

# **Book Title - Choose faith! By Susan R. Germanson**

## **Copyright**

United States Copyright Office - Registration number - TXu-1-862-919 April 11, 2013

## **Table of contents**

Author's notes

Forward - Julie Prinzing

Chapter 1 – To control or not to control

Chapter 2 – To sanctify or not to sanctify

Chapter 3 – To persevere or no to persevere

Chapter 4 – To keep or not to keep

Chapter 5 – To forgive or not to forgive

Chapter 6 – To have mercy or to not have mercy

Chapter 7 – To rest or not to rest

Chapter 8 – To finish or not to finish

Chapter 9 – To trust the Provider or not trust the Provider

Chapter 10 – To be Christ-like or not to be Christ-like

## **Acknowledgements:**

I want to give all my thanks and praise to God for giving us Jesus Christ as a perfect example as to how we can live our lives. With Him and His Son this book would not be possible.

## **Author's notes**

This book is about choices in life. It is about understanding the choices of our actions and attitudes. I have used many sources to compile this book. I chose to study other authors/speakers on the various topics in my book. I studied from the best, and they help us tremendously as we choose to explore these topics. I quote them a lot and want to give them credit for their work. Notice I have bolded their names. I also have used the dictionary and the thesaurus so that we can fully understand the meanings of each topic.

The majority of this book is scripture from God's Holy Bible. In other words, it serves as a concordance for people as they choose to grow in their faith. In some chapters I have written out the entire verses. Therefore, you won't need to refer to the Bible. There are other occasions that I just write the verse reference number with a short description. The descriptions are in short phrases, to give you an idea about the contents of that particular verse. With all of the verses organized you will have an opportunity to open your Bible and reflect on each verse. At times I don't comment much because I want you to read the verses and let God's word speak to you.

I am choosing to just post this book on the internet. I want everyone to be able to read this for free. Therefore I have chosen to not earn any money from this project. I do have a copyright on

this book, and hope that it will be respected. I do have two other published books and you can learn more about them on my website: [www.SusanGermanson.com](http://www.SusanGermanson.com)

One thing that I have learned in life is to be able to be in a tough situation, but also praise God at the same time. In the Old Testament, when people were grieving, they would tear their robes. Job is a great example of how we can tear our robes and praise God at the same time.

Job:1:20-21 At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship <sup>21</sup> and said: “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I will depart. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised.”

Job 6:10 Then I would still have this consolation—my joy in unrelenting pain—that I had not denied the words of the Holy One.

In life, we have our ups and downs. Most everyone has had some very difficult times. However it is our choice if we will praise God during those times. Hopefully this book will help you to do just that. I pray that the Bible and this book will make a significant impact on your life!

**Forward by Julie Prinzing - will be added later**

## **Chapter 1: To control or not to control?**

Our goal as Christian mom's/wives, dads/husbands... is to not control, but to let go! In other words, to surrender everything to God. Let Him do what He needs to do, when He deems necessary. God has never let us down! He has been there again, and again, and again.....for us!

God gives us all free choice. He doesn't bully us, control us, manipulate us...to do things or how to act. That is not God's style. He says, "Come my arms are open...." He doesn't go and round us up by force. He doesn't kick down the doors of our lives, but we are told to knock and the door will be open.

The person that does the controlling/manipulating is the devil. 1 John 5:19 *"We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one."* It is the evil one who controls....God doesn't. We should endeavor to be more like God/Christ, and not to have anything to do with Satan. Therefore we can choose to do our best to not control anymore, and to be like God who gives everyone free choice.

We need to learn what it is like to completely surrender everything to Him on a 24/7 basis. It will be such a great experience amidst all of the pain and problems! We can be at peace, because we know that God is in charge and His plan is way better than ours! The Passion of the Christ is a great movie to understand about surrendering to God's will, wisdom, and desires for our life. Jesus did it magnificently.

By taking things out of God's hands by manipulating/controlling/checking up on the person/over-encouraging/enabling... We are sinning and becoming more like the enemy. Even if our intentions are good! This is how Satan deceives us and this is one of his tactics to keep us and our faith from growing in the Lord! "We can do it" "We can take care of everything." No we can't do it, and we shouldn't do it! However, we should turn it over to God on a 24/7 basis. We need to treat people like God treats us. No manipulation, control...just allow them to make their own choices.

So how does this work in relationships? It is called tough love...If they blow it by making bad choices, and if we truly haven't manipulated or controlled them, then they are going to get the consequences of that choice. This way all of the pressure and heavy load is taken off of us! They are the ones free to make the choices, but they are the ones to suffer the consequences of the choice. They can't say that we were manipulative, overbearing, always checking up on us....because we didn't do it! We weren't the cause of their frustrations, we did not add to their frustrations, but they added to their own frustrations. This obviously is not easy to do, but it is possible. We have Jesus as our role model. He could have manipulated, controlled His way out of the crucifixion, but He didn't.

If the poor choices of another person are truly harming us, we might need to get out of that relationship. But we will leave holding our head high, knowing that we were pretty close to

being squeaky clean. We are only in charge of **our actions and attitudes**.

Therefore as we pray, we need to praise, confess, thank and then give our prayer requests:

1. It is biblical to pray for the protection from the evil one. John 17:15 *"My prayer is not that you take them out of the world, but that you protect them from the evil one."*
2. Then we need to pray more scripture so that we can unleash God's mighty power.
3. Next we need to pray for people, but doing so with the words...*Father do as you wish!*

We will all be so glad that God has done with us what He has wished, and not what we wished...We are much better off!

## **Chapter 2: To be sanctified or not to be sanctified?**

Why does God choose to sanctify us? It is His way of gradually bringing us to perfection. It can be a very painful process as He gets rid of our imperfections, impure thoughts, actions... Therefore we really need to examine our lives through the eyes and power of God. In other words, we need to face our own demons. This sanctification process is on-going until we see our Lord. It is similar to story of the Silversmith: (Num 31:19-24)

1. A silversmith must put the silver into the hottest part of the flame. He needs to sit very close to the fire and hold on to it the whole time.
2. He needs to watch the silver the whole time so that it isn't damaged by being in the fire too long.
3. The silver is completely purified when the silversmith can see his reflection in the silver. Then he pulls the silver out of the fire.

This is similar to how we get purified of our impurities/imperfections/sins... by our loving God in heaven. Purifying the silver is more important than making the silver, because it is a process of getting rid of all of the impurities.

### **What do we do about this pain of purification/sanctification?**

It is of utmost importance that we surrender everything to God. We need to surrender our lives, our situations, people near and dear to us, our pain, our frustrations...to Him. In other words, put everything on the altar! This is hard for people to do, because we tend to be controllers of our situations. By controlling our situations, we are not giving God a chance to work. He is ever-present, all- knowledgeable, and all-powerful. Therefore it makes sense to give everything to Him.

Many times when we are in the process of sanctification, we think that we are surrendering everything in our lives on a daily basis. However, we may not be surrendering all. We may be forgetting to surrender our aching hearts to God also. The most important thing that we can do when we are experiencing excruciating pain is to put our hearts on God's altar.

Why? Because complete healing is only possible when we give our hearts to God. He is the Great Surgeon, and He knows exactly what we need. By putting our hearts on the altar it is just like being in ICU in a hospital. However, we are in God's hospital. (By the way it is the best hospital around!) We are very weak, tender, broken...but God will take care of us in His ICU. Then pretty soon we will be out of God's ICU, and we will go to a regular room in God's hospital. Before we know it, we will be getting out of the hospital!

**A pearl of wisdom to remember when one is healing from emotional pain:** Our healing is only dependent on God...not on other's actions or attitudes. Be prepared, it is possible that you won't get the reaction that you want from your loved one. However it is ***your choice*** to engage in the healing process by giving God your heart, holding on to His hand, listening with all your heart, and choosing to obey Him. Notice these underlined words are verbs. It takes faith and action on our part! Complete healing is possible, whether the other people are helpful or hurtful in our healing journey!

## Vow of separation to the Lord - Numbers chapter 6

This chapter in the Bible shows us how to have a vow of separation to the Lord. (In other words, a special time of sanctification) The Lord was telling Moses how the Nazirites could experience this vow of separation to the Lord. They needed to follow various procedures during this time period so that they could completely yield themselves to the Lord. For example they needed to abstain from wine, not put a razor to their heads, not be near dead bodies... However, the lesson is not what they did, but why they did it. Therefore if we choose to do a vow of separation to the Lord, we will each need to do different things. Just listen to the Lord and He will tell you what to do.

Read the whole chapter of Numbers 6, but here are some of the key verses:

Vs. 2-3 *'If a man or woman wants to make a special vow, **a vow of separation to the LORD** as a Nazirite, he must abstain from wine and other fermented drink...'*

Vs. 6 *"He must be **holy until the period of his separation to the LORD is over.**"*  
(Notice it is for a time period. God will tell you when it is over.)

Vs. 8 *"Throughout the period of his separation he is **consecrated** to the LORD."*

Vs. 12 *"He **must** dedicate himself to the LORD for the period of his separation..."*

Vs. 13 *"The previous days **do not count**, because he became **defiled** during his separation." (Be careful not to break your vows during your time of separation.)*

Vs. 14 *"There he is to present his offerings to the LORD : a year-old male lamb **without defect** for a burnt offering, a year-old ewe lamb **without defect** for a sin offering, a ram **without defect** for a fellowship offering." (We need to present ourselves to God, as best as we can, without defect.) (Refer to Numbers 18:29)*

Vs. 20 *"After that, the Nazirite may drink wine." (This shows that this special time of sanctification does have an end.)*

Vs. 21 *"This is the law of the Nazirite who vows his offering to the LORD in accordance with his separation, in addition to whatever else he can afford. He **must fulfill the vow he has made,** according to the law of the Nazirite. "*

## The tabernacle and the ark of the covenant

During the sanctification process, God wants to bring us closer to Him. He wants to bring us from the outer court of the tabernacle into the inner court. Most people are in the outer court, and not many have made it into the inner court. It is your choice as to how far you are willing to allow God to draw you into His dwelling place. By being willing to fellowship in His sufferings, we are choosing to draw closer to Him. Thus, making it more possible to enter in to His holy of holies. "We can live our lives on the outer perimeters of our salvation, in Christ but not with Christ, or we can accept the challenge to enter and behold His glory. Godliness is a pursuit, salvation is a gift. Will you be like the shepherds who received the invitation of the angels and 'came with haste' (Luke 2;16)? Can you live with the mediocrity of life in the outer court when you have been invited to dwell in the excellence of the innermost place? If you dare to enter, you will never be the same." (**From Mended Hearts, Eternal Ties**)

### Definitions

#### **Dictionary definition – sanctify:**

Function: *transitive verb*

1. to set apart to a sacred purpose or to religious use : CONSECRATE
2. to free from sin : PURIFY
3. a. to impart or impute sacredness, inviolability, or respect to  
b. to give moral or social sanction to
4. to make productive of holiness or piety, observe the day of the sabbath, to *sanctify* it  
-- Deut 5:12 "Observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy, as the LORD your God has commanded you."

#### **Thesaurus – sanctify:**

Function: *verb*

Synonyms: BLESS, consecrate, hallow

#### **Thesaurus – bless:**

Function: *verb*

Text: to make holy by religious rite or word.

Example: The priest *blessed* the water and wine.

Synonyms: consecrate, hallow, sanctify

Related Word: dedicate

Contrasted Words: defile, desecrate, profane

#### **Dictionary – sanctification:**

Function: *noun*

1. an act of sanctifying
2. a. the state of being sanctified  
b. the state of growing in divine grace as a result of Christian commitment after baptism or conversion.

## **Bible search for the word "Sanctify" – 7 results**

1. Leviticus 21:8 "Regard them as **holy**, because they offer up the food of your God. Consider them **holy**, because I the LORD am **holy** - I who make you **holy**. "  
(**Holy** = who **sanctify** you/ who set you apart as **holy**)
2. John 17:17, 19  
Vs. 17 "**Sanctify** them by the truth; your word is truth."  
(It is by immersing ourselves in God's word that we may become holy!)  
Vs. 19 "For them I **sanctify** myself, that they too may be truly **sanctified**."  
  
**Sanctify** - Greek "hagiazō" - (set apart for sacred use or make **holy**);
3. 1 Thessalonians 5:23 "May God himself, the God of peace, **sanctify** you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."
4. 2 Thessalonians 2:13 "But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the **sanctifying** work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth."
5. Hebrews 9:13 "The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean **sanctify** them so that they are outwardly clean."
6. 1 Peter 1:2 "Who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the **sanctifying** work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance."

## **More verses about sanctification/becoming holy:**

Hebrews 12:14 "Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be **holy**; without holiness no one will see the Lord."

2 Corinthians 7:1 "Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God."

Romans 12:1 (Living Sacrifices) "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, **holy** and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual act of worship."



### **What we can do while we are being sanctified:**

Hebrews 13:15 *"Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise--the fruit of lips that confess his name."*

Psalms 59:16 *"But I will sing of your strength, in the morning I will sing of your love; for you are my fortress, my refuge in times of trouble."*

### **Verses to help us with the pain of sanctification:**

Psalms 42:5 *"Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God."*

### **God's promises to us:**

John 16:22 *"Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy."*

Psalms 34: 19-20 *"A righteous man may have many troubles, but the LORD delivers him from them all; he protects all his bones, not one of them will be broken."*

Psalms 71:20 *"Though you have made me see troubles, many and bitter, you will restore my life again; from the depths of the earth you will again bring me up." (God does restore us again, and again, and again...Think about your life and what God has already done for you.)*

### **Why we want to be sanctified:**

Matthew 24:36 9 *"No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father." (So that we can be ready for our Lord's second coming)*

Matthew 7:13-14 *The Narrow and Wide Gates "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it."*

### **The benefits of sanctification:**

Psalms 89:14-16 *"Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; love and faithfulness go before you. Blessed are those who have learned to acclaim you, who walk in the light of your presence, O LORD. They rejoice in your name all day long; they exult in your righteousness."*

### **My prayer for you during your sanctification time:**

Numbers 6:24-26 *"The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace."*

## **Chapter 3: To persevere or not to persevere?**

**Luke 8:15** But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.

We have all been through situations that are very challenging. Many times it can be especially hard, because it is attacking our Achilles Heel. (Where we are most vulnerable emotionally.) Therefore, “The Passion of the Christ” is a great movie that exemplifies perseverance. An incredible amount of **strength** and **hope** is apparent in this movie. Here are some “pearls of wisdom” from God:

1. Jesus never gave up amidst excruciating pain. If Jesus can persevere with His pain, then I should be able to persevere with mine.
2. His Mother witnessed the horrible atrocities that were being done to her child, and remained at His side the whole time. Therefore, as parents we should be able to stay strong, by the grace of God, no matter what situation comes our way. In the movie when Mary realized that all of the pain and torment was starting, she was portrayed as saying, “So be it.” If we truly trust God, we should be able to say, “So be it.”
3. We need to put all of our pain in perspective. Even though our pain can paralyze us emotionally at times, it will never compare to the **magnitude** of pain that both Jesus and Mary had to endure.

The following are observations of the movie, and some scripture verses for reference. By studying the last hours of Jesus life we can learn a lot about perseverance. When we find ourselves in a horrible situation that just doesn’t seem to let up, we can learn a very valuable lesson from Jesus. The Passion of Jesus, (the final hours of suffering) is packed with wisdom for us.

### **The following are three important observations:**

#### **1. He remained peaceful/calm and refused to use any kind of violence.**

In the garden, as well as His final hours, Jesus remained very calm amidst all the chaos and turmoil. He portrayed civil disobedience and passive resistance at its best. He said, “Put down the sword.” We need to do the same. We need to be aware of our swords of our Achilles heel, so that we don’t become dysfunctional with our pain. We need to put down **our** swords, whatever they may be, and come to full peace by trusting God. We all need to approach our situations like Jesus did with calmness, class, and dignity. We do this by completely surrendering **all** to God and acknowledging that His plan is better than ours. (Jer 29:11-13) It is much easier to lose the peace/calmness and to engage in the fight. Don’t engage! Jesus didn’t! During the Passion of the Christ, Jesus wasn’t as bold as he was in his ministry. Previous to the Passion, He tipped over tables (Mt 21:12, Mk 11:15), called people “Broods of vipers (Mt 12:34, 23:33)... However, during the passion, He didn’t fight back! Most of the time, He remained silent. If He answered a question, He did so very calmly and usually with another question. (Refer to Is 26:3, Phil 4:7, Ps 29:11 about peace.)

#### **2. Jesus’ situation was so wrong!**

In many of our situations we find ourselves the victim of an unfortunate circumstance, or the recipient of someone else’s dysfunction. Sometimes we are at fault for what is

happening, but many times we are not. With respect to Jesus, there were many things that were done absolutely wrong in Christ's last hours:

- The Sanhedrin held an illegal court meeting at night. **WRONG!**  
Mt 26:57-69, Mk 14:53-65, Lk 22:66-71 Jn 18:19-24
- In the movie, Jesus was put in chains. **WRONG!** This is an oxymoron. Jesus sets people free, so why should He be in chains? First and foremost, He sets us free so that we can spend eternity with God. In addition, He sets us free from our many chains of bondage. It is imperative that we allow Him to set us free during our tough times, too. We can be set free, be at peace, and have the same calmness that Jesus had in His most horrible hours. Only if we choose to let go, and allow God to be in complete control.
- Barabas, the notorious murderer, was freed instead of Jesus. **WRONG!**  
Mt 27:20-21, Mk 15:12, Lk 23:18, Jn 18:40
- In the movie it showed 4 or 5 men scourging Jesus while He was bound to a post. 4 on 1 isn't fair fighting odds. Also Jesus had no weapons and was not able to use them. **WRONG!**
- In the movie it showed people laughing during the scourging. **WRONG!** (It was interesting because there was a range of emotions from despair to laughing.)
- Jesus had to wear a crown of thorns and was constantly mocked. **WRONG!**  
Mt. 27:29, Mk 5:17-20, Jn 19:2
- Jesus was continually hit. **WRONG!** Mt 27:30, Mk 15:19, Jn 19:2
- After scourging Him to the point of near-death, they chose to crucify Him. **WRONG!** Mt 27:26, 31, Mk 15:15, 20, Jn 19:1, 16
- Making Him carry a heavy cross when He was in no physical condition to do so. **WRONG!** (However this symbolized that He was carrying **our** burdens, and He chose to keep going!) Jn 19:17
- Nailing an innocent person to a cross. Crucifixion was the most horrible way to die. **WRONG!**
- Mocking Him and giving Him vinegar water while He was on the cross. **WRONG!** Mt 27:34, Mk 15:23, Lk 23:36, Jn 19:29

Even though everything was wrong, Jesus **chose** to finish everything in accordance to His Father's will:

John 4:34 *"My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work."*

John 19:30 *"When he had received the drink, Jesus said, 'It is finished.' With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit."*

### **3. Jesus did all of this when He was experiencing the most pain.**

A key factor for us to consider, while we are learning what it truly means to persevere, is to study what Jesus said when He was on the cross. It is very important that we fully understand what happened. We need to remember that He made these statements when He was in the **most pain**! Therefore, if we want to be like Jesus, we need to do the same. We need to be able to, in the midst of our searing pain, do exactly what Jesus did. Let's look at His statements and what He did:

- Lk 23:34 *"Father forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."* Lk 23:43 *"I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."*

Jesus forgave people during the most painful moments of His life. We need to strive to forgive others when we are in the most pain and not just when our hearts are healed. Most people forgive others when they are at the point of moving on with their lives. How can we forgive others when we are in the midst of searing pain? This is tough to do! It is possible when we look at Jesus' example, and choose to surrender everything into God's hands. By the way...

- Look at the last part of Lk 23:43 *"for they do not know what they are doing."* This is true! Most people, due to their dysfunction, really don't know what they are doing. Most people don't want to hurt us, but they do so because of their insecurities. (Their Achilles Heel)
- If you have never had a major tragedy in your life or have been mistreated in a cruel manner, it is more important to learn **how** to forgive. Forgiveness is a process and it needs to be handled with care. Forgiveness must be heart-felt and genuine. Therefore you may need to take your time and do it correctly. False forgiveness doesn't do anyone any good. **Authenticity** is more important than **timing**. If you have had experience with forgiveness, try to forgive while you are in the midst of your pain. Even though you are still hurting, it is very freeing. It was the same with Jesus. He was in excruciating pain, but He was very free!
- Mk 15:34 *"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"*

Jn 19:28 *"I am thirsty."*

We need to be honest and admit that we are in pain and discomfort. Jesus did! However, He didn't **focus** on that pain! He kept his focus on the task at hand; which was being obedient, sacrificing His life for all, giving God the glory...This was accomplished because Jesus chose to see the situation in an **eternal** rather than **earthly** perspective. He focused on **God's promises** and not what other **people did or said**. It is imperative that we keep a heavenly perspective in our situations. If we think about it in earthly terms, it will be very self-defeating. If we are serious about our commitment to become more like Jesus, then we need to be **honest** with our pain, but **not to focus** on it. There will be more about **God's promises** later on in this paper.

- Jn 19:30 *"It is finished."* Lk 23:46 *"Father, into your hands, I commit my spirit."*

Jesus completed His task by surrendering to God's will/plan all the way **until the very end**. Every situation must stay in God's hands no matter what new bumps in the road may come our way. Just fasten the seatbelt of faith/hope in case the ride turns into a rollercoaster. Our goal should be to stay true to God the whole time. This is not an easy thing to do, but it can be done!

4. The following are other observations in the movie to consider:

- a. Don't be like Peter and deny Jesus/God.  
(MT 26:69-75, Mk 14:66-72, Lk 22:54-62, Jn 18:15-18, 25-57) When the pressure was on Peter chose to deny God. When the stress is getting to be too much, strive to do nothing wrong and to not deny God. Yes, we are hurt, angry, frustrated, sad...**but this doesn't give us permission to do wrong.** Taking things into our hands (in other words: doing wrong) is telling God that He doesn't have it under control.
- b. You will be tormented by the enemy! Satan showed up many times during the movie... but stand tall with God. According to **C.T. Arends**, "Surrender to God, but don't surrender to Satan." (Job 1:6, 2:2 – Satan on earth)  
*1 Peter 5:8 "Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour."*

*Rev 12:12 "But woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short."*

- c. In the movie Jesus fell down so many times when He was carrying His cross. Some of those falls were very brutal. This is similar to our hard times...
- We have had so many hard times in the past, too many to count.
  - Or one tragedy has made us fall down many times. So it seems like we are taking 1 step forward and 5 steps back.
- We need to remember that Jesus kept getting up. We must do the same!
- d. During His ministry He did say:  
Matthew 5:44 "But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."  
John 13:34 "A new command I give you: Love one another. **As I have loved you**, so you must love one another."

"Love one another as **I have loved you**..." This means I need to love **all the people**, even those who have **hurt me**. It does not say "love one another how **I want** to love them." These are commands and are tough ones to do correctly. Jesus again serves as a great example. During the Passion, scourging, mocking...there was:

- **Hate** in the eyes of the Roman soldiers and the Jewish Sanhedrin.
- **Grief/pain** in the eyes of Mother Mary and all of Jesus followers.
- **Love** in the eyes of Jesus.

Take time and consider what Jesus did and what the above verses mean to you.

- e. At the end of the movie His skin was completely healed, except for the holes in his hands. His skin was perfect, and this is a huge difference from His scarred body from the scourging. Therefore, we will be, and can be, fully healed **emotionally** and **spiritually** if we choose to **persevere** and **surrender all** to God. This does not mean that we will always be **physically** healed. If we trust in God during our tough times we can be spiritually and emotionally whole again.

### **What is in your cup? (By Dr. Tracy Kemble [www.rightliving.tv](http://www.rightliving.tv))**

Earlier the topic of focusing on **God's promises** instead of one's **pain** was discussed. This can be done if we choose to have a **heavenly** instead of an **earthly** perspective about our situation. According to Dr. Tracy Kemble, our lives are like a cup. Whatever is in your cup, is in your life. For instance, write down all the painful times, memories, and hurtful words that are still affecting you now. (In other words, all of your Achilles Heels.) What bad messages are in your cup? Is there room in your cup for God to put the good things?

The bad things in your cup are **not yours**. They are mostly made up of someone else's fear, pain, anxiety, issues, insecurities...They have stuffed them in your cup and **you have also allowed** these people to put these things in your cup. We all need to empty our cups to make room for the good things. The promises of God! Throw all the bad away, don't claim it anymore, give it to God (He can handle it), and be healed! Now for every negative message (Achilles Heel) that you have thrown away, you need to find one of God's promises to take its place in your cup.

