

The Power of Calvary

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Introduction

This has been one of the most powerful books that I've written. I am definitely not saying this to brag any way on myself. Sometimes I can get a good strong connection in the spirit or an anointing for a book and it turns out to be special. That is not what I'm saying here either. This is a powerful book because the subject I am writing about is so powerful. Powerful enough to raise the dead. Calvary. It is the reason this whole thing started. It is why Jesus came and walked among us. Through Calvary we find the immense power of His love. We find there forgiveness and salvation. We find there the power to become new every day of our lives. At Calvary we find healing, victory, authority over satan, and the power to become Sons of God. We find victory over persecution and the strength to pick up our cross and follow Jesus. One day the power unleashed at Calvary will be the power that will resurrect us from the dead to eternal life. Or it will be the power that will raise us into the heavens to be with Jesus. No wonder this is such a powerful book. The subject itself gives it that power. I pray that this power and anointing and victory is unleashed in your own life, as you revisit Calvary.

Chapter 1. The Power of Calvary

The most powerful force that the world has ever known exploded that day at Calvary. When we watch the effects of this world's most powerful energy sources, we see only a tiny shadow, not even an ounce, of that power that was unleashed that day at Calvary. It was a blast that not only was felt around the physical world, but it shook the spiritual realm as well. Not only was it a blast of power felt that day, but it also reverberated down through all time from the past to the future. It exploded from the very beginning of time to the end. No other act has or will influence as many lives as this single act of Calvary except for the day that Jesus returns. The power of Calvary is an awesome power.

It is sad, but all too often we only see Calvary as Jesus dying on the cross so that we can be forgiven of our sins and saved. We don't see it as being the place where we can find the victory and power to rise up out of our sins. Yes, we are saved. But that is only the beginning. Salvation is a wonderful thing in itself. We can't stop there. Many people do. They receive salvation and think that is all there is to it. The power unleashed that day at Calvary is even more. If we could ever get a full understanding of what went on at Calvary it is enough power to raise the dead. It is surely enough power to raise you up out of your bondages, battles, defeats, circumstances, fear, sickness, and anything else. It will be enough power to raise you up out of condemnation over your past. One day the power released at Calvary will be enough to even raise you from the dead. On one glorious day it will be what resurrects the whole world into a newness of life.

One of the glimpses of this power of Calvary is found in Colossians 1:12-22. "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son: In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead: that in all things He might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in His sight." Through Calvary we are delivered from the power of sin. We are delivered from the power of our own flesh. We are delivered from the powers of darkness. Calvary had the power to give mortal men

authority over the powers of wickedness in high places. When Jesus took the keys of hell and gave them to you, He gave you authority over the kingdom of darkness that rules this world. We have nothing to fear. Calvary gave us authority through the blood of Jesus. When Jesus made His show of triumph over hell, death, sin, and the grave, He didn't just do it for Himself. He did it for us as well. He took the keys and passed them to us. His victory that He won because of Calvary was our victory as well. His resurrection was also your resurrection. Not only do we have a resurrection that we will one day see in the flesh, but we also have a spiritual resurrection. Colossians 2:12-15 tells us, "Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it." Not only do we have power to overcome death, but also power to overcome satan. When the devil comes to destroy you, lift up a standard and declare His boundaries. He has no right to hinder you, a child of God. You have been given authority over Him because of Calvary. This authority is not based on who you are in the natural. It was paid for at Calvary. It is based on Who Jesus was and is. We'll talk more in this book about the authority that is given to us because of Calvary.

Calvary reached all the way to the beginning of time even to those souls who were held in captivity who had been there since their death waiting for that time when Jesus would walk in. Can you imagine Abraham's joy when he saw his great, great, great, ever so many great grand Son. Can you imagine how he felt when he was able to see with his own eyes the fulfilling of the promise that was given to him? Can you imagine the release that they all received? Can you imagine the deliverance and the power that was in that place that day? Talk about a revival!! Through this, Calvary reached back through the past to the beginning of time. It also reached ahead to forgive you the day you accepted your salvation. The last time that you wept before the Lord for your sins and you knew you were forgiven, it was because of the power of Calvary. The power of Calvary reached round the world and throughout all time. It was not limited by time or place.

Nuclear reactors fuse atoms and unleash tremendous power. Calvary was also a place where a fusing took place, a reconciliation. The power of reconciliation is found in Colossians 1:20, "And having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." Through Calvary not only are we are reconciled to God, but at one time, all things in heaven and earth will do the same. That is powerful. He is surely able to present you, "holy and unblameable and unreprouable in His sight." (Verse 22, "In the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouable in His

sight.”) One day we’ll walk in that perfection God created for us to have. We will walk unproveable in His sight. Verse 23 tells us how, “If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel, which ye have heard and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven...” In other words we have to continue in the faith to have these things of God including the resurrection. We cannot have these things if we do not continue in the faith. Revelations 5:12 tells us more of the power of Calvary. Not only will all of God’s children be reconciled to Him, but also so will all of creation. Verse 12 tells us the angels, and elders were, “Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard it saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.” The final triumph of Calvary will be when Jesus, the Lamb that was slain, is lifted up above all things to reign forever.

The power of resurrection is part of the power unleashed at Calvary. What other power do you know of that can bring eternal life to dead limbs? Jesus was resurrected, and He gave us the keys to death hell and the grave. I Corinthians 15:5 tells us, “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” We don’t even have to fear death because of Calvary. But there is also another resurrection that was unleashed at Calvary. Calvary had the power to forgive men of their sins and resurrect them in a new life. A changed life is a testimony to the power of Calvary. Because of Calvary, families come together to be renewed, hope springs up where there was none. A new life is found when death and destruction was the only thing to look forward to. A rebirth when the old is made as new as a newborn baby. Joy when despair was all that could be seen. All of these are testimonies to the forgiving power and salvation found at Calvary. We are not just talking here about the resurrection that salvation brings, but also the power of being made new that we can find each and every day of our lives. When we need to be made new because the world has taken a toll on our hearts, we can go to Calvary. When we sin, and need that renewal that only God’s forgiveness and perfect love can bring, we go to Calvary. When our faith is mangled by the battle and we need to be restored in God’s love, we can go to Calvary. We can find there that God truly makes all things new each and every time that we go there.

The power of Calvary also gave sight to the blind, made the crippled walk, restored worn out organs, touched and made new the bodies of more children of God than we can ever know. Healing flowed out from that day until the day when we are perfect and our old bodies will no longer need God’s healing touch. When those stripes were laid on Jesus, the power to heal went out down through time to where you stand in your need right now.

The power of Calvary also unleashed the Holy Ghost. Without Calvary the Holy Ghost could not have come into our hearts. Our sin stopped that. Through Calvary the Holy Ghost can come into our hearts and spirits to birth into us a new life, a new man. Through the Holy Ghost, a perfect Savior can come into a very imperfect man to give him the power to become the son of God from the inside out.

I think that one of the most wonderful parts of the power of Calvary though, is the power of God's love that made all this happen to start with. John 3:16 sums up this love. That God could look on the sins of man and know that they needed a Savior. That He would then send His only begotten Son because of that sin to die on a cross so that they could be forgiven. That love in itself is what leads us to Calvary. You can't talk about Calvary without talking about the love of God. It is a powerful force that changes lives and gives hope where there is no hope. For me, the love of Calvary is why I am here today. I know that everyone world over that reads this book knows the same love. Every child of God world over down through time to the beginning of the world knows this same love. Think for a minute and try to imagine all those whose lives have been changed by this great love. If you try to hold that in your head as the old saying goes, it will burst your brains. We can't contain it. The love of God is too much to even think about. We can't even comprehend it. What a powerful, powerful love. Through the power of Calvary we can be crucified to the world, this old fleshly world that we live in. We can be resurrected into a Spiritual realm so that we are mindful of the things of God. Without this we couldn't even understand God's love.

If this chapter has affected you like it has affected me, then by now you are just about ready to fly. Rapture practice time. You can pretty well figure out that another part of the power of Calvary will be what we will see on the day when we take to the skies to become one with Jesus. When we see Him we will be like Him. This comes about because of Calvary. Praise God. Praise God. Praise God.

Now do you agree with me that Calvary was much more than Jesus dying on the cross for our sins, even though that was a wonderful wonderful thing in itself. That was just the beginning. Through these pages, I pray that you learn more about Calvary. Read and be blessed.

Chapter 2. **The One Who Died**

John 1:1-5 and 9-14 tells us this about the One who died at Calvary. "In the Beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth." This is the best verse I know to start a chapter about Jesus. We have to start with Jesus to really start a book about Calvary. Without Jesus there would have been no Calvary.

In a way, Calvary started when Jesus left heaven to be born as a baby. Talk about submission. The Lord of all things once had to have His diaper changed just like we did when we were babies. I don't mean this in any way to be disrespectful. I am just saying to picture this. Jesus submitted to the place where He left a perfect heaven for a very imperfect world. Not only this but he also submitted himself to be humbled to be born as a baby. He grew up in this imperfect world so that He would know what it was like to be human flesh. Hebrews 2:17 tells us, "Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." Hebrews 4:15-16 tells us, "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Jesus even knows what it's like to be a baby, or a teenager. He knows what it's like to be human and he is in touch with our human frailties and infirmities. He knew we had to have a Calvary. He knew before He came to earth, but He certainly knew more after He came. He walked among us and look what He suffered from the time of His ministry. We didn't deserve a savior but we certainly needed one. In His love, He submitted to this flesh and lived here on earth. Then He submitted to the cross. Philippians 2:8, "And being found in fashion, as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Why? Because He loved us.

What a great love. Is there a greater love that you can find than the love of this One who died for you at Calvary?

Sometimes when the devil is beating me up with a battle of condemnation I pick up the Bible and I turn to the story of the crucifixion. I turn to Calvary. There I get reconnected with God's love and the love of His Son. From the kiss of Judas on, I can see pictures of my Savior. In Matthew 26:50 I see how He handled the worst rejection that He faced. "And Jesus said unto him, **Friend**, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took Him." I remember Zechariah 13:6, "And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then He shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends." When those who love me have betrayed me, I know He walked there too. I see His compassion even for the enemy when He reached out and healed the high priest's ear. I find there the strength to forgive my own enemies. In Matthew 26:63, ("But Jesus held His peace...") When He held His peace I find the strength I need to stand and be still when my mouth needs to be shut. When in verse 67, they mocked and spit on him and buffeted Him, I remember that being a Christian isn't for the weak, but for those who are strong. I remember that following Jesus takes guts and backbone. I also remember the place where I can receive my strength to make that stand. When they put on Him that robe and crown and mocked Him beating Him with those 39 stripes, I remember the healing there that He purchased for me. As He hung there on the cross, forgiving those who crucified Him, I know that when the devil condemns me I can put this in his face. I surely have a Savior who forgives. I know that He will forgive me as well. As He hung between the two thieves and the one was given the promise that he would see Him this day in paradise, I can take faith that those loved ones that I have watched being laid in a grave were only there for a very temporary residence until that same One received them in glory with Him. When He cried, "My God, my God. Why hast thou forsaken me?" because of the sins that He bore, I know that my sins were there too. I know that I too have a right to be a Son of God. I have a right because of that cry and the blood that was shed there to wash away my sin. When I read in John 19:28 how He waited to die until all the scripture concerning His death was fulfilled, I know without a doubt that He will keep His word for me. (28. "After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst." 30. "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished: and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost.") I know that there won't fail one "jot or tittle" of His Word. I know He keeps His promises. Not only will He keep His Word that He has written, but He will also keep every promise that He has ever personally spoken to my heart. When the earth shook and the temple curtain rent into from top to bottom, I know that the veil that separates me from His love and from being whole in Him was rent into as well. When the graves opened and the Saints rose, I know my victory over death is as sure as His was on that third day.

What about Calvary? It was certainly more than just a cross, a tragedy, and a loss. It was a victory, a power, a triumph that can scarcely be told. We know Who Calvary was about. Who was Calvary for? For you. For your victory. For your hope. For your life everlasting and eternal, beginning new every day.

We've talked about Jesus from the beginning. We've talked about Jesus at Calvary. What about Jesus today? I remember when I first got saved I was very young. I didn't know much about finding a relationship with God or with Jesus. I asked Jesus to come into my heart, but I didn't give him the whole thing. I followed him from far off. When I went away to college, my relationship with Jesus was not strong enough to hold me through all I had to face there. I tried everything that the college scene had to offer me and it was a lot. I wasn't a very good sinner. I really suppose no one is, but I was even dumber in the ways of the world, and it didn't take long for me to totally wreck my life. I wrecked my brain on alcohol and drugs. It might sound strange, but I rededicated my life to God the night I tried to kill myself. I knew that my life was such a mess that unless God was real and He helped me, I had no hope. I tried to take my life and told God that if He was real and He could help me then He would have to stop me. I told Him if He wasn't real that I wanted to die because I knew I had no hope. I knew that I was tempting God. He overlooked my foolishness and saved my life. He saved my soul as well. Still it took a while after that for my mind to clear.

I remember in my rough times that I would fling myself down and I would cry my eyes out. Then I would feel His sweet love just wrap me up and hold me. That's how I knew Jesus was real. I knew He was there for me. As I grew in the Lord, I grew in understanding what that meant. I learned more about His Word, and I received the power of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. Soon I could walk where before it seemed that all I could do was crawl. Do you remember those days? Then I began to run a little. Before long He strengthened me like Isaiah's eagle in Isaiah 40:31, "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." I knew more about my Savior then. It wasn't like it had been before I fell away from Him. My hand was in His hand. His steps led me. Do you remember walking in the snow in the footprints that your dad made? I was obeying Jesus and walking in the footsteps of my heavenly Father. That's where Jesus is now. Through the power of the Holy Ghost He is close up and personal. That Savior who loved me from the cross is there by my side to help me today.

He is also seated at the right hand of the Father and making intercession for me-for us all. Romans 8:34, "Who is He that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us." Jesus is praying for you. When you feel like you are all alone and there is no one who knows where you are, Jesus is praying for you. When it feels like your prayers are bouncing off a brick wall and getting nowhere, Jesus is praying for you. When you feel like you are hanging on to the knot at the

end of the rope, Jesus is praying for you. Be encouraged. He is there with you. He knows where you are. He knows what you're going through. He also knows how to get the victory through to you.

He is also exalted and lifted up above all. Colossians 3:1 tells us, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." He is high and lifted up. He is the Lord of all. One day all things will have to bow at His feet. He is almighty and everlasting. He is a Savior that is mighty and worthy not only to serve, but also to worship eternally. We have a wonderful Savior.

Draw close to him. The closer you get, the more you will want to get to know Him. His love will turn your world around. What was the motive for what He did on Calvary? Love. Pure love. Only love would have been strong enough to hold Him on the cross. In Gethsemane when He prayed there, He agonized so much over what He was getting ready to face that He sweated drops of blood. "And being in agony He prayed more earnestly: and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." He knew Calvary wasn't going to be easy. He knew all about that before He left heaven to be born as a baby. He could have refused to come. He could have refused there in the garden, but instead He prayed the prayer that's found in Luke 22:42. "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done." He could have called angels to deliver Him from the cross. Matthew 26:53 tells us, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" He submitted to the cross. He submitted to death so that we could find a victorious, eternal life in Him. I praise God for sending us such a wonderful Savior.

So when your battle gets weary, go to Calvary. Remember these things. Hebrews 12:2 tells us, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Colossians 1:11-14 tells us that we can be "Strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness; giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son: In Whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins." To find even more about the power of Calvary, read the rest of that chapter in Colossians 1. And keep on reading this book.

Chapter 3. **The Love of God**

Whenever you talk about something that has been done, for you to really understand it you have to discuss why it was done. You have to discuss the motive for what was done. What was done was Calvary. The motive was God's perfect love. John 3:16 tells us why Calvary happened. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." John 15:13 tells us, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down His life for His friends." Why did Jesus die on Calvary? Why did He die for you? Because He loves you. If you are following Christ and you don't know that love, then you need to find it. You need to draw close to Him. You need to draw close to your Savior. If you do not know the love of God, then you do not know God. We can follow God from far off. When we do this it is easy to get all kinds of things between God and us. Our priorities get out of line. Little sins creep in. Our vision gets clouded. Guilt comes in and the devil uses it to bind us into condemnation. Other people judge us or we think other people are judging us and we shrink back from walking in God's love. We forget the reason that we are here doing what we do. We forget the reason why God is there. We forget God is love. I John 4:8 tells us, "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love."

What kind of love does the Father have for you? I John 3:1 tells us, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God..." God has a love of a father for His sons. He was one with His Son. One of the purposes of Calvary is so that we can be one with them both. John records Jesus' last prayer before Gethsemane. It is a beautiful record of Jesus' love for His father and His love for us. You were included in that prayer in John 17. Please look this up and read the entire chapter. I have written here only verses 20-22. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." Jesus died so that we could be one in unity with Him as they are in unity with one another. Love is the glue that makes this unity possible. There is no greater love than the love that makes two identities one. I believe that this is why the church is called the bride of Christ. The love that a groom has for his bride longing to be one with her is the same love Jesus has for His church, His bride. That means you. You are beloved and longed for. You might not have been very beloved before you met Jesus. Look how He has turned your life around. He has made you more valuable just by being in your life. He has been working in your life, heart, and mind since the day He met you (really even before then) to bring you into being one with both Him and His father. You are very, very loved. The Bible says the saints of God are beloved of the Lord. You may

not always feel very saint like, but it is the presence of Jesus in you that makes you to be a saint in spite of yourself.

There is no greater love than the love of God. I watch people turn their back on the love of God to have the love of someone else: family members, friends, or boyfriend or girlfriend or spouse. These are the saddest people of all. To deny God's love and walk away from it seems to me to be one of the worse things that you could do. This never works. When you do this, usually you wind up losing your soul and when you do this so does the person you compromised on God to keep. Hell will be full of people who left the love of God for a shadow. We can leave the love of God for many things. The devil will send things that can cause our priorities to go wrong. We can forget what it means to obey God. We can get caught up in to so many things that we lose sight of what it means to obey God and have Him number one in our life. So many things can come between Him and us. When this happens we draw far from God and His love. God's love is a perfect love. We fall in love with God. When we do this and we fall in love with Jesus for real, there can be no other things in our life that are more important. God's love demands that we have no other gods before Him. In truth, when we really know the love of God we know that there are no other gods. When we stay close to Jesus, and we stay close to Calvary, we let that love drench our soul, spirit, and mind. It consumes us. Those things that we might be tempted to let move into number 1 place and become our gods grow strangely dim beside His love.

