiritual battles against the devil**

- 4a. When do you think the devil will most likely attack you?
- 4b. When you doubt who you are in Christ, who is the one who creates this doubt of who you are?
- 4c. Refer to John 8:44 for information of the devil's character. How can you recognize that the thoughts you have are from the devil?
- 4d. What does James 4:7 tell us to do when we come up against the devil?
- 4e. Should we carry on a two way conversation with him? Why? (Refer to what happened to Eve in Gen. 3:1-6 if you are unsure)
- 4f. What offensive weapon given in Ephesians 6:17 should you use against Satan's lies?
- 4g. Personal- In what ways are you tempted to have your need to be secure met apart from what God has provided you with?

**Attack Mode 2: Satan promises personal gain (again)**

- 5a. What area did the devil's second assault of Jesus (beginning in Luke 4:5) pertain to - Significance, Acceptance, or Security?
- 5b. What did the devil ask Jesus to do and what did he promised to give Jesus?
  
- 5c. What was Jesus response to the devil?
  
- 5d. According to Matthew 28:18, who has been given all authority now in heaven and on earth?
- 5e. Did Jesus need to get this authority from Satan?
- 5f. What offensive spiritual warfare weapon listed in Ephesians 6:17 did Jesus use to resist the devil?

**Personal Application**

- 6a. What thoughts of gain or significance have you had recently that affected the way you acted?
- 6b. Who gave you those thoughts?
- 6c. How are you significant according to God's word?
- 6d. Is there anything in your life that is giving you significance or pleasure that is coming between you and your worship of God? Who do you think is responsible for this?
- 6e. What should you do? (James 4:7)

6f. In what way are you trying to have your need to be significant met by your own accomplishments?

6g. Who do you think is leading you in this desire?

### **Attack Mode 3: Satan attacks Jesus position as the Son of God**

7a. What area did the devil's third assault (beginning in Luke 4:9) pertain to - Significance, Acceptance, or Security?

7b. What did the devil ask Jesus to prove, implying in some way this was not true?

7c. Is Satan able to quote scripture to us?

7d. What was Jesus' response?

7e. Read Luke 3:22. Was there any need for Jesus to prove Who He was to the devil? Was He accepted by God?

### **Personal Application**

8a. What doubts regarding your acceptance as a child of God has the devil recently given you?

8b. What bad feelings have you had recently regarding your acceptance by someone?

8c. What lie were you believing when you had these feelings?

8d. What are you in relation to God's family?

8e. Except for quoting him scripture, do you ever need to prove who you are to Satan?

8f. In what ways do you try to prove you are worthy of acceptance to others?

8g. Do you ever need to prove anything to anybody regarding who you are?

### **Retreat - Satan Leaves Defeated Hoping to Attack Another Day**

9a. According to Luke 4:13, how much temptation did the devil try on Jesus?

9b. Was he successful in any?

9c. According to Luke 4:13, was the devil finished in tempting Jesus? What was he going to wait for?

9d. According to Matthew 4:11 and Mark 1:13, who came and cared for Jesus' needs?

### **Personal Application**

10a. What temptations do you think the devil will try on you?

10b. When you resist the devil and he leaves you, will he ever return? If so when (Luke 4:13)?

10c. According to Phillipians 4:19, who will provide for your needs?

10d. How many of your needs will be provided for according to Phillipians 4:19?

### **Attack Resumes - Satan Thinks He Has A More Opportune Time**

The account is recorded in Matthew 16:20-24. This time Satan used a different approach. He used another person, a friend and disciple of Jesus. He attempted to conceal his identity and get Jesus to disobey God.

11a. What had Jesus just confirmed regarding Who He was through Peter in Matthew 16:16?

11b. What did Jesus tell the disciples must happen to Him?

11c. Who took Him aside and what did he say to Jesus according to Matthew 16:22?

11d. What did Jesus say to him?

### **Personal Application**

12a. Has the devil ever used someone close to you to get to you? How did you respond?

12b. How can you know for sure that the devil is using someone to persuade you to do something that God does not want you to do?

**Lesson 5**  
**PROTECTION AND HEALING FROM SERVING OTHERS**

1. Study Mark 9:33-35.
  - a. What were the disciples arguing about?
  - b. Why do you think the disciples had a desire to be great? (What was motivating them?)
  - c. What did Jesus tell them they had to be in order to be first?
  - d. What do you desire first and foremost in your life? (Be honest-no “this is what I should say” answers)
  
2. Study Matthew 16:22-23. When do we cause others to stumble?
  
3. Study Mark 10:35-45.
  - a. Do you think James and John understood what Jesus was saying in Mark 9:35?
  - b. Why were the other disciples angry at James and John?
  - c. What did Jesus say one must do in order to be great?
  
4. Study Phillipians 2:5-11  
 What should Be our attitude according to this passage?
  - a. What was the nature of Jesus before He became human?
  - b. What did God do because Jesus humbled Himself?
  
5. Study Luke 9:23-25
  - a. What should one do if he wants to save his life?
  - b. What does this mean?
  
6. Study Isaiah 58:6-12
  - a. List at least eight things that God considers true fasting.
 

1 _____	2 _____	3 _____
4 _____	5 _____	6 _____
7 _____	8 _____	_____
  
  - b. What will be our reward if we do those things according to verses 8 through 12? List beside each reward what this would mean to you?
 

1 _____	- _____
2 _____	- _____
3 _____	- _____
4 _____	- _____
5 _____	- _____
6 _____	- _____
7 _____	- _____
8 _____	- _____
9 _____	- _____
10 _____	- _____
11 _____	- _____
12 _____	- _____