### **For instance:**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| a. People who have been abandoned.                    | a. I will never leave you or forsake you. (Josh 1:5)<br>I hold you in the palm of my hand. (Is 49:16) |
| b. People with broken lives.                          | b. I will restore your life again (Ps. 71:20)   |
| c. People with a bad self-esteem due to verbal abuse. | c. I am wonderfully made! (Ps 139:13-14)  |

### **Dictionary definition - Persevere**

Function: *intransitive verb*

to **persist** in a state, enterprise, or undertaking in spite of counterinfluences, opposition, or discouragement

**Synonyms:** carry on, go on, hang on, persist

**Related Word:** continue, get on, press (on), proceed

**Idioms:** hang in there, hang tough, keep at it, keep driving, never say die, tough it out

**Antonyms:** **give up**

## Bible verses for perseverance or persevere

**Romans 5:3,4** *"Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance, perseverance, character; and character, hope."*

**Hebrews 10:36** *"You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised."*

**James 1:12** *"Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him."*

**2 Thessalonians 3:5** *"May the Lord direct your hearts into God's love and Christ's perseverance."*

**Hebrews 12:1** *"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us."*

**James 1:3** *"because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance."*

**James 1:4** *"Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."*

**James 5:11** *"As you know, we consider blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy."*

**2 Peter 1:5-7** *"For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness, and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love."*

**1 Corinthians 13:7** *"Love always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres."*

**1 Timothy 4:16** *"Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers."*

## More verses:

Revelation 2:2

Revelation 2:3

Hebrews 11:27

Revelation 2:19

2 Corinthians 12:12.

2 Thessalonians 1:4

Jude 1:17

**Dan Roelofs** was a young pastor who courageously fought cancer, and passed away leaving a wife and two children. As he was battling his cancer he wrote a book titled, "A Place Called Surrender". Even though he didn't like what he was going through, he chose to persevere in his faith under the toughest conditions. In the process he learned that it isn't the comfortable homes, good jobs, meaningless accomplishments, things... that are important in life. "All that

has been meaningless has been stripped away. Loving God and loving people have become paramount. Fear and discouragement is never from God. I could choose my thoughts, and I left the conversation rejoicing inside that there is always hope with God, because He is bigger than any obstacle. When you have laid down everything about your life before God, fear cannot remain—there is nothing more that can be taken away. I have the one thing I desire, and that is Christ.” Please refer to 2 Chron 22:13 about fear and discouragement.

According to Larry Lea, we have a shorehouse of spiritual weapons at our disposal as we are in the process of persevering. They are as follows:

1. Blood of Jesus (Rev 12:11)
2. Armor of God (Eph 6:10-18)
3. Praise
4. Word of God (Eph 6:17)
5. Name of Jesus (Mt 4:10-11, 1 Sam 17:45)
6. **Perseverance – Isn’t it amazing that when we choose to persevere, we are using one of God’s spiritual weapons! (My bolding)**

I would like to add:

7. The testimony of the saints (Rev 12:11)
8. Fasting (Peter Wagner) (2 Chron 20:3)
9. Specific prayer (Dean Sherman)

### **In conclusion, the following are thoughts to consider:**

1. We will never be victims as bad as Jesus was a victim. He suffered infinitely more than we ever will. He is our example, so we need to keep our eyes on Him.
2. It is important to be able to have the amount of praise that you give to God exceed your amount of pain that you are experiencing. This can be a challenge, but it can be done! Read the Psalms, pray, listen to praise music, sing to the Lord....
3. Life is always a choice. The best example is to study the crucifixion. As Jesus hung on the cross, there were also two men that were being crucified. They were both in the same situation, but they had two completely different attitudes and actions. One asked for forgiveness from Jesus and the other cursed Jesus. When we are experiencing pain, we are all in the same situation. We hurt! We need to acknowledge our pain and say, “Ouch!”. But choose to persevere and surrender completely to the will of God. Just like Jesus did!
4. God is always there... Always! Words from a song written by Avalon.  
“You Were There”  
*“You were the victor in the king  
You were the power in David’s swing (David and Goliath)  
**You were the calm in Abraham**  
You are the God who understands  
You are the strength when we have none.  
You are the living only one.*



*You **were**, you **are**, and you **will always be** the risen Lamb of God..."*

5. God doesn't call us to **give up**! I haven't found any Bible verses that tell us to **give up**!  
Focus on your faith and relationship with God and you will find the strength to go on.

1 Chron 22:19 "Now **devote** your **heart** and your **soul** to seeking the Lord your God."

2 Kings 23:25 "Neither before nor after Josiah was there a king like him who **turned** to the LORD as he did-with **all his heart** and with **all his soul** and with **all his strength**, in accordance with all the Law of Moses."

## **Chapter 4: To keep or not to keep?**

### **Table of Contents**

- A. Definition of gatekeepers/doorkeepers**
- B. Present day examples of gatekeepers/doorkeepers**
- C. Information about cleansing**
- D. Examples of protection and maintaining a clean/safe environment in the Bible.**
- E. Duties of the gatekeepers in the Old Testament**
- F. Stories in the Bible about the gate/doorkeepers**
- G. Stories in the Bible about how the temple was ruined**
- H. We need Gatekeepers in our lives now!**
- I. Gatekeepers Prayer – (There are three parts)**
  - 1. Taking a stand - Offense**
  - 2. Claiming back - Offense**
  - 3. Posting Gatekeepers – Defense**
- J. Gatekeepers in the New Testament**
- K. Modern day example of the importance of protection**
- L. A final tidbit of information.**
  - Guards for the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier**
- M. Conclusion/Final thoughts**

## **To keep or not to keep?**

This is a study on the gatekeepers/doorkeepers in the Bible. There isn't much written about gatekeepers/doorkeepers, but they were very important in the Old Testament. Therefore, we should learn more about their lives and how we can utilize their crucial ministry in our lives here on earth.

### **A. Definition of gatekeepers/doorkeepers**

**Doorkeeper**: a person who tends a door

**Gatekeeper**: one that tends or guards a gate, a person who controls access

In essence, gate/doorkeepers main goal is to protect whatever was inside the gate or door. They need to monitor the people who enter and exit the doors/gates so that their area remains undisturbed. Their goal is to keep it safe from destruction, maintain its cleanliness, and keep it in operational order. Sometimes the gatekeepers are armed with weapons to ensure the protection of their area.

### **B. Present day examples of gatekeepers/doorkeepers**

1. One example of this protection is found in the sport of Soccer. It is the most popular sport around the world. The majority of countries play soccer and many have national teams that compete worldwide. One key player is the Goalie. However, in the soccer world they chose to refer to the Goalie as the Keeper. Their main task is to protect the entrance of the goal and to **keep** the ball out of the goal. Keepers usually stay very close to the goal. Many times the Keeper will sacrifice their own safety to protect the goal, even to the point of injury. Keepers will rush the opposing team, dive in mid air; will suffer hard landings...as they desperately reach for the ball so that it won't go into the goal. The amount of pressure that a Keeper endures is huge. However, the Keepers go into strict training to be ready to handle all of that pressure. They do many agility drills, strengthen their bodies through grueling exercises, mentally prepare themselves for the game through various visualization techniques, and emotionally get psyched up for their duty. Keepers take their job very seriously.
2. Another example of protection that is used today is in our schools. Ever since the tragedy at Columbine High School, all of the schools around the world have taken extra measures for protection and security. In the past, the Hall Monitors were specifically checking on students who were skipping their classes. Now, the most important job for a Hall Monitor is to keep an eye out for unwanted visitors. In addition, all staff wear name badges so it is easy to recognize a visitor in the school. After all the students arrive to school in the morning, the majority of schools lock down their buildings. For the rest of the school day there is only one entrance to the school and all the other doors are locked. This way the exiting and entering of all people can be monitored. Most schools have door guards, but prefer to call these people "Greeters." They monitor who comes in the school. The visitors need to sign in and wear a visitor badge. By having visitors and staff

wearing name tags, the Hall Monitors can quickly identify the “intruders” and take action.

As we can see from these two modern day examples, gatekeepers are responsible for **protecting** their particular area. In addition, they are responsible to keep that area **clean** of anything that might cause harm.

### **C. Information about cleansing**

The God-fearing people did whatever it took to keep the God’s temple clean. They used extraordinary measures to build, fix, and clean the temple. God’s people were so serious about their worship that no one was permitted into the temple unless they were properly clean. That is why there were gate/doorkeepers. They even made sure that only the clean people could enter and kicked out the unclean people. Here are some reasons people couldn’t enter due to being unclean:

- Women with their periods
- Women who just delivered a baby.
- Being next to a dead person.

There were rules about cleansing oneself. The people used a mikvah or bath at each entrance so that they could cleanse themselves before entering. Priests also had to cleanse themselves before performing the offerings by using a laver, which was found in the inner courtyard of the temple. This was the beginning of modern day baptism as we know it today.

### **D. Examples of protection and maintaining a clean/safe environment in the Bible.**

In the Bible, there was much effort to use protection in order to keep the unclean things out, and to help maintain the cleanliness and purity of a place.

- satan was kicked out of heaven, because He sinned and became unclean. Ezekiel 28:11-19
- God kicked Adam and Eve out of His first “Temple”, the Garden of Eden Genesis 3:23-24
- Noah’s Ark - God was tired of all the rebellious unclean people. Genesis 6:5-8, 11-13
- Blood of lambs on doorposts as protection, so that the evil would not to enter. Exodus 12:1-29 (vs. 22-23 – “Not permit the destroyer to enter.”)
- God kept Moses and the first generation Israelites (except Joshua and Caleb) out of the Promised Land because they sinned. Numbers 27:12-14, Deuteronomy 31:2
- Cleansing at the lavers to enter the sanctuary. Exodus 30:17-21, 40:30-32
- Anointing the oil. Exodus 30:22-33
- Making the Tabernacle. Exodus 25:8

- Make the altar holy. Exodus 29:36-37
- Materials for the Tabernacle. Exodus 35:4 until the end of Exodus
- Water for cleansing. Numbers Chapter 19
- Clean vs. unclean. Leviticus 10:10, 11:47, 15:3
- Purification after childbirth Leviticus 12:1-8
- Regulations for being clean/diseases. Leviticus Chapters 13-16
- Responsibilities of Priests/Levites/Gatekeepers to keep the sanctuary clean. Numbers Chapter 18. (Especially verse 29)
- Celebrating the Passover. 2 Chronicles 30:16-27. Not all were clean, so Hezekiah prays to God, and God heals them. So the celebration goes on with more sacrifices and people being cleansed. Great joy never seen before.
- Priests duties in Inner court. Ezekiel 44:  
vs10-14 Bad Levites  
vs 15-16 Good Levites  
vs 17-27 Cleanse/clothes/hair....
- At the beginning of His ministry, Jesus kept Satan out of His life through the use of scripture. (When He was being tempted in the desert.)  
Luke 4:1-13
- Right after that, He had to deal with demonic confrontations. He cast out demons and healed the sick. He needed to cleanse the people so that they could hear the word of God.  
Luke 4:33-41, Luke 5:12-14
- Jesus kicked out the tax collectors and accused the people of “making my Father’s house a den of thieves.”  
Matthew 21:12-13
- In Heaven there will be no unclean people either  
Revelation 21:27

#### **E. Duties of the gatekeepers in the Old Testament**

The majority of information about Gatekeepers/Doorkeepers in the Old Testament is about their duties to protect the God’s tabernacle and God’s temple. They were posted at all entrances of the tabernacle and temple. The following is information about Gatekeepers in the Old Testament:

1. To protect the Tree of Life - Genesis 3:23-24
2. Protecting the tabernacle – Numbers 18:1-7 (Duties of priests and Levites) 19:20 (Consequences of being ritually unclean)
3. Keep temple clean/Guard the gates
  - a. 1 Chronicles 9:19, 22,24,
  - b. 2 Chronicles 8:14
  - c. **2 Chronicles 23:19\*\*\* (This is the key verse)**
  - d. Nehemiah 7:3

- e. Nehemiah 11:19
  - f. Ezekiel 44:10, about the Levites who deserted God and worshipped idols
- 4. Guard the Ark of the Covenant
  - a. 1 Chronicles 15:2,24
- 5. Guard the storerooms at the gates
  - a. Nehemiah 12:25
- 6. Collect money, responsible for rooms and treasuries
  - a. 2 Kings 22:4
  - b. 1 Chronicles 9:26
  - c. 2 Chronicles 31:14
  - d. 2 Chronicles 34:9
  - e. Nehemiah 12:44,45
- 7. Means of Communication
  - a. 2 Kings 7:10, 11 (People informed them and they shouted the news)
- 8. Ministering in the temple
  - a. 1 Chronicles 26:12
- 9. Didn't leave their posts
  - a. 2 Chronicles 35:15

(division of labor meant guards didn't need to leave their posts for Passover)
- 10. It was a position of some prestige. Throughout the Bible, gate/doorkeepers were the elders the name referred to the position of authority held.
  - a. 2 Kings 23:4 (Look at their rank)
  - b. Ezra 7:24
  - c. Nehemiah 10:28, 39
  - d. Nehemiah 12:47
  - e. Nehemiah 13:4,5
- 11. Were imprisoned
  - a. 2 Kings 25:18 (Taken with prestigious people)
  - b. Jeremiah 52:24 (Taken with prestigious people)
- 12. Miscellaneous verses
  - a. 1 Chronicles 9:17,18, 20 "Temple guards who lived in Jerusalem"
  - b. 1 Chronicles 15:18 "Getting ready to move the Ark of the Covenant"
  - c. 1 Chronicles 16:38 "Worship at Jerusalem and Gibeon"
  - d. 1 Chronicles 26:1, 19 "Assignment of guards from clans of Korah and Merari"
  - e. 2 Chronicles 34:13 "Division of labor in temple repair"
  - f. Ezra 2:42, 70 "Temple workers who returned from exile"
  - g. Ezra 7:7 "Ezra leads temple workers out of exile"
  - h. Ezra 10:24 "The men who had foreign wives" (See Ezra 10:18)
  - i. Nehemiah 7:1, 45,73 "Conclusion of reestablishing the temple and list of workers returned from exile"

**F. The following are stories in the Bible about the gate/doorkeepers.**

1. 2 Chronicles Chapter 23. This is a very important chapter about gatekeepers.

- v. 1-3 Priest Jehoida brought together many people to make a covenant with the king at the temple of God.
  - v. 4-5 The priests and Levites were given the job of being gatekeepers.
  - v. 6 No one is to enter except priests and Levites on duty.
  - v. 7-10 Made sure that each gatekeeper was equipped with weapons.
  - v. 12-13 Athaliah was intent on destroying the temple so she caused a disturbance.
  
  - v. 14-16 Boundaries were set, troops were sent out, but no killing in the temple.
  - v. 18 Jehoida had the priests review the oversight to the situation.
  - **v. 19\*\*\* The Plan. He stationed gatekeepers to keep the unclean out. (This is the key verse)**
2. Joash and Jehoida repair the temple 2 Chronicles 24:1-16
  3. Even though there were gatekeepers and strict rules, people broke into the temple of God and did damage.
    - 2 Chronicles 24:7 Athaliah sons break into temple
    - 2 Chronicles 28:21, 24 King Ahaz stole things from the temple
    - 2 Chronicles 36:15-19 Destroying the temple
    - Read Ezekiel 28:18, because the devil is known for desecrating sanctuaries.
    - Ezekiel 28:11-19 talks about when Satan (formerly the guardian cherub) was expelled from heaven.
  4. King Uzziah knew the importance of defense. 2 Chronicles 26:12-15 He called many people to serve in the army, equipped them all with shields, spears, helmets, coats of armor, bows and slingshots. In addition, machines were placed on the towers.
  5. Confrontation of King Uzziah 2 Chronicles 26:16-21  
 King Uzziah became very prideful, and he chose to enter the temple. Azariah and 80 other courageous priests confronted Uzziah and told him to leave the sanctuary. Uzziah became angry and raged on. Then he was stricken with leprosy on the forehead. The priests "hurried him out" and Uzziah was "eager to leave." For the rest of his life he had leprosy and was excluded from the temple.
  6. Jotham rebuilt the upper gate of the temple 2 Chronicles 27:3
  7. Ahaz took things and shut temple down 2 Chronicles 28:21,24
  8. Hezekiah reopened temple 2 Chronicles Chapter 29
    - 29:3 opened the doors and repaired the Temple.
    - 29:5 Consecrate yourselves and the Temple
    - 29:7 What bad fathers did
    - 29:15-36 Cleanse, purify, and huge atonement.
      - Atonement 1, 20-26
      - Atonement 2, 27-28
    - 29:20-24 Sacrifice animals
  9. Hezekiah built up the defense of the temple because the King of Assyria wanted to conquer Jerusalem.

- 2 Chronicles 32:1-8 blocked water, built another wall, spoke about God's strength
  - 2 Chronicles 32:20-22 Cried out to God, and God saved them
10. King Manasseh ruined the temple. 2 Chronicles 33:1-9
  11. King Josiah chose to repair the temple, purify land and temple, helped the gatekeepers... 2 Chronicles 34
  12. During King Josiah's reign, the gatekeepers didn't need to leave their posts because of the special preparations provided to them. 2 Chronicles 35:15
  13. Destruction of temple 2 Chronicles 36:5-21  
King Nebuchadnezzar (King of Babylon) took many things from the temple and also destroyed the temple. (See these verses in 2 Chronicles 36: 7,10,17-21)

#### **G. Stories in the Bible about how the temple was ruined**

There was evidence that the temple was tampered with and ruined by various people. This is another reason why they needed Gatekeepers/Doorkeepers.

- Temple was broken into - Chronicles 24:7
- AHAZ stole from Temple - 2 Chronicles 28:21, 24
- Leaders of the priests defiling the temple - 2 Chronicles 36:14
- King Nebuchadnezzar takes things and destroys - 2 Chronicles 36: 7,10,17-21

#### **H. We need Gatekeepers in our lives now!**

After reading all of this information about gatekeepers, and the fact that the temple was destroyed, we can see that it was a tough job for the gatekeepers in the Old Testament. How does all of this relate to us and our present day lives? If we follow the history of the temple of God, it started with the tabernacle. Then Solomon built the temple of God. After that, Jesus was the temple of God on earth and now **we** are the temple of God. Therefore, we should make every effort to keep it clean. According to **John Eldredge**, "Each one of us is now the temple of God. So where, then, is the Holy of Holies? Your heart. That's right-your heart. Paul teaches us in Ephesians that 'Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.'"

*1 Corinthians 3:16-1 "Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him; for God's temple is sacred, and you are that temple."*

How can we keep ourselves (The temple of God) clean and in good operational order? We need to be proactive with our prayers and commitment to God. According to **Beth Moore**, "We who are in Christ possess the power through His Word and His Spirit to avoid being defeated by the evil one. Problem is we don't always exercise the power. If we are going to be victorious in a latter-day society, we must become far more defensive and offensive in our warfare." How can we exercise this power when satan is always trying to destroy us? Well we need to have a good offense and defense. The following prayer helps us to do just that.



## I. Gatekeepers Prayer – (There are three parts)

1. Taking a stand - Offense
2. Claiming back - Offense
3. Posting Gatekeepers – Defense

### 1. Taking a stand -Offense (Three step approach to this part)

According to Larry Lea, the author of The Weapons of your Warfare, we need to take a **stand** against the strongholds in our lives and **stand** our ground. Follow the three steps:

#### A. Name the thing that is lording it over you, and declare that Jesus will be the Lord in its place. Example:

*"Depression you are not my lord. Jesus is my Lord."*

Don't allow the negative things to rule over you. Behind every vice in life, there is a principality, a strongman behind it. These negative forces drive you, overwhelm you, attempt to over take you, they never let up. A strongman never comes to show you a good time, it comes to hinder you and eventually to kill you. Luke 11:22 *"But when someone stronger attacks and overpowers him, he takes away the armor in which the man trusted and divides up the spoils."*

#### B. Bind the strongman with the Name of Jesus and the Word of God.

##### 1. Name of Jesus is your key to binding the strongman:

- Proverbs 18:10 Name of the Lord is a strong tower.
- Ephesians 1:20-22 Jesus is above every name and all things.
- Philippians 2:9-11 describes position of Jesus (every knee above, on, and below earth will bow)
- Acts 3:6, 4:29-30, 16:18 all use the Name of Jesus.

##### 2. Word of God: Find verses that counteract your vice/stronghold and use them. This is how you beat up the enemy: The Word breaks the ropes that tie us up. We become free and then can use those ropes to tie up the enemy! We can pray...

*"Listen spirit of loneliness. I have a friend who sticks closer than a brother. Proverbs 18:24. His name is Jesus. He has called me a friend. John 15:15. He loves me and is with me right now. So, spirit of loneliness, in the name of Jesus, get out of my life. Jesus is my Lord, not you!"*

Don't give him any more attention...if he comes back, beat him up again.

#### C. Punish the strongman with songs and praises to Jesus.

He can't stand hearing praises to God, so he won't hang around. Take authority with your praise, and do it again and again. Wear out the enemy

with your praises! Remember what King David said about the enemy. 2 Samuel 22:43.

We are not to beat up the human enemy, just the spiritual one. To the human enemies we need to Love them, Bless them, and Do something good for them. No place in the Word of God does it say to be kind, be patient, or have mercy on satan, because he is here to steal from you, destroy you and kill you. Be kind to people but be mean to the devil. After that strong hold is overcome...go on to the next one....

## **2. Claiming back – Offense**

The first part of this prayer helped us to clean out the bad things. The second part of this prayer focuses on bringing back the good in our lives. According to Larry Lea, our job is to claim back all the good things that have been stolen from us by the Name of Jesus and Word of God. The following verse talks about this. The “strong man” is satan and “someone stronger” is Jesus.

Luke 11:21-22 *“When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are safe. But when someone stronger attacks and overpowers him, he takes away the armor in which the man trusted and divides up the spoils.”*

“Dividing up the spoils” is another way of saying that Jesus is going to bring back everything that belonged to us. According to Beth Moore, “Jesus Christ is going to steal back what Satan has stolen from us! And not all the spoils have to wait until we’re in heaven! Understand that satan can’t take anything the believing hearer claims as hers/his. Once we’ve received the Word, it’s out of his reach. He cannot steal it. However we can give it up by our own volition.”

Exodus 15:3 *“The Lord is a warrior, the Lord is his name.”*

## **3. Posting Gatekeepers – Defense**

Just as they had gatekeepers to protect the Tabernacle and Temple of God in the Old Testament, we need post gatekeepers around us to keep the unclean/bad out and keep the clean/good in our lives. (We just finished Parts A and B by offensively ridding ourselves of the bad and claiming back the good. Now we need our defense to protect what we have just done.

2 Chronicles 23:19 *“He also stationed doorkeepers at the gates of the LORD’s temple so that no one who was in any way unclean might enter.”*

According to **Beth Moore**, “Let’s proactively guard ourselves and our families! The devil is sly and extremely seductive. I believe God is calling upon His church to pro-act rather than react.”

### **I. Gatekeepers in the New Testament**

Previously all of the information about Gatekeepers was from the Old Testament. Now we will explore the New Testament and see what it has to say about Gatekeepers.

a. John 10:1-10

- vs. 3            There is a watchman (gatekeeper) that opens the gate.  
vs. 7-9        Jesus is the gate.  
vs. 1,8,10     There are thieves and robbers who want to **steal**, **kill** and **destroy**.  
(This is why we need to claim back what has been stolen and to post Gatekeepers)

b. Luke 17:11-19 – Lepers were force into isolation because they were considered unclean. They we not allowed to enter many cities and places due to their physical condition. Here is another example of how people would go to great lengths to keep their area clean. (On a side note, this wasn't fair, but we need to heed the advice of keeping our area clean from anything that might infect us spiritually.)

- vs. 12 "They stood at a distance." The lepers were following the laws of their time. They were banished outside the city gates due to their leprosy/uncleanliness. One of those laws (Leviticus 13:46) *"As long as he has the infections he remains unclean. He must live alone; he must live outside the camp."*

To read more about lepers in the New Testament, refer to Matthew 8:1-4 and Mark 1:40-45

J. **Modern day example of importance of protection**

Invasion of Normandy, D-Day, during WWII can serve as a great example to the importance of having good protection against the enemy. This protection must be flawless, so that the enemy cannot penetrate and invade the peoples' territory. Any type of invasion sets the enemy up for overtaking the other side. Allow me some artistic license here, because the Nazis were the enemy/bad guys and the Allies were the good guys. It was **good** that the Allies were finally able to penetrate the beaches of Normandy and get a foothold into the western side of Europe. However, I want to use this example to show that faulty protection/doorkeepers/defense is lethal. This was the case of the German Nazis. We don't want the enemy, Satan, to get into our lives, the way the Allies were able to get into France. The Allies used a huge amount of deception, creativity, and had a diehard mentality, which gave them the victory. Unfortunately, Satan is the same. He uses deception/lies (John 8:44), creativity by masquerading as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14-15) and has a diehard mentality to destroy anyone and everyone (John 10:10).

The Nazis sensed that an invasion was imminent so they strengthened the coastal defense. Their goal was to cover as much of the coast as possible and made the Atlantic Wall. This whole system is similar to what I refer as the gatekeeper. They wanted to keep the enemy, the Allies, out.

1. Big sharp metal objects to block the landing of an amphibious assault. (Like claws)
2. 4 million mines attached to various things in the water.

3. Above the beach, they had gun emplacements – from simple machine gun nests to powerful artillery.
4. Behind the beaches, some fields were flooded to entrap the paratroopers.
5. Huge wooden poles were erected to stop any fighter landings.

However, the Allied spies made everyone aware of what they were to face. With all of this information, they were able to outwit the Nazis. Therefore, the Allies created their own inventions in order to break through the barriers of the strategic entrances into France.