We need to get close enough to Him to know the love God has for us. It is one thing to know that God is love. It's another thing to know that God loves you. It is another thing to trust that love that He has for you. It is still another thing to walk with your hand in His day to day because of that love. You can raise your hands toward heaven and feel that sweet love rolling down covering you from head to foot. You can feel that love covering your sins, your weaknesses, healing wounds in your heart, loosening the bondages that satan has put around you, easing the pain of the battle. It's one thing to know that the Word of God says that God is love. It's another thing to open up your heart so that you can feel that love that He has for you. We have to stay close enough to God so that we can feel his touch.

The love of God is a personal thing. You can't find it out if the only relationship that you have with Him is your pew in church. You can't find it if the only prayer life you have is running to your pastor or someone else for their prayers. You can't find it if God's Word lays on the shelf in your home only to come off on Sundays. You can't find it if everything else in your life has priority and the time that the Lord gets is only your leftovers. We need to get real with ourselves and real with God. We need to get real with our relationship with the One Who gave His all on Calvary.

If you know God's love, then you can overcome whatever battle the enemy throws against you. When the devil throws condemnation like a blanket to cover

you away from God's love to choke your spiritual life away, you can remember God's love. You remember the last time that He held you close and you knew that you are beloved. When the devil tells you that there is no hope and your vision becomes clouded, you remember the last time that God wrapped you in His love and the promises that He gave you. You know that you can make it through it all. When we know God's love, the best discouragements that the enemy has to bring against us are not enough to turn you around. All it takes is one look at Calvary and the price that was paid for you and the shadows of doubt have to leave. Romans 8:37-39 tells us, "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

What are some of the things that can separate us from God's love? We have talked about what cannot separate us. What about the things that can separate us? We know that sin can. What is sin? Those things that separate us from God's love are sin. Doing the things that God's Word tells us not to do is sin. Having those attitudes that God's Word tells us not to have is sin. Failing to put God as number one in your life is sin. Not obeying him from day to day is sin. Failing to do what God's Spirit leads you to do in your heart is sin. What is right is right and what is wrong is wrong. If we live in the middle, in the gray area in between, then we are what the Bible calls being lukewarm. Revelations 3:16 tells us what God will do with lukewarm. "So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." Today's world makes us think that even the house of God has to be "politically correct." The world says that we need to overlook the wrong that others do because we don't want to offend them. The world goes one step farther from that thinking to the thinking that what is wrong for you might not be wrong for me. We are all little god's and we can decide what sin is and what sin isn't is the way that the world thinks. That is not God's Word.

Sin is sin. Wrong is wrong and right is right. God is God and we are not. If we sin without repenting then we are in danger of facing an eternity in hell whether we choose to think it is so or not. When we do wrong we have to repent. Repentance means that we turn away from sin. We cannot willfully walk in sin and know anything about the love of God. Sad to say many people use the love of God as a cloke for sin. John 15:22 tells us, "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloke for their sin." Calvary took away our cloke for our sin. We have no more excuses left. I Peter 2:16 tells us, "As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God." If we are truly the servants of God then we will deal with our sin, confess it, and repent. We will depart from our sin. We certainly won't use God's love and forgiveness as an excuse to be able to sin. Some people say that we can sin because God loves us. We can sin because God will forgive us. When

we say this Calvary loses its power. Calvary loses its preciousness. Calvary even loses its love. We should never mock God's love using it as an excuse to sin. Don't let sin separate you from God's love.

Another thing that can separate us from God's love is the bondages that the devil brings against us. These include: fear, discouragement, unbelief, condemnation, fear of rejection, and more. The devil can put fear around you so that you think there is no way that you can see God's love for you. He can shroud you with condemnation so that you can't see Calvary and the price that was paid to forgive you or God's love. He'll cause feelings of defeat to surround you like the enemy so that you lose sight of the victory that is yours. When these things surround you and separate you from God's love, identify who they come from. Take authority over Satan. Tell him in the name of Jesus to leave you alone. Take the authority that is given you by the Word of God that was purchased at Calvary. No matter whether or not you feel like it stand up and take the authority that is yours. It is not based on what you feel. It is based in God's Word. Push back the powers of hell that come against you. Victory is yours. God's love is yours as sure as His Word. Go back to Calvary. Find there the love and strength that you need to push on past the enemy. Find there the strength that you need to put the enemy under your feet where he belongs.

Other people and things of this world can crowd out the love of God and the love of your Savior. The closest husband and wife have to spend time in their relationship with one another or the love between them will fade. The battle is real. The devil is in your face 24/7. He doesn't wait for permission. He is constantly there. To find God's fellowship though we have to actively seek His face. We have to desire to fellowship with Him. Proverbs 8:17 tells us, "I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me." Deuteronomy 4:29 tells us, "But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find Him, if thou seek Him with all thy heart and with all thy soul." I Chronicles 16:11 tells us, "Seek the Lord and His strength, seek His face continually." When our life is so filled up that the only time that we have to seek God is at the end of the day when we fall asleep in the middle of our conversations with Him, then our life is out of order. We need to go back and seek God's face as to where our priorities are out of line. We need to get His help to get our lives back in order. The world will crowd its activities in our faces. I see families who have their children so involved in every activity that they have no time for God and less time for their own families. The kids get burned out and hate every minute. Because priorities are out of line, the devil easily gets in and brings in confusion and exhaustion. The spiritual defense of the family weakens. No one is obeying God, so He can't lead them in getting order back in their lives. No wonder families fall easy prey to the devil. One of the saddest things happens when the church has some activity every night. Everyone is busy running to church. They have no time to strengthen the family. They have no time for personal fellowship with the Lord. They have no time to build and strengthen the family in the Lord. When this happens how

can the church be entirely in the will of God in planning their activities? If the church isn't careful it gets into a competition with the world trying to win people by its activities. These aren't planned out by Spirit led people. The motive behind the whole thing is wrong. Families need to seek God and obey him. If God says go to every church function then go. If He says stay home for some, stay home and spend time together as a family with Him. However, make sure that it's not the devil or your flesh that's telling you to stay home. If you are in leadership in a church then plan activities as the Lord leads. A worn out weakened family can fall prey to the devil just like a worn out weakened family of God can fall prey. As both a family, and as a family of God, make sure that your priorities are in line. Choose activities wisely according to these priorities as the Lord leads you. If you do, then your children will have a strong foundation in knowing how to run their own homes later on.

Another thing that can separate us from God's love are the scars that we have from being hurt. If you are afraid to love others because someone has hurt you then it will be hard to open up your heart freely to God's love. I John 4:20 tells us, "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" Also bitterness and unforgiveness can stop us from feeling the fullness of God's love for us. We'll talk more about that in a later chapter.

Search your heart. Are there other things hindering you from finding the fullness of God's love? It may be other people that take a number one place in your heart. God has to be number one. He doesn't deserve second place. Jesus didn't die on Calvary to become number two in your life. His love is the best you'll ever find. Don't forsake Him for anyone or anything else.

I have put here a section from my book, ***You are Beloved and Longed For.*** *I used to wonder a lot why, if God is no respecter of persons, some people seemed to have more of His blessings, anointing, gifts and talents, and more of His favor than others do. I asked God why? He showed me that His love is the same for us all, but some have found more of it. I asked Him how. He showed me this simple little scene that illustrated so much. I saw a circle of children. Jesus was in the center of the circle. Some were gathered right around Him, as close as they could be. Around that circle was another ring of children, then another, so forth and so on. I thought to myself why did He gather that one circle closer to Himself and not the others? Why was He partial to them? Then God showed me the attitudes and faces of the children. He showed me last the ring of children that were closest to Him. He showed me first the ring of children who were second from Him. They looked on Him and the ring of children that were closest to Him with longing. You could feel their desire to run to Him, but they were afraid to. They were afraid He might reject them, because others had rejected them. They were afraid He wouldn't love them as much as He loved the ones closest to Him. Some were condemned from past sins. Others were beaten down by satan. Jesus would glance longingly at them, but you see, God loves us*

and draws us to Himself, but we are the ones that have to come forward. He cannot go against our free will. His love was as great and true for them all. He would in a minute have wrapped them all in His arms, but they wouldn't come closer. They wouldn't receive.

The next row of children further away looked at Jesus with longing, but more than they looked at Him, they looked at the other children. They wanted to be a part of the children more than a part of Jesus' love. They couldn't press on past those others to run to Him. They did this or that to get the other children to notice them, not to get Jesus to see them. They soon became jealous and full of envy because Jesus didn't accept them like the others. That wasn't being fair to them, they would say. They wanted the gifts and attention, but they wouldn't do what they needed to do to get it. Some of them had in their hands weights that weighed them down so that they could hardly move closer. These weights were the world, sin, fear and doubt, because they were not close enough to see Jesus' love. If they would only have set the weights down, they could have moved closer. God can't take these things away from us. We have to lay them down and give them to Him. Many would eventually give up trying to move up and move back instead of forward.

The next ring of children further back was looking at what was all around them, instead of looking at Jesus. They glanced at Him, but were infatuated with everything else and distracted from Him. They looked at the world and were eventually drawn by it away from even glancing at Jesus. They looked at their circumstances and eventually, because they weren't wrapped in His love, fear and doubt caused them to drift away. Some in this group wanted some of the time to be a part of Jesus love, but they didn't want to do what the others there were doing. They wanted to do their own thing their own way, so they did just that. This got them further away. Disobedience and self-will can cost us God's love.

Then God showed me the circle of children closest to Jesus. They sat with their hearts and minds riveted to every Word He said. They wanted to please Him in every detail; they loved Him so much. They were full of joy because He was happy with them. There was glow coming out from Jesus. His love was so bright it glowed. Those children closest to Him were wrapped in this glow. Jesus was passing gifts to those around Him. Gifts like talents, anointing, spiritual and physical blessings. The children were anxiously receiving them. The last and most precious gift He gave them was eternal life with Him; the One they loved and desired to follow with all their heart.

God showed me that sometimes some of the children in the outside circles would break away and move up a ring. Sometimes they would get all the way to the circle closest to Jesus. Many never made it. Those that were able to, when they struggled and broke through to Him, were made very welcome by the One Who honored their struggle. Jesus' love was the same for them all, but only those that pressed closest to Him received it in the fullest measure. Only those closest in

the circle around Him received His gifts, because they were the ones who reached for them, trusting Him to give them to them.

What is our part? Press on closer. Don't put your eyes on the others around you or on the world or it's circumstances. Don't get caught up in anything or anyone that will hold you back from drawing nearer to Him. Give up your way and your will so that you can do what He wants you to do. His way is so much better than yours is. Ours can only eventually destroy us. Let Him make you accepted in the Beloved. Let Him draw you to Himself. Where are you in the circle of God's love?"

God loves you. God is love and you are the personal receiver of that love. Draw closer to Him. Find out how deep that love is and how wide. Remember the song that you sang is a child. "Love so high you can't get over it. Love so low you can get under it. Love so wide you can't get around it. Just go in at the door." He loves you child of God. In a day when the devil is specializing in causing the hearts of men to fail them for fear and the love of many is waxing cold, we have to hold fast to the love of God. Let Him love you. Take time out every day to let Him wrap you in his arms. Go to his Word and read the promises of His love for you. Go back through this chapter and look up the Scriptures and read the references about God's love. Let him renew and refresh you in his love. Go back to Calvary. Reread the account there of what He went through to love you. That is part of the power of Calvary.

Chapter 4. Salvation

Let's start here by talking about what salvation means. In the Old Testament, salvation meant something different than it did in the New Testament. To Moses and the children of Israel before the Egyptians, salvation meant the parting of the waters. (Exodus 14:13, "And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.") When Hannah prayed in I Samuel 2:1, it meant a son. (And Hannah prayed, and said, My heart rejoiceth in the Lord, mine horn is exalted in the Lord; my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation.") To David in II Samuel 22:3, it meant safety from the enemy. ("The God of my rock; in Him will I trust: He is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my Savior; thou savest me from violence.") To Israel in I Chronicles 16:23, it meant that the ark of the covenant of the Lord had returned home. ("Sing unto the Lord, all the earth; shew forth from day to day His salvation.") For Job in 13:16, it meant that Job had hope. ("He also shall be my salvation; for an hypocrite shall not come before Him.") For Israel in Isaiah 12:1-3 it meant that in the midst of destruction, there was mercy. ("And in that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.") For Jeremiah in Lamentations 3:26 it meant a light in a dark world. ("It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.") All these things represented the salvation that God's people needed at that time. Through these also we can see a reflection of the Salvation that was to come. We see a reflection of the salvation that was found at Calvary.

These are only a very few times that the word salvation was used in the Old Testament. In Zechariah 9:9, however, the word Salvation began to take on a different meaning. Salvation began to look like a King Who would come riding on a colt. Riding that day on a trip that would bring Him toward Calvary. ("Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.") Luke 1:68-69 tells us more about this Salvation. "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for He hath visited and redeemed His people, And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David." Salvation for those who we mentioned earlier in the Old Testament meant salvation from destruction, or salvation from battle or a turmoil. Salvation in those days was meant to keep them momentarily. After Zechariah, it took on a different meaning. The Salvation talked about in the New Testament is an eternal salvation. Romans 1:16 tells us, "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of

Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." Romans 10:10 tells us, "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Salvation became possible for all because of Calvary. This salvation became not just for that time of deliverance, like the salvation of old, but it became an eternal salvation, making the way for us to have eternal life. Hebrews 1:13-14 tells us, "But to which of the angels said He at any time, sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" I Thessalonians 5:9-10 tells us, "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him." Salvation became a thing of grace. Titus 2:11 tells us, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men." It became something that wasn't just for that day, but something that was inherited generation upon generation. I Peter 1:3-5 tells us that it is a thing of faith. ("Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.")

Without Calvary, this salvation could not have existed. Jesus had to die so that we could be saved. We're saved from death, hell, and the grave because of His resurrection. I Corinthians 15:55 tells us, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Romans 6:10 tells us, "For in that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God." Because He lives, we can live also. We are saved from sin because of Calvary and the salvation that Jesus purchased there for us. We're forgiven because of the shedding of his blood. We are also saved from the power of satan because of Calvary. We receive strength because of Calvary. II Corinthians 13:4 tells us, "For though He was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by the power of God toward you."

When we first receive salvation, often we repeat the phrase "we're saved" without understanding fully what it is that we're saying. We're not really sure what salvation means. Then we begin more and more to realize the power of God's forgiveness. When we know that we stand forgiven and we are a "new creature in Christ", we catch a glimpse of the keeping power of God. I remember a young boy who described his salvation in these words. After he was saved, we asked him how he felt. He replied, "I feel like Jesus took me by my feet, hung me upside down and shook all the dirt out." Remember that feeling. Remember that feeling of knowing that you were forgiven and you were made new. Remember when you first figured out what it meant that the old man was dead and that there was something new that was going on inside of you. You knew what it meant to

be saved. Sin, the old you, and the world that had destroyed you had all lost a hold on you and you were free. You had found out the truth and His name was Jesus. (John 8:32, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.") God lifted up a standard against the enemy that was destroying you and you had hope now to be able to overcome him. God's love poured in and a lot of stuff poured out. Remember. What a wonderful miracle salvation is. We need to remember how it was when we first came to the Lord. We need never to move away too far from that first love. When the disciples came back to Jesus after finding out that even the demons were subject to them, He answered them in Luke 10:18-20 setting their priorities straight. "And He said unto them, I beheld satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." They would see all this power. They would one day see the dead raise, the lame walk, and the blind see. But the greatest miracle of all He reminded them was the miracle of salvation. I remember a young man who had gotten saved. I remember coming in after he had been saved. I had known this man for many years, but when I came in I didn't recognize him. All those years of hard sin had left his face. He looked years younger. He was gloriously saved. What a wonderful thing this salvation that belongs to the children of God. How sad to know that there are so many who have no idea of what this means. Even many that profess to possess it. I read a little tract several years ago that was titled, *How Can You Miss Heaven By 14 Inches*. That is the distance between your head and your heart. You can think that you have something, but if you don't possess that heart felt relationship with God that is real, then you don't possess it.

Salvation also means grace and forgiveness. Remember knowing that you were forgiven and that you no longer had to carry the weight of your sin. The old was passed away and wiped away. No more guilt. No more condemnation. You were new. We'll talk more about forgiveness in another later chapter. It deserves a whole chapter all by itself. Remember when you were saved and you knew that you no longer had to face the world alone. Remember that feeling when you figured it out in your heart that you no longer had to be lonely. You had a Savior Who loved you enough to die for you, Who held you in the palm of His hand. I used to be so afraid to face the world as a young person that I would hyperventilate. When I realized heart deep that I didn't have to be afraid any longer, a weight of a ton lifted off my shoulders. I was free from fear. With a heavenly Father like mine and a big Brother like Jesus, I could take on any thing. What in the world do we have to be afraid of except for fear itself?

And remember the love. Wow!! Before I was saved, I wasn't used to love. Sin robs you from being able to have a tender heart. Sin toughens you up to the place where you no longer feel the pain. Problem with this is when you no longer

feel pain you can't feel love either. Remember when the love of God first tenderized your heart. I remember that I cried for hours.

Remember when you had that first love. You were in love with your Lord and you didn't care who knew it. He died for you, you had received his salvation and you loved Him with all your heart. He didn't have to fight to be in number one place in your life. He was on the throne of your heart and nobody or anything else was going to take that number one place. The first thing that you may think of when you've read this chapter is that you wish you could go back to that place. You wish that you could go back and renew that newness of your salvation. Why not? Sometimes we need to return to that first love. We need to remember so that we renew our hearts commitment to Him. Calvary isn't just for yesterday. Salvation isn't just for yesterday. If you have grown apart from the One that at one time meant so much to you, He is only a prayer away. Come back to the place where you started going away from Him. Commit and submit to Him. Let Him renew your salvation. He is your salvation. Draw near to Him.

Where would you be right now without that salvation from the Lord? Hell is a very real place. I think that the Bible doesn't say much about hell because words can't describe it. We do know that it is for eternity. Hebrews 2:3 tells us, "For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him." I believe it is safe to say that many of us, without God's salvation, protection, grace and love, would now be in hell.

Praise God for His wonderful salvation. Praise God for Calvary. Without it how lost we would be. Without it we would have no hope. Thank you God for Calvary.

Chapter 5. The Blood of Jesus

To understand the blood of Jesus, let's first go to Hebrews. The book of Hebrews was written to give the Jews an understanding of why Jesus came. They knew about having to make sacrifices. They knew that without the shedding of blood there was no remission for sins. Hebrews 9:22 tells us, "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission." The Hebrews had been through many generations of having to make sacrifices for their repentance. They knew that there was a veil over the temple and they could not go into the holy of holies where the Ark of the Covenant was kept. Hebrews 9 gives us a picture of how it was in the days of the priests. Verse 3 tells us, "And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all." Verse 7 says, "But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people." The Hebrews knew that the holy of holies was a place where only the priest who were set aside by God for generations were allowed to enter. They knew that the anointing of God could only rest upon those priests and the prophets that God chose. They knew from the Word of God that when they died they were separated into a place of keeping and they were not allowed to enter into heaven to be in the presence of God. They knew about the holiness of God and the separation from God that was caused by their sins.

All of this is why Jesus had to shed his blood. The sacrifices were not enough. The sacrifices were only a shadow of what was to come. Hebrews 8 tells us about this that came. Verses 4, 6, and 10 sum up this passage. "For if He were on earth, He should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law. But now hath He obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also, He is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." As Abraham declared on Mount Moriah on that day that he went to sacrifice his son. "God will prepare himself a lamb". (Genesis 22:8, "And Abraham said, My son, God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering...")

In Genesis 22, Abraham went to the mountain in obedience to God. God required him to sacrifice his only son. Now notice a parallel between God and Abraham. Abraham would not be the only one who would be required to make a sacrifice. God was using Abraham to give us a picture of what was to come. God knew all about what it means to sacrifice a son. Abraham's obedience here touched the heart of God. Because of His obedience Abraham won favor with God. Genesis 22:16-17 tells us, "And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son; That in blessing I will bless thee...." God himself did not withhold his only

Son. That Son was the lamb that Abraham prophetically spoke of that day. These Hebrews knew about Abraham and the promises of God. However, they could scarcely see Jesus. Hebrews 9 was written to convince them that their ram in the thicket had come.

Read Hebrews 9. It gives a picture of how it once was before Jesus came. For us to appreciate the blood that was shed to cover our sins, we need to go back to the days when man was totally separate from God. Verse 11-14 tells us, "Christ being come a high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building: neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood, He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

Jesus entered into the holy place as a sacrifice for us. I love verse 14. "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" How many times has that precious blood of Jesus reached out to you and purged your conscience? How many times since the very first time that you ran to Him to ask forgiveness have you felt His precious grace because of that blood that was shed there for you, and you knew that you had a new beginning just ahead. Praise God there are now no petitions to separate you from God. Praise God that there is a High Priest for us. Not only did He live on earth and He will help deliver you, but lives in you and will change you from the inside out by the power of the Holy Ghost. Not only is there no division in the temple, but also through the blood of Jesus and the Holy Spirit *you are the temple*. I Corinthians 3:16 tells us, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in **you**?" Now that most high holy Priest sits in the presence of God interceding for you. Hebrews 10:16-17, "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." We not only can enter into the presence of God, the holy of holies, but we can enter into his presence with boldness having a full assurance of faith. Hebrews 10:19 and 22 tells us, "Having therefore, brethren boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."

No wonder that the devil tries to destroy our confidence in God. No wonder that he tries to destroy us by condemnation. No wonder he tries to bring a lack of self-confidence. When that happens we need to just let ourselves go and enter into that holy place with God. We need to go there and rest in the presence of the One who died to make us whole. We need to allow God to get rid of all the

things in us that would separate us from his love. We need to draw close to Him. In the light of that love, what do we have to fear? We need to enter into the holiest of holies and rest in the presence of our God.

He Is

Chorus

He is my resurrection, my past and my present.
 He is my salvation, my redeemer and friend.
 He's my song in my midnight when darkness surrounds me.
 He's the joy in my morning, my sweet victory.

Verse 1

I go to the garden, I smell His sweet fragrance.
 I know He has come to strengthen my soul.
 Sweet manna from heaven,
 Cool living water.
 Jesus my Savior, Jesus my Lord.

Verse 2

Come sit down beside Him; let Him touch your spirit.
 He'll draw you aside from the heat of the day.
 Come rest by this stream with this Shepherd so tender.
 He'll heal your heart and love your battles all away.

We can draw near to Him so that He draws us aside from the heat of the battle, from the heat of the day. We can rest in His love and trust Him. Any thing less than an up close and personal relationship with God and a walking, talking relationship with Jesus wastes the precious blood that He shed. When we fail to allow the Holy Ghost to have His way, submitting to Him with all our heart and our lives, we also waste the blood of Jesus. We need to rise up and be the Sons of God that He gave us power to become. John 1:12 tells us why there was a Calvary. "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name."

Think back to when He first saved you. Think back to that first time that you realized what forgiveness was all about. That's why there is power in the blood of Jesus. Think back to that time when you drew away and the world crept into your life. Remember that day that He drew you back into its love. That's what the blood of Jesus is all about. Forgiveness, a new life every day, a new man or woman, a new hope, another touch of grace. That's what the blood of Jesus is all about. Victory to overcome because of the Holy Ghost in us. Power to bind satan because we know where we stand and we know that he is under our feet. The right to victory because we are God's sons. Knowing that the blood of Jesus

covers our sins and there is "therefore now no condemnation" Knowing that the blood of Jesus makes us new every day that we go to Him in repentance genuinely seeking a new beginning. Praise God for the precious blood of Jesus. We no longer have to make a sacrifice. We no longer have to carry the lamb to the temple. The sacrifice is made. It was made for you. You don't have to be separated from God by the devil's load of guilt and condemnation. Your sin, your past, your weaknesses are all under the blood as long as you let the Holy Ghost convict you and you repent and seek the forgiveness of the Lord. It's at Calvary too that we find the power to rise up out of that sin and our weakness into a newness of light and a fresh new anointing. The power of Calvary not only forgives us and makes us new but it also gives us the power to rise up and overcome. Something to consider here, that precious blood that was spilled at Calvary was not spilled so that we could continuously and willfully sin. We'll discuss this more in the chapter "Mocking Calvary".

The blood of Jesus also gave us power over the devil and his angels. It's our sin that gives the devil power over us. Not only what we do by our actions but also our thoughts and our attitudes and feelings as well. When our sin is under the blood the devil sees the blood. There is nothing there that he can grab hold of to use against us. It's all covered. That's why he tries so hard to condemn us or cause us to justify our sin so that we won't repent, be forgiven, and be covered. You have power over the devil through the blood of Jesus. You have the authority by the blood of Jesus. This is not authority that comes from you in the flesh. It is not based on who you are in the natural. But it is based on who you are in the spirit. You are a Son of God. You have within you Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Ghost. You have a right to have authority over satan. You were given power through God's Word. When your sins are forgiven, in order to get to you the devil has to go through the blood of Jesus. That won't happen. You have authority over satan because of the blood of Jesus.

Calvary drew us close to God. Calvary made us beloved in Him. Calvary restored us to the place where we were created to be. Calvary restored us to being the sons of God. Because of Calvary and the blood of Jesus you are forgiven. Ephesians 1:6-10 tells us, "To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace; wherein He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence. Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself: That in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him." Ephesians 1:17-23 gives us a prayer that we need to pray concerning Calvary. "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the

saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe, accordingly to the working of His mighty power, Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, abut also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." That is the power of Calvary. Because of the power of Calvary not only are we forgiven, but we're raised up to sit in heavenly places. That's what the blood of Jesus is all about. O how precious is the blood of Jesus.

Chapter 6. Be Sure Your Sins

Numbers 32:23 tells us that our sins will find us out. "But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the Lord: and be sure your sin will find you out." Our sins can find us out in many ways. One of the ways that our sins can find us out is when we have to pay the price for it. The wages of sin is death. Romans 6:23 tell us this, "For the wages of sin is death: but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Sin is not pleasant. The wages of sin are not pleasant. You probably know many people who have paid the full price for their sin. Families are broken up, people live in constant stress, and they live in constant fear all because of the price of sin. Some of the unhappiest people I know are the children of God who have turned away from God's love to turn to their sin. I think one of the things that make them so unhappy and downright miserable is that they know better. There will be many people in hell that knew better. I am convinced that when you turn your back on God and you turn to a life of sin, unless you repent and turn back to God you will pay the full price of the penalty of that sin. The full price of that will be eternal life in hell. I have watched it in my own lifetime. I've had many friends who served God. But there was a little part of themselves that they would not commit or submit. That little flaw eventually cost them their soul. I watched them turn away from God and I knew that the chance of their ever returning was slim. Some of them died in that unrepented state and I had little doubt that they spend eternity in hell. I realize that it is true and scriptural that once you know God's ways and you walk in His Word, then nothing can separate you from his love. However, you may still be loved, but a righteous God will be your judge. If you walk away from God, then the things that you do, your disobedience, your turning your back on God will be what will cost you your eternal position with God.

When we walk away from God's love then this puts us in the position of being judged for that separation. Our disobedience will not separate us from God's love. We will be loved. However, if we choose to walk away from that love and the righteousness of God and we die in our unrighteousness in unrepented sin that will separate us from God for eternity. If we choose to stay separate from Him, then that choice itself will separate us. God's judgment will reveal our sin. God's righteousness will judge our sin. On the other hand, nothing can separate us from God's love if we choose to walk in obedience to Him and His love. Now hold on, I am not just talking out of my ignorance. Let's go to the Word of God and see what God has to say about the subject. Please read the entire chapter of Romans 6. It starts with "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" It goes on to say in verse 12, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." Verse 16 says, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye

are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" It closes with these verses 20-23, "For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Hebrews 10:26 tells us, "For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." What do we know through this chapter? What will be our wage if we return from following God to our sin?

The wages of sin is death. If we choose to yield ourselves to sin and let sin control us, then we become the servants of sin. The wages of sin is death, eternal separation from God. This is true whether you think it is true or not. What God's Word says, it says. Whether we want it to be true or not. Now consider this just for a moment. I know that there are many church doctrines out there that teach just the opposite. They concentrate on the scriptures that deal with God's mercy and grace and not His righteousness and judgment. This doesn't take away His judgment. If the things that I have spoken about in this chapter are true, and I walk in a way in which I do not willfully sin, then I have nothing to loose when I stand before God at judgment. Now if you don't see eye to eye with me in this matter and I am wrong, and I walk in a way before God in which I do not willfully sin, then what have I lost? Nothing. What have I gained? I have gained a life without the heartaches that sin brings into my life and the lives of those I love. Now let's say for example that I am right and you live a life that is filled with compromise, walking the edge of your salvation, dipping over into sin whenever you can find an excuse to do so, pushing the edges of the Word of God to cover up your sin at whatever opportunity that you can find to do so. If I am right and you are wrong, then what have you got to loose? Do you get my point? Living a life that is free of sin definitely has its advantages, and what do you have to loose when you do.

There is another instance in which your sins will find you out. To keep us, God will reveal our sins to us so that we can repent and be forgiven. God will use whatever He can to bring your sins to light. Thank God. If He never revealed our sin, then there would never be any repentance or forgiveness. I value my forgiveness. Without it we can never make it to heaven. I praise God that He reveals to my heart those things that I need to fix in my life. Not only does He reveal them, because of the power of the Holy Ghost within us and the power of Calvary He provides all I need to overcome them. God doesn't leave us in our sins, but He makes us a way of escape.

The Church to day has taken the altar out of their services. Very seldom do you find churches where the people weep and cry for their sins and weaknesses around the altar. Maybe that is part of the reason that the Holy Spirit no longer moves as a whole in our services. One of the jobs that the Holy Spirit has is to convict us of our sins. When we shut off His conviction and refuse to allow Him

to deal with our hearts then we turn Him away. He does not come where He is not made welcome. It's not easy to have Him deal with our hearts. I'm sure you know what I am saying here. It is not comfortable. God's Word and His Spirit are both like a sword cutting down to the quick and marrow. No this is not at all comfortable. One thing to remember here is that neither is it comfortable in hell. If we refuse to allow the Holy Spirit to have His way in our lives, to operate freely in us to convict us, bring us to repentance and to God's forgiveness, then hell will be our eternal home. I praise God for the conviction of the Holy Spirit. It may be uncomfortable, but I certainly don't want to turn it off.

One of the things that we have to guard against doing is willfully stopping wrong attitudes or pushing them down inside so we don't have to deal with them. We often can know that we are having an attitude that isn't according to the Word of God maybe one like rebellion, or strife and contention. We know we shouldn't have these attitudes so when we do we chunk them down inside. We can only chunk them down so long. They start creeping back up. What we have to do is get rid of the root of the problem. Maybe in the case of rebellion it might be having a controlling type spirit. We have to submit that to God, yield it to Him totally and allow Him to break that in our lives. Until we get rid of the root, the problem will keep cropping up. The danger of allowing that to happen is this. Each time the problem crops up we feel defeated and condemned that this thing is continuing in our lives. Eventually if we aren't careful we will become defeated over this and give up entirely. Or since this is an area that we haven't totally submitted to God that isn't totally under the blood, the devil will grab hold of it and use it to destroy us. Never stop God from dealing with all the issues of your life. Never draw a line to keep certain things that you don't really want to yield to God. Never chunk things down, but get real with God and He will get real with you. You'll find that giving these things up is so much better than the battle that you will face if you don't.

Now I want to take time to tell you that yes I praise God for revealing my sin but it is definitely not an easy thing. On the morning that I am writing this, God is pruning me. I don't write the books that I write because I am perfect. I write because I know the joys of God's mercy and the power of Calvary because of my imperfection. This morning as I write this I am very aware of my imperfection. God has out his pruning shears. God can certainly get down to the quick. It is painful. Now it would be very easy to shut this off and go on about my own thoughts. It's easy to let God start His conviction, feel it a little, repent on the surface, and merrily run on your way. But this will not get the job done. This will lead to a surface repentance and before long it will be easy to do the same thing again. Then it will be even easier to do it the time after that one. And do it again the next time, and so forth. When God gets down to business with you and you get down to business with God and the full conviction-repentance cycle is done believe me it will not be easy to go out and do that again. For one thing you will catch a real glimpse of God's love. You will catch a real glimpse of His

mercy. We can't repent without glimpsing Calvary. When we do, we catch a glimpse of that wonderful Savior and His love. We won't want to sin again. When we are really truly forgiven in more than just a surface forgiveness, then we know God's love. Through that process we are drawn even closer to Him. However, because we have drawn closer, we won't repeat that sin. John 16:8 tells us, "And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." I Corinthians 5:7 tells us, "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." The fruit of our flesh apart from God only brings forth fruit unto death. (Romans 7:5, "For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.") We no longer have to walk in that sin. We can walk in the newness of life through the power of Calvary, the power of God's Word, and the power of the Holy Ghost within us.

Any thing contrary to God's Word that is in our hearts or minds needs to be purged out of us. It needs to be pruned away. Have you ever seen trees that had been pruned back to the place where they were just a nub? Have you ever felt after God got through with you that you were just a nub? Have you ever gone back to look at trees that had been pruned. I have two of the thickets, most beautiful trees in my yard. When you look up into those masses of limbs, you can see where at one time they had been pruned back to the very trunk. I am sure that during that time they were not very beautiful. Now though they are strong and tried and true. We are sometimes the same way. The conviction power of God and the sword of the Holy Ghost sometimes can cause us to feel like a nub. Just wait though until the pruning is done and God has His perfect work in you.

We have to remember that sin does not always come in big packages. If we aren't careful, the devil can make us consider sin to be only the big things. Those big things like adultery, lying, stealing, and the biggies that you find in the "Shall Not's" of the Ten Commandments. We need to realize that it is much more than that. James 4:7-11 tells us, "Submit yourselves to God, resist the devil, and He will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up. Speak not evil one of another, brethren...." Verse 17 goes on to say, "Therefore to Him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." This is a wonderful picture not only of a few examples of sin, but how we should react when we sin. It sums up the sin issue by saying if we know we shouldn't and we do it anyway, that is sin. It also can be taken in this similar way. If we know we should and we don't, then it is sin as well. I John 5:17 tells us, "All unrighteousness is sin..." We can get the picture from these two sections of scriptures that it's not always the big sins that can destroy us. The devil knows that it probably won't be able to come against us to get us to sin in the big ways.

He likes to sneak in the little things. What's the danger of this? Song of Solomon tells us in 2:15, "Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes." The little foxes can destroy us an inch at a time. Attitudes are some of the worst little foxes you'll find. Bitterness, pride, rebellion, self-justification, hate, spite work, fear, the pride of life, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes name only a few.

The cares of life can choke the spiritual life out of you as well. If you become so tangled up in the world and the flesh that you don't have time to let the Holy Ghost have His way in your life then this can destroy you as well. I have known lot's of people down through the years who were one time serving God but no longer do so. I know that they did not purposely set out to fall away. They fell away because they didn't purposefully set out not to do so. We have to purposefully set our sights on a goal of eternal life with God. We have to be sure that nothing hinders us. Especially little foxes. Having the goal of eternal life should never be an afterthought, one that you think about only when you're exhausted after a day filled with everything else. If someone who runs races only trains for his race the way that you live your Christian life, would they be a winner or loser? Hebrews 12:1-2 tells us, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith..." I Corinthians 9:24-25 tells us, "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible." Remember, one way or the other, your sins will find you out. Even the little foxes will. They may find you out when God begins to convict and purge you. Or they will find you out by becoming weights that will hinder you from finishing this race.

Since we know that our sins will find us out, the worse thing that we can do is make excuses for our sin or our wrong attitudes and actions. Self-righteousness happens when we make ourselves to seem right in our own eyes. Self-justification comes when we make excuses and justify what we do wrong. Both are very dangerous. Both are very human. We cannot do well on our own without God. That is why we needed salvation purchased by His perfect blood, that perfect price for our redemption at Calvary. Proverbs 12:5 tells us, "The thoughts of the righteous are right; but the counsels of the wicked are deceit." II Corinthians 10:12-13 tells us, "For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise. But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you." Ecclesiastes 7:20 tells us, "For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." Romans 3:19 tells us, "Now we know that what things soever

the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." Verse 23 tells us, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." I knew someone who was in her eighties. She had lived all of her life with the thought that she was a good person. She didn't do all those bad things that others did. She was convinced that because of that she would get to go to heaven. She had no personal salvation experience. She had no relationship with the Lord. She definitely didn't know anything about herself for truth. Flesh will never be able to see itself as it really is. It takes the perfect Spirit of God to reveal our sin to us. It is only through the Spirit of God that we can see our sin, our weaknesses, and our failures. Thank God that this lady received salvation and repented before she died. If she hadn't she would have waked from death to find herself in the devil's hell with worse sinners, and she would have been no better off than they.