1. Rag doll decoys that were put into parachutes.
2. Engineless aircrafts - gliders
3. Deception campaign – (Night of June 5 – morning of June 6)  
They wanted to deceive the Nazis into thinking that the invasion will come at different places instead of the beaches of Normandy.
  - a. Strategic bombing of the “so-called” (decoy) invasion sites:
    - Nazi defenses
    - Transportation infrastructure
    - Radar installations
  - b. They also made two other false destinations, Le Havre and Calais. The English bomber planes flew from England to these two ports in France in a circling/spiral fashion. They also dropped aluminum strips as they were flying. Therefore, when the Nazi radar picked up this activity, it looked like a convoy of ships was traveling at 8 knots of speed. There were some boats in that area that used recordings of loud sounds such as anchors dropping, voices giving orders, splashing sounds to make this invasion more realistic.

After their deception was underway, the Allies started to descend on the beaches of Normandy.

1. They had gliders, which were towed by other planes. In order to stay quiet they communicated by light rather than sound for the disconnection. They disconnected from the tow planes, and the gliders silently landed behind enemy lines with soldiers and large equipment. (Jeeps, artillery, etc.) Some of the gliders were damaged, but fortunately, the people and equipment were not harmed. These Allied soldiers were to destroy the Nazi defenses and secure the bridges.
2. Paratroopers were dropped behind enemy lines. Some of the paratroopers were real and some were the fake decoys. The dummy paratroopers, called Ruperts, were dropped at a different place. This was called Operation Titanic.
3. Amphibious assault called Neptune had to be postponed one day due to weather. Here is the chronological account of what happened.
  - a. Allied bombers went first
  - b. Numerous ships descended close to the shore. They used artillery from these boats to weaken the Nazi artillery on the shore. From these big ships, the men boarded smaller boats to go to shore.

- c. When the soldiers reached the shore, they couldn't run due to all the metal blockades and wire so they used Banalore torpedoes (used on land) to take out the wire, by bombing out an area.
- d. They also used TNT to blow up the Nazi bunkers. The Allied soldiers had to run up to the wall, put the TNT on the wall, set the fuse, and run back to the ocean in order not to die in the blast.
- e. Boats named Squad Bay went to shore and dropped 36 men each.
- f. Big landing ships brought the big machines and supplies. 5,000 vessels.

The victory for the Allies was in their keen plan of deception. The Nazis thought that the D-Day at Normandy was the **diversion** not the **real invasion**, because there wasn't a harbor at Normandy. Harbors are important because they don't have the big waves pounding their shores. There was no way the Allies could land with such great wave action. Therefore, the Allies made two portable harbors at Normandy called Mulberry A and B. They made their own breakwaters out of enormous walls of concrete (Phoenix) and the old sunken ships from the previous battles. However, the Nazis didn't know about these man-made harbors. Because Normandy wasn't a harbor, the Nazis weren't concerned about security there. Well they were out-foxed!

**K. A final tidbit of information.**

We should learn about the **Guards for the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier**, and choose to follow their example. Their integrity and mission are top notch and can give us insight as we guard our bodies/God's temple. Information was taken from

[www.tombguard.org](http://www.tombguard.org)

**General George S. Patton, Jr.** said it best: *"The highest obligation and privilege of citizenship is that of bearing arms for one's country."*

- The soldiers who stand guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier are hand-picked and rigorously trained. There are men and women. The duty is not for everyone. Over 80% of the soldiers who tryout for this duty do not make it.
- Each soldier must have strong military bearing, discipline, stamina and present an outstanding soldierly appearance. Each Sentinel must be able to flawlessly perform seven different types of walks, honors, and ceremonies. They must retain vast amounts of knowledge concerning the Tomb, Arlington National Cemetery, the United States Army and their unit.
- The mission of the Guard of Honor, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier is as follows:
  - \*Responsible for maintaining the highest standards and traditions of the United States Army and this Nation while keeping a constant vigil at this national shrine.
  - \*Prevent any desecration or disrespect directed toward the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.
- Guards at the Tomb carry unloaded M-14 rifles. They are all sentinels of the Third U.S. Infantry. When on guard they take twenty-one paces down the mat, pause for twenty-one seconds, and then they turn and take twenty-one paces back. Twenty-

one is symbolic of the highest salute afforded dignitaries in military and state ceremonies. 21 gun salute

- From March 15 to September 30, the Changing of the Guard ceremony takes place every half hour. During the rest of the year, it happens every hour. When the cemetery is closed, guard changes occur every two hours.
- Their gloves are moistened to improve his grip on the rifle.
- Where did the idea come from?

The idea of honoring the unknown dead originated in Europe after World War I. The first country to honor its unknown warriors from that war was Great Britain. On 21 December 1920, Congressman Hamilton Fish, Jr., of New York introduced a resolution calling for the return to the United States of an unknown American soldier killed in France and his burial with appropriate ceremonies in a tomb to be constructed at the Memorial Amphitheater in Arlington National Cemetery. The body of an unidentified soldier, killed in France, was laid to eternal rest in the plaza of the Memorial Amphitheater on 11 November 1921. This soldier represents all the unidentified and missing from World War I.

#### **L. Conclusion/Final thoughts**

In conclusion, it is evident that the role of gatekeepers/doorkeepers was very important back in history. Their presence in our lives as physical protectors around our countries borders is just as important today as it was in the past. Moreover, the protection in our lives spiritually is imperative with respect to our health and well-being as human beings.

Unfortunately our enemy, satan, is very intelligent, tricky, and a master at deception. We never know how, where, and when he will show up in our lives again. Neither do we know what he will be his masquerade in his upcoming attack. This is very similar to our current war on terrorism. We are fighting an enemy who is very elusive, crafty, and deadly. Currently our nation is changing our strategy as to how we fight our wars. This annoying nemesis is executing a terror campaign that is completely evil, immoral, and unfortunately one that is effective. Therefore, our country's leadership is going back to the drawing board, studying the enemy, and going forward with the best effort possible. As we fight our spiritual battles, we will need to go back to the drawing board, by spending time with God and in His Word. We need to continue to learn more about satan so that we might not be outwitted by his awful schemes. However, the comforting news is that we do have the most effective weapon in this battle. We have the gift of Jesus Christ who sacrificed His life once and for all, so that we might all have eternal life. We can rest assured that by having Jesus in our lives, we have everything that we need for this battle.

Proverbs 21:30 *"There is no wisdom, no insight, no plan that can succeed against the Lord."*

1 John 3:8 *"The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work."*

1 John 5:3-5 *"This is the love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands and not burdensome, for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God."*

## Chapter 5: To forgive or to not forgive?

Some of the ideas come from Barbara Pizzarello, counselor in California.

### 1. Why should we forgive?

2 Corinthians 2:11 – “in order that Satan might not outwit us.”

### 2. Unforgiveness is...

- a. Holding on to the offense.
- b. Believing that if I let it go, I will be vulnerable again.
- c. Holding a grudge.
- d. Staying bitter instead of getting better.
- e. Shutting off our feelings until we lose the capacity to:
  1. love
  2. see beauty
  3. feel
  4. be intimate with God, others and ourselves
  5. look inside ourselves
  6. have honest relationships
  7. laugh at ourselves and the world
  8. enjoy life

Everything becomes tainted and stained. We see the world through “the offense”. Obsessing over what happened... We also begin to identify ourselves by the offense.

### 3. Who do we forgive?

1. Self
2. Others
3. God
4. Circumstances
5. Nature

### 4. In order to forgive, one needs...

- Complete awareness of the situation to fully forgive...no more denial...Otherwise the forgiveness is artificial. One must forgive genuinely in order to completely heal.
- To realize that we all need forgiveness. We all make mistakes, whether they are intentional or not.
- To forgive unconditionally. We have to abandon our expectations that the offender will repent for sure. Many times the victim does all the work when the offender sits back and does nothing. Offenders are great at denying...so don't wait around for the rest of your life for them to see the light.
- To accept our responsibility in the situation. Not all situations are 50/50 at fault. Some times it can be 100/0, as in abusive situations. No one ever deserves to be abused! Other times it can be 95/5. Dig deep and figure it out.
- To realize that we may need to forgive ourselves.



## 5. Other ideas

- a. Write every offense on paper and **attach it to a stone**. Put it in a **backpack** and wear it for a day. Continue to add new offenses to the backpack, keep close track of them and keep numbering them....Our backs will break with the weight of all the stones. This is exactly what we are doing emotionally to our hearts, soul, spirits...
- b. **Turn other cheek** – has more meaning than to just let people keep hitting you. Back in old times, one would turn their cheek so that the person was not able to hit them with the back of the hand. The **worst insult was to be back-handed**. Therefore, in turning the other cheek, one was protecting themselves from receiving the insulting hit. In other words, they were standing up for themselves.
- c. ***"If you do not forgive, you become like your captors."***  
Corrie Ten Boom – Survivor and Prevailor of the Holocaust
- d. **Research on forgiveness** suggests it can lead to **better health**. One recent study found that holding a grudge could be bad for your heart and your health. **Hostility is a potent risk factor for heart disease**.
- e. Forgiveness allows you to change your anger from the **person** to the **action**. It helps you to **let go of the rage inside yourself**.

## 6. Some of Worst Case Scenarios: Betrayal with a kiss. Both Jesus and many of us are

betrayed this way.

- adultery
- rape (stranger, date, marital)
- being molested
- Betrayal, abuse, and abandonment by  
Friends, neighbors, parents, spouses, relatives...

***Zechariah 13:6 "If someone asks him, 'What are these wounds on your body?' he will answer, 'The wounds I was given at the house of my friends.'"***

## **What forgiveness is not:**

**Reconciling** with the other person.

**Forgetting** what happened.

**Denial** that it happened or that  
We are capable of forgiving.

**Making excuses** as to why we can't forgive.

**Saying "its O.K."** or "no problem",  
or letting the **offender off easy**.

## **Passive**

**Pretending** or artificially forgiving  
the offender.

**Revenge or payback**  
4:15 No revenge, Don't kill Cane

## **Quick and fast**

Being **weak** and **wimpy, giving up**

**Only for the offender**

## **Forgiveness is:**

The **mysterious capacity** that people have to  
**relinquish their fury** against an offender. **Not hanging on** to the offense, but letting go. (2  
Corinthians 2:7)

**Learning** and **becoming wiser**.

**Trusting in God**. Forgiveness is tough  
to do by ourselves (Proverbs 3:5-6)

A **choice**. We choose to not hold on  
to what the other person has given us and become  
bitter. Refusing **bitterness** and **bondage** and  
striving for **wholeness** and **power**. (Hebrews 12:15)

**Confronting the person**. Tell them you  
didn't like the pain. (Be assertive not  
aggressive) Let them be **prosecuted** and  
deal with their **legal consequences**.  
Say **Ouch!** (Matt 18:32-34)

## **Active**

It's **genuine, real, and hard work!**  
(Matt 18:21-22, 1 Kings 8:50)

**Refusing to take vengeance**, even when the Gen  
opportunity is there. **Giving forward** Give  
what was not meant for us to hang on to.  
**Liberating** us from the "victim" status. (John 20:23  
1 Thess 5:15)

A **process of restoration** (It can take time. It took  
20 years for Nehemiah to rebuild the temples in  
Jerusalem.)

Acknowledging that **we aren't destroyed**...We are  
**still standing**.  
Luke 13:32-33

It is **compassion for ourselves** as well as others.  
Allows us the chance to **move on with our lives**.

## **7. Christian perspective on forgiveness**

### **A. Bible verses**

#### **New Testament**

Matthew 6:15 "But if you **do not forgive** men their sins, your **Father will not forgive** your sins."

Mark 11:25 "And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, **forgive him**, so that your Father in heaven **may forgive you** your sins."

Matthew 18:35 "This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you **unless you forgive your brother from your heart**."

Matthew 6:12 "**Forgive us** our debts, as we also have **forgiven our** debtors."

Matthew 18:21-22 "Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, 'Lord, how many times shall I **forgive** my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?' Jesus answered, 'I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.' "

Luke 17:3 So watch yourselves. "If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, **forgive him**."

Luke 7:47 "Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been **forgiven--for she loved much**. But he who has been **forgiven little loves little**."

Luke 23:34 Jesus said, "Father, **forgive them**, for they do not know what they are doing." And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

2 Corinthians 2:7 Now instead, you ought to **forgive** and comfort him, so that he will not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow.

2 Corinthians 2:10 "If **you forgive** anyone, I also **forgive** him. And what I have **forgiven--**if there was anything to **forgive**--I have **forgiven** in the sight of Christ for your sake."

2 Corinthians 2:5-11 Forgiveness for the Sinner

"If anyone has caused grief, he has not so much grieved me as he has grieved all of you, to some extent--not to put it too severely. **The punishment inflicted on him by the majority is sufficient for him. Now instead, you ought to forgive and comfort him, so that he will not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow.** I urge you, therefore, to reaffirm your love for him. The reason I wrote you was to see if you would stand the test and be obedient in everything. If **you forgive anyone**, I also **forgive him**. And what **I have forgiven**--if there was anything to **forgive**--I have **forgiven** in the sight of Christ for your sake, in order that **Satan might not outwit us**. For we are not unaware of his schemes.

1 John 2:12 "I write to you, dear children, because your sins have been **forgiven** on account of his name.

John 13:15 "I have **set you an example** that **you should do** as I have done for you." (refer to 2 Cor 2:10 and 1 John 2:12)

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 unrighteousness."

Romans 4:7 "Blessed are they whose transgressions are **forgiven**, whose sins are covered.

Ephesians 4:31-32 and 5:1,2 "**Get rid of all bitterness**, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, **forgiving each other**, just as in Christ God **forgave you**. Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and **live a life of love, just as Christ loved** us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God."

Hebrews 12:15 See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that **no bitter root grows up** to cause trouble and defile many.

John 20:23 "If you **forgive** anyone his sins, they are **forgiven**; if you do not **forgive** them, they are not **forgiven**."

Colossians 3:13 "Bear with each other and **forgive** whatever grievances you may have against one another. **Forgive** as the Lord **forgave** you."

### **Old Testament**

Numbers 5:7 "...and must confess the sin he has committed. **He must make full restitution for his wrong**, add one fifth to it and give it all to the person he has wronged."

Genesis 50:17-21 When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "What if Joseph holds a grudge against us and pays us back for all the wrongs we did to him?" So they sent word to Joseph, saying, "Your father left these instructions before he died: 'This is what you are to say to Joseph: I ask you to **forgive** your brothers the sins and the wrongs they committed in treating you so badly.' Now please **forgive** the sins of the servants of the God of your father." When their message came to him, Joseph wept. His brothers then came and threw themselves down before him. "We are your slaves," they said. But Joseph said to them, "Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. So then, **don't be afraid**."

I will provide for you and your children." And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them.

1 Kings 8:50 "And forgive your people, who have sinned against you; forgive all the offenses they have committed against you, and cause their conquerors to show them mercy."

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

Jeremiah 31:34 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."

Psalms 86:5 "You are forgiving and good, O Lord, abounding in love to all who call to you."

Proverbs 3:5-6 "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight." (When you are trying to forgive and just don't know how to do it.)

## **B. Christian thoughts**

It took Nehemiah 20 years to rebuild the wall that had been destroyed! It takes work. It is not just accepting a "sorry" or roses...it is rebuilding the trust that was broken.

From the cross flows mercy and grace. Christ died for the sin and to wipe away the cause and the effects of sin upon us and upon the other sinner. When we choose to NOT forgive the offender we stand between Christ and the other person. We are in the way of God's forgiveness and we prevent His mercy and grace from flowing down on the sinner

We must deliberately:

1. **Stop** looking at **blaming** the other person
2. **Turn** to the **cross**
3. **Pull** out the **arrows of pain** that are inside of us
4. **Put them** where they belong – **in the Body of Christ** – give the offenses forward to God and let Him deal with the sin, the other person and the effects of the sin.
5. Get **behind the cross**
6. Ask God to **let us see** the other person **as He sees them**.
7. Ask God to **change our hearts** to have **His heart for them**.

Turn judgement into compassion, and hate into forgiveness. Your life, health and well-being depends on it

1 cross  
+3 nails  
4 given

#### **8. Quotes:**

*"When you forgive and remember, you grow smarter. Forgiveness is not about saying that what happened to you was right. You still help the police put the person who raped you in jail, but you can also feel unconditional forgiveness of that person."*

**Mary Hayes-Grieco Counselor.**

*"It take a lot of emotion and psychological energy to keep a wound open, to keep a grudge alive... The longer I allow the wound to fester, the more bitterness, anger, and self-pity poison my blood and eat my heart."*

**Rev. Albert Haase Franciscan Priest**

*"To forgive is to give a precious part of yourself to others, and to give yourself a chance to keep your priceless you intact."*

The Author

## Chapter 6: To have mercy or to not have mercy?

### References:

1. Sermon by Professor Finney. TRUSTING IN GOD'S MERCY \* May 7, 1845
2. Joyce Meyer
3. Rebecca - <http://everydaymusings.blogspot.com/2004/10/gods-mercy.html>  
"A first step toward understanding the true depth of God's mercy is understanding the depth of our own neediness. We are utterly without hope short of God's merciful activity on our behalf. 'God be merciful to me a sinner (Luke 13:18)'"

### **What is Mercy?**

A. **God's Mercy** - Mercy is an attribute of God. Mercy is who God is and it is in His essential nature to be merciful.

1. **God is always compassionate, our comfort, supplier of our needs and it doesn't matter how we act or treat Him. This is Mercy.**

*2 Cor. 1:3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of **compassion** and the God of **all comfort**,*

*Nehemiah 9:31 But in your great **mercy** you did not put an end to them or abandon them, for you are a gracious and **merciful** God.*

*Neh. 9:16-21 "But they, our forefathers, became arrogant and stiff-necked, and did not obey your commands. 17 They refused to listen and failed to remember the miracles you performed among them. They became stiff-necked and in their rebellion appointed a leader in order to return to their slavery. But you are a **forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love**. Therefore you did not desert them, 18 even when they cast for themselves an image of a calf and said, 'This is your god, who brought you up out of Egypt,' or when they committed awful blasphemies. 19 "Because of your **great compassion** you did not abandon them in the desert. By day the pillar of cloud did not cease to guide them on their path, nor the pillar of fire by night to shine on the way they were to take. 20 You gave your good Spirit to instruct them. You did not withhold your manna from their mouths, and you gave them water for their thirst. 21 For forty years you sustained them in the desert; they lacked nothing, their clothes did not wear out nor did their feet become swollen.*

2. **His mercy is eternal and unchanging.**

In the song, "Great is thy faithfulness" it talks about God's mercy.

"Great is Thy faithfulness! Morning by morning **new mercies** I see"

Lamentations 3 talks about this.

*Lam 3:22-24, 31-33 Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his **compassions never fail**. 23 They are **new every morning**; great is your faithfulness. 24 I say to myself, "The LORD is my portion; therefore I*

will wait for him." 31 For men are not cast off by the Lord forever. 32 Though he brings grief, he **will show compassion**, so great is his unfailing love. 33 For he does not willingly bring affliction or grief to the children of men.

Psalm 103:17 But from **everlasting to everlasting** the LORD's love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children's children. Luke 1:50 (Mary's song) His **mercy** extends to those who fear him, from **generation to generation**.

3. **Mercy comes from kindness. Kindness is a prerequisite for anyone who chooses to be merciful. Kindness is also one of the fruits of the spirit.**

*Gal 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, **kindness**, goodness, faithfulness,<sup>3</sup> gentleness and self control.*

*Ephesians 2:3-7 Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. <sup>4</sup>But because of his great love for us, God, who is **rich in mercy**, <sup>5</sup>made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. <sup>6</sup>And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup>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.*

- B. **Mercy is an act to pardon the guilty. It is the opposite of justice or seeking justice through a penalty. Mercy asks that justice be set aside.**

"Mercy has to do specifically with God's characteristic attitude toward people who are in trouble. It is God's pity for those who are miserable or suffering or needy, and helpless in their situation; but it includes more than just a feeling of pity, for his mercy has his rescuing power behind it." **Prof. Finney**

- C. **To receive mercy, there must be guilt. People need to know that they have wronged the other person, in order to receive mercy.**

Romans 11:30-32

*Just as you who were at one time disobedient to God have now received **mercy** as a result of their disobedience, so they too have now become disobedient in order that they too may now receive **mercy** as a result of God's **mercy** to you. For God has bound all men over to disobedience so that he may have **mercy** on them all.*

- D. **The amount of mercy is equal to the punishment. If great punishment is deserved, great mercy can be shown**



## Prerequisites for mercy:

### A. The offender

1. We are **repentant first**, and have a **conviction of guilt**. "Trusting in mercy always implies a deep, heartfelt conviction of personal guilt."

**Professor Finney.** We need to:

- repent. Turn from our bad ways
- We must confess our sins.

Psalms 51 is a great example of **repentance, confession, true reform and making restitution**. [A psalm of David. When the prophet Nathan came to him after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba.] It starts out with asking for mercy...

*Psalms 51:1 Have **mercy** on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your **great compassion** blot out my transgressions.*

*Psalms 41:4 I said, "O LORD, have **mercy** on me; heal me, for I have sinned against you."*

*Proverbs 28:13 He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds **mercy**.*

*Isaiah 55:7 Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have **mercy** on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.*

*1 Timothy 1:13 Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown **mercy** because I acted in ignorance and unbelief.*

*1 Timothy 1:16 But for that very reason I was shown **mercy** so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on him and receive eternal life.*

2. Trusting in mercy implies a **stopping all excuses and excuse-making**.

- We need make **restitution**. (As much as we are able)
- We need to **reform**.
- We need to be **completely submissive** to the person giving mercy.

### B. The person offended

Trust in mercy always implies **justice will not prevail**. The person will not suffer the consequences of their actions. Therefore if you want to **give mercy**, or be merciful, you **need to be hurt**! It is impossible to give mercy if there hasn't been an offense of some kind. Giving mercy is not easy, but consider yourself **privileged** that God has given you an opportunity to experience being merciful. This way we are becoming more and more like His Son, Jesus Christ!

## III. Common mistakes with mercy

- Many trust more in **justice** and **not in mercy**. They say, "God is just—God will **always** follow through with justice. God is a **God of justice**, but He is also a **God of mercy**. It is His decision as to what He chooses to do.

*Romans 9:15 For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." [Exodus 33:19]*

\*The Psalmist did not say, I trust in the justice of God forever and ever.

\*It was I trust in the mercy of God forever and ever.

- Many want to trust in the mercy of God **without fulfilling the conditions...** basically wanting their cake and eating the icing too.  
(Go to the previous page, Part II talks about conditions.)

## IV. Mercy with respect to Salvation – Professor Finney

### A. Plan of salvation

1. Is based on the assumption that we deserve everlasting death and must be saved by sovereign grace and mercy.
2. God gives mercy for His own purpose and as it fits His own plan
3. Those who seek his mercy always find it
4. It was because of God's tender mercy that Christ was born to be our Savior (Luke 1:78).
5. Delivering us from sin through Christ was the supreme act of God's mercy.
6. It was on the basis of God's mercy that He saved us from our state of helpless disobedience (Titus 3:3-5).
7. The ultimate sacrifice of Christ come because God is "**rich in mercy**". By his great mercy he gave us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, that is, into an inheritance imperishable, undefiled, and unfading.  
(1 Peter 1:3,4 NET)
8. It is out of God's mercy that we are "born again to a living hope,"  
*Psalm 130:7 O Israel, put your hope in the LORD , for with the LORD is unfailing love and with him is full redemption*  
*Psalm 147:11 the LORD delights in those who fear him, who put their hope in his unfailing love.*
9. Trusting in God's mercy implies a **belief that He is merciful**. We could not trust him if we had no such belief.

## V. Mercy and dealing with others Joyce Meyer

- A. When we deal with ordinary people, they usually are not very merciful.
- B. God is just the opposite. It is His nature to be merciful. He enjoys giving people mercy, being good to those who least deserve it and giving people a second chance in life.
- C. Too often we look to people to give us what only God can give. I did this for many years of my life, and it always ended in heartache.
- D. People all have inherent (built-in) weaknesses; therefore, they can never be perfect. We are all flawed; that is why we must have God's help continually in our lives. When we expect people to give us what only God can give us, we are doomed to disappointment.

E. There is **no point in ruining your life over someone else's bad choices**. I strongly encourage you to stop looking to people for approval and acceptance and instead, look to God.

**F. Give Away What You Want to Receive**. Give mercy to others, and you will begin to reap mercy in relationships. Mercy is better than judgment! Any farmer knows that he will never reap harvest without first sowing seed. If you want unconditional love, mercy and respect, begin giving it to others. Don't fall into the trap of self-pity, being resentful toward those who don't meet your needs. Look to God to meet your needs and ask Him to use you to help someone else.

*Matt 7:1,2 Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. NIV*

*Matt 5:7 Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. KJV*

**G. Rebecca**, "Because God has been merciful to us, we have reason to be merciful in our actions toward those who are in need. We must "be merciful, just as [our] Father also is merciful (Luke 6:36 NET)." Mercy is one of God's *communicable* attributes, meaning that he **shares** it with us and **expects** it from us."