It is so dangerous when we get right in our own eyes. When we do, God cannot deal with this. We have to commit ourselves and actively walk with God. We have to submit our will and our way to Him. We have to allow His Spirit to convict us and work in our lives. We have to actively repent and turn away from our sin. If we don't, then Calvary will not be real to us. If we don't, then the price that Jesus paid there for us would just be for nothing. It is human nature to hide things under the rug, stacked in the closet, or make excuses. It is human nature just to let things happen and not actively seek out the things of God. We have to remember though that for Jesus to be Lord of all, He also has to be Lord of our rugs and our closets. When we stand before Him and the light of his love and the sacrifice that was made for us at Calvary, we are without excuse. When we stand in the light of the power of his Word and the promises there, we are without excuse. When we stand in the light of the authority that He is given us to overcome satan and the power to overcome our own flesh because of the Holy Ghost within us, then we are without excuse. Calvary takes away all our excuses. One day when we stand before the Lord of all, we can be sure that all our sins will find us out, unless they are under the blood of Jesus and we are not allowing that sin to be lord of our lives.

Be sure your sins will find you out. Let them be found out through God's love. Conviction is for the overcomer. Let Him convict you so that you can overcome. Draw near to God. Draw near to Calvary.

Chapter 7. Forgiveness

Let's start this chapter with the story of three women. The first met Jesus by a well. You know the story. The scriptures are well orchestrated. What I mean by that is that the things that happened did not randomly happen by chance. If we walk in the Spirit today, and we are obedient to God our life can be the same way. There is an order to how things took place in Jesus' life when He walked on the earth. If we are walking in the Spirit minding the things of God, then there will be an order in our lives as well. If we find that there is a lot of chaos in our lives, then Jesus is not the Lord of our lives, and we need to make some changes. There were few things in Jesus' lifetime that happened randomly or haphazardly. Most of the things that were recorded were recorded for a purpose. They were recorded often to show the fulfillment of previous scriptures. Often they were recorded to make a point, to teach a lesson, or sometimes just so a miracle could take place. This story of the woman at the well is one of those things. I am using the story told in John 4:4-30. Read this please. I will only put in highlights of this scripture.

Jesus was in Samaria. This was a key thing in itself. The Jews and Samaritans were archenemies despising one another. Most Jews would never let their feet touch Samaritan soil. If a Jew needed to travel from the part of Israel on one side of Samaria to the part that was on the other side, instead of going straight through Samaria they would walk around it. This wasn't a short journey. Here was Jesus. We find Him not only in the middle of Samaria but talking to Samaritans being right at home. The scripture notes that this was at the sixth hour. This Savior was almost as you might say at the sixth hour of His life as well. He was almost ready to be offered as a sacrifice both for the sins of the Jews and the sins of the Samaritans, and ours as well. He was the Sacrifice for both the Jews and the Gentiles. He was also the Savior for those who despised and hated Him, as well as the Savior for those who weren't accepted as the in or the religious elite crowd, the Samaritans, Jews, and all of us. Praise God, He came for all. Here He sat at a well with a Samaritan woman at the sixth hour. Now the surprising thing about this well that you might not expect is found in verse 5. It was in a parcel of land known as Jacob's Well. It was in the land that Jacob had given to Joseph. Jacob, the grandson of Abraham, gave this land to his son Joseph. Joseph was favored of the Lord. We have to also remember that Jesus was of the lineage of Abraham. He was the promised seed of Abraham. (Genesis 26:3-4, "Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father; and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.") Here in itself was a fulfillment of prophecy. Not that Jesus was drinking from that particular well, but that He was there at that very

place where Abraham's grandson had given his son land, and at this particular well that had belonged to him. That was surely a fulfillment of prophecy.

The time that this happens also means a lot. The Bible seldom mentions times when things happen that it isn't important in the life of Jesus. If a time is mentioned, then it is significant to the full understanding of what is going on. What hour did this happen in? The sixth hour. Jesus' time was not completely fulfilled, but it was fast drawing near. It was his sixth hour as well. Well, here was this woman, a pretty wild lady to say the least. Remember, these were the days when you were stoned for adultery. This lady had gone far past that. Jesus knew her life's story. I'm glad that He knew mine. Those days when I was in the world and running from Him into everything wild that I could find to get into, I am glad that He knew my heart. I am glad that He took time to sit down with me like He did that woman on that day. I am so glad that He drew me back to Him and gave me some of the living water that He gave her on that day. That river of life touched my life and I've never been the same since then. That sweet water still wells up in my soul today. When Jesus told her that He had water for her, He wasn't kidding.

Jesus told the woman at the well to go get her husband. She wasn't entirely honest with Him in her answer in verse 17. Isn't that how we get so often. We give Jesus half answers to hide the whole truth about what we've done. He knows all along. His Spirit convicts us and His Word cuts to the marrow of our bones. Hebrews 4:12 tells us, "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing, asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." All too often we stand there making excuses when we are caught. Conviction is the gateway to forgiveness. We can't allow God's conviction to work when we aren't willing to be honest about our sin. If we didn't have God's Spirit to convict us, then we wouldn't know how to even tell right from wrong. If we aren't careful we want to shut up that still small voice that convicts us. Then it becomes that heart-wrenching sword of the Word of God. If that doesn't work, then it gets even worse. We don't want to be uncomfortable. When God's Spirit and His Sword start cutting away, we won't feel comfortable. But we will feel saved.

Conviction is where forgiveness starts. Repentance also has to come. There are so many people who allow God to convict them on the surface, but they don't really repent. How do I know? Because they turn right around and do it again. Sometimes they do this with the thinking that it's OK to do this because God forgave them. They didn't really repent. To repent means that you love God with all your heart and you are grateful to Jesus for paying the price of Calvary for your forgiveness. When you mess up it grieves your heart so bad that you will never do that again. That is what the love of God and Calvary is all about. The real love of God will never bring about an attitude that God loves me so I can do it anyway. The love of God brings about a desire never to hurt Him or bring pain or

disappointment to Him for what you've done. That is repentance. Conviction comes about because of God's love for you. Repentance comes about because of your love for God. Forgiveness comes about because of God's love for you and your love for Him.

The woman at the well that day had her whole life's story told to her by this complete stranger. Just like He tells us our life's story today. She didn't make any more excuses. There wasn't a point for that any longer. She knew that Jesus was the Messiah. She met the River of Life. She drank from His living water and found forgiveness that day. How do I know? Her life was changed. John 4:28-30 tells us, "The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? Then they went out of the city, and came unto Him." I am sure that this woman with such a wild reputation was known in that town. When she went and told the others that she had met the Messiah, they believed her. There had been a change. This woman left there knowing the joy of forgiveness. She was made whole. She had tasted this living water.

One of my favorite stories concerning forgiveness is found in Luke 7:36-50. Read this beautiful story of forgiveness. Jesus is at a Pharisee's house. A woman came in. In verse 37 she is described as definitely being a sinner. In verse 39 we read, "Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth Him: for she is a sinner." Now notice that he didn't even say this out loud. He just said it within himself. He thought it. Jesus answered his thought. That should have been proof there that this was a Prophet. I don't know what sin this woman was guilty of, but I do know that it was not too big for Jesus' love. This woman saw in Him something that the self-righteous Pharisee missed. Many of them missed it even on the day that they had Him taken to Calvary. They hung Him there. He submitted, and hung there for this woman, and for everyone like her all the way through time. That is what the forgiveness of God is all about. It isn't about doing what we want because we can be forgiven. It is all about love. When the Pharisee made his comment he was met with a wonderful answer in verse 40-41. "And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owned five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged. And he turned to the woman and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet; but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee,

Her sins, which are many, are forgiven for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.” And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.” What a beautiful picture of forgiveness. Here you have on one side the self righteous Pharisee, and on the other side you have the woman who was a sinner. Who received forgiveness? The one who knew her sin, on one hand or the one that at that moment had convinced himself that he had none. This woman loved him much because much had been forgiven. I don’t care what you’ve done, it isn’t bigger than God’s love. It can’t out size His forgiveness. Romans 4:7 tells us, “Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.” Romans 6:23 tells us, “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Now you may remember at the beginning of the chapter that I said that I would tell the story of three women. One was the woman at the well, one was the woman at the banquet. The third you’ve read about throughout this chapter. The third one I told about was me. I am here writing these books because I know about that same forgiveness. You are there reading it and being blessed by reading about the miracles of Calvary because you too know this same forgiveness. What an awesome God!!

The price for our forgiveness (yours and mine and for all) that was paid at Calvary was great. The love behind that price that was paid was even greater. The woman in this chapter received forgiveness with all her heart. We have to receive forgiveness for it to work. I John 1:9 tells us, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” If we fail to accept forgiveness and forgive ourselves then the price that Jesus paid on Calvary is for nothing. Part of accepting God’s forgiveness is in turn forgiving ourselves. I remember one time that I was having an especially hard time with condemnation. Jesus speaks to me sometimes using pictures in my mind. I guess He knows that He has to keep things simple with me. He showed me His hands. He showed me the scars there. He told me that this was for me. That made the forgiveness that He paid for at Calvary real and personal. I knew that He died for the sins of the world, but I hadn’t quite gotten the idea that I was in that personally. That day, the price paid for my forgiveness became real and so did the love that was behind it. Then He told me that if He had forgiven me then I had no right to condemn myself. I forgave myself. Condemnation comes from the devil. It is his tool to discourage us. Condemnation is not the same as conviction. Conviction doesn’t defeat us. It draws us closer to God. Condemnation slams in your face every moment of defeat, every failure, every weakness, and every sin that you have done for the last 20 some years. God convicts as you do the sin, then He forgets. That is the difference between the two. God forgives. The devil condemns. Romans 8:1 tells us, “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Notice that this says that a condition for this verse is walking in the Spirit. If we walk in the flesh and not in

the Spirit, then the devil can have free reign with us. If we walk in the Spirit, then we can take the authority that God has given us and bind the devil.

You are forgiven. Like the woman at the well, you have a new life. You have nothing to hold your head down about. Yesterday is over and each day is new every morning. That forgiveness paid for at Calvary is precious. Never consider it to be less. Love can't continue without forgiveness. What is that saying, "Love is never having to say I'm sorry"? I have never really understood that. That had to be written by someone out of touch with reality. Love means forgiving and being forgiven. And when we are forgiven, love means accepting that forgiveness and forgiving ourselves. We aren't perfect. God knew that we couldn't be. That is the why for Calvary. Love was why. Praise God for conviction. Praise God for repentance. Praise God for forgiveness. Praise God for Calvary that made it all possible.

Chapter 8. The Old Man Is Dead

Calvary made a way for us to be forgiven, but it also went a step further. Calvary made possible four different resurrections. Now hold on and hear me out. One resurrection was the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Another resurrection comes when we will do the same. Because of Calvary we will be resurrected from the dead to eternal life with our heavenly Father and His Son who shed His blood on Calvary making these resurrections possible. Another resurrection comes when we accept salvation. We become a new man. Jesus comes into our hearts through the power of the Holy Ghost and there definitely is a change. We are resurrected in a newness of life. The old is passed away. We are forgiven and set free from the sins of our past and that in itself brings a resurrection. We begin to see things differently. The old things that we did hold no interest any longer. The old ways are dead. And we are resurrected in a new life. The Word of God opens up new thinking and we are changed through It's power working in us. We find the power to walk away from those things that bound us before we came to Christ. We find power to overcome the world and the devil who has it so bound in sin. We are changed when we are saved. Salvation itself brings about a resurrection as we are made new in Christ. We have discussed three resurrections made possible by Calvary. What is the fourth?

This is the resurrection that happens daily in our lives. Romans 6:6 mentions it. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Galatians 2:20 talks about this resurrection. Galatians 2:20 tells us, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me." We cannot walk this Christian walk on our own in the flesh. The only way that you can walk a supernatural walk with a supernatural God is to walk in the Spirit and not in the flesh. Galatians 2:20 tells us several helps as to how we can do this. First we have to consider our old man dead on Calvary with Christ. "I am crucified with Christ." It is that old man, that flesh part, that gets us in trouble. It has to die so that the new man birthed in us through the power of the Holy Ghost can rule in our life.

What is the difference between the old and new man? What is our flesh? Paul talked about the battle between the two in Romans 7:18-25. I am sure that you can identify with what Paul is saying. Verse 23 and 25 sums this up. "But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God but with the flesh the law of sin." This war gets us into trouble if we aren't careful. That struggle is always there. What does the flesh bring into our lives when it

wins? Romans 8 tells us more about that, and the war between flesh and Spirit. Read that chapter please. Now let's compare the two-flesh vs. spirit. Verse 4 tells us that righteousness is found in those that walk in the Spirit. Verse 5 tells us that if we are walking in the flesh we can't mind the things of the Spirit because they are spiritually discerned. We can't even see spiritual things let alone understand them. Verse 6 tells us to be carnally minded is death, but spiritually minded is life. Verse 6 tells us that the way to find peace of mind is to walk in the Spirit. Verse 7 tells us that if you walk in the flesh and think carnally then you become an enemy to God against the law of God just by your nature. You may not intend to be an enemy, but that is just what happens any way. Verse 8 tells us that if you do not walk in the Spirit then you cannot please God. Verse 9 even says that if you are in the Spirit then you are God's but if not then you are not His. Go on to verse 14. Verse 14 says, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." That shows us that we aren't obedient and led by the Spirit of God then we can't be the Sons of God. Continue on and read the entire chapter. We can't be saved in the flesh. We can't inherit eternal life in the flesh. We can't even understand God or His Word or how to walk in victory in Him in the flesh. We can't obey God in the flesh. We can't please God in the flesh. I guess that after all that we can sum this up by saying that it is very important to walk in the Spirit. Earlier I mentioned that the first step in doing this to let the old man die. Unless you let the old man, the flesh man die, and let the Spirit man, Jesus in you through the power of the Holy Ghost rise up and control your life, then you cannot walk in the Spirit. That is a resurrection that comes from the power of Calvary.

To let the old man, the flesh man, die you have to recognize the work that was done at Calvary. The old man is dead. Our flesh died at Calvary. We are crucified with Christ like Galatians 2:20 tells us. Then we have to bury the old man. We have to let him stay dead. I die daily. Daily that old flesh man tries to rise up and through the power of the Holy Ghost in me I rebuke him and I allow the Holy Ghost to rise up in me and over come that flesh. If we let it, that old "stinking thinking" of the flesh tries to control our minds with that doubt and unbelief. That flesh that says, this is what I want to do, and this is what I don't want to do, when it is the opposite of what God says to do rises up. That flesh with all its petty petted emotions wants to control our heart and keep the love of God from being the center. If we are a spoiled, self centered natured person than we will have problems with letting the flesh go. This can't happen and we get our way. We have to give up our way. We have to let God break us so that we can do this. We have to give up our will and let Him have His will. Problem is, this is not human nature. Human nature wants to control. Human nature doesn't want to give in. Human nature has to go. God has to break our self will so that self will stays buried in Christ. We have to recognize how bad our flesh is and that we can't allow it to be in control and have victory in Christ at the same time. It will not work that way. To have a supernatural victorious walk with God, then we have to let the flesh go. That is the hard part. How do we do this?

One of the keys to allowing the new man, Jesus in us through the power of the Holy Ghost, to rise up to control the old flesh man is the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. We'll talk more about this gift from God in a later chapter. The Word of God also gives us power to overcome our flesh. If you aren't reading your Bible but once in a while when you feel guilty, then you are probably not walking in the Spirit. The Word of God keeps us in the right way of thinking so that we can walk in the Spirit. If we fill our mind with God's Word, then it can strengthen us as well. What we read becomes a part of who we are and how we think. That is definitely true concerning the Word of God. It has the power to transform our mind and cause us to think in the way that God thinks, in the Spirit. If our mind is filled with the Word of God it is easier to walk in the Spirit.

Another way to overcome flesh is not to give in to the world and everybody else, and the flesh that rules both. If you typically go along with the crowd and you are concerned with what is the popular thinking, then you are definitely not walking in the Spirit. If your time is filled with your day-to-day activities and most of your life evolves around them to the place that you have no place left for God, then you are not walking in the Spirit. If your mind is centered on everything but the things of God, you are not walking in the Spirit. The old man is dead, crucified with Christ. You have to let him stay buried. Walking everyday in obedience to the Spirit of God, committing yourself and submitting to Him is the only way that you can do this.

There are other things that help you to walk in the Spirit and be strengthened in that walk. One thing is good old Gospel music. I am prejudiced for Southern Gospel, but there are all kinds of flavors. I am prejudiced against the Gospel that sounds like those who are making the music or singing the songs are trying to have a contest seeing how much like the world they can sound. God tells us to come out from among them and be a separate people. You can't be a separate people if in your heart you really want to sound like the rest of the world. I'm not talking about just contemporary music here. There is some praise music that lifts me right up to the Lord. Then there is some that I can't tell apart from a rock and roll band. Hey, I'll not stop there. There are some southern Gospel groups that try to get the popular world sound going. They aren't singing for the Lord, but they are singing to just to be popular and to have a sound that will imitate the world's sound so that their music will sale to the world. I like to feel the touch of God in the music that I listen to. When groups are dedicated to the Lord and they sing for the purpose of ministering to God's people, then you'll be ministered to. You will feel something in the music. This kind of music will help you to walk in the Spirit. The other kind will only cater to your flesh. It may have a good beat that gives you a good bouncy feeling, but it won't minister to your soul.

Another thing that will help you to walk in the Spirit is fasting. Fasting is depriving your flesh of something that it craves. This may not always be food. The Bible also mentions fasting sex. Fasting can be fasting anything that your

body craves. I've fasted certain kinds of food permanently. I don't drink soft drinks or anything that could even remotely have caffeine or carbonation in it. I had severe problems at one time with my kidneys. They would even shut down and not work for a couple of days at a time. I had a habit of drinking coke and coffee all day back in those days. God would heal me, but because of this habit, I was soon back in the same shape. I made a commitment not to continue to do this, so I gave this up. Now I don't drink it at all. Anytime that we make this sort of commitment and stick to it, it helps us to put our flesh in place and walk in the Spirit. We say to our flesh that this commitment that we are making is ruling our life. Not our flesh. Every thing that we do in this way helps.

We live in a generation where flesh rules. Sad to say this is true even in the church. We hear on all sides "if it feels good do it". We hear that you are free to do what you want and anybody that tries to make you feel bad for doing it has a problem themselves. This is creating a generation of spoiled children who want their way. They want to be in the center of attention at whatever cost to everyone around them. You can't have these traits and walk in the Spirit. You have to let go of yourselves, let go of your flesh, and let the old man be crucified. The new man has to be resurrected in you through the Holy Ghost. He will resurrect you daily in a new life in Him.

I want to add something here as a footnote to this chapter. I know a lot of people who think that they need to change someone who is close to them. I have been guilty of this myself. Sometimes in our human flesh it is easy to see things about the people that we love that we think needs to change. It may be that person needs to change in that area, but often it may mean that they really don't. We just think that they need to. Flesh really has no idea of what needs to be changed in someone else and what doesn't. Matter of fact, we often can't even see our own selves in reality and yet we want to go to work on others around us. If we aren't careful we can come up with our little ideas of things that need to be changed in someone else and that can be one of the most dangerous and damaging things that we can do. Matter of fact, the devil can use this very easily. We'll talk more later about how he can.

Here are some reasons that it doesn't work when we try to change others. Number One-if we start concentrating on the list of things that we think that others need to change, we run a high risk of becoming disgusted with them. Or we run a high risk of nagging them into despair. Hey men, I'm not just talking about women who do this either. All of us if we aren't careful can so easily pick out our list of things. We harp on that little list until if that person wanted to change, they became too defeated to be able to do so. I know someone (actually several people) whose family is actually backing up from them, but they can't see this. This is happening because every time that they are with them this person harps on what they think they need to change. That is the main topic of their conversation. We play little gods in trying to control things in those people we love and we wind up actually driving them away from what God is trying to do in their lives. We may

be well meaning in our thinking, but that really doesn't change the damage we do. That's why a lot of people fall out of love with their spouses and even with their children. When we concentrate on one another's shortcomings we lose our love. When we lose our love we lose a lot more than we can stand to pay. We may start out just wanting to help others, but the devil comes in and changes our attitude to a critical attitude. Some of the most critical people are those who are the loneliest. If we aren't careful we'll begin to point out every speck that is in that person's eye, and when we do we will no longer be the apple of their eye. If we want to be loved then we need to shut up and let God be God. Boy that sounds rough, but this is the voice of experience speaking. I have been there and done that and know. It is not our duty to change others.

Number 2-We can very easily ignorantly undo in just a few minutes what God has patiently worked in someone for years to build. Let me explain. For example, I have certain traits in me to help me to serve God that He has been perfecting in me for over 20 years of working in a ministry. One of these traits is a hardheaded determination to do what God wants me to do. That goes along with a hardheaded determination not to be led around by flesh-centered people or people who at the moment are walking in the flesh. These go hand in hand. You can't obey God constantly and consistently in the way you need to if you allow everyone who is in the flesh to lead you here or there, or to influence you in any way. If someone in the flesh even influences how you think, then you can easily lose a battle because in that area of your thinking the Spirit didn't lead you. We can get side tracked so easily by those who are walking in the flesh and not minding the Spirit. I have seen so many ministries that stopped in their tracks because the leaders allowed flesh-centered people to influence them. The devil will send all kinds of people. The worst will be those who love you and who are serving God with you who are having a weak moment and give into the flesh. They are the hardest to overcome. You can imagine as a Director of a Christian school for over 14 years how many flesh situations I've had to maneuver through. If I would have let flesh centered people or those who were having a "flesh controlled moment" control me, I would have had major problems through the years. I would have gotten sidetracked and I would have led an entire staff of people, all the children in the school, their parents, etc. all to be side tracked. There have been many many times when that was just what the devil wanted. We have avoided a lot of terrible situations because I refused to let flesh rule. So one of the "safety mechanisms" that God has built in me is a heavy caution light that comes up in my spirit when the devil is trying to manipulate me in this way. My reaction to this is an almost involuntary severe reaction that springs up out my spirit. This happens in the Spirit sometimes before I even know what is going on in the flesh. Now not everyone who is having a flesh moment realizes that this is what is going on. Matter of fact, people who as a whole walk in the flesh instead of the Spirit can't see their weaknesses. None of us can when we walk in the flesh. These have to be discerned by the Spirit of God. So a lot of people like this

have left my office after I had this defense mechanism spring into action and were really sure that I had a terrible problem. They were sure in their own minds that God needed to change that part of me we've been talking about. Or at least they left praying for me really hard. They actually left praying for God to change the thing in me that He had spent years perfecting in me. Flesh is ignorant. We only see skin deep. If we aren't careful we may be trying to change something that God has spent years developing in someone to help them overcome things that they face. Or something that God has given them to help them to serve Him in a more dynamic way. If we keep hammering at certain traits in which this is the case, we run a high risk of coming against God who has perfected these things. Then we will find ourselves in a different situation there. It is best not to play god.

Now I'm not just talking about preacher's wives here as some may think that I am inferring. That is a good point there though. If you are a preacher's wife then you are in a very special place in your husband's ministry. You are in a key position. Your influence can make or break your husband's ministry. You are definitely in a position that the devil will attack you to stop your work as a team for the Lord. I have seen many strong preachers whose ministries were broken by wives who allowed the devil to use them. Honor your position in partnership with your husband. Realize that he is over the ministry, but your place is to be by his side. Handle this position with much soul searching and much prayer. Keep your flesh under subjection and submit to your husband and to God. If you allow the devil to cause you to become a hindrance then the blood of those that you as a ministering team would have reached will be on your hands. Be very careful that you don't undo the things in your spouse that God has spent years perfecting. You may not see or understand these things. Let God be the One who does the changes. Let Him perfect your spouse as you submit to Him and let Him perfect you. That's how to have a powerful team.

But as I mentioned before, I'm not just talking about preacher's wives. I am talking about anyone connected with anyone who is ministering in any way. And really that should be all of us. We all should have an effective ministry even if it is just to family, friends, acquaintances, and work people. We as a spouse want to be careful not to do anything that would hinder the other's ministry. Guard against that and honor what one another is doing for the Lord. Also, we as a family of God need to guard our unity and our love. That is what makes an effective church. Don't allow anything to hinder this. We need to be careful that we don't do anything to hinder one another's effectiveness in our work for the Lord. When we tear down another's effectiveness, then because we as a family of God are one, then we really are tearing down our own selves.

Walk in the Spirit in your relationships with others. When the Holy Ghost leads you to intercede for someone's weaknesses, then intercede. Then let God be God in that person's life. Let Him do the work. We always want to help Him out like we think that He can't do it well without us. Hey, He's been at this a lot longer than you have. You may be the thing that is hindering Him from working

because you are undoing everything that really needs to be done. Let go and let Him be God. If He leads you to do or say something then do or say it. If not for goodness sake be quiet and stay out of His business. The Bible says that we are God's workmanship, right? Not the workmanship of our spouse. Not the workmanship of our friends. Not the workmanship of those in our church. Let God be God.

Number 3- We forget a very important fact when we start looking at the things in others that need to be changed. If you point a finger at someone, you have three pointing back at you. Try it and see. The scripture puts it this way in Matthew 7:1-5, "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye, and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of the brother's eye." Wow. That is rough talking. Hey, I didn't say it. Check it out. Jesus did. One of the ways that the devil can stop God from being able to change us is by causing us to concentrate so hard on what's wrong in everybody else that we neglect our own soul's salvation. Hey you aren't responsible to get anyone to heaven. You are responsible for your own soul. Be careful not to be so carried away looking at everyone else that you don't have time to seek God about your own failing.

Number 4-A lot of times when we are so caught up in trying to change others it is really a form of control. We want to control others so that they can't control us. We want to do this especially when we see their weaknesses so that we won't be vulnerable. Number one problem with this is when we control others to keep from being controlled, how can we really submit to God? If we can't submit to others around us, then we can't submit to God. We definitely can't submit to God especially if we can't submit to those who love us and those who are over us in the Lord. If we won't let go and give in to others, we won't let go and give in to God. Flesh stays in control. We won't submit to the Spirit enough to walk in the Spirit. We want to tell everyone else how to do instead of letting God tell us what we should do. When we are doing this way, we definitely need to stop trying to play God in the lives of those we love because no matter how well meaning we may be, it will only bring disaster.

I may have sounded pretty strong on these points above. There were several reasons why the Lord led me to write these things. Part of the purpose of my writing this book was to include it in the curriculum of our college, *New Life Bible College and Seminary*. A majority of our students are in some type of ministry. Those in the ministry especially need to hear what I am saying. I really do believe that this area is one in which the devil hinders ministers more than any other area. Ministering teams, husbands and wives united in love, walking in the Spirit, are hated by the devil. Guard against him causing your love for one another to be

anything but the bright light that God has caused it to be. Keep that love shining for the Lord. It will be part of what draws others to His love. Don't allow flesh to divide you. Sure everybody has flesh, but we don't have to allow it to rule our relationship with others. True love and the Holy Ghost and flesh centered lives just really don't mix. Also, if you are a leader of a church, guard the unity in your church family as close as you would the unity in your own physical family. Often the devil uses the ignorant to cause situations. These situations cause division. This stops the move of God in churches. Guard against this.

In closing to this last section of this chapter, it is the Word of God, the power of the Holy Ghost in us, and the power of Calvary that changes us. Isn't that enough without our help? Let God be God. When you are really submitting to His Spirit and letting Him perfect His work in you, you'll let go of others. When you really let God be God in your own life, it is a lot easier to let God be God in the lives of others. Trust Him. He knows what He's doing.

We can be changed and made new everyday because of the power of Calvary, the power of God's Word, and the Holy Ghost who dwells in our hearts and minds. We're not stuck with the way we are. We have more than just a hope that we can change. Praise God. We serve a God of the new whose goodnesses are made new each and every day. He can renew us each and every day as well. This is part of the power of Calvary, the power of resurrection. Through Calvary, the old man is dead. Through Calvary we are made new. The New Man is in us. Jesus on the inside working on the outside changing our whole lives.

Chapter 9. Made New

It is good to know that we are forgiven. We can rejoice in our forgiveness. But hallelujah, God doesn't forgive us so that we can do the same thing over and over. We don't have to be stuck in the rut of our sins. When God forgives us, He delivers us to go on toward heaven in a newness of heart and mind. We are made new each time we go to Calvary. When you research the words "made new" in the scriptures, the most profound verse is found in Revelations 21:5. "And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And He said unto me, Write; for these words are true and faithful." Here we read that at one time in the not so very far away future all things will be made new. Totally and completely new. When we read this scripture we can certainly find hope that God can make us new as individuals. There are many times when we need to be made new. Certainly one of the first is the change that comes with salvation. This newness is mentioned in Ephesians 2:12-16. "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby."

This new man is birthed in us by the power of God's Word and His Spirit. When Jesus comes into our hearts through the Holy Ghost, we have a new man inside of us. This gives us power to overcome our flesh, the old man. Romans 6:4-7 tells us, "Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection; Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin." Real, genuine salvation brings about a change. That change doesn't stop at salvation, though. It continues and brings a newness of life every day. We can be renewed in Him every day. I don't know about you, but I need this. There have been times when the devil rushed in like a flood and literally pounded me. I needed strength, and I needed it fast. God renewed my strength. (Ephesians 3:16, "That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man.") There have been times when my heart was so torn up by hurt that I simply needed a new heart. If I wouldn't have had a new heart, I would have gotten bitter and shriveled up. If you loose your love for those around you because of hurt, you are in danger of loosing your love

for God. If you are in any way involved in the ministry, and we all should be in some respect, then if we loose our love we loose our drive to do what we do. If we loose our love, we loose our priorities and other things can creep in to take over Jesus' place as number 1 in our lives. We loose our commitment. Then sin starts to creep in. It is important to let God renew our heart. He is able to. Remember He will make all things new. He certainly can make new your broken heart.

David knew about battles. He knew what it meant to struggle daily against a friend who had become an enemy. He knew what it was like to struggle against fear and bitterness. Psalms 51:10 tells us his prayer. "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." David knew the importance of keeping his heart and spirit upright before God. He also trusted the Lord to keep him. There may be times when the devil comes in like a flood with things to cause us to get wrong attitudes. If we aren't careful our spirit will get cluttered with these things and they will bind us. If we let it continue we can become bound by things like spirits of bitterness, jealousy, rebellion, anger, contention, doubt, pride or many other things. We need God to renew our spirit so that these things don't take us over. Ezekiel 11:19 tells us, "And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh." Yes, this is talking about salvation. But the same God that renews us through salvation continues to make us new each day. We can walk in the newness of life every day.

Our mind needs to be made new as well. It is constantly bombarded with thoughts that are of this world, not of God's ways. We constantly hear the devil's messages everywhere we look. We see it through the media, coming out of the mouths of people around us who aren't submitted to God. We constantly hear words of doubt, fear, unbelief, and even words mocking the very existence of God pour out. We constantly hear the world's philosophies and ways of thinking. I know some people who have warped ways of thinking. That is because they have let other things control their minds besides God's Spirit. This keeps them from acting soundly. It influences their daily decisions. It influences their relationships with others and their relationship with God. It can cause them to be so confused that they become double minded. We can prevent all this from happening by allowing God to renew our minds. Our minds can also be so worn out by the battle or stressed out by the cares of life that we can't think straight. When this happens we are in need of renewal. God renews our mind through the power of His Word. Have you ever went through a time when it felt like your head was about to explode because the devil was bringing such a battle against your mind. That is until you picked up your Bible and buried yourself in Its pages. There you found right thinking, words of peace to fill your mind, and a release from the confusion. The world brings confusion. The Word of God brings peace. Another way that our minds are renewed is through the Holy Ghost. When we line up with His Spirit then we take on the mind of Christ. Romans 12:2 tells us, "And be not

conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” I Corinthians 2:16 tells us, “For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he might instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.” When we walk in the Spirit then our steps are sure. Our decisions are sound. We are letting God lead us. We are thinking those thoughts that He puts into our minds. Our mind is renewed in Him. We can go to Him and He pours out His Holy Ghost so that our mind is touched and renewed. All these things help to have a sound mind in Christ. We read in II Timothy that we have a right to a sound mind. II Timothy 1:7 tells us, “For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound minds.”

From time to time the devil will come against us so that our faith is literally shaken at its roots. Our faith itself needs to be renewed. I remember a time when the devil was pounding on me. I started having problems. I asked God what was wrong. He showed me my shield. It was all beaten and banged up. The battle had pounded my faith. He renewed my faith. The strength of my shield was renewed. It was stronger than ever. God can do that for you. Look to Jesus Hebrews 12:2 tells us. “Looking to Jesus the author and finisher of our faith: who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith. When we think that we can’t go on because there is no way to go further, look to Him for the faith to take that next step. When nothing is going right and you surely are going to be destroyed, look to Him, He will finish that faith that He put in you. He will move just in time. He Himself is the finisher of our faith.

When our faith is growing dim, and He steps in, that faith becomes even stronger than it was before. Our faith is also renewed in God’s Word. When we bury our mind in the pages of God’s Word, we can’t even hear what the devil has to say. Our mind is also renewed by the power of a touch from the Holy Ghost. Titus 3:5 tells us, “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost. Which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior.” If we are walking in sincerity before God, when we lift up our hands in need before His throne, then it won’t be long before a blessing comes down that will renew our soul and mind. Prayer in the Holy Ghost also renews our faith when we pray in tongues and the Holy Ghost takes over and prays through us. Jude 20 tells us, “But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost.” All these things renew us day to day.

One thing that we can do to be renewed is to stay away from those things that tear us down. One of the things that can destroy us is sin. Sin makes us very old. When we repent and receive forgiveness then it is good to know that Jesus can make us new. When you are lying on the floor on your face because you have messed up and failed God, isn’t it good to know that you can be made new? Isn’t

it good to know that old things are passed away? That God in His love made a way for you to be made whole again. Isaiah 43:18-19 tells us, “Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it?..” God is not a God of the past. You don’t have to stay stuck in your past. He is a God that makes all things new. That includes you. He is a God of today, and tomorrow. Every day we can be renewed and made new in Him. We don’t have to stay where we are. When the devil bangs up on our faith, or our heart, or our mind, we can be renewed in the power of the Holy Ghost and God’s word. When our life is wrecked with sin, God can make us new and restore to us what was stolen. We will have to pay the price, but we can be renewed. What I mean by this is when we give in to sin, we will pay the price of what we have done. God will forgive us, and He will restore us, but there will be the scars of what we have done. He can heal these, but we will know that they were there. We reap what we sow. Some of the price that we have to pay for our sin is the cost that will be paid by those who love us. Some of the price will be our having to remember that. Sin isn’t easy. But when we fall prey to it, we can be renewed. You may have a past that you are trying to forget. Everyday you wake up the devil is there to rub this part of your life in your face, the failures of yesterday. These have become like grave clothes binding you up from finding victory in the Lord. You have a Calvary. You have resurrection promises of God. We talked about these in this chapter. Put these promises in the devil’s face. Get out our Bible and shake these promises in his face. Declare that **ON THIS DAY I AM MADE NEW.**

You may have been through a battle in which the devil nearly destroyed you. You became so weak that you gave into his bondages. Don’t sit there in that tomb. Grab hold of the hand of the One that walked out of His tomb. That same power of resurrection that was there in His tomb that day will certainly lift you out of yours as well. You may be weak in body and spirit. The devil may have been pounding on you. It may be because just around the corner God is getting ready to explode in your life and use you in a way you can’t even imagine. That strength and life that came into Jesus’ tomb that day was enough to raise the dead. Is it any less for you? Let that same Holy Ghost rise up in you and strengthen you. You can be made new. The eagle goes through a time when he sheds his feathers. He goes into a cleft in the rock cliffs and hides away there in the safety of the rocks where the storm can’t touch him. There he beats all of his feathers against the cliff face. The old feathers fall off. He beats his beak against it so that it is dull and useless. Then he sits there defenseless and weak for a season. His feathers begin to grow back. His beak begins to grow back sharper than ever before. After this season of helplessness, he flies from the safety of those rocks a new creature, stronger than he had ever been before. Those new feathers cause him to soar higher. The new razor sharp beak is ready for any enemy. Jesus is the rock. When your strength is low, fly into the safety of His cliffs where the devil’s storm can’t buffet you. Let God do that new work in you. Let His Holy Ghost renew

you in Spirit, body and mind. Then come out of there with your head up and your steps firm, ready to be used by the Lord in a mighty way.

You may have had your heart torn all to pieces. When you actively serve God reaching out to those you love, this easily can happen. The devil will even use those you are trying to reach out for to turn on you to shred your heart to pieces so that you stop reaching out with all your heart. He knows that if he does this you will probably let go of them and stop reaching out. When you don't let go, you can get torn to bits. You have to just keep holding on. That is a hard place to walk in. Just know that there is a God that can take that broken heart and make it new. Release that hurt to Him. He knows all about it and He knows those scars. Don't hold in your hurt and become bound with the grave clothes of bitterness. The devil can stop the most effective workers for God when they take on a spirit of bitterness. Go to God and let Him wrap you in His love. Let His Holy Ghost touch that hurt. Let go of it and forgive. Cry a river. Let Him make your heart new.

Your faith may have been battered. Your trust in God is being shaken by the battle. Your first love may become worn away by the storm. The storms of life may have crushed against you until your shield is battered and bashed in. Hey it is still holding or you wouldn't be here reading this book. Right? Hold on. Get out God's Word. Bury yourself in its pages. Pray in the Holy Ghost. Encourage yourself in the Lord. Just around the corner you will find out what all this battle has been about. You'll find out when that new day dawns in the morning. Joy comes in the morning. Just hold on through the night. You have something new ahead of you that will make it all worthwhile.