H. Verses for having mercy on others:

*Matthew 5:7 Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.*

*Luke 10:37 The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."*

*Romans 12:8 if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.*

*James 2:12, 13 Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment!*

*James 3:17 But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peaceloving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.*

We need to **love** our offenders, **grieve** over what happened, and have **mercy** on them. This is **setting people free**...that is what Jesus did for us!

## **VI. God is the giver of mercy**

According to **Rebecca**, the merciful deliverance of his people resulted from an act that was not kind toward the people of Egypt. His **act of mercy** toward one group of people was at the same time an **act of severity** toward another group of people. God's mercy, then, like his love and grace, is particular. While his people can count on his mercy never being turned from them, there are times when he is not merciful to some people.

## **God is Sovereign with His mercy God decides who He has mercy on...**

**\*\*\*Exodus 33:19** And the LORD said, "I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the LORD, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

**Amos 5:15** Hate evil, love good; maintain justice in the courts. Perhaps the LORD God Almighty will have mercy on the remnant of Joseph.

**\*\*\*Romans 9:18** Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden.

**Romans 9:15** For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." [ Exodus 33:19]

**Zechariah 1:12, 16** 12 Then the angel of the LORD said, "LORD Almighty, how long will you withhold mercy from Jerusalem and from the towns of Judah, which you have been angry with these seventy years 16 Therefore, this is what the LORD says: 'I will return to Jerusalem with mercy, and there my house will be rebuilt. And the measuring line will be stretched out over Jerusalem,' declares the LORD Almighty.

## **God will and does show mercy**

**\*\*\*Deuteronomy 13:17** None of those condemned things shall be found in your hands, so that the LORD will turn from his fierce anger; he will show you mercy, have compassion on you, and increase your numbers, as he promised on oath to your forefathers,

**1 Kings 8:50** (Solomon prayer of dedication of temple)

And forgive your people, who have sinned against you; forgive all the offenses they have committed against you, and cause their conquerors to show them mercy;

**Isaiah 63:9** In all their distress he too was distressed, and the angel of his presence saved them. In his love and mercy he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

**\*\*\*Micah 7:18-20** Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy. You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea. You will be true to Jacob, and show mercy to Abraham, as you pledged on oath to our fathers in days long ago.

**\*\*\*Romans 9:16** good one! It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on God's mercy.

**\*\*\*1 Corinthians 7:25...**but I give a judgment as one who by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy.

**Titus 3:5** he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit,

**1 Peter 2:10** Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

## **VII. More verses for mercy**

### **Calling out for mercy**

1 Chronicles 21:13 David said to Gad, "I am in deep distress. Let me fall into the hands of the LORD, for his mercy is very great; but do not let me fall into the hands of men."

Psalms 9:13 O LORD, see how my enemies persecute me! Have mercy and lift me up from the gates of death,

Psalms 25:6 Remember, O LORD, your great mercy and love, for they are from of old.

Psalms 28:2 Hear my cry for mercy as I call to you for help, as I lift up my hands toward your Most Holy Place.

Psalms 40:11 Do not withhold your mercy from me, O LORD; may your love and your truth always protect me.

Psalms 69:16 Answer me, O LORD, out of the goodness of your love; in your great mercy turn to me.

Psalms 79:8 Do not hold against us the sins of the fathers; may your mercy come quickly to meet us, for we are in desperate need.

Psalms 86:3 Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I call to you all day long.

Psalms 119:132 Turn to me and have mercy on me, as you always do to those who love your name

Psalms 123:3 Have mercy on us, O LORD, have mercy on us, for we have endured much contempt.

Psalms 140:6 O LORD, I say to you, "You are my God." Hear, O LORD, my cry for mercy.

Psalms 143:1 [A psalm of David.] O LORD, hear my prayer, listen to my cry for mercy; in your faithfulness and righteousness come to my relief.

Daniel 9:18 Give ear, O God, and hear; open your eyes and see the desolation of the city that bears your Name. We do not make requests of you because we are righteous, but because of your great mercy.

Nehemiah 13:22 Then I commanded the Levites to purify themselves and go and guard the gates in order to keep the Sabbath day holy. Remember me for this also, O my God, and show mercy to me according to your great love.

Job 9:15 Though I were innocent, I could not answer him; I could only plead with my Judge for mercy.

### **God Hears our cries for Mercy**

Psalms 6:9 The LORD has heard my cry for mercy; the LORD accepts my prayer.

Psalms 28:6 Praise be to the LORD, for he has heard my cry for mercy.

Psalms 116:1 I love the LORD, for he heard my voice; he heard my cry for mercy.

### **What we do with God's mercy**

Psalms 5:7 But I, by your great mercy, will come into your house; in reverence will I bow down toward your holy temple.

Psalms 119:132 Turn to me and have mercy on me, as you always do to those who love your name

Mark 5:19 Jesus did not let him, but said, "Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had **mercy** on you."

### **What God wants...**

Hosea 6:6 For I desire **mercy**, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings.

Matthew 9:13 But go and learn what this means: 'I desire **mercy**, not sacrifice.'

[Hosea 6:6] For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." )

Matthew 12:7 If you had known what these words mean, 'I desire **mercy**, not sacrifice,' [Hosea 6:6] you would not have condemned the innocent.

Micah 6:8 He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love **mercy** and to walk humbly with your God.

Zechariah 7:9 "This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Administer true justice; show **mercy** and compassion to one another.

Romans 12:1 [ Living Sacrifices ] Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's **mercy**, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.

Hebrews 4:16 Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive **mercy** and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Jude 1:21 Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the **mercy** of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.

### **Jesus was born to show us mercy Luke 1:67-80**

<sup>67</sup>His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied: <sup>68</sup>"Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come and has redeemed his people. <sup>69</sup>He has raised up a horn<sup>[d]</sup> of salvation for us in the house of his servant David <sup>70</sup>(as he said through his holy prophets of long ago), <sup>71</sup>salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us— <sup>72</sup>to show **mercy** to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant, <sup>73</sup>the oath he swore to our father Abraham: <sup>74</sup>to rescue us from the hand of our enemies, and to enable us to serve him without fear <sup>75</sup>in holiness and righteousness before him all our days. <sup>76</sup>And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High; for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him, <sup>77</sup>to give his people the knowledge of salvation through the **forgiveness** of their sins, <sup>78</sup>because of the **tender mercy** of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven <sup>79</sup>to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace." <sup>80</sup>And the child grew and became strong in spirit; and he lived in the desert until he appeared publicly to Israel.

### **Examples of asking Jesus for mercy**

Matthew 9:27 [ Jesus Heals the Blind and Mute ] As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him, calling out, "Have **mercy** on us, Son of David!"

Matthew 18:33 Shouldn't you have had **mercy** on your fellow servant just as I had on you?'

Matthew 20:30 Two blind men were sitting by the roadside, and when they heard that Jesus was going by, they shouted, "Lord, Son of David, have **mercy** on us!"

Matthew 20:31 **read the chapter**

The crowd rebuked them and told them to be quiet, but they shouted all the louder, "Lord, Son of David, have **mercy** on us!"

### **We can persevere with God's mercy**

2 Corinthians 4:1, 7-9 [ Treasures in Jars of Clay ] Therefore, since through God's **mercy** we have this ministry, we do not lose heart. <sup>7</sup>But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all surpassing power is from God and not from us. <sup>8</sup>We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; <sup>9</sup>persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed

James 5:11 As you know, we consider blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of **compassion and mercy**.

### **We have hope**

1 Peter 1:3 [Praise to God for a Living Hope ] Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his **great mercy** he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

Jude 1:2 **Mercy**, peace and love be yours in abundance.

### **Sometimes there is no mercy from God**

Joshua 11:20 For it was the LORD himself who hardened their hearts to wage war against Israel, so that he might destroy them totally, exterminating them **without mercy**, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

Psalms 59:5 O LORD God Almighty, the God of Israel, rouse yourself to punish all the nations; show **no mercy** to wicked traitors. Selah

Jeremiah 6:23 They are armed with bow and spear; they are cruel and show **no mercy**. They sound like the roaring sea as they ride on their horses; they come like men in battle formation to attack you, O Daughter of Zion."

Jeremiah 13:14 I will smash them one against the other, fathers and sons alike, declares the LORD. I will allow **no pity or mercy or compassion** to keep me from destroying them.' "

Jeremiah 21:7 After that, declares the LORD, I will hand over Zedekiah king of Judah, his officials and the people in this city who survive the plague, sword and famine, to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and to their enemies who seek their lives. He will put them to the sword; he will show them **no mercy or pity or compassion**.'

Jeremiah 50:42 They are armed with bows and spears; they **are cruel and without mercy**. They sound like the roaring sea as they ride on their horses; they come like men in battle formation to attack you, O Daughter of Babylon.

Matthew 23:23 "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cummin. But you have **neglected** the more important

matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former.

### **Misc Verses**

Habakkuk 3:2 LORD , I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds, O LORD.

Renew them in our day, in our time make them known; in wrath remember mercy.

Hebrews 9:5 Above the ark were the cherubim of the Glory, overshadowing the atonement cover. [ Traditionally the mercy seat] But we cannot discuss these things in detail now.

## **VIII. Dictionary and Thesaurus**

### **Dictionary – Mercy (Noun)**

1. **Etymology:** from Latin, price paid, wages, from merc-, merx merchandise  
a: compassion or forbearance shown especially to an offender or to one subject to one's power; also : lenient or compassionate treatment <to show mercy>  
b: a blessing that is an act of divine favor or compassion  
c: a fortunate circumstance <it was a mercy they found her before she froze>  
d: compassionate treatment of those in distress <works of mercy among the poor>
2. **synonyms:** MERCY, CHARITY, CLEMENCY, GRACE, LENIENCY...  
mean a disposition to show kindness or compassion.
  - MERCY implies compassion that forbears punishing even when justice demands it <threw himself on the mercy of the court>.
  - CHARITY stresses benevolence and goodwill shown in broad understanding and tolerance of others <show a little charity for the less fortunate>.
  - CLEMENCY implies a mild or merciful disposition in one having the power or duty of punishing <the judge refused to show clemency>.
  - GRACE implies a benign attitude and a willingness to grant favors or make concessions <by the grace of God>.
  - LENIENCY implies lack of severity in punishing <criticized the courts for excessive leniency>.

### **Thesaurus – Mercy (Noun)**

1. a show of or a disposition to show kindness or compassion <the mercy of the Lord knows all seasons>
2. **Synonyms:** charity, clemency, grace, lenity; FORBEARANCE
3. **Related Word:** compassion, pity, benevolence, kindliness, kindness; generosity, goodwill
4. **Contrasted Words:** reprisal, retaliation, retribution, revenge, vengeance; castigation, chastening, chastisement, punishment

**Mercy is also described as compassionate forbearance!**



## **Dictionary Forbearance (Noun)**

- 1: a refraining from the enforcement of something (as a debt, right, or obligation) that is due.
- 2: the act of forbearing : PATIENCE
- 3: the quality of being forbearing : LENIENCY

## **Thesaurus Forbearance (Noun)**

- a. **Synonyms**: PATIENCE, longanimity, long-suffering, resignation, uncomplainingness, clemency, leniency, mercifulness, tolerance
- b. **Related Word**: restraint, temperance; endurance, long-suffering, patience; charity, grace, lenity, mercy, the quality of being forbearing <*she is known for her forbearance with children*>
- c. **Contrasted Words**: firmness, inflexibility, rigidity, sternness, strictness; austerity, harshness
- d. **Antonyms** - vindictiveness

## *Grace – Dictionary (Noun)*

### **1. Divine**

- a** : unmerited divine assistance given humans for their regeneration or sanctification
- b** : a virtue coming from God
- c** : a state of sanctification enjoyed through divine grace

### **2. Divine and human**

- a**: **APPROVAL, FAVOR** <*stayed in his good graces*>
- b** *archaic*: **MERCY, PARDON**
- c**: a special favor : **PRIVILEGE** <each in his place, by right, not *grace*, shall rule his heritage -- Rudyard Kipling>
- d**: disposition to or an act or instance of kindness, courtesy, or clemency
- e**: a temporary exemption : **REPRIEVE**
- f**: the quality or state of being considerate or thoughtful

### **3. synonym - MERCY**

## **Chapter 7 To rest or not to rest?**

*"In all of the religions of man, he never can, by works, enter into rest. To cease from works is the only possible ground of entering into rest. God ceased from His works of creation, and entered into that rest, all being finished."* Jack Gent

Daniel 12:13 (Last words told to Daniel)

"As for you, go your way till the end. You will **rest**, and then at the end of the days you will rise to receive your allotted inheritance."

### **Table of Contents**

- I. Definitions
- II. Definitions of Rest according to John MacArthur B.
- III. What can I learn about "rest/resting in God".
- IV. Why should we rest? Jesus rested!
- V. Bible Verses about Rest
- VI. Facts about the Sabbath from The Herald of Truth
- VII. Final thoughts by Ellen G. White

### **1. Definitions**

#### **Dictionary Definition - Noun**

1. **Repose, sleep** ; *specifically* : a bodily state characterized by minimal functional and metabolic activities
2. freedom from activity or labor, a state of motionlessness or inactivity
3. peace of mind or spirit
4. something used for support

#### **Thesaurus - Noun**

- **Text:** freedom from activity or labor. A natural periodic loss of consciousness during which the body **restores** itself
- **Synonyms:** ease, leisure, relaxation

- **Related Words:** sleep, slumber, slumbering, quiet, silence, stillness; calm, peace, restfulness, serenity, tranquility
- **Near Antonyms:** pressure, strain, stress, tension
- **Antonyms:** exertion, labor, toil, work

### **Dictionary Definition - Verb**

1. to get rest by lying down
2. to cease from action or motion : refrain from labor or exertion
3. to be free from anxiety or disturbance
4. to sit or lie fixed or supported
5. to remain confident : **TRUST**

### **Thesaurus - Verb**

- **Text:** to refrain from labor or exertion, be in a state of sleep
- **Synonyms** bask, lounge, relax, repose
- **Near Antonyms** drudge, hustle, labor, plod, plow, slave, strain, struggle, sweat, toil, work;

## **II. Definitions of Rest according to John MacArthur B.**

*(John MacArthur expands the various meanings of "rest" to that of "resting in God".)*

The dictionary gives the following definitions of rest:

### **1. To cease from action**

The word rest means to cease from labor or exertion. Applying that to God's rest, it means no more self-effort--no more trying to please God by your fleshly works. Rest involves cessation from legalistic activity; we rest in free grace.

### **2. To be free from worry**

Some people are never at peace because they're always bothered about something. To rest means to be free from whatever disturbs you, or causes you to worry. It means in this sense to be quiet, still, peaceful, and free from guilt. To enter God's rest means to be at peace with God--to possess the perfect peace that God gives. It means to be free from guilt, because our sin is forgiven.

### **3. To be settled**

God's rest is the kind of rest where a man is established in Christ, and does not run from philosophy to philosophy. He is no longer blown about by every wind of doctrine, but is rooted and grounded in the truth of Christ.

### **4. To be secure**

To enter God's rest is to be secure, having absolute trust + confidence in God's care for you.

### **5. To have something to lean on**

To enter God's rest means that you can lean on Him. You can rely on God for support, trusting Him to supply all your needs.

## **6. There are two final definitions of rest not found in a dictionary.**

The Bible speaks of rest in the millennial kingdom and rest for eternity in heaven.

That's what God is promising and that's what He calls rest. Many people fail to believe in God's promises, and thus do not enter into rest because of their unbelief.

## **7. Rest, with respect to faith**

### **A. Rest defined (See Hebrews 4:1-11 on next page)**

In Hebrews 4:3-4, verse 3 God defines the rest as "my rest." God's rest is not a rest of weariness or inactivity but of finished work. God's rest began after the sixth day of creation. After creating the universe, the earth, and all life (including man) in six literal twenty-four-hour days, God rested. His rest is described in verses 3-4: Although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he spoke in a certain place of the seventh day in this way, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works (Gen. 2:1-2).

### **B. Rest forfeited**

There was only one condition for Adam and Eve to remain in God's rest, and that was to believe God. However, they chose to believe Satan's lies instead and by their unbelief forfeited rest. Hebrews 4:5 reiterates the statement of verse 3 that the unbelieving Israelites failed to enter God's rest. I believe that the people who sinned in the wilderness not only forfeited Canaan, but also forfeited the eternal life Canaan symbolized unless they exercised personal faith in God.

### **C. Rest recovered**

The rest of the Bible records God's efforts to get man back into His rest. To do that, He had to deal with man's sin. The coming of Jesus Christ took care of the sin issue, and through the death of Christ, men may enter back into God's rest. Christ bore the sins of those who lived prior to the cross as well as those of us who live after the cross.

## **III. What can I learn about "rest/resting in God".**

Learning this concept of resting in God, and trying to truly understand what it means is imperative for all. **John MacArthur** described the various ways that one can rest and how he ties to our faith in God. Let's take it a step further.

1. The word, **rest**, means the ceasing of action. To just stop doing, working, multi-tasking.... It is imperative that we take a break from our activity so that we can **restore** ourselves. The main function of sleep is to restore the body so that it can function the next day. Resting is not only physical, but it is mental, emotional, spiritual, and social. We all must take time to restore ourselves in all of these areas. The interesting thing about this type of rest is that we don't do it all of the time (24/7). We do need to work, think, function... in this world. So rest should not be a constant phenomenon, but something that should be incorporated into our lives on a daily basis.

2. The concept of **resting in God** is similar to the concept of rest. However, it is more complex than just taking a break. **Resting in God and His sovereignty** is having **complete confidence** that God is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent...and that He doesn't need us! This mentality of total trust should be a constant force in our lives. We should be trusting God 24/7. We should not worry, panic..., because then we are telling God that He cannot handle the situation. This assumption that God can't handle it is wrong because God is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent. It is OK to be angry and frustrated, but it isn't OK to worry. Obviously worrying is a tough emotion and many people struggle with worrying. However, day by day we can continually choose to trust more and worry less. There is a Ziggy cartoon that has a picture of Ziggy rocking in a rocking chair. It says, "Worrying is like a rocking chair, it gives you something to do, but it doesn't get you anywhere."

(Omnipotent – all powerful, Omniscient – all knowing, Omnipresent – all present, God is everywhere)

#### **IV. Why should we rest? Jesus rested!**

1. Jesus would take time out of His busy days to spend time in prayer and with His Father. *Mark 1:34 "Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed."*
2. He spent 40 days in the desert *Mark 1:12-13 At once the Spirit sent him out into the desert, and he was in the desert forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.*
3. His time spent in the tomb is by far the most important resting time in the whole world. God took the most powerful human being on earth and chose not to use Him for 3 days. Jesus chose to be obedient to His Father's desires in the most painful time of His life. Jesus was obedient to the point of death and then did nothing on earth for 3 days. Due to Jesus' unswerving obedience, the biggest miracle was achieved! Forgiveness of sin and eternal life are available to us. *Luke 24: 46-47 He (Jesus) told them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."*

Allow me to emphasize that:

- Jesus did **nothing** on earth during His 3 days in the tomb. Moreover it was God who raised Jesus from the dead.

*Acts 4:10 then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom **God raised from the dead**, that this man stands before you healed.*

*Acts 5:30 The **God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead**—whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree.*

*Acts 10:39-40 "We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a tree, but **God raised him from the dead on the third day** and caused him to be seen."*

- Jesus needed to submit to the authority of His Father, and truly rest in His Father's sovereignty so that God's plan could be realized. Did Jesus have the power to make God's plan happen? Yes, He was part God. Did Jesus have his own will and desires? Yes, because He was part man. Refer to the verses when Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane.

*Mark 14:32-36 "Sit here while I pray." ... and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled. "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death," ... he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. "Abba, Father," he said, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not **what I will**, but what **you will**."*

Jesus submitted to the authority of His Father and truly rested in His Father's sovereignty during His entire life on earth. A great example of this is when Jesus chose not to speak back or retaliate during the last hours of His life. Even though there were many erroneous accusations, insults, and physical beating, Jesus rested in God's promises and sovereignty. Jesus had the power to call on angels and stop the whole process, but He didn't.

*Mark 14:57-60 Then some stood up and gave this false testimony against him: "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this man-made temple and in three days will build another, not made by man.' " Yet even then their testimony did not agree. Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, "Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?" **But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer.***

### **The following are verses about Jesus' three day rest in the tomb**

*Matt 12:38-40 Then some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law said to him, "Teacher, we want to see a miraculous sign from you." He answered..."For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the **Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.**" (See Jonah 1:17)*

*Mark 8:31 (Jesus Predicts His Death) He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and **after three days rise again.***

*Mark 9:31 because he was teaching his disciples. He said to them, "The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. They will kill him, and **after three days he will rise.**"*

*John 2:18-22 Then the Jews demanded of him, "What miraculous sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?" Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in **three days.**" The Jews replied, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in **three days?**" But the temple he had spoken of was his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the Scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.*

People knew that Jesus had claimed that He would be raised in three days, that they used this fact to verbally attack Him. *Mark 15:29-30 Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, "So! You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in **three days,** come down from the cross and save yourself!"*

Scripture (Old and New Testament) backs up scripture.

### **(New Testament)1 Corinthians 15:3-4**

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that **Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,** that he was **buried,** that he was **raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.**

### **(Old Testament) Isaiah 53:9-12** (These verses prophesy the crucifixion and resurrection)

He was **assigned a grave** with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though **he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth.** Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, **he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand.** After the suffering of his soul, **he will see the light of life and be satisfied;** by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and **he will bear their iniquities.** Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For **he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.**

In conclusion, God gave Jesus to the world so that we could have an example on how to live our lives. Jesus modeled many wonderful characteristics, attitudes, and actions. I believe that Jesus' example of "resting in God" is a very important lesson for us all. We should all strive to truly rest in God like Jesus did.

## **V. Bible Verses about Rest**

### **A. God rested after making the world and Sabbath (Rest = Sabbath)**

**Genesis 2:1-3** Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he **rested (ceased)** from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he **rested** from all the work of creating that he had done

**Exodus 34:21** "Six days you shall labor, but on the seventh day you shall **rest**; even during the plowing season and harvest you **must rest**.

**Leviticus 25:4-5** But in the seventh year the land is to have a **sabbath of rest**, a **sabbath** to the LORD . Do not sow your fields or prune your vineyards. Do not reap what grows of itself or harvest the grapes of your untended vines. The land is to have a **year of rest**.

**Hebrews 4:1-11** A Sabbath-Rest for the People of God

1Therefore, since the promise of entering his **rest** still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it. 2For we also have had the gospel preached to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because those who heard did not combine it with faith. 3Now we who have believed enter that **rest**, just as God has said,

"So I declared on oath in my anger, 'They shall never enter my **rest**.' "And yet his work has been finished since the creation of the world. 4For somewhere he has spoken about the seventh day in these words: "And on the seventh day God **rested** from all his work." 5And again in the passage above he says, "They shall never enter my **rest**."

6It still remains that some will enter that **rest**, and those who formerly had the gospel preached to them did not go in, because of their disobedience. 7Therefore God again set a certain day, calling it Today, when a long time later he spoke through David, as was said before:

"Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts." 8For if Joshua had given them **rest**, God would not have spoken later about another day. 9There remains, then, a **Sabbath-rest** for the people of God; 10for anyone who enters God's **rest** also **rests** from his own work, just as God did from his. 11Let us, therefore, **make every effort** to enter that **rest**, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience.

(See explanation on next page for Hebrews 4:1-11)



## **1. Explanation of Hebrews 4:1-11 by United Church of God**

Now we come to a controversial statement: "There remains therefore a rest for the people of God" (verse 9). The Greek word translated "rest" in every other verse throughout Hebrews 3 and 4 is **katapausis**. (Means "inner spiritual rest" salvation in Jesus) The word for "rest" in Hebrews 4:9 is **sabbatismos** (Greek noun) means "Sabbath rest" a unique word in the New Testament. This is the only New Testament occurrence of this word, and its meaning is fundamental to understanding this pivotal verse, which is the conclusion of everything previously said about "rest" beginning in Hebrews 3:7.

The experience of 'Sabbath rest' (sabbatismos) points to a present 'rest' (katapausis) reality in which those 'who have believed are entering' (4:3) and it points to a future 'rest' reality (4:11). Physical Sabbath-keeping on the part of the New Covenant believer as affirmed by 'Sabbath rest' epitomizes cessation from 'works' (4:10) in commemoration of God's rest at creation (Heb 4:4 = Genesis 2:2) and manifests faith in the salvation provided by Christ.

"Hebrews 4:3-11 affirms that physical 'Sabbath rest' (sabbatismos) is the weekly outward manifestation of the inner experience of spiritual rest (katapausis) in which the final...rest is...experienced already 'today' (4:7). Thus 'Sabbath rest' combines in itself creation-commemoration, salvation-experience, and eschaton [end-time]-anticipation as the community of faith moves forward toward the final consummation of total restoration and rest."