You may have circumstances that have risen up and wrapped you all around like grave clothes. It may seem that they are like a brick wall that you can't get through and they are surely destroying you. Destruction is the only thing that you can see. Keep on pressing on. When God gets hold of things, when He is done with those things you'll find out that they only looked like a brick wall. It is really one that is just made of paper. Let Him strengthen you in His Spirit and renew you. **Burst on through.**

You may have gone through a time when the devil has banged against your body with affliction. Hold on. Trust in God's promises of healing. You can have a new body and you don't have to go to heaven to get it. God can renew your strength. He can heal you and make you new. Claim His promises daily. Don't take no for an answer. Don't settle for your affliction. Part of the power that was unleashed at Calvary was for your healing. We'll have another chapter later with more on the power of healing.

You may have some unconfessed, unrepented of, and unforgiven sin that you haven't fully given to the Lord. You can. That is part of the newness of life to be found at Calvary. You don't have to be at church to get this forgiveness. Hey, my bedside has been an altar more than once when I was tired of the sin that so easily beset me. Right now without any more delay run to the arms of the One

who stretched out His arms for you on the cross that day at Calvary. Get real. Pour out your heart. Confess, repent, and be forgiven. Then forgive yourself. You'll find after this that His love will shine brighter than it ever did before. You'll find after this that sin won't have the same hold on you that it did before. You can be made new. Those grave clothes of sin will just slide away.

You may have some of the grave clothes that I mentioned in this chapter that are binding you. Rise up and walk. The power unleashed at Calvary is enough to unwrap your grave clothes just like it did Jesus' grave clothes. Remember. They found His grave clothes lying in the tomb. Just ask Lazarus. He knows how they came off too. Rise up and walk. Rise up from those things that wrap you like grave clothes. God is a God of resurrection. Calvary was Calvary because there was going to be a resurrection. We aren't living in the age of Calvary being just a death on a cross. We are living in the age after the resurrection. Without Calvary there could have been no resurrection. Part of the power of Calvary is that there was one. There is a resurrection for you as well. The price for your resurrection from these things that hold you in a spiritual grave that the devil has intended to destroy you in was Calvary. The power for you to overcome was unleashed at Calvary. The power of Calvary became our own power to rise up above death, hell, and the grave. The power of Calvary also becomes life to us every day that we live. Calvary gives you the power to rise up over the enemies of yesterday. Calvary gives you the power to become made new. You can walk in the newness of life every day.

Yesterday is gone. It is buried. It is buried along with the chains that it held you down with. The devil dwells on yesterday. He loves to take the condemnation from yesterday and bind God's children. Take yesterday to Calvary. Let it be crucified there with Christ. Lay it in His tomb. You won't even have to wait three days to see what will happen with it. I don't say all this to say that your yesterday will be resurrected. I am saying this all to say that it will be you who will be resurrected in a newness of new life. You will be the one who walks out brand new. It will be you that will break out of those grave clothes that have you all wrapped up. Can you imagine how dark a sealed tomb would be? You can just see Lazarus standing there in the bright sunlight after four days of total darkness. He probably couldn't see for a while because everything was so bright. Could you imagine how he felt and what he was thinking? He had been dead and he knew he had been dead. When he was able to focus, I don't imagine that he was surprised at all to see that hand that he had loved so much reaching out for his. When we come out of the devil's tombs we are much the same. The light nearly blinds us. The joy of our release makes it all brighter. Then we see that precious nail scarred hand that reaches out for us. Leading us away from those grave clothes that He gave us the power to leave behind. Take your past, these battles that you are stuck in, these circumstances that threaten to destroy you, the sicknesses that have wrapped you up, take them all to Calvary. There will be a resurrection. You will be made new.

We don't have to wait for heaven for a resurrection. We don't have to miserably grope around down here on earth trudging around in bondages we can barely walk in. We don't have to trudge around down here on earth with only a hope that one day things will be better. We don't have to wait around miserable hoping that one day we will be resurrected to a better place. Now can be the day of your resurrection. You can walk today in that newness of life that is promised you by the power of God's Word.

Some people have a strange doctrine that the resurrection has already happened. When I say the resurrection here I mean the resurrection that will take place when Jesus appears in the clouds and receives His children to Himself. They are talking about the resurrection when all things will be made new in Christ. They are teaching that today we are walking in the time past the resurrection. I think that these people have two problems. One problem-evidently they are serving a much smaller god than the One that I am serving so it can't be God. Another problem that they have is that they have no idea about God's Word. They are surely ignorant. This mess that we live in today is certainly not the best that an almighty, all-powerful God has to give His children. It certainly isn't the wonderful post resurrection of all things world that is promised by the Word of God. No, we have promises of something so wonderful that human words cannot even describe it. I think that is why so little is recorded about it in the scripture. In the flesh, our minds can't even understand it. It will be so great. We will talk in a later chapter about the resurrection of all things that is to come. When I talk about the fact that we can live in a newness of life now, I am definitely not talking about the same resurrection that will one day come to us all, and everything else besides. I am definitely not agreeing with this strange doctrine. I am simply saying that through the power of God's Word and His Holy Ghost because of Calvary, we can walk every day in newness of life. We don't have to stay bound by yesterday. We don't have to stay bound by grave clothes. Shake them off. You have a Calvary and you have a resurrection. Walk today in the newness of life purchased for you there. You have been made new.

Chapter 10. Crucified

We are crucified with Christ. We have already talked about in an earlier chapter how that we are crucified with Christ in one sense. The old man is dead and we are made new. We talked about how we need to die daily to the things in the flesh. Let's talk about some other ways that we are crucified.

We are dead to this world. We are crucified to this world. Galatians 6:14 tells us, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Let me explain what I mean when I say the world. Down through the years I have watched those people whose priorities were in line with God's Word. I have watched those whose commitments were solid and sound, those whose relationship with the Lord showed by the fruits that were in their lives. I have watched those whose feet were firmly planted in the truth of God's Word. Of all those people, there were not many, if any, who had not come out from the world and become a separated people. Now what do I mean here? The Bible has this to say about the world. Of course there is the physical world, the earth and everything in it. But when the scripture talks about the world, it often means more than just that. Here are some verses that tell about characteristics of this world. Mark 8:35-37 tells us, "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the Gospel's the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" This bears out that we can't keep the world and keep our soul. Mark 4:18-19 tells us, "And these are they which are sown among thorns: such as hear the Word. And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the Word, and it becometh unfruitful." This bears out that the world can choke out the Word from us. John 8:23 tells us, "And He said unto them, Ye are from beneath: I am from above, ye are of this world; I am not of this world." This bears out that Jesus is not from this world. John 14:30 tells us, "Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." This bears out that the prince of this world is not Jesus. So if we become engulfed in the things of this world, then we will not have Jesus as our Lord. John 15:19 tells us, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." This tells us that if the world loves us, then we are not serving God for real. John 16:33 tells us, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulations: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." This tells us how we can overcome the

world. Because Jesus has overcome the world. Here are more scriptures about the world. Romans 12:2, “And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that it may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” I Corinthians 2:6, “Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to naught.” Galatians 1:4, “Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father.” James 1:27, “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to **keep himself unspotted from the world.**” This last verse sums up what we’re saying. The world is something to avoid. The world is something that we must separate ourselves from. We have to keep ourselves unspotted from the world. I John 2:15-17, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in Him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.” We can see through all of these scriptures that the world and God’s ways are totally separate. We can see that the world can bring destruction if we become entangled in it. We can see that satan rules this world. We can see that we are to come out of the world, be separate. We can see that it is very important to get a clear understanding of just what the Word of God means when it says, “the world”.

Here is an illustration that will help to understand this. I praise God for Godly grandparents. They taught me what it means to come out from the world. They lived on a farm up in a hollow in the hills of southwest Virginia. They lived a quiet life and a very peaceful one. They weren’t caught up in the pride of life. They weren’t caught up in the ideas and thinking of everyone else. They weren’t trying to be like everyone else, or have the things that everyone else had. They weren’t trying to be popular. They were just serving the Lord with all their hearts. The things that they had were only the things that they needed. My grandfather farmed and my grandmother was right by his side. They worked hard but at the same time they had plenty of time for fun and family. Their favorite pastime and recreation was going to church. They loved to go to church. They traveled everywhere they could to be in services. One of their main activities of the day was prayer. I remember as a child that we would always without fail close our day with prayer and devotion time reading together and studying God’s Word. Now as a young person, I rolled my eyes at this but no matter. We were gathered in for devotions rather we liked it or not and we really knew better than to say any thing about it. My grandparents didn’t own a TV set. It had gone out many years earlier. My grandparents didn’t have it fixed for several years. When they did get it fixed they saw that the programs had started showing people drinking and smoking. They didn’t like to watch that so they put the TV back up and never did get it back out. The main source of entertainment was the big piano. We’d gather

around and sing for hours. There was never anything played there or sung but Gospel music. They had a radio, but it always stayed tuned to Gospel stations. For more than 70 years, the only sounds that came from that house was the sound of good Gospel music, and the sound of prayer and praise, and singing to the Lord. When I think about what it means to come out from the world and be a separate people, I catch a glimpse of my grandparents. It's a glimpse that guides me today in making the choices of my life. It is a glimpse that causes me to focus on the world to come, and not on the bondages of this present world.

As a contrast, I have watched the lives of many people today. Not only people outside the church, but also many inside the church as well. Sad to say, but even in the church you find more of the world than you find the Spirit of God. The pride of life is one of the bondages of this world. I have known people who wanted more and were never satisfied with what they had. If they thought it was stylish to own something, then they would go and buy it, no matter how deep in debt they were. If they thought that it left an impression on other people if they had or did this or that thing, then they would go after it. These people are never satisfied. Their mind is constantly in what they have or want. Their lives are focused on this world, and not on the things of God. They go where the rest of the world goes, talk like the rest of the world talks, do what they do. They talk that talk and walk that walk no matter how funky it is. They have to be fashionable and up to date in their thinking no matter how against the Word of God that thinking is. They frown on and look down on those that aren't like they are and they control the popularity of others by this. These people are usually stressed out from running here and there because they lack a genuine focus for their lives. The world is cruel. Since they aren't focused on God and the things of God, the world gobbles them up. They are usually a nervous wreck, broken hearted, insecure mess. They have no real security because without God as their number one focus, they have no security. They lack peace and contentment that only comes when Christ is number one. Usually they are on all kinds of pills. They take medication because they are nervous, or depressed, or chemically out of balance. They have no idea that their problem is that they are out of balance themselves. Now I want to make a point here. I am not talking about sinners. Matter of fact there are many people who meet this description that sit on the pews of the church every Sunday. Maybe I have even been discussing you.

The Word of God says to come out from among them and be a separate people. God knows what He is talking about. II Corinthians 6:17, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate saith the Lord..." God knows what He is talking about. If my grandmother would have come in all shaken up, popping pills we would have thought surely the world was coming to an end. My grandparents had a peace that was a light to me even now years after they have gone on to be with the Lord. They didn't even know what the world thought, and they certainly didn't care. They weren't caught up in the thinking of this world,

but in the ways of the Lord. They passed on those ways to us. We have passed them on to our children.

Now on the extreme end from those who are caught up in the world, there is another group of people that are holy in their own eyes. They walk in a rigid life that is made up of legal laws that they live by. These people say that it is a sin to wear pants, wear makeup, wear jewelry, cut your hair and do a whole list of things. Many of them believe it is a sin to own a TV. Many of them say that if you break these rules then you cannot go to heaven. If that is true then why did Jesus die? We could have earned eternal life by keeping these rules. My grandparents didn't live the way that they lived because they were keeping to those self righteous man made rules that others had set up for them. They chose that way of life simply because it was how they were in their hearts. They lived what they were. No rules were needed to make them be that way. Nobody was there to tell them that if they didn't do these things they were on their way to hell. They chose to do these things and they did them out of a genuine experience with God. When someone comes along and makes rigid rules and people keep these because they are afraid not to, then all you have is a man made mess. This kind of stuff comes because people do not have a genuine committed submitted relationship to God but they have a relationship with the people who have set up these rules and they are afraid to break them. That isn't a heart-felt commitment at all. God is no where near this mess These people have a shallow experience with God and more of an experience with what other people think of them. This often leads to rebellion. Self is not crucified but squashed down in and bound up. When you do that one of these days it is going to spring up and when it does it will be ugly.

I want to take a minute to say that I have made a commitment to the Lord to wear dresses or skirts. I don't wear pants. I have made a commitment to do many of the same things that some of the people in this crowd have committed themselves to. So I have a right to talk about this crowd. However, I have made a commitment as unto the Lord, not as unto the others in the church. There is no condemnation involved in my decisions, just commitment. Matter of fact there are many things that I won't do or stress in my life. Many people have no understanding of why I do these things. Many people consider me a little extreme in my commitment. They don't understand why I do what I do mainly because I made these commitments unto the Lord, not as unto the others around me so they don't see the whole story. But they do see the results in what I do to serve the Lord that comes from these commitments. They do see that there is something different about me, and they know that something different is my relationship with the Lord. They know where I stand and know that when they come back years down the road I will have the same commitments that I have today. And I will have the same relationship with God. Why? Because I am definitely not standing on the edge of my experience with God. My commitment shows. Most of the people that I minister to in a day's time have no understanding of the reasons behind

many of the commitments that I have made. Matter of fact I minister to a lot of out and out sinners in the course of a day's time. They find from me the same love of God and the same truth that any one else sees. My love for them is not less because I have my long nose stretched out looking down on others that don't share my commitments. I think that is where the church has failed many who are reaching out for God. We forget that God is love.

Let's go from here to another extreme. The world has crept into the church in the form of many doctrines and ideas. One of those doctrines says, "We don't want to make people uncomfortable. Let's not bring up what is right and what is wrong. We want the people to know God's love, so let's not bring up any truth that is definite. Let's just stay in the gray areas, and then people will come back to church." Sound familiar? We took the altar out of many services. Sad to say when we took on this way of thinking, the Holy Ghost left our services and we didn't even realize that He was gone. Church began to be a social experience instead of a spiritual one. We stopped going by God's Word. We stopped obeying Him and letting His Holy Ghost guide us in services. Since God's Word and Holy Ghost were gone from our services, then it quickly became a thing of the past that we no longer had for our personal day-to-day lives. Then our children came along and grew up in this. Do you know that I have known many young people who have grown up in church who honestly did not know that it was a sin to have extramarital sex? This was only one example of something they had lost reality with in being right or wrong. They really do not know right from wrong. Everything is gray to them. No wonder they live in such a violent world that is full of such turmoil. They have no handlebars, nothing to steady them. They lack guidance and the purpose that it gives. They don't even know that there is a way that is separate. They don't even know what the world is or how to come out from it. I hope that through these examples you have caught a glimpse of what it means to come out from the world and be crucified to the world and the importance of why we need to do so.

In the examples that I mentioned earlier we can see that there is a balance in God's ways, a balance in His Word, and a balance in His Spirit and how it works. We can go too far to one extreme or the other and miss living in the truth. It is the truth that will set us free. Anything else is bondage.

That cross that we were talking about earlier comes to us too when we give up the things of this world. This world is full of so much garbage. This garbage pollutes us if we allow it to. You know what I mean when I talk about this world. We can't be in competition with the world, and be victorious in Christ. The Bible says to come out from among them and be separate. We cannot allow ourselves to be filled with the thoughts of this world, to talk and walk like this world, and mind the things of God. We can't serve two masters. We have to be crucified to this world. Today's churches are so compromised with the world that they have forgotten the power of Calvary. They need to go back to that place where black is black and white is white. They need to get on their knees at the foot of the cross

and find true repentance and be renewed. They need to find the power of Calvary. We are supposed to be the light to a lost and dying world. Instead when the world looks at us it sees only a sick version of itself. I read some disturbing statistics. A great majority of the United States confesses religious affiliations. Of these only 10% believe in moral absolutes. No wonder the world mocks the church. We don't even know what is right or wrong and we are setting ourselves up to be the moral leaders of a lost and dying world. Who is leading whom? We need to go back to Calvary. We have become a spoiled generation who understand little about what it means to take up our cross. As a whole we don't understand commitment. I used to think that this was just in churches in America. Lately I've spoken to people world over that say that this is spreading to their churches in their countries as well. Time is running out, church. This spirit of complacency and compromise is the devil's way of crippling the church so that it can't reach out. We have only a little time left until the end of time. We need to go back to Calvary. We need to take up our cross and follow Jesus. We need to renew our relationship and return to our first love. That does wonders for commitment. We need to walk in the Spirit and let the flesh go. We need to come out from among them and be a separate people. We need to become the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

Another cross that we have to carry is the cross of what we have to go through as Christians. People who have a surface relationship with God preach that when you follow Christ, He will lead you into a place where everything is wonderful. They say that when you are there everything will be perfect from that point on. God loves you and He won't let you suffer. Then why did Jesus say take up your cross and follow me if that is true? That doesn't sound like a perfect life to me. The cross was in no way easy. Ours won't be either. Those that preach this set young Christians up to be destroyed by the devil. When battles come they question their relationship with God. They fall into condemnation. They think, "How can God love me if He allows me to go through battles?" Since they are going through battles they think that God must not love them. As we grow in Christ we find out that is not how it is. We have an enemy that means to destroy us. We also live in an imperfect world where the rain falls on the "just and the unjust". We also are surrounded by people who do not know God and who walk contrary to His ways. All these things will cause us to face circumstances and situations that aren't pleasant. Even then, though, the victory that we find in Jesus is sweet.

Being crucified to the world is one way that we have to become crucified. There is another cross that we have to look for in our own personal lives. It is the cross where we have to lay down our will and take up the will of God. That cross comes when we submit ourselves and commit our lives to God. When we do this there will definitely be a change in our lives, a change that obedience brings. For us to do the will of God, we have to lay down our own will. We have to let our self-will, our flesh be crucified with Christ.

There is another crucifixion that we personally have to experience. The first time that the word cross is mentioned in the scriptures is found in Matthew 16:24-26, "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me, For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." Jesus Himself is speaking here. It is interesting that the first time He mentions a cross, He is not talking about the one that He was going to carry, but the one that we have to carry. It isn't easy to follow Christ. Sure it is a breeze if we do it in a half baked way without submission or any commitment like that one group that we talked about just in the previous paragraph. But if we really get a genuine relationship with God and become obedient in that relationship we will face a lot of changes. For one thing we will face an enemy and he will try to destroy us. We will also make an enemy with those that are in the world. They will do everything that they can to pull us down and trap us just like they did Jesus. They won't do this because they hate us but because they will be giving into the one who hates us. Then we'll have the battle that goes on between our own flesh and the Spirit. No, it isn't easy. Praise God though that He has made a way for us to overcome. We've talked about the many powerful weapons that we have to be victorious. To do so, we have to put ourselves, our will, our flesh, on that cross at Calvary. We have to become crucified from the world. We are crucified with Christ. Galatians 2:20 tells us, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

We have to be crucified to this world. We have to allow our self will to be crucified. We have to take up our cross and follow Christ. We can do all these through the power of Calvary.

Chapter 11.

The Holy Ghost

I mentioned in earlier chapters that one of the outcomes of Calvary was the releasing of the Holy Spirit. Before Calvary, the anointing of God could only rest on certain people for a time or a season. This was because of sin. Because of the Holy nature of God, the Spirit of God cannot dwell in a temple filled with sin. We had to receive forgiveness and cleansing before God could dwell in our hearts. Because Jesus died on Calvary to forgive us of our sins, the Holy Ghost can come in to our heart. Now I am a firm believer that when we are saved we receive a measure of the Holy Ghost. There is more to receive. There is a second gift that God has for us, the Baptism of the Holy Ghost or the filling of the Spirit. How have I come to that conclusion? One-I have studied out the scriptures. We will go over many of the ones that I have studied in this chapter. Secondly-God Himself revealed to me that it was real and it was for me. When I first heard about it, I went to God and trusted Him to lead me. He led me in understanding about it and led me to receive it. Thirdly-I received it for myself. No one can tell me that it isn't real. When you possess something, you know that it is real. I know what a change it made in my life. I can also say that without the Baptism of the Holy Ghost I would not be here today. It gave me the power that I needed to stand. There is no need for anyone to try to hint that it isn't real. Fourth-I know zillions of other people that possess it. So how can you argue with all of that?

We mentioned in earlier chapters that through the Holy Ghost, an incarnate, eternal, all powerful, all knowing, all encompassing, perfect God could come right into your heart to dwell. We mentioned that you are the temple of the Holy Ghost. You have within you through the Holy Ghost, God Himself birthed in you through His Word because of His Son who gave His life at Calvary. That is powerful. If we can really get hold of that knowledge, it will deliver us from a lot of bondages that the devil has around us. Think about this for a moment. You have in you God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost. You have God's Word for that. Now what about those insecurities that bind you? What about that self-condemnation? What about that fear of failure that prevents you from starting a work for God? What about the fear of the devil and his destruction? What about that fear of sickness? What about those circumstances that you can't rise above? What about those people who try to control and bind you? What about that thing that God has told you to do but you don't because you say you can't? What about that scared little child in you that stays huddled up in the corner instead of jumping right in the middle of all God has for you? What about those days when you feel like a certain failure? What about those situations that you just don't have the wisdom to know how to handle? What about those weaknesses that keep pulling you back? Now before you get all bogged down headed in the wrong direction, let's go back and reread these questions with this idea in mind that we talked about before we started the questions. You have within you God, Jesus, and the Holy Ghost. Now

go back and read those questions again. At the risk of seeming very foolish, reread those questions. Are you catching a glimpse of what I am saying? You have the Spirit of God within you. You have Jesus Christ in you through the power of the Holy Ghost and God's Word. What have you to fear? What have you to fear? That is one of the things accomplished at Calvary.

I want to take a minute or two here to talk about the Baptism of the Holy Ghost again. Now hold on a minute. You may be someone who does not understand what that is all about. You may have even been taught that it isn't real. You may have even been taught that it is a doctrine to fear. It is not something to be scared of. It is just simply God. I understand where you are if these things are true for you. I did not even hear about the Baptism of the Holy Ghost until I was in my 20's. I knew a little about it but the little I knew was dangerous. If we only know enough about something to cause us to fear it, then the little we know is dangerous. But you see, I was saved when I was a young girl. In my older teenage days, I rebelled against God and got tangled up in drugs and alcohol, and you name it. By the time I was in my early 20's, I had totally destroyed my life. When I rededicated my heart and life to God, He was my only hope. I needed help and fast. I needed power to withstand my past. I needed the power to stand against the enemy who was trying to destroy me. I needed all I could get. Praise God. When I heard about the Baptism of the Holy Ghost I definitely didn't run away from it. I was hungry to receive anything that I could, and I opened up my arms and ran toward it. If you haven't received the power of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, remember that it is for you. I pray that through these pages you run to it just like I did.

I have put here a chapter from my book, *Walking in the Spirit*. It is titled "The Baptism of the Holy Ghost". By the way, it is a good book if I do say so myself. It is help in learning more about walking in the Spirit. *Trying to walk in the Spirit without having the Baptism of the Holy Ghost is like trying to race a 2003 sports car with a model T engine. You just won't have the power to win the race. I grew up not hearing about the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. I grew up in an area that had been blinded and bound to think that this gift of the Spirit was not real. I was taught that when you were saved, you got all of God's Spirit that there was. I was taught that after salvation, you had it all. I grew up not knowing a thing at all about the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. Anyway, I didn't know a thing that was true. Through a miracle, God brought me into contact with a church that believed in the Baptism of the Spirit. After I received it for myself, no one could tell me that it wasn't real. It was the key that brought me victory over a life that had been bound by sin, drugs, and alcohol. The devil had worked overtime in much of my life to destroy me because he knew that I would one day serve God. Maybe you are going through the same thing. Maybe it seems like every time you try to get up, you get knocked back down. You know in your heart that you should walk up-right before God, but every time you take one step forward it seems you get knocked three back. You may be about to give up in defeat, which is exactly*

what the devil wants you to do. It may be that he sees that up ahead, you will bust his little kingdom wide open in some area. You may be sitting there thinking that it is hopeless. That there is no use to keep trying. You won't make it. The devil has you where he wants you. You think it is because you are worthless. It may be because you are getting ready to rise up and be what God has chosen for you to be. It is your choice. If you give up now, you will never know. Maybe the key for you to overcome is the same as it was for me-the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. When I first learned about it, I got it. I grabbed hold and didn't let go. There was none of that intellectual twisting around that a lot of people do. I knew that this was the key for a victorious life and I turned it. Even though I had grown up hearing that it was not right, when it came time for me to accept it, I knew I needed it. That settled that. Don't read about this and talk yourself out of thinking that it is real, and that it is for you. God said it is, so let that be the end of that.

Now over 25 years later, I can say that no wonder the devil tried to keep me blinded. I have been working full time for a ministry for 25 years, and will continue to do so. Not in my own power, but in the power of God's Spirit. I had to be hungry enough to submit myself to allow God to do things His way. I had to take Him and His Word at face value. I had to receive the gift that He had for me. I have never regretted it. God will allow His Spirit to control only the things that we allow Him to control. When we say, God, I have decided to do it your way. Come and fill me up to the brim. Then we are ready for the Baptism of God's Spirit. He fills us up all the way with His Spirit. That is what the Baptism of God's Spirit is all about. Here is what God has to say about it in His Word. We first read about it in Acts Chapter 2. Here we read that the disciples were all gathered in one mind and accord. In verse 4 it tells us, "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." What was the outcome of this? These few who were hiding in fear after the crucifixion, became bold enough and so full of God's Spirit that they turned the world upside down. Without the Baptism, they would not have endured to start the church, and keep the Gospel that was committed to us today. Verse 41 tells of the outcome of that day, "Then they that gladly received His word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." This didn't stop here. We read about this throughout Acts. In Chapter 8, verses 14-17, these men received the gifts of the Holy Ghost. In Chapter 10, verses 44-48, the Holy Ghost is again on the scene filling the Gentiles. In Acts 19: 1-6, these men also received the gift of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. Paul asked them if they had received the Holy Ghost since they had believed. These men were already saved, but they had something in addition to salvation that they were about to receive. They answered, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." In verse 6 the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied. I think of myself when I read their answer to Paul before they received it, "We have not so much as heard whether there be a Holy

Ghost.” I hadn’t heard, but God found me anyway. How do you receive the gift of the Holy Ghost? I was blessed to find a church that believed this way. The congregation laid hands on me and prayed for me in the same way that Paul laid hands on the men in Acts 19:6. But I still didn’t receive it that night that they prayed. Several nights later, when I was by myself, the Holy Ghost fell on me and I was filled. I prayed in tongues for the first time that night. You can receive it through the prayers of others, or you can receive it through your own prayers. It is a gift of God that He has given us to empower us against the battle of satan. It is a gift that gives us boldness in our witness, like it did those on that first day. It is for you. I have heard many people argue against the Baptism of the Holy Ghost being real. They argue that it is not for us today. When I hear this I know several things about those people. I know that they are ignorant of God’s Word. In Acts 2:38-39 we read, “Then Peter said unto them, repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” This is not saying here that if we are baptized in water we will receive the Holy Ghost, which is our salvation. We can’t be saved by water baptism. Water baptism is a symbol of the work that God does in our heart and spirit. It doesn’t bring about salvation. Here it is talking about the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. This verse also answers the question whether or not this gift is for us today. It says that it is for “all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call”. I would say that means us too. I also know when I hear people argue that the Baptism is not for us today, that these people do not know God. I know that He wants the best for His children. He wants us to overcome and be victorious. I also know that we live in the last days, which has to be one of the hardest times to live on the earth. Why would God give a gift to help the early disciples, tell us about it, and then deny us the right to have it or make it so that it is not available to us who need it the most? That is not the God I know.

I think that one of the things that hinders people in receiving the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is that it comes along with the gift of speaking in tongues. For many, that is a stumbling block. This is because the devil wants to scare people away from our being able to pray in the Spirit, or pray in tongues. What it means when we pray in tongues is that the Spirit of God prays through us in His own language. He is praying directly through us using our vocal chords. We may not understand what He is saying, though sometimes He will allow us or others to interpret. Whether or not we understand, the devil knows when we start praying that something is being done to bind him and that the power of God is on the scene. No wonder he works overtime to confuse people about this powerful gift. Have you ever wanted so badly to pray for someone but didn’t know how to pray? All you could do was to say a general half way prayer, when you know you needed to do more. The Holy Ghost knows exactly how to pray in God’s perfect will. When He prays through you that is a powerful prayer that will get the job done.

Also, when we pray in the Holy Ghost it strengthens our inner man, Who is the Spirit of God in us. (Jude 20, "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost.") When we are filled and consumed with the Spirit of God, and we allow Him to pray in us, we are submitted to His Spirit in a way that nothing else can do. We strengthen His Spirit in us. We submit our flesh and our flesh man takes second place in our life. With all that going on our flesh doesn't stand a chance. God's Spirit rises strong in us and we take on His likeness.

Now you may interrupt me here to say, what about the people who receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and wind up turning their back on God, or they sin in a big way and take on a life of sin instead of a life with God? Just because you have the Baptism of the Holy Ghost it doesn't make you perfect. You still have your flesh man. If you have the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, but the Holy Ghost is still not allowed to control your life, then flesh will. That is why it is important to allow the Holy Ghost to move in you. Pray in the Holy Ghost daily. Don't hinder the Spirit of God when He starts to move in or through you, whether it be in church or at home. Allow God's Spirit to control. Then He will be there when you need Him.

One of the greatest stories I have ever heard about the power in the prayer of the Holy Ghost is this. The Holy Ghost moved on a man and began interceding through him. The man had no idea why, but he obeyed and yielded. God spoke to him to take note at what time this had happened. The next day he heard about a close friend who had been stabbed. That had happened at exactly the time that the man had prayed. The other man's life had been miraculously spared. Another time I heard about a man on a plane who had interceded in the Holy Ghost. After they landed, they were told of a mechanical failure that had nearly caused them to crash, but miraculously the failure had corrected itself. The man who had prayed had no idea, but God knew. Thousands of times I have heard stories about how the Holy Ghost had interceded by speaking in tongues through those who had the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. The situation was corrected, the life was saved, the soul was saved, the person was delivered, or whatever need there was, it was met. There is no prayer that is more powerful than the prayer of the Holy Ghost Himself. If you do not have the gift of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, ask God for this. Seek it. The Bible says that when we seek God, or His gifts, we will find them. Who says so? Jesus. Luke 11:9, "And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Read this section of scripture through verse 13. In verse 13 we read, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?"

If you haven't received the Baptism, ask for it. It is a gift, and God would love for you to have it. If you have, realize that just receiving the Holy Ghost doesn't mean that you have arrived. We still have to day-to-day walk in the Spirit and not in the flesh. We have to let the Holy Ghost rule and reign in our life daily.

We have to walk in the Spirit to find the victory that God has promised us. All of this is possible because of the power of Calvary. If you know someone who doesn't have the Baptism of the Holy Ghost but they are seeking it, take them a copy of this chapter of this book. I pray that it make a difference in helping them to understand. Sometimes people don't receive it because they don't understand. Because of Calvary we can be filled to the brim, baptized with the Spirit of God. If you have received this, then you can say with me, "This has changed my life."

Chapter 12. Obedience

You cannot even consider Calvary without considering the obedience that was involved. Philippians 2:8 tells us about that obedience. “And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” That obedience really started before Jesus’ birth. The king of glory left heaven to submit to be born as a little baby. To me that is amazing. He obeyed God to come to earth to die for us to be forgiven. Romans 5:19 tells us, “For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.” Without obedience, we would only have the hope of salvation. Jesus was obedient to the death. When He prayed in Gethsemane in agony, He knew what was ahead of Him. He knew the details of what He would have to face. You see, within the knowledge of God there really is no time. God knows what will happen 100 years from now as well as He knows the past. Jesus knew all about the cross in detail. He still submitted to the will of His Father. He didn’t have to die. He could have called angels to deliver Him. He submitted to God’s will for His life. In the whole picture of Calvary, we see one of the keys to becoming obedient.

We have to submit to obey. It is human nature to want our own way. It is human nature not to want anyone to tell us what to do. We want to do things our way. It is scary to submit sometimes when we’ve been hurt. So we have to let that little part of us go to be able to trust someone else enough to submit to them. I have come to the conclusion in my own life that if I can’t submit and obey those who are around me, then I will have an awfully hard time trying to submit to God. It is so easy to play the little control games. You know what I mean. The manipulation of others. The self-pity to get our own way. Manipulating the truth so that we don’t have to see ourselves as we really are. Changing around what we know God’s will is to meet our own personal agenda. Getting defensive to cover up a wrong in our own life by packing it off on others. You know all the little games the flesh is so good at playing to get its own way. What if Jesus would have been walking in the flesh instead of walking in the Spirit? What would have happened at Calvary? What if He would have given in to all these things and declared that Calvary was just too much for Him to go through for that bunch of sinners? What if He had declared that He had given enough for that bunch of sinners, and He wasn’t taking any more? What if He said, “Look at how I have been treated. I won’t put up with that. I’m out of here.” What if He’d given in to the flesh. You know, He had the same flesh that we have. He submitted His flesh to obey God. That is the start of obedience. That isn’t easy.

For us to submit to the place where we are truly obedient we have to allow God to break us. He has to break our stubborn self will. We have to walk in the Spirit instead of the flesh. We have to allow Him to break us over and over and over and over again. We have to be committed to God to the place that we have

Him as number one priority in our lives. We can't really be obedient any other way. If we aren't then we will only obey Him when it is convenient to do so. All other things will take priority. Also you have to have a genuine relationship with Him. Real obedience starts with love. We obey because we love God with all our heart. The more you get to know Him, and the closer you grow to Him, you will make Him number 1. He is that wonderful. The closer you get to Him, He won't be an after thought at the end of your day, but the One who leads you day to day. He will become the One that is the center of your life bringing all other things into focus. The love of God makes obedience possible. We have to know His love and trust his guidance to be able to walk in obedience. This comes easier as we grow in obedience to Him. Obedience is not an occasional act. Obedience is a condition of the heart that is evidenced in everyday living. It is an everyday, 25 hours a day, 7 days a week way of life. True obedience can only come about when we submit our will and we walk in the Spirit. We can't obey and follow the voice of God in the flesh. Obedience has to come in the Spirit. We can't even understand God in the flesh, let alone obey Him.

We are under a mandate from God to obey. The scripture constantly talks about the importance of obedience. There are also many scriptural warnings that go to those who are disobedient. Deuteronomy 11:26-28 tells us some important information regarding obedience and disobedience. "Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you this day: And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known." It is something to consider though that if fear is the only motivation for you keeping on the track, then that fear by itself won't hold you. If fear of what will happen if you are disobedient is the only reason why you are obedient, then you probably will never make it as a Christian. Wow, that sounds harsh. But it is true. I've been there and done that. I used to see God as a fearful somebody who was just waiting to jump on me for doing the wrong thing. It scared me so bad that I was always doing wrong almost without trying to. Have you ever been there? Have you ever been so afraid that you only half tried because deep in side you knew before you started that you couldn't do it? The fear of failure is a crippling thing. If we see God in the light of just His judgment and not His love, we will be too afraid to obey. Obedience has to come from love and trust. If you see God in that way as being fearful, then I pray that by the end of this book, you catch a glimpse of His wonderful love. That is the love that hung on the cross there at Cavalry.

We obey God to have a victorious life in Him. We don't obey Him because we are afraid not to, but because we love him too much not to. We don't want to let Him down. We trust Him and we know that the way He chooses for us is the way that we need to go. He knows just how to lead us into those right places where we are safe. He knows how to guide us away from the things that are harmful both in the Spiritual and natural realm. If we aren't careful we'll have the

idea that obedience is God helping us to do what we want to do or doing what we think that God wants us to do. No. It is doing what God wants us to do. This is important. We have to let go of our will so that we can do the will of God. We have to get a walking, talking relationship with Him so that we know what He wants us to do. Obedience isn't a once in a while thing, but it is a condition of the heart and mind, and a way of life.

One of the wildest times that He ever led me out of danger was on my mission trip to Russia. We were to travel across Romania into Russia. Some of the people who were with us wanted to have someone to drive us so that we could see the country. The Lord spoke to us that we should take the train. We did. When we arrived at our destination we learned that terrorists had taken machine guns and mowed down people in their vehicles on the very route that we had been scheduled to take if we would have gone by a vehicle. Our obedience to the Holy Ghost leading us saved our lives. Think of all the times this has happened to you. Take just a minute to think about all the times that God has led you out of danger.