In summary, The Anchor Bible Dictionary decisively and correctly concludes that **sabbatismos** means keeping the seventh-day Sabbath. Therefore, Hebrews 4:9 stresses the need to continue to keep the Sabbath in a New Covenant context,

## **2. Explanation of Hebrews 4:3-4 by Michael Morrison**

The ancient Israelites, who had the Sabbath, did not enter the rest he is talking about. God's rest is entered by faith—by believing the gospel (vs. 3-4). The author is not interested in a day of the week—he is concerned about how people respond to Jesus. A person who keeps the weekly Sabbath but rejects Christ has not entered God's rest. We enter God's rest only by believing the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Why then does he call this a Sabbath-rest? By using this word, he indicates that this is what the Sabbath pointed to. Just as the bronze snake pointed to Jesus' crucifixion, and the washings pointed to forgiveness, and the sacrifices pointed to Jesus, similarly, the weekly Sabbath pointed to something spiritual: our rest through faith in Christ.

## **B. Deuteronomy Chapter 5 - The Ten Commandments (Verses 12-15)**

"**Observe the Sabbath day** by keeping it holy, as the LORD your God has commanded you. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a **Sabbath** to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or

daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your ox, your donkey or any of your animals, nor the alien within your gates, so that your manservant and maidservant may **rest**, as you do. Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the LORD your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the LORD your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day.

### **C. Rest**

#### **Genesis 18:1-5** The Three Visitors

The LORD appeared to Abraham near the great trees of Mamre while he was sitting at the entrance to his tent in the heat of the day. Abraham looked up and saw three men standing nearby. When he saw them, he hurried from the entrance of his tent to meet them and bowed low to the ground.

He said, "If I have found favor in your eyes, my lord, do not pass your servant by. Let a little water be brought, and then you may all wash your feet and **rest** under this tree. Let me get you something to eat, so you can be refreshed and then go on your way—now that you have come to your servant." "Very well," they answered, "do as you say."

#### **Numbers 10:33-34** – Moses and The Israelites Leave Sinai

So they set out from the mountain of the LORD and traveled for three days. The ark of the covenant of the LORD went before them during those three days to find them a place to **rest**. The cloud of the LORD was over them by day when they set out from the camp.

#### **Isaiah 11:10** (Root of Jesse = Jesus)

In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his **place of rest** will be glorious

#### **Isaiah 32:16-18** Justice will dwell in the desert and righteousness live in the fertile field.

The fruit of righteousness will be peace; the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever. My people will live in peaceful dwelling places, in secure homes, in **undisturbed places of rest**.

#### **Isaiah 57:2** Those who walk uprightly enter into peace; they find **rest** as they lie in death.

### **D. Rest in God**

**Deuteronomy 33:12** About Benjamin he said: "Let the beloved of the LORD **rest** secure in him, for he shields him all day long, and the one the LORD loves **rests** between his shoulders."

**Psalms 16:7-11** I will praise the LORD, who counsels me; even at night my heart instructs me. I have set the LORD always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I

will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure, because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

**Psalm 116:7** Be at rest once more, O my soul, for the LORD has been good to you.

**Psalm 62:1,2,5,6** A psalm of David.

- 1 My soul finds rest in God alone; my salvation comes from him.
- 2 He alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will never be shaken
- 5 Find rest, O my soul, in God alone; my hope comes from him.
- 6 He alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will not be shaken.

**Psalm 91:1-2** He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust."

## **E. God gives us rest**

**1 Kings 8:56**

"Praise be to the LORD, who has given rest to his people Israel just as he promised. Not one word has failed of all the good promises he gave through his servant Moses.

**Psalm 116:7** (God talking to Moses)

Be at rest once more, O my soul, for the LORD has been good to you.

**Exodus 33:14**

The LORD replied, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest."

**Deuteronomy 12:10** Your God is giving you as an inheritance, and he will give you rest from all your enemies around you so that you will live in safety.

**Joshua 1:13** "Remember the command that Moses the servant of the LORD gave you: 'The LORD your God is giving you rest and has granted you this land.'

**Jeremiah 31:2** The people who survive the sword will find favor in the desert; I will come to give rest to Israel."

**Joshua 21: 43-45** So the LORD gave Israel all the land he had sworn to give their forefathers, and they took possession of it and settled there. The LORD gave them rest on every side, just as he had sworn to their forefathers. Not one of their enemies withstood them; the LORD handed all their enemies over to them. Not one of all the LORD's good promises to the house of Israel failed; every one was fulfilled.

**1 Kings 5:4** But now the LORD my God has given me rest on every side, and there is no adversary or disaster.

## **2 Chronicles 14:6 and 15:15** (Asa King of Judah)

6) He built up the fortified cities of Judah, since the land was at peace. No one was at war with him during those years, for the LORD gave him **rest**.

15) All Judah rejoiced about the oath because they had sworn it wholeheartedly. They sought God eagerly, and he was found by them. So the LORD gave them **rest on every side**.

## **F. Command**

### **Mark 6:30-32** (Before Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand)

The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some **rest**." So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place.

## **G. There is rest for weary**

**Isaiah 28:12** ...to whom he said, "This is the **resting** place, let the weary **rest**"; and, "This is the place of repose"—but they would not listen.

**Matthew 11:28-30** "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you **rest**. Take **my yoke** upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find **rest** for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

According to Wendy Pope; "The Lord's yoke is:

- Easy
- Light
- A place to learn
- **A place to find rest, relief, ease, refreshment, recreation and blessed quiet**
- Useful, good, comfortable, gracious, and pleasant

God's yoke is truly "one size fits all." Try it on his yoke. Keep it on. Don't go shopping for another garment to wear such as pride, control, or self-sufficiency. This garment never wears out."

## **H. No rest**

**Job 3:26** I have no peace, no quietness; I have **no rest**, but only turmoil."

**Job 30:17** Night pierces my bones; my gnawing pains **never rest**.

**Jeremiah 45:3** You said, 'Woe to me! The LORD has added sorrow to my pain; I am worn out with groaning and find **no rest**.' "

## **2 Corinthians 7:5**

For when we came into Macedonia, this body of ours had **no rest**, but we were harassed at every turn—conflicts on the outside, fears within.

**Psalm 95:7-11** for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care. Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did at Meribah, as you did that day at Massah in the desert, where your fathers tested and tried me, though they had seen what I did. For forty years I was angry with that generation; I said, "They are a people whose hearts go astray, and they have not known my ways." So I declared on oath in my anger, **"They shall never enter my rest."**

## **Hebrews 3:11, 18**

11So I declared on oath in my anger, 'They shall **never enter my rest.**' " [ Psalm 95:11]  
18And to whom did God swear that they would **never enter his rest** if not to those who disobeyed [ Or disbelieved]

## **Hebrews 4:5-6**

And again in the passage above he says, "They shall **never enter my rest.**" It still remains that some will enter that **rest**, and those who formerly had the gospel preached to them did not go in, because of their disobedience

## **Revelation 14:11**

And the smoke of their torment rises for ever and ever. There is **no rest** day or night for those who worship the beast and his image, or for anyone who receives the mark of his name."

## **I. Manna and the Sabbath**

**Exodus 16: 21-30** – Manna and the Sabbath (23,26,29,30)

23 He said to them, "This is what the LORD commanded: 'Tomorrow is to be a **day of rest**, a holy Sabbath to the LORD. So bake what you want to bake and boil what you want to boil. Save whatever is left and keep it until morning.' 26 Six days you are to gather it, but on the seventh day, the Sabbath, there will not be any. 29 Bear in mind that the LORD has given you the Sabbath; that is why on the sixth day he gives you bread for two days. Everyone is to stay where he is on the seventh day; no one is to go out." 30 So the people **rested** on the seventh day.

## **Manna and the Sabbath explained by United Church of Christ**

The whole chapter of Exodus 16 talks about Manna. However, God was already a step ahead of them. He promised to send manna, a miraculous substance to nourish and sustain them as long as they were in the wilderness (verses 4, 15-18).

But God imposed a condition. He would provide the manna only six days out of every seven. On the sixth day there would be twice as much as usual, but none on the seventh day (verses 5, 22). Moses explained to the people what God had told him: "Tomorrow is a Sabbath rest, a holy Sabbath to the Lord...Lay up for yourselves all

that remains, to be kept until morning...Six days you shall gather it, but on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, there will be none" (verses 23, 26).

But some didn't listen and "went out on the seventh day to gather, but they found none" (verse 27).

What was God's reaction to this blatant disobedience? "How long do you refuse to keep My commandments and My laws? See! For the Lord has given you the Sabbath; therefore He gives you on the sixth day bread for two days. Let every man remain in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day" (verses 28, 29).

## **VI. Facts about the Sabbath from The Herald of Truth**

Did the Creator bless the Sabbath? Yes! **Genesis 2:3.**

Did He hallow the Sabbath? Yes! **Exodus 20:11.**

Did He command the keeping of Sabbath? Yes! **Exodus 20:8-11.**

Did He rest on the Sabbath? Yes! **Exodus 20:11.**

Did He call the Sabbath His Holy Day? Yes! **Isaiah 58:13.**

Does He offer great reward to you for keeping holy the Sabbath? Yes! **Isaiah 58:13-14.**

Did holy women keep the Sabbath according to the commandments? Yes! **Luke 23:56.**

Was it the Savior's custom to keep the Sabbath? Yes! **Luke 4:16.**

Was it Paul's "manner" to worship on Sabbath? Yes! **Acts 17:2.**

Were people punished by God for Sabbath breaking? Yes! **Jeremiah 17:27.**

Jesus referred to the Sabbath in that way when He said, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath" **Mark 2:27, 28.**

## **VII. Final thoughts by Ellen G. White**

My Dearest Child,

Today I looked down and noticed as you were hurrying off to work. You looked so stressed and worried... My heart went out to your children as they stood in the living room window watching you go.

Later I looked again. You were sitting with your head in your hands wondering how to cope with life. If you would only stop a minute and listen to what I have to say... I have the answer to your problems.

"Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy..." I wrote those words with my own finger in stone so they would last for all eternity, and I long to write those same words on your heart in letters of love... because I want to spend time with you. I never designed you to live under a crushing load of care. I want to give you My joy, My peace, My love--my wonderful rest.

Remember the Sabbath day... come to me, and I will give you rest.

Love,



## Chapter 8: To finish or not to finish?

All scripture is in *italics*.

The **bolding** and underlining in the verses are **my emphasis**.

### **A. God is the Finisher and Perfecter of our Faith - Joel Osteen**

According to **Joel Osteen**, Pastor of Lakewood Church and author, God is the finisher and perfecter of our faith. He used these verses in his sermon.

Philippians 1:3-6 *I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being **confident** of this, that he who **began a good work in you will carry it on to completion** until the day of Christ Jesus.*

Hebrews 12: 1-3 *Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run **with perseverance** the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the **author** and **perfecter** of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.*

Joel believes that if God started it then He will finish it. God is the Author and Finisher/Perfecter of our faith. Unfortunately due to our situations we can lose sight of this truth. Many times we can give up, because life is just too hard. The first place that we lose the battle is in our own thoughts. "It is impossible to fix. I can't do it..." The devil knows that God is a Finisher, therefore the enemy will do whatever he can to destroy your life and your dreams. He will fill your head with many negative thoughts. "You'll never do it. You are too weak. You aren't smart enough..." However we have a choice! We can dare to believe, to not give up, and to claim the truth that God is a Finisher.

Joel continued the sermon talking about the fact that some of us have given up temporarily. We have allowed our disappointments and unfair situations in our lives to steal our hopes and dreams. Yes, some times these disappointments last too long and we become discouraged. Take Joseph (in the Old Testament) for example. Before he became the great leader he was sold into slavery, and put in prison even though he was innocent. Thirteen years later, he became that great leader. Joseph had no earthly reason to believe that his life would turn around, but he held on to his faith. Joel recommends that we take the following verse seriously.

Hebrews 10:23 *"Let us **hold unswervingly** to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. ("**Hold unswervingly**" can also be translated as: Hold fast... hold back, hold firmly, keep, possess.)*

Joel continues that when a person is holding fast on to something, then another force is trying to pull it away. He likened it to a tug-of-war. For us and our faith as we are holding fast, unfortunately disappointments, time, negative voices...are on the other side trying to pull our hope away. So today we need to draw a line in the sand and start over. He states that we need to shake off the doubt and unbelief on a daily basis. Your situation may look impossible, but remember that God (El Shaddai:

The God who is more than enough and Jehovah Jireh: Our Lord the Provider) is on our side. Believe with confidence that the Almighty God is working behind the scenes of our lives. God is in the finishing business. Daily we need to thank God for being a finisher, and hold fast/unswervingly to our faith.

## **B. Finishing in pain –**

*James 1:2-4 Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. **Perseverance must finish** its work so that you may be **mature and complete, not lacking anything.***

**We need to finish strong, and persevere! The following people are/were finishers:**

### **1. God/Christ**

**God:**

Genesis 2:2 By the seventh day God had **finished** the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work.

**Jesus:**

Matthew 13:53 When Jesus had **finished** these parables, he moved on from there.

John 4:34 "My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to **finish** his work.

John 5:36 "I have testimony weightier than that of John. For the very work that the Father has given me to **finish**, and which I am doing, testifies that the Father has sent me.

John 19:30 When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is **finished.**" With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. (When he was on the cross)

### **2. Noah – Genesis 7:5 And Noah did all that the LORD commanded him.**

- 6:14-22 So make yourself an ark of cypress wood; make rooms in it and coat it with pitch inside and out... Noah did everything just as God commanded him.
- Hebrews 11:7 By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

### **3. Moses (After the Exodus he set up the Tabernacle in the desert)**

- Exodus 40:33 Then Moses set up the courtyard around the tabernacle and altar and put up the curtain at the entrance to the courtyard. And so Moses **finished** the work.
- Numbers 7:1 [ Offerings at the Dedication of the Tabernacle ] When Moses **finished** setting up the tabernacle, he anointed it and consecrated it and all its furnishings. He also anointed and consecrated the altar and all its utensils.



#### 4. **Solomon** (Built and finished the first Temple, which took 20 years)

- 1 Chronicles 28:20 **(Advice about finishing the temple)** David also said to Solomon his son, "Be strong and courageous, and do the work. Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the **LORD God, my God, is with you. He will not fail you or forsake** you until all the work for the service of the temple of the LORD is **finished**."
- 2 Chronicles 8:1, 2, 16 At the end of twenty years, during which Solomon built the temple of the LORD and his own palace, Solomon rebuilt the villages that Hiram<sup>[a]</sup> had given him, and settled Israelites in them. All Solomon's work was carried out, from the day the foundation of the temple of the LORD was laid until its **completion**. So the temple of the LORD was **finished**.
- 1 Kings 6:37-38 The foundation of the temple of the LORD was laid in the fourth year, in the month of Ziv. <sup>38</sup> In the eleventh year in the month of Bul, the eighth month, the temple was **finished in all its details** according to its specifications. He had spent seven years building it.
- 1 Kings 9:1-3 When Solomon had **finished** building the temple of the LORD and the royal palace, and had achieved all he had desired to do, <sup>2</sup> the LORD appeared to him a second time, as he had appeared to him at Gibeon. <sup>3</sup> The LORD said to him: "I have heard the prayer and plea you have made before me; I have consecrated this temple, which you have built, by putting my Name there forever. My eyes and my heart will always be there."

#### 5. **King Hezekiah** Destroyed the Temple

- King Hezekiah was the son of King Ahaz. Ahaz was an evil king and chose to shut down and defile the temple. 2 Chronicles 28:22-25

*In his time of trouble King Ahaz became even more unfaithful to the LORD... Ahaz gathered together the furnishings from the temple of God and took them away. He shut the doors of the LORD's temple and set up altars at every street corner in Jerusalem. In every town in Judah he built high places to burn sacrifices to other gods and provoked the LORD, the God of his fathers, to anger.*

- Hezekiah was 25 years old when he became king and served for 29 years. In the first month of his reign he opened the Temple doors.
  - A. 2 Chronicles 29 – Hezekiah starts restoring the temple:
    - Vs. 3-19 Cleansing Temple and purifying it
    - Vs. 20-36 Restoring themselves before God...atoning for sins with animal sacrifice. (Asking for forgiveness)
  - B. 2 Chronicles 30:5 Hezekiah wanted people to return and worship God now that the Temple was restored...

*They decided to send a proclamation throughout Israel, from Beersheba to Dan, calling the people to come to Jerusalem and celebrate the Passover to the LORD, the God of Israel.*
  - C. 2 Chronicles 31 2-21 Restores the true forms of worship

- Vs. 20 *And thus did Hezekiah throughout all Judah, and wrought that which was good and right and truth before the LORD his God.*
- Vs. 21 *And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered.*

D. Hezekiah was a man of God:

- 2 Kings 18: 5-7 *Hezekiah trusted in the LORD, the God of Israel. There was no one like him among all the kings of Judah, either before him or after him. He held fast to the LORD and did not cease to follow him; he kept the commands the LORD had given Moses. And the LORD was with him; he was successful in whatever he undertook. to all the Levites, who showed good understanding of the service of the LORD.*
- 2 Chronicles 30:22 *Hezekiah spoke encouragingly to all the Levites, who showed good understanding of the service of the LORD.*

## 6. **King Nebuchadnezzar** of Babylon destroyed the Temple in 586 B.C.

- 2 Kings Chapters 24 and 25
- 2 Chron 36:18-19 *He (Nebuchadnezzar) carried to Babylon all the articles from the temple of God, both large and small, and the treasures of the LORD's temple and the treasures of the king and his officials. They set fire to God's temple and broke down the wall of Jerusalem; they burned all the palaces and destroyed everything of value there.*

After the first Temple was destroyed by King Nebuchadnezzar, the Jews were taken captive to Babylon for 70 years. But after the fall of the Babylonian Empire to Cyrus, king of Persia, in 539 B.C., Cyrus proclaimed in 537 B.C. that the Temple of God should be restored and built once again, and encouraged the Jews to return to Judea to accomplish this task (II Chron.36:22-23). Therefore fulfilling Jeremiah's prophecy (Ezra 1:1) The rebuilding of the temple started when Zerubbabel built the altar on the ruins of that which had been destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar.

## 7. **There were three major players in the rebuilding of the Temple.** The Temple was finally completed after various problems and hassles.

1. Zerubbabel - appointed by King Cyrus to take exiles with him and to finish temple.
2. Zechariah the prophet - Encouraging them to rebuild the temple
3. Ezra - comes to Jerusalem later, and he is the writer of this event.

A. **Zerubbabel** - means "Born at Babylon".

Zerubbabel returned with the 42,360 Jewish exiles to Jerusalem (Ezra 2:64). Along with Joshua the high priest, they built the altar of God (Ezra 3:1-6). During the second year of they started the foundations of the Temple. (Ezra 3:11) Unfortunately the first effort to rebuild the Temple failed. Their adversaries, the Samaritans, opposed their effort and persuaded King Artaxerxes I to stop the rebuilding of the Temple. Nothing happened for

another sixteen years. In 520 B.C. the prophets Haggai and Zechariah encouraged Zerubbabel to try to rebuild the Temple again. Zerubbabel and Joshua chose to take on this task. It took only four years to finish the Temple. Therefore Zerubbabel is a very important figure in biblical history. The first Temple is known as Solomon's Temple, the second one is "Zerubbabel's Temple", and the third one is "Herod's Temple" when he started to rebuild it in 20 B.C.

- B. **Zechariah** – Was a prophet and the son of Berechiah. His name means “Yahweh remembers”. He is one of 12 minor prophets. He prophesied during the reign of Darius. Zechariah is set in the same time period of Haggai, another prophet. The exiles have returned from captivity in Babylon and like Haggai, Zechariah encouraged them to continue rebuilding the Temple when the Temple was stalled. For the most part, Zechariah told Zerubbabel to “Begin Again”. Zerubbabel didn't think he could do it, so Zechariah reminds him in verse 4:6 that it isn't Zerubbabel's might or power, but it is God who will make it happen.

Zechariah 4:6-9, (Angel talking to Zechariah)

*So he said to me, "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: '**Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,**' says the LORD Almighty. "What are you, O mighty mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become level ground. Then he will bring out the **capstone** to shouts of 'God bless it! God bless it!' " Then the word of the LORD came to me: "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this temple; his hands will also complete it. Then you will know that the LORD Almighty has sent me to you."*

(Note: Vs. 7 - God wanted Zerubbabel to get a **capstone** to be the finishing piece to the Temple. The capstone that was laid before Joshua refers to the **foundation** or **chief cornerstone** of the Temple. It also symbolizes Christ the Messiah. God knew that Zerubbabel needed a daily reminder as he was finishing the Temple. Each and every day Zerubbabel and Joshua were able to see the capstone. This capstone served Zerubbabel as a picture of finishing the task. **Joel Osteen** recommends that we all have our own capstone that we can see on a daily basis to remind us that God will finish the task. An inanimate object will work: a picture, a ring, a small sculpture,,,) )

Zechariah prophesizes....

- Zech 6:15 *"Those who are far away will come and help to build the temple of the LORD, and you will know that the LORD Almighty has sent me to you. This will happen if you **diligently obey** the LORD your God."*
- Zech 8:9 *This is what the LORD Almighty says: "You who now hear these words spoken by the prophets who were there when the foundation was laid for the house of the LORD Almighty, let your hands be strong so that the temple may be built."*

- C. **Ezra** – After the temple was rebuilt, Ezra led more Jewish exiles to Jerusalem with many more exiles. Ezra is also the person that wrote about the rebuilding of the Temple.

Ezra 4:1,4,5

1) When the enemies of Judah and Benjamin heard that the exiles were building a temple for the LORD, the God of Israel ...

4) Then the peoples (the enemies) around them set **out to discourage** the people of Judah and make them afraid to go on building. 5) They hired counselors to **work against** them and **frustrate their plans** during the entire reign of Cyrus king of Persia and down to the reign of Darius king of Persia.

Ezra 5:11-12 **Rebuild after destroy**

This is the answer they (the rebuilders) gave us: "We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and **we are rebuilding the temple that was built many years ago**, one that a great king of Israel built and **finished**. But because our fathers angered the God of heaven, he handed them over to Nebuchadnezzar the Chaldean, king of Babylon, who destroyed this temple and deported the people to Babylon.

Ezra 6:14-15

So the elders of the Jews continued to build and prosper under the preaching of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah, a descendant of Iddo. They **finished** building the temple according to the command of the God of Israel and the decrees of Cyrus, Darius and Artaxerxes, kings of Persia. The temple **was completed** on the third day of the month Adar, in the sixth year of the reign of King Darius

Ezra 7:23 – (King Artaxerxes is talking to temple builders after allowing them to build again.)

Whatever the God of heaven has prescribed, let it be **done with diligence** for the temple of the God of heaven.

## **8. Nehemiah** Nehemiah returned from Babylon to Jerusalem to rebuild the wall.

Nehemiah 2:17-20 (Even with mocking, Nehemiah stayed the course)

Then I (Nehemiah) said to them, "You see the trouble we are in: Jerusalem lies in ruins, and its gates have been burned with fire. Come, let us **rebuild the wall of Jerusalem**, and we will no longer be in disgrace." I also told them about the gracious hand of my God upon me and what the king had said to me.

They replied, "Let us start rebuilding." So they began this good work. But when Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite official and Geshem the Arab heard about it, they mocked and ridiculed us. "What is this you are doing?" they asked. "Are you rebelling against the king?" I answered them by saying, "The God of heaven will give us success. We his servants will start rebuilding, but as for you, you have no share in Jerusalem or any claim or historic right to it."

Nehemiah 4:10-21 (Many obstacles to overcome)

10) (Poor attitudes) Meanwhile, the people in Judah said, "The strength of the laborers is giving out, and there is so much rubble that we cannot rebuild the wall."

11) (Enemies wanting to attack) *Also our enemies said, "Before they know it or see us, we will be right there among them and will kill them and put an end to the work."*

12) *Then the Jews who lived near them came and told us ten times over, "Wherever you turn, they will attack us."*

(So Nehemiah sets up a defense so that the wall can be finished.)

13) *Therefore I stationed some of the people behind the lowest points of the wall at the exposed places, posting them by families, with their swords, spears and bows...*

16-17) *From that day on, half of my men did the work, while the other half were equipped with spears, shields, bows and armor. The officers posted themselves behind all the people of Judah who were building the wall. Those who carried materials did their **work with one hand and held a weapon in the other...***

21) *So we continued the work with half the men holding spears, from the first light of dawn till the stars came out.*

Nehemiah 5:16 (Some other governors were taking advantage of their people, but Nehemiah, also a governor, chose not to do that)

*But out of reverence for God I did not act like that. Instead, **I devoted myself to the work on this wall.** All my men were assembled there for the work; we did not acquire any land.*

#### **\*\*\*\*\*Further Opposition to the rebuilding the wall. Please read Nehemiah 6:1-4**

Nehemiah 6:15,16 (The Completion of the Wall)

*So the wall was **completed** on the twenty-fifth of Elul, in fifty-two days. When all our enemies heard about this, all the surrounding nations were afraid and lost their self-confidence, because they realized that this **work had been done with the help of our God.***

Nehemiah 8:9-12 (After the wall was built, they gathered to hear Ezra read from the Book of the Law of Moses.)

*Then Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who were instructing the people said to them all, "This day is sacred to the LORD your God. Do not mourn or weep." For all the people had been weeping as they listened to the words of the Law.*

*Nehemiah said, "Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is sacred to our Lord. Do not grieve, for **the joy of the LORD is your strength.**"*

*The Levites calmed all the people, saying, "**Be still,** for this is a sacred day. Do not grieve."*

*Then all the people went away to eat and drink, to send portions of food and to celebrate with great joy, because they now understood the words that had been made known to them.*

Nehemiah 12:27 (Dedication of the Wall of Jerusalem)

*At the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem, the Levites were sought out from where they lived and were brought to Jerusalem to celebrate joyfully the dedication with songs of thanksgiving and with the music of cymbals, harps and lyres.*

## 9. Elisha and the Shunammite Woman -

Read about this story. 2 Kings 4:8-36 Pay particular attention to verses 23-28

We can learn a lot from the faith of this Shunammite woman.

- She felt her pain and said Ouch!— Verse 27 *"She is in bitter distress"*
- She was real about her needs and challenged Elisha – Verse 28 *"Did I ask you for a son, my lord?" she said. "Didn't I tell you, 'Don't raise my hopes'?"*
- In all of her pain, she chose to rest/trust in the God and know that He would take of the situation. Either He would help her process her pain or He would miraculously raise her child from the dead. Verse 23 *"It's all right," she said.* Verse 26 *"Everything is all right," she said.* These words were spoken by the Shunammite woman during the tragedy and also before the miracle happened. She knew that God was a finisher and that He would not abandon us in our hard times. She knew that God would see her through this tragedy because God is "El Shaddai" (The God who is more than enough) and He is also "Jehovah Jireh" (The Lord our Provider).

Therefore in tough situations we need to feel our pain, be real about our pain, but also rest/trust in God that He does care about us and will help us through each and every situation in our lives. Even if it isn't the outcome that we would have desired, God still gives us the grace and the strength to deal with the tragedy. We need to trust God as El Shaddai and Jehovah Jireh in our lives, no matter what the circumstances may tell us.

## 10. Paul

Acts 20:24 - *However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace.*

Phil 3:12-14 - *Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. (The goal is to finish)*

2 Timothy 4:7 *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.*

Acts 12:25 (with Barnabas) *When Barnabas and Saul had finished their mission, they returned from Jerusalem, taking with them John, also called Mark.*

2 Corinthians 8:10-11 (Paul talking to the Corinthians) *And here is my advice about what is best for you in this matter: Last year you were the first not only to give but also to have the desire to do so. Now finish the work, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it, according to your means.*

## 11. Devil

Luke 4:13 *When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time.*

### **As God's children we need to take a stand.**

We need to take a stand, but we stand firm in the name of Jesus Christ. We do this by leaning on God. So this is a diagonal type of standing. We are standing firm, but we are also leaning on God the whole time.

Ephesians 6:10-14 *"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. <sup>11</sup>Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your **stand** against the devil's schemes. <sup>12</sup>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. <sup>13</sup>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**. <sup>14</sup>**Stand firm** then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place..."*

2 Corinthians 1:21-22 *"Now it is God who makes both us and you **stand firm in Christ**. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come."*

Matthew 24:13 *"but he who **stands firm** to the end will be saved."*

1 Cor 15:58 *"Therefore, my dear brothers, **stand firm. Let nothing move you**. Always give yourselves **fully** to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain."*

Proverbs 3:5 *"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and **lean not** on your own understanding."*

## C. Don't give up

Some have died while finishing their course for God. Dying is not the tragedy, because they are in heaven! Tragedy is when you die **without** finishing the course. God is faithful. He'll help us complete our course:

Psalms 138:8 *The LORD **will fulfill his purpose for me**; your love, O LORD, endures forever— do not abandon the works of your hands.*

1 Thessalonians 5:23 *May God himself, the God of peace, **sanctify you through and through**. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Luke 18:1 Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.

2 Chron 15:7 But as for you, be strong and do not give up, for your work will be rewarded."

#### **D. The spirit of a finisher – 1 Peter 5:7-10**

7) Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. 8) Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. 9) Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings. 10) And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.

#### **Attributes of a finisher:**

1. Jesus is the Lord of your life. Total commitment to the lordship of Jesus.  
1 Peter 5:10 *"And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. To him be the power forever and ever. Amen."*
2. Casts away all their worry.  
Worry is a completely alien concept to the man/woman of God who bears the spirit of a finisher. 1 Pet 5:7 notice the word "all".
3. Stays in fellowship with the body of Christ no matter what. Finishers don't do it alone.  
Matt 18:19-20 *"Where 2 or more are gathered..."*
4. Keep their oaths to God

Psalm 15:1, 4 <sup>1</sup> *LORD, who may dwell in your sanctuary? Who may live on your holy hill?...<sup>4</sup> He who keeps his oath even when it hurts."*

Numbers 30:2 *"When a man makes a vow to the LORD or takes an oath to obligate himself by a pledge, he must not break his word but must do everything he said."*

**During the tough times,  
God and you will see what you are made of,  
by the way you respond.**

Providing we finish the way God wants us to, we will receive the Crown of life. He'll give us a Crown of Life, but He had to wear a crown of thorns.

James 1:12 *"Blessed is the man who **perseveres under trial**, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the **crown of life** that God has promised to those who love him."*

Revelation 2:10 *"Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. **Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.**"*

2 Timothy 4:8 *"Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day--and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing."*



## **E. Dictionary and Thesaurus**

### **Dictionary definition – To finish**

Function: *verb*

**1:** to come to an end : TERMINATE, END

**2:** to come to the end of a course, task, or undertaking

**3:** to bring to completion or issue

### **Thesaurus – To finish**

Function: *verb*

**Text:** **1** to bring (something) to a state where nothing remains to be done

**Synonyms:** complete, consummate, finalize

**Related Words:** follow through, see out, stick out; accomplish, achieve, effect; execute, fulfill, perform

**Near Antonyms** abandon, desert, drop, forsake, quit

(Notice the Antonyms...God does not abandon, drop, forsake, or quit...it goes against the essence of His being.)

## **Chapter 9: To trust the Provider or not?**

(In this chapter, all of the Bible verses are in italics, all underlining/bolding in the verses is my emphasis.)

### **Table of Contents**

- A. **The Abrahamic Covenant**
- B. **Abraham and Jehovah Jireh**
- C. **Biblical Scholars and their explanations of Genesis 22:1-18**
- D. **The Abrahamic covenant continues after Abraham's death.**
- E. **Common theme in the Bible...That Jesus stamps out satan.**
- F. **We all have Achille's heels.**
- G. **Verses to assure us that we are safe from the enemy**

God is our Provider. He took on this role when He created heaven and earth. His creation was His first provision for us. God has been in the business of providing ever since and He will continue to do so. In this study you will witness God's provisions through various people in the Bible. Let's take a closer look into Abraham's life as we learn more about God as Jehovah Jireh.

## **A. The Abrahamic Covenant**

The Abrahamic Covenant takes place in the Old Testament. This is where God promises Abraham and his descendants that He will provide for them. He first tells this to Abraham. God repeats it to Abraham's son, Isaac, and then to Isaac's son, Jacob. This is what God said He would provide:

1. God will raise Abraham up into a **great nation**. Genesis 12:1-3. (Notice: Abram is the old name for Abraham)

*1 The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.*

*2 "I will make you into a **great nation**  
and I will bless you;  
I will make your name great,  
and you will be a blessing.*

*3 I will bless those who bless you,  
and whoever curses you I will curse;  
and all peoples on earth  
will be blessed through you."*

2. God promises Abraham that his family/descendants (The Israelites) will have **a place to live where they can thrive in peace.**

Genesis 12: 6-7

*Abram traveled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. The LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring **I will give this land.**" So he built an altar there to the LORD, who had appeared to him.*

Exodus 6:4, 8

*4) I also established my covenant with them to give them the **land of Canaan**, where they lived as aliens... 8) And **I will bring you to the land** I swore with uplifted hand to give to **Abraham**, to **Isaac** and to **Jacob**. I will give it to you as a possession. I am the LORD.' "*

3. God will bring a **Savior (Jesus Christ) from Abraham's family**. (This is also King David's family)  
Again, God tells Abraham, then repeats it to Isaac, and then to Jacob.

- Genesis 22:17-18 (To Abraham)

*I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, and through your **offspring/seed**, all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me.*

**Matthew Henry's** commentary about this verse: "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Jesus Christ is the great blessing of the world, the greatest that ever the world possessed. All the true blessedness the world is now, or ever shall be possessed of, is owing to Abram and his posterity. Through them we have a Bible, a Saviour, and a gospel. They are the stock on which the Christian church is grafted."

- Gen 26:2-5 – (To Isaac)

*The LORD appeared to Isaac and said, "Do not go down to Egypt; live in the land where I tell you to live. Stay in this land for a while, and I will be with you and will bless you. For to you and your descendants I will give all these lands and will confirm the oath I swore to your father Abraham. I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and will give them all these lands, and through your **offspring/seed** all nations on earth will be blessed, because Abraham obeyed me and kept my requirements, my commands, my decrees and my laws."*

**Les Feldick's** commentary about this verse: "God has promised the whole area of the Middle East to the offspring of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and no one else."

- Gen 28:13-15 (To Jacob)

*There above it stood the LORD, and he said: "I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. **All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring/seed**. I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."*

(The "Offering/Seed" is the seed of Christ. The Messiah)

All of these promises came to pass. Read in the New Testament about how the God gave us a Savior through Abraham's family. Matthew 1:1, 2, 15 - 17

### The Genealogy of Jesus

1) A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ the **son of David, the son of Abraham**:

2) Abraham was the father of Isaac,

**Isaac** the father of Jacob,

**Jacob** the father of Judah and his brothers...

15) Eliud the father of Eleazar,

Eleazar the father of Matthan,

Matthan the father of Jacob,

16) and Jacob the father **of Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.**

17) Thus there were fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen from the exile to the Christ.

## **B. Abraham and Jehovah Jireh**

One specific time Abraham's faith was seriously tested by God. Notice how Abraham was completely obedient, therefore God provided for Abraham. In turn, Abraham named the place "Jehovah Jireh", Read about this in Genesis 22:1-18:

### *Abraham Tested*

1 Some time later God tested Abraham. He said to him, "Abraham!"

**"Here I am,"** he replied.

2 Then God said, "Take your son, **your only son, Isaac**, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about."

3 **Early the next morning** Abraham got up and saddled his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. When he had cut enough wood for the burnt offering, he set out for the place God had told him about. 4 On **the third day** Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. 5 He said to his servants, "Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. **We** will worship and then **we** will come back to you."

6 Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. As the two of them went on together, 7 Isaac spoke up and said to his father Abraham, "Father?"

"Yes, my son?" Abraham replied.

"The fire and wood are here," Isaac said, "but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?"

8 Abraham answered, **"God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son."** And the two of them went on together.

9 When they reached the place God had told him about, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. 10 Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. 11 But the angel of the LORD called out to him from heaven, "Abraham! Abraham!"

**"Here I am,"** he replied.

12 "Do not lay a hand on the boy," he said. "Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son."

13 Abraham looked up and there in a thicket he saw a ram caught by its horns. He went over and took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son. 14 So Abraham called that place **The LORD Will Provide**. And to this day it is said, **"On the mountain of the LORD it will be provided."**

15 The angel of the LORD called to Abraham from heaven a second time 16 and said, "I swear by myself, declares the LORD, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, 17 **I will surely bless you** and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, 18 and through **your offspring/seed all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me.**"

In verse 14 Abraham chose to celebrate God and honor Him for being the Great Provider after God saved Abraham's son. God provided the lamb/ram for the offering sacrifice on Mount Moriah. Therefore Abraham named this place Jehovah Jireh:

(Gen 22:14) Is the main verse for Jehovah Jireh in the Bible. Notice the King James Version: *And Abraham called the name of that place **Jehovahjireh**: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be **seen**.*

#### Definitions for Jehovah Jireh (Hebrew)

- The Lord will provide.
- Jehovah will **see**; i.e., will provide
- English word "provision" is made up of two Latin words "to **see** beforehand"

#### Notice Abraham's unquestioning obedience:

- God calls to Abraham and he replies, "*Here I am*". Vs. 1, 11
- He immediately did what God wanted by rising early the next day. Vs. 3
- He continued on for 3 days knowing he needed to sacrifice his only son, and he didn't turn back. Vs. 4

#### Notice Abraham's unflinching faith:

- He used the pronoun "we" when he was talking about returning. He was talking about his son and himself. By faith, he knew God would provide some other sacrifice. Vs. 5
- After being questioned by his son...he said "God himself will provide..." vs. 8

### **C. Biblical Scholars and their explanations of Genesis 22:1-18**

1. **C. H. Spurgeon** was England's best known preacher for the second half of the nineteenth century. (1834-1892). He eloquently creates the scene for us:

"I believe that the truth contained in the expression '**Jehovah-jireh**' was ruling Abraham's thought long before he uttered it and appointed it to be the memorial name of the place where the Lord had provided a substitute for Isaac. It was this thought, I think, which enabled him to act as promptly as he did under the trying circumstances. His reason whispered within

him, "If you slay your son, how can God keep His promise to you that your seed shall be as many as the stars of heaven?" He answered that suggestion by saying to himself, "Jehovah will see to it!" As he went upon that painful journey, with his dearly beloved son at his side, the suggestion may have come to him, "How will you meet Sarah when you return home having imbrued your hands in the blood of her son? How will you meet your neighbours when they hear that Abraham, who professed to be such a holy man, has killed his son?" That answer still sustained his heart-- "Jehovah will see to it! Jehovah will see to it! He will not fail in His word. Perhaps He will raise my son from the dead; but in some way or other He will justify my obedience to Him, and vindicate His own command. Jehovah will see to it."

If we follow the Lord's bidding, He will see to it that we shall not be ashamed or confounded. If we come into great need by following His command, He will see to it that the loss shall be recompensed. If our difficulties multiply and increase so that our way seems completely blocked up, Jehovah will see to it that the road shall be cleared. The Lord will see us through in the way of holiness if we are only willing to be thorough in it, and dare to follow wheresoever He leads the way."

According to C. H. Spurgeon

- a. The provision was **spontaneous** made for Abraham. Abraham didn't ask God to give him a different thing to sacrifice. He was totally obedient to what God called him to do. This ram also represents the spontaneous provision that God made for us with His Son, Jesus Christ. Just like Abraham, we didn't ask God to give us a sacrifice, much less sacrifice his One and Only Son. (My paraphrase)
- b. "When Abraham said '**Jehovah will provide,**' he meant us, first of all, to learn that THE PROVISION WILL COME IN THE TIME OF OUR **EXTREMITY**. Where will He provide? He will provide for us *in the mount*, that is to say, **in the place of our trial**. In the mount it shall be seen, in the place of the trial, in the heat of the furnace, in the last extremity Jehovah will be seen, for He will see to it, and it shall become a proverb with you,-- '***In the mount Jehovah shall be seen.***' (Gen. 22:14). That is to say, when you cannot see, the Lord will see you and see to your need; for His eyes are upon the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry.

As soon as the Lord has seen our need, then His provision shall be seen. You need not climb to heaven or descend into the deep to find it: the Lord's provision is near at hand,--the ram in the thicket is behind you though you see it not as yet. When you have heard God speak to you, you shall turn and see it, and wonder you never saw it before. You will heartily bless God for the abundant provision which He reveals in the moment of trial."

"The expression used in Gen. 22:14, '*in the mount of the Lord it shall be seen*' has been regarded as equivalent to the saying, 'Man's extremity is God's opportunity.'"

**[www.christiananswers.net](http://www.christiananswers.net)**

- c. “‘**Jehovah-jireh**’ is true concerning all necessary things. The instance given of Abraham being provided for shows us that the Lord will ever be a Provider for his people. As to the gift of the Lord Jesus, this is A PROVISION WHICH GUARANTEES ALL OTHER PROVISION.”

Notice C.H. Spurgeon uses the word “necessary”. Therefore the Lord sees and provides for the necessities of His servants.

2. According to Les Feldick – Teacher of the Bible for 30 years through books, radio and television.

**Genesis 22:9**

***“And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.”*** Now that almost seems beyond human comprehension, it seems beyond the God that we know of Scripture. How could God expect a man to lay his own son, when we know that one of the horrors of Israel’s history was child sacrifice and yet here God commanded Abraham to lay Isaac on that altar bound, hand and foot, although there is no indication that Isaac resisted. He was totally obedient to the father as he’s laid on the altar.”

3. Alexander Maclaren wrote a sermon titled Jehovah Jireh. (Alexander Maclaren, 1826-1910, was one of Great Britain's most famous preachers. He was known as "the prince of expository preachers.") Here is an excerpt from that sermon.

“Abraham christened the anonymous mountain-top, not by a name that reminded him or others of his trial, but by a name that proclaimed God's deliverance. He did not say anything about his agony or about his obedience. God spoke about that, not Abraham. He did not want these to be remembered, but what he desired to hand on to later generations was what God had done for him. Oh! dear friends, is that the way in which we look back upon life? Many a bare, bald mountain-top in your career and mine we have got our names for. Are they names that commemorate our sufferings or God's blessings? When we look back on the past what do we see? Times of trial or times of deliverance?”

4. The following quote comes from "Poor Man's Commentary On The Bible."

By Robert Hawker, D.D.

Late Vicar Of Charles, Plymouth. (1753-1827)

“When I can, and do put down, after any sharp trial, any Jehovah-jireh, and say, here it was ‘the Lord did provide;’ will it not, in any future exercise, enable me to say, ‘If the Lord helped me then, may I not hope that he will help me now?’ Whereas the very sight of our Jehovah-jirehs should teach us to say, ‘Here the Lord helped me: here he manifested his free unmerited grace to me: and will he not again? Is he less Jehovah than he was? Is he not God all-sufficient, all-gracious still?’”

5. According to Chuck Smith, Pastor and Faculty of Blue Letter Bible Institute:

“And Abraham offered the ram as the sacrifice and he declared, ‘Jehovah-Jireh.’ He called the name of the place Jehovah-Jireh, for the Lord will provide. And then again he prophesied, ‘For in the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.’ Interesting! Not, ‘It was seen, I saw it, I’ve seen it,’



but future, 'It **shall** be seen.' Very interesting that 2,000 years later on the top of Mount Moriah, the very same mount where Abraham offered Isaac, God provided Himself a sacrifice. And God's only begotten Son was crucified on Mount Moriah (near) the spot where Abraham offered Isaac as a sacrifice. And so Abraham was only in a play act drama, play acting what God would do in the future and prophesied of that day in the future when God would provide Himself the sacrifice. 'In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen,' and it was."

To conclude this part on Genesis 22:1-18, **Chuck Smith** and other theologians have made comparisons of Abraham sacrificing his son on the Mount and God sacrificing Jesus on the cross.

1. Both Isaac and Jesus were only sons. (Isaac was the only son of Abraham and Sarah)
2. The place for both situations was on Mount Moriah.
3. Isaac was referred to the seed of Abraham and Jesus the seed of God.
4. God provided a ram/lamb to Abraham, while He provided His Son as the lamb to take away our sins.
5. Isaac was totally obedient like Christ was.

#### **D. The Abrahamic covenant continues after Abraham's death.**

After Abraham had passed on, God continued to follow through with the Abrahamic Covenant. The Israelites (Abraham's descendents) became slaves to the Egyptians. So, God made a plan to save the Israelites. He did this by using Moses and Aaron.

1. God talked to Moses and Aaron about leading His people out of Egypt. Ex 6:1-11
2. The Israelites had no power to free themselves from slavery. **Les Feldick** uses this analogy: "Just like a fly that is in a spider's web...The fly can't get out at all due to the stickiness of the web. Only by having a human pull the fly out of the web, can it survive. So it was with the Israelites, they had to depend on God and His Sovereignty to get out of Egypt." God took an "impossible situation" and turned it around. God is Sovereign. Here is the definition to the adjective sovereign:
  - having supreme rank, power, or authority.
  - supreme; preeminent; indisputable
  - greatest in degree; utmost or extreme.
  - being above all others in character, importance, excellence, etc.
3. Moses needed to plead with the Pharaoh of Egypt to set God's people free. The Pharaoh did not want to free the slaves, because of all the work they did for the Pharaoh. The Pharaoh would lose his free workforce, so the Pharaoh was very stubborn and wouldn't give them their freedom. God gave Moses supernatural powers to convince the Pharaoh to let the slaves go...

Exodus 7:10-12

*So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did just as the LORD commanded. Aaron threw his staff down in front of Pharaoh and his officials, and it became a snake.*

*Pharaoh then summoned wise men and sorcerers, and the Egyptian magicians also did the same things by their secret arts: Each one threw down his staff and it became a snake. But Aaron's staff swallowed up their staffs.*

Notice that Aaron's rod/snake swallowed up the other rod/snake

- Aaron's rod/snake is a symbol for Jesus
- Magician's rod/snake is a symbol for Satan.

Aaron's rod swallowed up the magician's rod...just like Jesus defeated Satan when He died on the cross! God has provided hope for now and the future. He provided:

- Moses/Aaron to give the Israelites freedom from slavery.
- Jesus Christ to give us freedom from the slavery to sin.

## E. Common theme in the Bible...That Jesus stamps out satan.

Let's look at Genesis 3:13-15

13 Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?"

The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

14 So the LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this,

"Cursed are you above all the livestock

and all the wild animals!

You will crawl on your belly

and you will eat dust

all the days of your life.

15 And I will put enmity

between you and the woman,

and between your offspring/seed and hers;

he will crush your head,

and you will strike his heel."

(King James Version of verse 15: *And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall **bruise** thy head, and thou shalt **bruise** his heel.*)

### Matthew Henry's explanation Genesis 3:13-15

1. "**War is proclaimed** between the Seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent...there is a continual warfare between grace and corruption, in the hearts of God's people. Heaven and hell can never be reconciled, nor light and darkness; no more can Satan and a sanctified soul. No sooner was the wound given, than the remedy was provided and revealed. This gracious revelation of a Saviour came unasked, and unlooked for. The serpent is hurtful to man, and often bruises his heel, because it can reach no higher. But man (in the form of Jesus) is victorious over the serpent, and bruises his head, that is, gives him a mortal wound, aiming to destroy the whole generation of vipers. It is the effect of this curse upon the serpent that, though that creature is subtle and very dangerous, yet it prevails not. Destroyed and ruined at last by *the great Redeemer*, signified by the breaking of his head. His subtle politics shall all be baffled, his usurped power shall be entirely crushed, and he shall be for ever a captive to the injured honour of divine sovereignty."
2. "God **immediately proceeds to pass sentence**; and, in these verses, he begins (where the sin began) with the serpent. God did not examine the serpent, nor ask him what he had done nor why he did it; but immediately sentenced him,

- Because he was already convicted of rebellion against God.
  - Because he was to be for ever excluded from pardon.”
3. “He was likewise to be the seed of a **woman only**, of a virgin, that he might not be tainted with the corruption of our nature; he was sent forth, *made of a woman* (Gal. 4:4), that this promise might be fulfilled.”  
(Notice that God is only addressing Eve and not Adam in verses 13-15. Therefore Jesus is born of a virgin. So it was the **seed of the woman (Jesus)** that crushes the **head of the serpent (satan)**)
4. “His sufferings and death, pointed at in Satan's ***bruising his heel***, that is, his human nature. Satan tempted Christ in the wilderness, to draw him into sin. It was the devil that put it into the heart of Judas to betray Christ, of Peter to deny him, of the chief priests to prosecute him, of the false witnesses to accuse him, and of Pilate to condemn him, aiming in all this, by destroying the Saviour, to ruin the salvation; but, on the contrary, ***it was by death that Christ destroyed him that had the power of death***, Heb. 2:14. Christ's heel was bruised when his feet were pierced and nailed to the cross, and Christ's sufferings are continued in the sufferings of the saints for his name. The devil tempts them, casts them into prison, persecutes and slays them, and so bruises the heel of Christ, who is afflicted in their afflictions. But, while the heel is bruised on earth, it is well that the head is safe in heaven.”  
(Hebrew word...bruise also means overwhelm)

***“He shall bruise his head, that is, he shall destroy all his politics and all his powers***, and give a total overthrow to his kingdom and interest. By his death, he gave a fatal and incurable blow to the devil's kingdom, a wound to the head of this beast, that can never be healed.” The following verse refers to Jesus’ victory over satan.

Colossians 2:14-15. *He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.*

## F. **We all have Achilles’ heels**

Particular situations (abandonment, insecurities...) that just paralyze us to the point of feeling helpless, hopeless... This Achilles Heel is our slavery/bondage that doesn’t allow us to live life to the fullest. We have to trust that God will pull us out of our slavery/bondage, like He did with the Israelites and the Exodus with Moses.

Unfortunately, the devil will do anything to make us stay in our slavery/bondage and put spider webs all over the place to trip us up. He will cause any and every kind of interference to discourage us. We need to tell our Achilles heel that our God is Sovereign and bigger than any problem we might have. We need to be aware of the enemy’s tactics. We need to ask ourselves these questions...

- What are some of your Achilles heels that leave you in slavery/bondage?
- What are some of the spider webs that the devil puts in your way to cause interference?

Yes, God is Sovereign. God brought the Israelites out of Egypt. (a seemingly impossible task with Pharoah and his hard heart....) But it happened, and God will pull all of us out to the slavery of our Achilles heels! God the Provider, Jehovah Jireh, can free us from all types bondage; spiritual, emotional, mental... God will turn your situation around for good. He will pull us out of our wilderness that we have been going through and bring us to a place of serenity. All we have to do is believe and be obedient to God's will. Therefore we can apply the Abrahamic Covenant to our lives. God will provide during our good and our bad times. He provided before and He will continue to do so.

## **G. Verses to assure us that we are safe from the enemy**

### 1 Corinthians 15:54-58

*then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory."*

*"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.*

### John 10:27-30

*My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one."*

### 1 John 5:18

*We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the One(Jesus) who was born of God keeps him safe, and the evil one cannot harm him.*

## **Chapter 10: To be Christlike or not to be Christlike?**

It is good to be merciful, sanctified, restful...as mentioned in my previous chapters. However the ability to have such qualities in life is dependent on being Christ-like. We need to study the life of Jesus to fully understand what it is like to be Christ-like. When we choose to be like Christ, we are honoring God. This chapter could also be titled "To Honor God or not Honor God". I am choosing to end my book with this chapter. My prayer is that we can truly embrace this concept of being Christ-like. Thus, we will be setting the foundation for honoring God. This chapter is divided into three parts.

- **Part 1 - Jesus' Characteristics**
- **Part 2 - What Jesus did - Jesus'actions**
- **Part 3 – Honoring God**

I have chosen to support my writing with scripture. You will find many verses in each category. Please notice that verses that have stars\*\*\* in front of the scripture are the most important ones for that characteristic or action.

### **Part 1: Jesus' Characteristics**

Jesus had no sin. (2 Corinthians 5:21) Jesus was our living example and explanation as to how we should live our lives. Praise God for not only sending us a Savior, but also giving us such an incredible example. Jesus is our source to learn how to be Christ-like.

#### **Characteristic 1 – Supernaturally Sovereign**

First and foremost, God is Sovereign! There aren't enough words to do justice to His Sovereignty. He created the world and gave us Jesus to be an example of His greatness. Jesus healed the sick, raised the dead, and cast out evil spirits. Moreover, He conquered death itself by dying on the cross and resurrecting three days later. What a blessing to know God!

#### **A. Jesus healed the sick**

Matt 8:1-1– Healed many (Matt 8:34 After healing they pleaded with Jesus to leave.)  
Matt 8:5-13, Luke 7:1-10 – Healed Centurion's servant (Lk 7:9 said encouraging words)  
Matt 8:14-15, Mark 1:30-31, Luke 4:38-39 – Cured Simon's Mother-in-law  
Matt 8:16-17, Mark 1:32-34, Luke 4:40-41 – Healed diseases, cast out demons  
Matt 9:1-8, Mark 2:1-12, Luke 5:17-26 – Healed paralytic  
Matt 9:2, Luke 5:20, Mark 2:5 – Jesus healed sins (Healed spiritually also)  
Matt 9:18-26, Luke 8:40-56, Mark 5:21-43 – Healed Jarius daughter 12 years +  
woman who touched cloak  
Matt 9:27-34 Blind and mute – drive out demons  
Matt 10:1, Mark 6:7, Luke 9:1 – Gave authority to disciples drive out demons + heal sick  
Matt 12:9-14, Luke 6:1-5, Mark 3:1-5 – Healed on Sabbath  
Matt 12:15, Matt 14:36, Matt 19:2, Mark 3:10 – Healed many

Matt 15:29-31, Mark 7:32-35 – Helped deaf hear

Matt 20:29-34, Mark 8:22-25, Mark 10:46-52, Luke 18:41-43 – Healed blind

Luke 13:10-13 – Healed crippled woman on Sabbath

Luke 17:12-17 – Healed 10 lepers

### **B. Jesus cast out evil spirits**

Matt 8:1-4, Mark 1:40-42, Luke 5:12-15 – Cast out demons, healed lepers

Matt 8:28-34, Mark 5:1-20, Luke 8:26-39 – Healed demon possessed. Put in pigs

Matt 12:22, Luke 4:33-37, 40-41 – Rid evil spirits

Matt 17:14-21, Mark 9:14-27, Luke 9:37-43 – Healing boy of evil spirit

- Vs. (Mt-16) (Mk- 17-18) (L- 40) – Your disciples couldn't heal
- Vs. (Mt-17) Mk-19) (L- 41) – Oh unbelieving ...How long shall I put up with you?
- Mark vs. 22 – Man says "if you can?"
- Mark vs. 23 – Jesus response. "If you can?"
- Vs. (Mt-8) (Mk-25) (4L-2)– Jesus rebuked evil spirit.

Luke 11:14-20 – Drive out demon Beelzebub

### **C. Miscellaneous miracles**

\*\*\*Luke 7:11-16 – Raised widow's only son from the dead.

Matt 8:23-27, Mark 4:35-41, Luke 8:22-25 – John 6:16-21 Calms the storm

Matt 11:4-6, Luke 7:21-23 – Did miracles, tell John the Baptist about the miracles.

Matt 14:24-27, Mark 6:47-51, John 6:16-21 – Walking on water

John 2:1-11 – Changed water to wine

John 6:1-14 Feed 5000 – (Matt 14:13-21, Mark 6:30-44, Luke 9:10-17)

### **Characteristic 2 – Bold**

Jesus was loving, but also very bold at times. In being bold, one must know how to properly make boundaries. Jesus needed to have boundaries due to the irrational thoughts and actions by many people. This is especially true for the Pharisees and religious authorities who had over 600 laws added to God's laws. This made it almost impossible for the people to live. You will find in this chapter that the Pharisees were the total opposite (antithesis) to Jesus. The Pharisees wanted to measure people's obedience to tangible things versus Jesus encouraging the obedience to intangible things. **According to Chuck Swindoll in his book, "The Greatest Life of All. Jesus." Pg 162**

*"The division between Jesus and the Pharisees had never been anything less than a canyon. He came to speak the truth; they desired to control. And one thing that will always be true of controllers: what they cannot control, they destroy."*

We as Christians need to learn boundaries, because we tend to help others too much. In other words, we can enable others. Therefore this section on being bold and making boundaries is the longest section in this chapter. There are numerous verses about this concept in the Bible.

In the end of Chapter Matthew 4, there was a great multitude of people who followed Jesus. They followed Jesus due to their love for Him. In contrast, the majority of the people who followed the Pharisees, did so out of fear. The Pharisees knew that the people were starting to follow Jesus due to the message of love that He spoke. The Pharisees were so dysfunctional that they devised a plan to get rid of Jesus. They paid Judas to betray Jesus, therefore making it possible to arrest Jesus. Refer to the following verses; Matt 26:1-5,14-16, Mark 14:1-2,10-11, Luke 22:1-6.

There were times that Jesus was so bold and so right that the Pharisees couldn't respond. See verses Matt 22:41-46 and Luke 14:1-6

Jesus was very bold. The majority of His conversations with the Pharisees were very contentious and Jesus needed to be bold. However, there are a couple of verses where there was positive interaction with a teacher of the law.

- Matt 22:34-40, Mark 12:28-34, Luke 10:25-37 – Jesus encouraged teacher of law.
- Mark 12:32 – Teacher gives a nice comment
- Mark 12:34 – Jesus gives a nice comment.
- Luke 20:39 – Some of the teachers responded politely to Jesus

Due to the importance of being bold, I choose to start this section on boldness/boundaries with the commentaries that I found from the **Life Application Study Bible New International Bible.** **This Bible is published by Tyndale House Publishers and Zondervan.** Notice these quotes/paraphrases are italicized and have the page references for each quote from this Bible. Have your Bible ready so that you can read the Bible verse first, then you can read the commentary. Following these commentaries I have more verses about boldness/boundaries.

## **1. Commentaries on boldness/boundaries.**

- A. Eating with "sinners". The erroneous thoughts and actions of the Pharisees, with respect to Jesus eating with "sinners", are portrayed in Matt 9:11-12, Mark 2:16-17, and Luke 5:30-32, Luke 15:2. However, Hosea 7:6 refutes the Pharisees. "For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgement of God rather than burnt offerings." The Bible's commentary for the following verses is:
- Hosea 7:6 – *"Religious rituals are helpful if carried out with an attitude of love and obedience to God...if not they become empty mockers. God doesn't want rituals, but our hearts."* (Pg 1403)
  - Matt 9:11-12 – *"The Pharisees were more concerned with their own appearance of holiness than with helping people. With criticism than encouragement, with outward respectability than practical help. Following Jesus' example, we should share the gospel with the poor, immoral, lonely, an outcast, not just the rich, moral, popular, and powerful."* (Pg 1550)
  - Mark 2:16-17 – *"Jesus gladly associated with the sinners because he loved them and because he knew that they needed to hear what he had to say. We, too, must befriend those who need Christ, even if they do not see to be ideal companions."* (Pg 1610)

- Luke 5:30-32 – *“The Pharisees wrapped their sin in respectability. They made themselves appear good by publicly doing good deeds and pointing at the sin of others. Jesus chose to spend time not with these proud, self-righteous religious leaders, but with the people who sensed their own sin and knew that they were not good enough for God.”* (Pg. 1678)
  - Luke 15:2 – *“Jesus showed complete disregard for their sanctions against associating with certain classes of people. He came to offer salvation to sinners, to show that God loves them.”* (Pg 1702)
- B. Matt 12:14, Mark 3:6 – Plotting to kill Jesus. Pharisees were mad because Jesus healed on the Sabbath and it is a sin.
- *Jesus overruled their authority and exposed their evil attitudes in front of the entire crowd.* (Pg 1557)
  - *Ironically the Pharisees themselves were breaking God’s law by plotting murder.* (Pg 1611)
- C. John 5:9-18 – Jesus healed the crippled man on the Sabbath. According to the Pharisees, He was working on the Sabbath and breaking the law. Jesus also called God His Father, making himself equal with God. Of course, the Pharisees were not thrilled with this either.
- *Pharisees were more concerned about their petty rule, than the life and health of a human being.* (Pg.1748 vs. 10)
  - *God rested...This can’t mean that He stopped doing good.* (Pg 1748 vs 17)
- D. Mark 12: 1-12, Matt 21:33-46, Luke 20:9-19 – Parable of the landowner and bad tenants
- Jesus exposed the religious leaders with this parable, and they knew it.* (Pg 1638) *Here is the explanation of the people and what they represent* (Pg 1579):
1. *Man planted vineyard – God*
  2. *Vineyard – Nation of Israel*
  3. *Tenants – Israel religious leaders*
  4. *Servants – Prophets and priests faithful to God*
  5. *Son – Jesus*
  6. *Others – Gentiles*
- E. Matt 12:9-14, Mark 3:1-6, Luke 6:3-11 – Healing on the Sabbath.
- *“The Pharisees placed their laws about human need. They were so concerned about Jesus breaking one of their rules that they did not care about the man’s shriveled hand.”* (Pg 1557)
  - *The religious leaders were more concerned with negatives: what rules should **not** be broken, what activities should **not** be done. Jesus was positive: doing good and helping those in need. They could not accept Jesus because he did not fit into their system.”* (Pg 1679)



- *Are you more concerned about what people shouldn't be doing than you are about advancing God's kingdom?" (Pg 1679)*
- *"Jesus was angry about the Pharisees' uncaring attitudes. Anger itself is not wrong. It depends on what makes us angry and what we do with our anger. Jesus expressed his anger by correcting a problem – healing the man's hand. Use your anger to find constructive solutions rather than to tear people down." (Pg 1661)*

F. Matt 9:14-17, Mark 2:18-20, Luke 5:33-39 – Eating/drinking instead of fasting.

- *"New wine expanded as it fermented stretching the wineskin. After the wine had aged, the stretched skin would burst if more wine was poured into it. New wine was always put into new wineskins. Jesus had not come to patch up the old religious system of Judaism with its rules and traditions. His purpose was to bring something new, though it had been prophesied for centuries." (Pg 1550-1551)*

G. Matt 12:1-2, Mark 2:25-28, Luke 6:3-11 – Gathering food on Sabbath

- Matt 12:1,2 *"The Pharisees had established 39 categories of actions forbidden on the Sabbath, based on the interpretations of God's law and on Jewish custom. Harvesting was one of those forbidden actions. By picking wheat and rubbing it in their hands, the disciples were technically harvesting, according to the religious leaders. Jesus and the disciples were picking grain because they were hungry, not because they wanted to harvest the grain for a profit. They were not working on the Sabbath. The Pharisees, however, could not (and did not want to) see beyond their law's technicalities. They had no room for compassion, and they were determined to accuse Jesus of wrongdoing." (Pg 1556)*
- Mark 2:25-28 – *"Jesus used the example of David to point out how ridiculous the Pharisees' accusations were (this incident occurred in 1 Samuel 21:1-6). For the Pharisees, Sabbath rules had become more important than the Sabbath rest. Both David and Jesus understood that the intent of God's law is to promote love for God and others. When confronted with rules of your own or others' making, ask:*
  - 1. Does the rule serve God's purposes?*
  - 2. Does the rule reveal God's character?*
  - 3. Does the rule help people get into God's family, or keep them out?*
  - 4. Does the rule have biblical roots that can be supported in the context of all of scripture?**Good rules pass all four tests." (Pg 1611)*
- Luke 6:3-11 (vs 6,7) – *Another forbidden action on the Sabbath, (No healing) "The religious leaders were more concerned about protecting their laws than freeing the person from painful suffering." (Pg 1679)*

H. Matt 9:34 – Casting out demons.

- *"In Chapter 9, the Pharisees accuse Jesus of four different sins: blasphemy, befriending outcasts, impiety, and serving Satan. Matthew shows how Jesus was*

*maligned by at those who should have received him most gladly. Why did the Pharisees do this?*

- 1. Jesus bypassed their religious authority.*
- 2. He weakened their control over people.*
- 3. He challenged their cherished beliefs.*
- 4. He exposed their insincere motives.*

*While the Pharisees questioned, debated, and dissected Jesus, people were being healed and lives changed right in front of them. Their skepticism was based not on insufficient evidence, but of Jesus' popularity."(Pg 1552)*

- I. Matt 15:1,2,20, Mark 7:1-7 – Eating with unclean hands.
  - *"The religious leaders didn't like what they found (eating with unclean hands), however, Jesus scolded them for keeping the law and traditions in order to look holy instead of honor God. The prophet Isaiah accused the religious leaders of his day of doing the same thing. (Isaiah 29:13) Jesus used Isaiah's words to accuse these men." (Pg1624)*

**2. More verses on Boldness/Boundaries** – These verses are boundaries that Jesus made with religious leaders, his disciples, people in general and Satan. This section will discuss the boundaries that He had with the various groups of people.

**A. Boundaries with Pharisees, Chief Priests, teachers of the law**

The majority of the Pharisees, Chief Priests and teachers of the law were very dysfunctional. They were so caught up in their legalism that they couldn't see the reality of most situations. For example, the Pharisees said that Jesus was the devil in Matt 9:34 – "But the Pharisees said, "It is by the prince of demons that he drives out demons." Moreover, the Pharisees were so concerned that Jesus was breaking their laws. However, they were plotting to kill Jesus! In my opinion, plotting to kill someone is worse than supposedly not washing their hands.

1. Matt 12:14, Mark 3:6 – Plot to kill Jesus  
Matt 12:15, Mark 3:7-12 – Jesus response was to withdraw, but kept healing.
2. Matt 26:3-5 – Plotting to kill Jesus again

Due to the ridiculousness of the Pharisees, Jesus needed to set boundaries on many occasions. Notice that the first set of boundaries are not responses from criticism from the Pharisees. There was no immediate situation/person that caused Jesus to speak. He was just teaching people.

**No complaints by Pharisees**

**Jesus speaking**

\*\*\*Matt 21:31-32 – Tax collectors and prostitutes  
go to heaven before you.

\*\*\*Matt 23:13-36 Seven Woes –

??? Verse 23 – Justice, mercy, faithfulness

\*\*\*Luke 11:42-53 – Six Woes (Especially v. 45-46)

### Landowner and bad tenants

- a. Matt 21:33-46 – Jesus + Scripture vs 42
- b. Mark 12:1-12 – Jesus + Scripture vs 10-11
- c. Luke 20:9-19 – Jesus + Scripture vs 17
  - vs.16-18 Jesus refers to Pharisees
  - vs.19 Pharisees new Jesus refers to them

Now the following verses have someone saying/doing something and Jesus responds to the criticism. Notice the complaint is on the left and Jesus response is on the right.

#### Complaint

\*\*\*Matt 9:11, Mark 2:15-16, Luke 5:29-30,  
Eat with sinners

\*\*\*Matt 12:9,10, Mark 3:1-3, Luke 6:6-8,  
John 5:9-18 – Heal on Sabbath

Matt 22:23-28, Mark 12:18-23

Sadducees question Jesus

Luke 13:31 – Pharisees warn that Herod  
wants to kill Jesus

Luke 15:1,2 – With tax collectors/sinners

John 8:12-13 – Pharisees challenge Jesus

#### Jesus' response

\*\*\*Matt 9:12-13, Mark 2:16-17, Luke 5:31-32,  
The sick need the doctor

Matt 12:11-13, Mark 3:4-6, Luke 6:9-11,  
John 5:19-30 – Can do good on the Sabbath

Matt 22:29-32 Mark 12:24-27 vs 27\*\*\*

You don't know the scriptures

\*\*\*Luke 13:32-35 – “You tell that fox...I will reach  
my goal and keep going.”\*\*\*

\*\*\*Luke 15:3-32

vs. 3-7 one lost sheep

vs. 8-10 lost coin

vs. 11-32 prodigal son

\*\*\*vs. 20 compassion

John 8:14-20 – My testimony is valid

### More boundaries with Pharisees....

#### Complaint

Matt 9:3 – Heal paralytic, sins, blasphemes

Matt 9:14, Mark 2:18, Luke 5:33

Disciples didn't fast

Mark 2:23-24

Lk 6:1,2, + 13:14-17 – Sabbath

Matt 12:24, Mark 3:20-22, Luke 11:14-16

Beelzebub

Matt 15:1,2, Mark 7:1-5 – Disciples

don't wash hands

Matt 16:1 – Tested Jesus

Matt 19:3,7 – Divorce

Matt 21:15 – Chief priest were indignant

#### Jesus' response

Matt 9:4-8 – He knew their thoughts  
and challenges them.

Matt 9:15-17, Mark 2:19-22, Luke 5:34-39

Why mourn when Bridegroom will come? Matt 12: 2,

Matt 12:3-8, Mark 2:25-27, Luke 6:3-11

All 3 books used O.T. David and eat

Matt 12:25-37, Mark 3:23-30,

Luke 11:18-28 (Especially Verse 22)

Matt 15:3-10 (Used scripture) v.7 – Hypocrites

Mark 7:6-13 (Used scripture) Isaiah

Matt 16:2-4,

Matt 19:4-6,8,9,

Matt 21:16 – (Used scripture)

Matt 21:23, Mark 11:27,28 – Luke 20:1,2 Questioned Jesus authority	Matt 21:24-27 , Mark 11:29-33, Luke 20:3-8 Answered with question, Pharisees no response
Mt 22:15-17, Mk 12:13-15, Lk 20:20-22 Trap Jesus/tax to Caesar?	Matt 22:18-22, Mark 12:15-17, Luke 20:23-26 Used questions/You hypocrites
Mark 2:6-7 – Blasphemes, forgives sins	Mark 2:8-11
Mark 8:11 – Tested Jesus, needed a sign from heaven.	Mark 8:12-13 – No sign for you and left.
Mark 10:1-10 Vs. 2 Unlawful to divorce wife? Vs. 4 Pharisee response	Mark 10:3 – Answered with question Mark 10:5-9 – Used scripture.
Luke 5:20-21 – Forgiving sins	Luke 5:22-26 – Answered with questions, then healed and forgave.
Luke 7:29-30 – Reject God’s purpose	Luke 7:31-35 – Answered with questions and used scripture
Luke 7:36-39 – Eat and women wash feet	Luke 7:40-50 – Used parable
Luke 11:37-38 – Jesus doesn't wash hands	Luke 11:39-41
Luke 16:13, 14 – Scoff at Jesus, because He said can’t serve God and money	Luke 16:15,
Luke 17:20 – Question Kingdom of God	Luke 17:21
Luke 20:27-33 – Sadducees question	Luke 20:34-38 – Sadducees satisfied vs 39-40

## **B. Jesus' boundaries with the Disciples**

\*\*\*Matt 15:21-28, Mark 7:24-30 – Disciples want to send the woman away  
(Mt 15:24 - I was sent ONLY to the lost sheep)\*\*\*

\*\*\*Mark 9:34-35, Luke 22:24 – Who is the greatest?

### Jesus response:

- Mark 9:35 – Jesus response – be a servant
- Luke 22:25-27 – should serve

Matt 8:23-27, Matt 14:28-31, Mark 4:35-41, Luke 8:22-25 – calm sea, you of little faith.

Matt 15:12-21, Mark 7:17-23 – Didn’t understand, wanted parable explained

Jesus’ response Matt 15:16, Mark 7:18 frustrated with their lack of understanding

Matt 16:8-11, Mark 8:17-21 – You don’t understand

Matt:17:14, Mark 9:14-19, Luke 9:37-43 – Disciples couldn’t heal. Jesus was frustrated.

“Oh, unbelieving perverse....”Then He healed.

Matt 19:13-15, Luke 18:15-17, Mark 10:13-16 – Stopping children. Jesus says come children

Matt 20:20-28, Mark 10:35-45

Mark 10:35-40 – Bad request by disciples and Jesus response

Mark 10:41-45 – Disciples fight and Jesus does conflict resolution

Matt 26:6-13 (v 10), Mark 14:3-9 (v 6), John 12:1-11 (v 7) – Woman and perfume

Matt 26:31-35, Mark 14:27-31, Luke 22:31-34, John 13:31-38 – Predicts Peter’s denial

Matt 26:40-45, Mark 14:37-42, Luke 22:45-46 – Frustrated with disciples sleeping.

Mark 13:1-35 – Teach about end times. (Vs 5, 9, 33, 37 Watch, be on guard)

Vs24- 25 Scripture was used

Mark 14:17-18, John 13:21 – One of you will betray me.

Mark 16:12-14, Luke 24:13-26 – Appeared before 2, then disciples, rebuked lack of faith

Luke 9:49-50, Mark 9:38-41 – Disciples told man to stop driving out demons

Mark 39-41 – Jesus response – “Do not stop him”

Luke 10:17-20 – Rebuked the 70 (Not disciples, but followers)

### **C. Advise to the Disciples about their boldness/boundaries**

\*\*\*Matt 23:1-12, Luke 20:45-47, Mark 12:38-40 – Beware of teachers of law...will be punished.

\*\*\*Matt 25:31-46 – Sheep on right, goats on left (\*\*vs 41-46)

\*\*\*Luke 12:1-7 – Warn about Pharisees

Matt 10:17-23 – Warning to disciples

Matt 10:32-39 – Who acknowledge me or not, I do the same. No peace but sword

Matt 16:5-12 – Mark 8:14-21 Warn about Pharisee’s teaching (yeast)

Matt 19:8,9 – Mark 10:10-12 Response about divorce.

Matt 21:19-21 – Mark 11:11-14, 20-21

Jesus talks about fig tree, faith and doubt (boundary+encouragement)

(Luke 13:6-9 same but Jesus talking to people)

Mark 6:11, Luke 9:5 – Matt 10:14 Shake dust off your feet

Luke 4:24-30, John 4:44 – Prophet not accepted in his own home.

Luke 16:10-13 – Can’t serve God and money.

### **D. Advice to people in general about their boldness/boundaries**

Jesus taught the people about various themes. However the most powerful teaching was about the money changers and Father’s house. The majority of the time Jesus was assertive with his boundaries, however this time He was very aggressive. I believe this is because it didn't affect Him, but it affected His Father. He made no excuses and even turned over the tables to prove His point. Moreover, He used scripture to back up His claim. (Matt 21:13 refers to Isaiah 56:7 and Jeremiah 7:11) **The Life Application Study Bible New International Bible states that Jesus turned over the tables on two occasions.**

- 1<sup>st</sup> time John 2:15,16
- 2<sup>nd</sup> time Matt 21:12,13 Luke 19:45-46, Mark 11:15-17 (Used scripture Matt/Luke)

### **More verse of Jesus advice to people**

\*\*\*Matt 11:18-19 – Comeback to accusations...Jesus is with tax collector/sinner, glutton and drunkard. “Wisdom is proved right by her **actions**”\*\*\*

\*\*\*Matt 23:1-12 –Mark 12:38-40, Luke 20:45-47 Beware of teachers...must be punished

\*\*\*Luke 18:10-14 – Mightier than thou... Pharisee vs Tax collector

\*\*\*Luke 19:7-10 – Very angry with Jesus and Zaccheus...Seek and save lost.

Matt 11:20-24 – Denounces the cities that didn't repent

Matt 11:25 – Talking to people and God... Hide but reveal to the children

Matt 12:31, Mark 3:29 – Blaspheme Holy Spirit...Eternal sin.

Matt 13:58 Mark 6:4-6 – Didn’t do many miracles due to unbelief.

Matt 18:5-6, Mark 9:42-48, Luke 17:1-2 – Don't cause others to sin  
Matt 19:16-30, Mark 10:17-31, Luke 18:18-30 – Salvation  
    (Mt 19:18-19) (Mk 10:19) (Lk 18:20) – used scripture  
    (Mt 19:23) (Mk 10:25) (Lk 18:24) – used word picture  
Mark 10:15, Luke 18:17 – Enter Kingdom of God  
Luke 12:8-9, 46-47 – Boundary with respect to salvation  
Luke 12:14,20-21 – Against greed  
Luke 12:54-59 – Against know-it-alls. “Hypocrites”  
Luke 13:22-30 – Enter Kingdom of God...I don't know you.  
Luke 19:12-27 – Noble man gave minas (money) Boundary vs.22-27  
Luke 21:1-4 – Mark 12:41-44 Praise poor woman that tithe more than rich.  
John 6:41-42 – Jews grumble about Jesus' claims.  
    John 6:43-49 Jesus confronts grumbling. Uses scripture  
John 6:52 – Jews question - how can He give us His flesh to eat?  
    John 6:53-59 Jesus response  
John 7:25-43 – Confronts people about wanting to kill Him. Used scripture.  
John 8:42-58 – Jesus confronts people for not believing His truth  
    Strong words vs.44\*\*\* – You belong to the devil  
    vs. 58 – They threw stones at Jesus.

#### **E. Boundaries against the devil**

Matt 4: 1-11, Mark 1:12-13, Luke 4:1-13 – (Only used scripture in Matt and Luke)  
Matt 16:23, Mark 8:33 – Command satan  
Mark 1:34 – Won't permit demons to speak.

### **Characteristic 3 - Jesus was compassionate**

**Jesus is the master at compassion. He could and can see through all of our emotional blemishes and scars, whether they are physical, emotional, spiritual. He will be compassionate to all of us. Even when we have made bad decisions, God is compassionate to us. Yes, He hates our sin, but he loves us. Being compassionate is being comforting. I believe that the words comfort and compassion are very similar in this text. One needs compassion to be able to give comfort. Read the following verse 2 Corinthians 1:3-7:**

"The God of All Comfort

<sup>3</sup>Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, <sup>4</sup>who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. <sup>5</sup>For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows. <sup>6</sup>If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer. <sup>7</sup>And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort."

There are two verses in John that shows Jesus' compassion is John 3:16-17. God didn't send Jesus to condemn the people but to save them. Also in John 9:1-12 when Jesus heals the blind, you will see a completely different approach from the Pharisees and Jesus. Please refer to:  
John 9: 13-34 Pharisees questioned and insulted man and his parents.  
John 9:35-38 Jesus finds the man and is gentle with him.

#### **A. Bible verses for compassion.**

\*\*\* Matt 15: 24 – sent only to lost sheep

Matt 9:5-6, Mark 2:5. Luke 5:20 – Forgive sins

Matt 11:28-30 – Come to me... weary...take my yoke...

Matt 14:13-21, Mark 6:32-44, Luke 9:10-17, John 6:5-14 – Feeds 5,000

Word "compassion" – Matt vs 14, and Mark vs 34

Matt 14:22-27, Mark 6:45-52, John 6:16-21 – Saw disciples struggling, walked on water

Matt 15:21-28, Mark 7:24-30 – Canaanite woman needed help for daughter, disciples sent her away.

Not Jesus, He chose heal daughter vs. 28

- Matt 15:29-31, Mark 7:31-37 Then He did more healing.

Matt 19:13-15, Mark 10:15-16, Luke 18:15-17 – Disciples rebuked children, Jesus – "let them come to me"

Luke 17:3-4 – Rebuke but forgive

John 3:22-23 – Baptize people

John 4:1-26 – Woman at the well

John 5:1-15 – Healing sick and lame

John 8:11 – When Pharisees wanted to stone a woman

John 11:17-44 – Comforts Mary and Martha

Vs. 47 – will not judge world but to save it

John 13:1-20 – Wash servants' feet  
vs. 14 you should wash others  
John 13:34 – Love each other as I have loved you.  
John 14:1 – Don't be troubled, trust God and me.  
John 20:14-16 – After death, comforted Mary Magdalene

**B. Bible verses where the word "compassion" is used.**

Matt 5:1-11, Luke 16:17-26 – Sermon on the Mount preached comfort... Encouraged them, gave them hope...  
Matt 9:36-38 – Compassion on crowds and gave solution  
Matt 14:14, Mark 6:34 – After withdrawing due to John the Baptist's death, Jesus saw a multitude and had compassion.  
Matt 15:29-39 (vs. 32), Mark 8:1-10 (vs. 2) – Feed 4,000 "I have compassion for these people"  
Matt 20:34 – Moved with compassion...healed blind  
Mark 1:41 – Moved with compassion...healed leper.  
Luke 15:3-32 – Prodigal son. Father "filled with compassion" vs. 20

**C. Verses for mercy** – Being merciful is another way of showing compassion

- Matthew 5:7 Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown **mercy**.
- Luke 10:37 The expert in the law replied, "The one who had **mercy** on him." Jesus told him, "**Go and do likewise.**"
- Romans 12:8 if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing **mercy**, let him do it **cheerfully**.
- James 2:12, 13 Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, because judgment without **mercy** will be shown to anyone who has not been **merciful**. **Mercy** triumphs over judgment!
- James 3:17 But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peaceloving, considerate, submissive, **full of mercy** and good fruit, impartial and sincere.
- Zechariah 7:9 "This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Administer true justice; show **mercy and compassion** to one another.'
- Galatians 5:22,23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, **kindness**, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup>**gentleness** and self-control.

**D. Pharisees did not treat many people with compassion, especially the women.**

They preferred to punish the women with letter of the law. Jesus on the other hand treated the women with mercy, grace and compassion. He even treated the prostitutes and poor with dignity. **Here is a quote from the Life Application study Bible – New Living Translation, Tyndale House Publishers pg 1797.**

**"Women-** *It is clear that Jesus did not treat women as others did in His culture. He treated them with dignity as people of worth. Mary Magdalene – even when she was a 'sinner'.*

1. *He drove out 7 demons*



2. *Helped instead of belittled/abused her.*  
*He relates to women as He created them – as equal reflectors of God's image."*

### **Verses for women**

Mark 15:40-41,47 – Mary Magdalene, his mother and other women cared for needs of Jesus in His lifetime. They were also there at the burial site.

Mark 16:1-8 – Women went to tomb with spices, but Jesus gone.

Mark 16:9-11 – He appeared first to Mary Magdalene. She believed when the other disciples did not believe that Jesus had risen.

Jesus was a gentleman in the true sense of the word. Please notice the words. One is “gentle” the other one is “man”. Gentleman is a word that we use a lot in the English language. However there are some men who do not live up to that name. They should be called “abusiveman” or “controlman”, because they are anything but, gentlemen. The Pharisees were the opposite of Jesus, therefore I can't say that the Pharisees were gentlemen.

### **Characteristic 4 - Honest**

Jesus was honest with everyone including His Father. He told the truth, even when it was unpleasant. He held honesty as a very important character trait, and we should too. Jesus is the opposite of lying, and wouldn't lie because of His refusal to follow the devil.

Matt 8:26, Mark 4:40 – Honest with disciples about their lack of faith.

Matt 27:46, Mark 15:34 – “Why have you forsaken me.”

Luke 14:25-35 – Cost of being a disciple.

### **Characteristic 5 - Obedient**

Jesus was a magnificent example of how to be 100% obedient. He was obedient to the point of death. The more we get to know and love God, the more we want to be obedient to Him. We can get to the point where it is seen as an **honor** rather than a **burden** to be obedient to God.

Matt 21:1-5 – obedient and followed scripture about His situation/doom. He made sure there was a donkey to fulfill scripture.

Matt 27:50 – Yielded up His spirit.

Luke 2:51 – Obedient to Parents

### **Characteristic 6 - Loyal - Never Abandons**

Most all of us have experienced the pain of someone leaving/abandoning us. This pain can be very intense and leave us emotionally paralyzed for a period of time. During times like these, we can focus on how God will never abandon us. The intensity of this thought will help us to heal ourselves and move on with our lives.

Matt 26:56, Mark 14:50 – He was abandoned by everyone. He understands.

John 10:10-15 – Always protects sheep

John 10:22-30 – Can't snatch the sheep out of my hand.

### **Characteristic 7 - Was emotional – He had emotions**

Jesus was God made flesh. He experienced everything that do here on earth. Jesus had emotions like we all do, but He chose to stay obedient the whole time in spite of his emotions. Jesus had an honest, open dialog with God in Mark 14:32-42 – “Deeply distressed...troubled...overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death...Take this cup...frustrated with disciples.”

Matt 14:13 – Withdrew to solitary place. He was sad due to John the Baptist's death

Matt 17:14-20 – Frustrated the disciples didn't/couldn't heal others

Matt 21:12-13, Mark 11:15-17, Luke 19:45-46, John 2:15-16 – Turned over tables (Angry)

Matt 27:27-50, Mark 15:15-37, Luke 23:26-46, John 19:17-30 – tortured and mocked

(Mark 15:34 gut level honesty)

(Matt 27:46 – Why have you forsaken me?)

Mark 3:5 – Angry and deeply distressed

Mark 11:12 – He was hungry (Physical pain)

Luke 12:50 – Distressed

Luke 19:41 – Jesus wept over Jerusalem

Luke 22:15 – Eagerly desire

Lazarus' death

- John 11: 33 – Deeply moved in spirit and troubled
- John 11:35 – Wept
- John 11:38 – Deeply moved

John 12:27 – My heart is troubled

### **Characteristic 8 - Non-Violent**

Jesus chose to be non-violent. If He was physically hurt, He would not retaliate. Even when people told lies about Him, He chose not to fight back with words. Yes, Jesus turned over the tables when He was in the temple. This was a righteous display of condemning inappropriate the actions in His Father's house.

\*\*\*Matt 12:13-21 – Jesus won't/didn't hurt others. The Pharisees plot to kill Jesus, but Jesus leaves and continues to heal others. He did no revenge, so that He could fulfill what prophets said in Isaiah 42:1-4. (He would not hurt others)

\*\*\*John 18:11, Mark 14:48 – Put down sword

## **Characteristic 9 - He was humble**

Jesus was the picture of humbleness. Look at how He entered and left the world. He came in a manger and left on a cross. In our eyes, He was the greatest man to ever walk on this earth.

**However, His actions didn't show this, nor did He brag about where He came from.** He humbly went about His business on a day-to-day basis. He spent time with the poor, sick, outcast... Moreover, Phil 2:28 talks about Jesus humbling himself by becoming obedient to death!

Matt 3:13-15 – Jesus came humbly asked to be baptized.

Matt 11:29 – Be gentle and humble

John 13:1-17 – Jesus wash the feet of his disciples

Romans 12:3 – Be humble

Eph 4:2 – Be humble

James 4:10 – Be humble

1 Pet 3:8 – Be humble

1 Pet 5:5-6 – Be humble

Ps 147:6 – The Lord sustains the humble

## **Characteristic 10 – Omniscient -**

Jesus knows everything! Therefore we should listen to His commands and advice. By spending time in the Bible we can learn more about Jesus. The Bible is our Owner's manual. When we buy new things, we usually look at the owner's manual to know how to get the most out of our new purchase. It also warns us how to not damage the product. The Bible does the same for us. Therefore we should spend time learning and absorbing the life of Christ in our heart, soul and mind. According to Luke 9:35, "A voice came from the cloud, saying, 'This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him.'" It is imperative that all of us listen to Jesus and act on His wisdom.

### **A. We should listen to Jesus**

Matt 17:5, Mark 9:7, Luke 9:35 – This is my son whom I love...Listen to Him.

### **B. We are commanded to love**

Matt 5:43-48, Luke 6:27-36 – Love enemies

Luke 10:25-37 – Love God and neighbor

John 13:34 – Love each other

John 14:15 – If you love me, obey my commands

John 15:12 – Love each other

:13 – Lay down life

:17 – Love each other

### **C. We should not worry**

Matt 6:25-34 – Don't worry, God will provide, Seek 1<sup>st</sup>...

Luke 12:11-12 – Don't worry

Luke 12:22-34 – Don't worry

### **D. We are to be encouraged**

Matt 14:27, Mark 6:50, John 6:20 – Take courage

Luke 7:9 – Complimentary words from Jesus  
Luke 8:50, Mark 5:3 – Believe and she will be healed  
Luke 18:1-8 – Pray and do not give up

#### E. We are to forgive

Matt 6:12-15 – Forgiveness  
Matt 18:22 – Forgive 77 times. Story of slave owner that freed debt of slave, but slave didn't do it to others.  
John 20:23 – Forgive sins

#### F. We should evangelize

Matt 28:19-20, Mark 16:15-18 – Great commission

#### G. Procedure we should use when we have problems with others

Matt 18:15-17 – When someone sins against you:

- a. Go to source
- b. Take 1 or 2 others
- c. Tell church
- d. Treat him as a pagan or tax collector

#### H. We should not judge

Matt 7:1-6, Luke 6:37-42 – Do not judge

#### I. Miscellaneous advice

Matt 5:17-48 – here are many ways to live holy life.  
Matt 6:1-4 – Don't be hypocrite, give to needy in secret.  
Matt 6: 5-15 – Lord's prayer  
Matt 6:16:18 – Fasting  
Matt 7:15-20, Luke 6:43-45 – Bear good fruit  
Matt 7:21-29, Luke 6:46-49 – Wise and foolish builders, rock for foundation  
Matt 18:5-9, Mark 9:42-48, Luke 17:1-2 – Warning against temptation. Don't enable other with bad decisions. (Millstone around neck)  
Matt 19:16-30, Mark 10:17-31, Luke 18:30 – Ten commandments  
    Luke vs 25 Easier for a camel than a rich man...  
Matt 26:41, Luke 22:40 – Pray not fall into temptation  
Luke 11:33-36 – Eyes lamp of body  
Luke 12:13-21 – No greed  
Luke 12:35-48 – Be watchful  
Luke 13:4 – Repent  
Luke 14:7-14 – Be humble

### **Characteristic 11 – Wise**

Yes, Jesus is omniscient, but He is also wise. God gave Jesus wisdom for each situation and how to react.

A. Jesus was wise at a young age

Luke 2:40 – Young and wise

Luke 2:49 – Why were you searching for me...in my Father's house?

Luke 2:52 – Wise

B. Jesus' wisdom for His boundaries and boldness

Matt 12:14, Mark 3:6-7 – Pharisee plot to kill Jesus

Matt 12:15, Mark 3:7 – Jesus withdrew but kept healing

Matt 9:1-8, Mark 2:1-12, Luke 5:17-26 – Heal/Forgive Sins

Matt 9:9-13, Mark 2:13-17, Luke 5:27-32 – Eat with tax people

Matt 9:14-17, Mark 2:18-22 Luke 5:33-39 – Fasting

Matt 12:1-8, Mark 2:23-28, Luke 6:1-5 – Get food on Sabbath

Matt 26:47-56, Mark 14:43-49, Luke 22:47-53 – In the garden

John 18:2-8 – Jesus talked to guards with questions

C. Jesus recruited more help

Mt 10:1-15, Mk 6:7-13, Lk 9:16 – Send 12 out. Preach, cast out demons, heal

Mark 3:14, Luke 6:13 – Appointed 12. Jesus didn't do it on His own

Luke 10:1-16 – Appointed 72 to go and instructed them.

D. Jesus Chose to not talk after being arrested

Earlier we learned about when Jesus was angry and spoke boldly and turned the tables in His Father's house. However during crucifixion/passion Jesus didn't say much, even when He knew that He was going to suffer greatly. I believe this is because the arrest was against Him and not His Father. Also His suffering was in His Father's will and destroying the temple was not.

Matt: 26:57-68(v 62-62), Mark 14:53-65(v. 60-61) – The first time Jesus was questioned at an illegal meeting held at night with false testimony.

Matt 27:11-26 (v. 12,14), Mark 15:2-15 (v.5), Luke 23:13-25, John 19:1-16(v.8) The second time Jesus was questioned during passion. He agreed or said nothing.

Matt 27-31 Mark 15:16-20 (*Mark 14:65*) – They spit on and mocked Jesus. Jesus didn't say a word.

E. Jesus was sensitive to others' needs

Matt 28:10 – Telling women to not be afraid

Mark 7:26-30 – Woman who wanted demon cast out of her daughter

Luke 10:38-41 – Mary and Martha

F. Jesus taught in parables – Jesus understood the need to speak at the level of his audience. To read these verses, please look in the next section on "What Jesus Did – Teach"

G. Jesus planned ahead

Matt 21:1-11, Mark 11:1-11, Luke 19:28-44 – He made sure there was a donkey to fulfill scripture.

Matt 26:17-19, Mark 14:12-16, Luke 22:7-13 – Get the Passover ready

## **Part Two: What Jesus did**                      **Intro Paragraph**

In Part One of this chapter we focused on what Jesus was. We learned about His various characteristics. Part Two is about what He did, due to all of His wonderful characteristics. In other words, we will learn about what Jesus did, because of who He was.) In verses Mark 16:19-20 – He did things right...so He sits at right hand of God. The following verses show us Jesus' actions.

1. **Jesus did many things**

2. **Teach**

Matt 7:29, Mark 1:21,22, Luke 4:31-32 – Teach with authority, not like scribes

Mark 2:13, 4:1,2, 6:2 – Teach

Luke 2:46-47 – Sat with the teacher at a young age

Luke 4:14-15 – Teach

Luke 11:2-4 – Teach prayer

Luke 13:18-21 – Teaches about Kingdom of God

Luke 19:47 – Teach daily

John 8:1, 2 – Teach in Temple

3. **Teach with Parable**

In Matt 13:3-23 and Mark 4:10-34 Jesus explains the parable, breaks it down, and tells why He teaches in parables. In this parable Jesus refers to Isaiah 6:9,10. "See not believe...calloused heart" (Matt 13:14-15, Mark 4:12)

Matt 13:1-52, Mark 4:1-34, Luke 8:4-18 – Explains parable, breaks it down, and tell why He teaches in parables (Matt:13-13-15, Mark 4:12 - uses Is: 6:9-10)

Matt 21:28-45 – Taught two parables (Mark 2:1-12, Luke 20:9-19 – one parable)

Luke 5:4-11 – Used fish story to get point across

4. **Preach and tell Good News**

Matt 4:17, Mark 1:14-15, Luke 4:14-15 – preach

Matt 9:35 – Preach and heal

Matt 11:1-6, Luke 7:18-33 – Preach

Luke 4:43-44 – He knew His mission... "I was sent"

Luke 8:1 – Proclaiming the good news

5. **Spent time with people**

\*\*\*Mark 2:15- 17, Luke 5:27-32, Matt 9:9-12 – Dined with tax collectors and sinners

Mark vs. 16 – Pharisees condemn Jesus

\*\*\*vs. 17 – Sick need a doctor (Mark)

Mark 14:3, Matt 26:6 – At Simon's house (John 12:1-2 Lazarus' house)  
Luke 22:14, Mark 14:17, Matt 26:20, John 13:21 – Reclined at table Last supper.  
John 21:12 – Had breakfast

6. **Resisted temptation**

Luke 4:1-13 – Tempted in the desert. He was hungry...human. But His response was only scripture.

- Hungry – Didn't eat – Man doesn't live by bread alone.
- Kingdom – Didn't take/turned down worldly authority
- Test God – There was no way that Jesus was going to test God.

7. **He spent time alone**

Matt 12:15, Mark 3:7 – Withdrew to sea

Matt 14:13 Mark 6:31-32, Luke 9:10 – Go away after John Baptist's death

Matt 14:23, Mark 6:46, John 6:15 – Went up the mountain

Matt 17:1, Mark 9:2, Luke 9:28 – Went up the mountain

Mark 1:35, Luke 4:42 – Early in the morning

Mark 3:13, Luke 6:12 – Went up the mountain

Mark 9:30-31 – Alone to teach the disciples

Luke 5:15 – Often and prayed

Luke 9:18 – Praying in private with disciples

Luke 11:1 – Praying

8. **Sinless - He did not sin**

Luke 4:1-13 – Tempted in desert. (Jesus was hungry and human, but He chose to fight Satan with scripture)

1. Hungry – didn't eat...live by bread alone.
2. Kingdom – Turned down worldly authority\*\*\*
3. Test God – No way.

9. **He healed people**

Luke 8:26-56 – healed disease, cured of evil spirit and raised from dead.

There are more healing verses earlier in this chapter. Look for "Jesus was compassionate".

10. **Miscellaneous**

John 21:25 – Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of His good deeds were written down, I believe that the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.

Matt 12:18-21 – Jesus won't hurt others (Isaiah 42:1-4)

Matt 17:24-27 – Integrity: Pay the temple tax...let's not offend them.

Matt 20-25 – Wants to serve

Mark 14:20-26 – Shared all of Himself (Last Supper)

Luke 5:4-11, John 21:6 – Helpful with small details. (Throw net to the right.)

Luke 22:32 – Prays for us (Prayed for Peter)

Luke 10:21 – Praised God

Matt 28:9-10, Mark 16:9, Luke 24:13-35, – Miracles - He appeared again after death

## **Part Three: Finishing Thoughts from the author**

What can be done with all this knowledge of Jesus and how He lived his life? We can honor God in all that we think and do. Honoring God should be our number one goal in life. We can honor God by being as Christ-like as possible. Studying the life of Jesus is instrumental in being able to live as Jesus did. We will never be able to reach perfection, like Jesus, however our whole focus in life can be about doing our best to be like Jesus.

### **This entire book is about choice. Notice the title and the chapter headings!**

God has given us all free choice. Knowing that, we have a huge responsibility to do our best to make appropriate choices in our lives. Everything is about choices, especially when we are going through very tough times. I feel very strongly that we all have choices in life. We can make our life better or worse. We can choose to take a lemon and make lemonade out of it. We can choose to **not** be victims and turn our situations around from being on the defense to being on the offense. There have been 3 life situations that continue to help me. The following situations show us, not only how people have chosen to live, but how they are going to die.

#### **1. Jesus on the cross.**

First of all when Christ was on the cross, He was accompanied by two other men. There was one man on each side. All three men were in the same situation. They were dying in one of the cruelest ways a person can die. They were being crucified. Each person said their last dying words. Jesus chose to say, "God it is your will not mine." One of the men wanted to go to heaven with Jesus and asked for forgiveness. The other man did not want anything to do with Jesus. This situation is a remarkable example of how we all have a choice until we breathe our last breath. (Luke 23:32, 39-43)

#### **2. The Warsaw Ghetto.**

The second situation was the Warsaw Ghetto in Poland. During World War II Hitler was invading Poland. The Polish army lost in less than a month. It was also the same for France. Many Polish Jews needed to go to Warsaw to live in an enclosed ghetto. Mordecai Anielewicz decided that he wanted to choose the way he died, not how the Nazis wanted him to die. He organized an underground system in the Warsaw Ghetto that fought off the Nazis longer than the Poland's and France's armies could. He motivated many Jews to take charge of their own lives. He continued to ask this question. "How can a moral man, that's me, maintain his moral code in an immoral world?" He was killed in the Warsaw Ghetto, fighting against Germany.

There was another man in the Warsaw ghetto and his name is Janusz Korczak. He was a very important man in Poland, an author and extremely well respected. Janusz is as famous in Poland as Anne Frank is in Europe for what he did. He chose to run an orphanage in the Warsaw Ghetto to help the children. The children continued to learn and were cared for by Janusz and his staff. In their classes the children learned a positive song to help them in their situation. So when the day came, the children were marching to the trains singing this very positive song. Janusz walked with them and chose to get on the train. The soldiers told Janusz that he didn't have to get on the train and also pleaded with him not to board. Janusz was determined to be with the children, so he boarded the train with them. These children marched courageously and made a huge statement to the Nazis. Janusz died in August of 1942 at the Treblinka extermination camp.



### **3. The Salem Witch Trial**

Most people know about the horrible story of the Salem Witch trials. Many people were put to death because some young girls thought these people were witches. This happened just as people came to America and England hadn't set up all of the laws of the land. So some people took the law into their own hands. Obviously, all the people that died were in the same horrible situation. It is interesting to know that when the people were taken on the cart to be hanged, two people chose to pray to God as they were dying. Others were crying, screaming... But two people Rebecca Nurse and George Burroughs chose to say the Lord's prayer before they died. The difference in the demeanor of Rebecca and George compared to the other people was amazing. Again, these two people chose how they wanted to die.

Hearing about these real-life situations helps us understand that life is a choice. God gave us all free choice. Therefore it is our choice where we are Christ-like or not. Unfortunately the Pharisees chose to reject the way Jesus lived His life. They chose to reject God's purposes for their lives. Read Luke 7:29-30. Jesus taught us that we need to live obedient Christ-like lives. This is found in Matt 5:20 *"For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven."* **Jesus was not talking about being pious outwardly with legalities, but being loving and obedient in the heart.**

In every situation our motto should be **WWJD**. (What Would Jesus Do?) Our goals should be to hear God say that He is pleased with us like He did in Luke 3:21-22, *"When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: 'You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.'"* We can do this by honoring God in all that we do!

In conclusion, Luke 8:19-21, *"Now Jesus' mother and brothers came to see him, but they were not able to get near him because of the crowd. Someone told him, 'Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you.' He replied, 'My mother and brothers are those who hear God's word and put it into practice.'"*