Obedience is important for us to be kept in the natural realm. It is also a very important thing to enable us to be kept in the spiritual realm. We can't see the spiritual enemies that we face. They are determined to destroy us. It is only through submitting to God's Spirit and obeying Him that we are kept from that spiritual wickedness in high places. We have an enemy. He means to destroy us. We can't even see him. After he pulls his tricks and does his dirt, we certainly know that he's been there. By then, though it may be too late. He can manipulate situations around us to destroy us. He can manipulate people who let him. They can come against us to destroy us and not even know why they are doing what they are doing. They are just in their ignorance giving in to the devil. Bad spirits with bad feelings can camp against us causing us to feel them to the place that we think that they are our own feelings. These can be depression, rebellion, bitterness, and so on. Sure we can take these on because we give in to them. Sometimes too the devil can camp around us with these so that we eventually give in to them. These can destroy our soul from the inside out. The only way that we can stand against these attacks of the devil is to walk in the Spirit and obey God. When we hear God's voice, obey Him. He'll show us what is happening so that we can bind the devil and come out from under his oppression. God will keep us out of harms way in the spiritual and the physical.

There are two types of obedience. We have to first of all obey the Word of God. II Thessalonians 1:8 tells us, "In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." In I Peter 4:17 it tells us, "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God?" The Word of God was given for an example and an ensample. It is not just a good book with history and poetry and fairy tales. It is the literal Holy Ghost inspired Word of a living God. It is true. It is true in every part between Its pages. It is given for our obedience. We can read it all day, but if

we never do what it tells us to do, how can it help us? What good does it do to read it but never heed it? We can discuss it all day, but if we don't live by it in obedience, what do we really know about its power? The Word of God helps to be a measure of what we need to do as far as the spoken Word of God. If God or anyone speaks to you to do something that doesn't agree 100% with His Word, then you can know that it wasn't God after all that spoke to you. God will never go against His Word. God's Spirit will never lead you contrary to His Word.

It is important to obey God's voice as well as his Word. Deuteronomy 27:10 tells us, "Thou shalt therefore obey the voice of the Lord thy God and do His commandments and His statutes, which I command thee this day." Jeremiah 26:13 tells us, "Therefore now amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the Lord your God...." His voice will lead you every day. It takes practice to learn which voice is God's voice when He speaks to your heart. As you get to know Him and you hear His voice more, you learn to recognize it. Hearing Him becomes easier.

We have established why we need to obey God. Another reason is that the Holy Ghost is given to those who obey. Acts 5:32 tells us, "And we are His witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey Him." The Holy Ghost won't be around us if we play games with God. We have to be obedient for Him to be there to lead us in our lives. We have to submit to His leading before He will lead us. We will have a measure of God's Spirit in our lives, but if we really want His anointing and the fullness of His Spirit, then we have to be obedient.

Again, Calvary can't be considered without considering the obedience that was involved. Through the obedience of Jesus we are given the power to become obedient ourselves. That is the only way that we will find true and complete victory. For more about obedience read my book, *But God...A Guide To Obedience*. It helps you to overcome the excuses that we find not to obey.

We glimpse obedience at Calvary. We see it through the obedience of Jesus. We also see a heart's call for us to be obedient as well. Love is the best motivation that you can find for obedience. How can you look at Calvary and come away without a determination to every day be more consumed with God's love. A glimpse of Calvary and the love of God will bring about obedience. When we learn more about Calvary, we can be more obedient.

Chapter 13. Persecution

You can't consider Calvary without knowing the message of the power of persecution. Before we consider Jesus and the persecution that He endured at Calvary, let's talk about someone else in the scriptures who was a master at knowing about persecution. David certainly knew about persecution. We read about his persecution throughout Psalms. Psalm 7:1 tells us, "O Lord my God in thee do I put my trust: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me." Psalm 35:6-7 tells us, "Let their way be dark and slippery: and let the angel of the Lord persecute them. For without cause have they hid for me their net in a pit, which without cause they have digged for my soul." Psalm 143:3, "For the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath smitten my life down to the ground; he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead." King Saul had turned against David because of the anointing of the Lord and his own disobedience. When the anointing of the Lord left Saul and rested on David, that's when Saul had his problem with David. David was a continual reminder to Saul of what he had lost. David reminded Saul of his own failure and disobedience. Then a spirit of jealousy took over. Jealousy is cruel as the grave. If you have ever experienced a spirit of jealousy or have been persecuted by someone who has been consumed by it, you know what that means. Under normal circumstances, David might have served King Saul for a lifetime loyally. These were definitely not normal circumstances. It became the number one objective in Saul's heart to destroy David. (As a note: how do you guard against letting jealousy consume you. Get real and repent. Seek God's face for forgiveness and get real with the person that you have had jealousy against. Seek their forgiveness as well. Jealousy starts a lot of times when you are not secure in God. This causes you to lift other people up on pedestals. Before long you feel like you will never be as good as them, and you begin to resent them. Insecurity is often the root of jealousy. Jealousy causes you to live a life looking at what other people have and concentrating on them instead of building up your own self in the Lord. When you do this you never gain in the Lord, only loose.) David knew about the pain of Saul's jealousy. I'm not sure how many years Saul tried to destroy David. It may have been for many years. I have searched for this but can't find the answer. If anyone knows, please let me know. David knew about persecution. Psalm 69:4 tells us, "They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head; they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored that which I took not away." Psalm 102:8, "Mine enemies reproach me all the day; and they that are mad against me are sworn against me." Through all the persecution that he had to endure, David put his trust in the Lord. How do we know? Psalms is full of verses that encourage and strengthen us to do the same. Psalm 23 is only one of many.

Psalms is filled with help when we are persecuted written by one who knew the pain of having someone who at one time was a friend to lift his hand to try to destroy him. Right in the middle of Psalms, in verses about David's persecution, we start to catch a glimpse of another persecution. I am studying this part from a neat little Bible that has a crown beside every verse that refers to Jesus in the Old Testament. I counted 74 verses in Psalms alone that had in it some prophetic reference to Jesus life, persecution, death, ministry, or characteristics of Jesus. That is amazing. We serve a very extraordinary God who let some very ordinary men be covered with His Spirit to be able to write some very extraordinary things.

I think that it is very fitting that one of the first places in the scriptures where the persecutions of Jesus are mentioned is in the book of Psalms penned by the one who knew so much about persecution. Throughout Psalms we see pictures of what Jesus would endure. The beauty of this is that these were written thousands of years before Christ's birth. Here are some of the scriptures found in Psalms that prophesy Jesus' persecution that would one day come.

Psalm 16:8-10, "I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest I hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."

Psalm 22:16-18, "For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture."

Psalm 34:20, "He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken."

Psalms 69:21, "They gave me also gall for my meat: and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink."

What about the persecution of Christ? I mentioned earlier that the persecution of Christ was part of the power of Calvary. We know that everything that happened to Jesus was allowed. What I mean by this was that God foretold it. He knew ahead of time that they would happen. They were allowed to happen. There are countless of other prophecies in the Old Testament about the persecution Jesus endured at Calvary. Why did God allow His Son to go through such things that none of us could have endured? Most of us would probably have died before we even made it to the cross. Why did Jesus go through this? How can we even start to consider that these terrible things were power for us? Let's look at them and see.

Persecution wasn't new to Jesus. Those that wanted Him dead had spent months trying to set Him up and prove Him wrong. That is a hard persecution to endure when you have others that aren't coming openly against you but they are trying in every way that they can to set you up to prove you wrong. Jesus came through it all with flying colors. Through the Holy Ghost, He always knew exactly what to say and when to say it. If you are being persecuted and it seems like no one believes you because those that are doing the persecution are sneaky, hold on. God will bring it all out into the light.

Study throughout the Gospels what Jesus went through from the time of His arrest in the garden of Gethsemane. You may have read them many times but please reread them in the context of what we are talking about. The mocking and ridicule were way beyond what we've ever had to endure. Even when we thought we couldn't stand it, it hasn't at all been as bad as what He went through for us. That ridicule was the least of what Jesus faced. We are mocked and we shrink back from obeying God. What does mocking hurt but our pride? What about the rest that He endured for you? He was beaten so severely that you couldn't tell His features. Isaiah 52:14 tells us, "So many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men." He was whipped with a whip. I have read in history books that the typical Roman whip was made of strips of leather with bits of metal or glass woven in. After only a few stripes the flesh would start to separate. Jesus was whipped 39 times. The flesh no longer covered his bones. The crown of thorns jammed on His head was to declare in mockery that He was the king of the Jews. These thorns ran into His skull. The nails of the cross were cruel enough. Even when He was dying they mocked Him. However, I think that one of the hardest persecutions that He had to endure was looking down at the foot of the cross to see only a handful of His disciples who had stood faithfully by Him. No, after we think about it, we may think that we are going through it, but we really know very little about persecution.

We start to get a glimpse of the power of persecution that was unleashed at the cross when we begin to catch a glimpse of what held Jesus there to endure all He endured. We start to see the power when we begin to feel that love that held Him through it all. Why did God allow it? Because of the greatest love that you'll ever know. Love held Jesus through all that persecution that He had to endure. Love held Jesus on that cross. This wasn't just His love for the whole world down through time, it was also His love that He had personally for you. If you read what He endured at Calvary with your heart there probably isn't one of you that didn't wind up with tears praising Him for His wonderful love. He endured that for you. His love that you felt as you read those scriptures is still as great two thousand plus years later as it was that day at Calvary. Two thousand plus years after It happened you can still sit at his feet and hear Him speak to your heart that He endured that and why. That it was because of His love for you. Wow. What a love! This love will be there for you personally throughout eternity. It will never

fade. That love like the One Who possesses it will never die. Let Him love you in the light of all He's done for you. Right now, open your heart, stretch your hands and your heart up to Him and let his Spirit love you. The persecutions that you have been through will not be what they were in the light of that love and the persecutions that He endured for you. Instead of those persecutions that you are going through being something to make you bitter, they will become precious offerings to lay at His nail scarred feet. Instead of their being something that tears up your spirit they will become a precious gift to the Lord. Instead of being a burden they will become a cross you'll gladly bear for the One who bore so much for you. That is part of the power of persecution at Calvary.

Another part of the power that we find at Calvary is perhaps the greatest that was there. It was the power of forgiveness. Forgiveness was the reason that Jesus submitted and endured it all. This kind of forgiveness can only come through the greatest love the world has ever known. It was the forgiveness that was glimpsed when He told the thief on the cross that this day He would see Him in paradise. It was the forgiveness that poured from Him in His precious blood down through time to cover your sins. It is that forgiveness that was glimpsed the last time that you ran to Him with tears to leave rejoicing because you knew that you were forgiven. Without the persecution there at Calvary, we would not have forgiveness. That forgiveness was there for a whole world of God's children through all of time, all of His children that do the same as you did and run to Him for his forgiveness. "Forgive them for they know not what they do" were words that echoed out from the cross. ("Luke 23:34, "Then said Jesus, Father forgive them; for they know not what they do...") That forgiveness was for those that had plucked out His beard and spit in His face. That forgiveness was for those who had beaten him. It was even for those who had used that whip. It was for those who had nailed the spikes in to His hands and feet. It was for those that gambled at His feet for His garment. Father forgive them.

If Jesus had been consumed with bitterness that day, He would have never finished what His love started. There would have been no forgiveness when you run to Him and His grace. There would have been no love that reached a world through time. We would have had no hope. Part of the power of Calvary is that not only did He forgive but He died, and was resurrected. Then He sent back the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost echoes Christ. We have in us the Spirit of the One who cried from the cross, "Father forgive them." We don't have to be bound in bitterness and unforgiveness especially when we are persecuted. We have in our hearts the One Who knows all about forgiveness. When we can't forgive because what we have been through makes it impossible, then He can. He is right there in our hearts to give us that same love that He had at Cavalry. Then we too can pray, "Father forgive them." The Bible tells us that if we can't forgive then we can't be forgiven. The Lord's Prayer teaches this. "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." Calvary gives us the power to forgive as well as to be forgiven.

When we consider the persecution at Calvary there is one more thing that we have to think about. Picture again that cat of nine tails, that whip that the Roman soldiers used that had those bits of metal and glass. History details it as being one of the cruelest forms of punishment. These were continuous blows made after Jesus had already endured a lot. They were allowed and endured for a reason. When Peter and John walked into the temple that day in Acts 3, they carried something greater than silver or gold with them. When that man who was lame from his mother's womb reached out to their hands, something else reached down through them. What reached to him came in part because of the persecution that Jesus endured at Calvary. He went away leaping and dancing and praising God. When you were in need of a touch of healing and that healing came, that came because of the persecution at Calvary. When God heard your prayer for someone you loved and healing came, it came in part because of the persecution at Calvary. Isaiah 53:5 tells us, "But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed."

The early church knew about enduring persecution. They had the same problems that we have in the church. Factions split up in churches. There was division. Backbiting, jealousies, strife went on in the early church even then. We read many times in the Epistles where Paul reprimanded them for these things. But persecution went a lot further than that. When you study out the history of the early church, you'll find that only one disciple, John, died a natural death. He died exiled on an island. The others and many others who walked with Jesus were stoned, sawn asunder, crucified, even boiled in oil. They knew about persecution. I Corinthians 4:9-13 tells us Paul's own words for his persecution. "For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong: ye are honorable, but we are despised. Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place; and labor working with our own hands; being reviled we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it. Being defamed, we entreat; we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day." We can also see how in those early days, God used the persecution that they went through. Acts 8:1 tells us, "And Saul was consenting unto his (Stephens) death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judah and Samaria, except the apostles." Persecution became the fan that not only fanned the fire to make it hotter, but it wound up spreading that flame around the world. Because of the persecution of the early church, those that really walked with God became a light in a dark world. To escape persecution they ran around the world carrying that light everywhere they went. Acts 8:4 tells us, "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word."

Paul definitely knew about persecution. Galatians 1:13 tells us, “For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews’ religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it.” Paul knew about persecution from the viewpoint of the persecutor. What changed him from being a persecutor to being the persecuted? It had a lot to do with that voice in Acts 9:4. I believe too that it had a lot to do with having been around the persecuted. It was no coincidence that Paul’s conversion is recorded just after his witnessing the stoning of Stephen in Acts 7. How many others beside Stephen had Paul witnessed their faith? How many others had Paul seen that had the face of an angel in the midst of suffering? When you stand in God’s strength and love in the midst of persecution you will change the lives of those around you. You may even change the lives of those who are persecuting you. How many found God’s grace after watching Jesus that day at Calvary? One day we will know. How many can find God’s grace by watching how you endure your persecution? One day you’ll know. Romans 8:35 tells us, “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril or sword?” Who can separate you? Even in your persecution you can be a light.

The power of persecution at Calvary was great. Next time that you are persecuted let God turn it around for your good. Your victory will be no less than the victory that you’ve read about here in this chapter. God’s promises are no less for you. I recently heard someone testifying about the persecution that they were going through. They were going through some pretty rough stuff. They testified that when they were going through this they remembered what Jesus had gone through for them. They were willing to declare the victory and keep on pressing on. Their persecution became praise. That is the power of persecution at Calvary.

Chapter 14. Resurrection Power

Let's go back for just a moment to the tomb of Lazarus in John 11. Martha had come to Jesus. She was puzzled and torn in her heart. She said to Him in verse 21, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." Jesus answered her in verse 25-26 with words that still echo in our hearts and minds even today giving strength and peace in time of death. "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" They were all surprised there that day when Jesus told them to open up the tomb. Jesus was in a place where the people believed. He was among friends and those who knew Him. He declared in verse 40, "Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" When He cried out "Lazarus come forth", Lazarus simply came forth. In chapter 12 when they were gathered together in Bethany and Mary anointed His feet, Lazarus was there. How fitting that is. When Judas complained because Mary anointed Him, Jesus replied in John 12:7, "Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this. For the poor always ye have with you but me ye have not always." I wonder if they remembered this night after Jesus' death. I wonder if the words that He cried out at Lazarus' tomb echoed in their hearts. "I am the resurrection and the life."

In John 20:1 on the first day of the week, Mary came running to Peter and John. "They have taken away the Lord". They looked in and saw the linen that He had been wrapped in. But Jesus was gone. Mary stayed weeping after the others had left. Two angels appeared to comfort her. A greater comfort was on its way. Jesus appeared and He asked her, "Why weepest thou?" When He called her by name, she knew who He was. Can you feel what that would have been like? She went from total despair to total and complete joy in a matter of minutes. She knew that day that there was a resurrection power.

One the day that Jesus walked through that wall into the upper room, the disciples knew too. In John 20:19 when He said to them "Peace be unto you", there was a new power in His voice. When the once dead, now alive Savior stood there in their midst they knew without a doubt that when He spoke peace, there would be peace. They had stood at Calvary and watched Him die. They had watched the sky turn black as if the very earth mourned His death. They had watched His body being taken down. They knew there had been a death. That is why they were huddled in that upper room that day in fear. When Jesus came into that room they knew too that there had been a resurrection. Their hearts echoed Thomas' words when he spoke in verse 28, "My Lord and my God". There was no more despair. There was no more fear. They knew without a doubt that they had walked with the Son of God and He had called them friends. That is one of the greatest victories of Calvary. We too know that there was a resurrection.

What does this have to do with us? Because of Calvary we too have the power over death and the grave. I have been blessed to stand by the casket of many saints of God. I have also stood by the caskets of those who didn't know God. If you've done this, you know what I mean by what I am saying. On the faces of the saints of God you could see a light and a peace that even death couldn't steal away. There was a comfort in the hearts of those saints who had gathered there with love. Those that knew God had a comfort that they carried with them through the lonely days ahead. I spoke recently with someone who had just lost her Dad. He had been sick for some time and she knew before he died that he didn't have long left in this world. She had worried a lot about how hard it would be for her when he went home. When that day came, she realized that she had worried needlessly. She told me later that she had been carried in a little bubble of strength and peace. That comfort that God promised in His Word had carried her through her grief and loneliness. That Holy Ghost comforter had been there to help and strengthen her. What a power. We don't even have to fear death. We can rejoice when someone goes to be with the Lord because we know that they walk with the One Who is the resurrection and the life. Death, where is thy sting? Grave, where is thy victory?

Calvary established once and for all that there is a resurrection and His name is Jesus. What have we to fear as long as our hand is in His hand? I Corinthians 15:26-55 has some powerful words. Read these and let them soak in. Here are the highlights. Verse 26, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Verse 54, "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. This section of scripture closes with words that echo down through time to give us comfort in the face of death. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?" Death has no victory. The devil has nothing stronger than death. We have victory even over death. Hold your head up. No matter what the battle is or what you're going through there will be a resurrection for you as well. Hold on. God will see you through. Romans 6:5 tells us, "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection." Philippians' 3:10-14 tells us, "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus." We have a prize and that prize was purchased for us at Calvary. There is not anything that is worth letting go of that prize. There is nothing that is more valuable. If you have anything else that is a number one priority in your life, then something is wrong.

We need to forget all those things that are behind and reach forth to eternal life. One way or other we will see a resurrection, either a resurrection to be in heaven eternally with Christ, or to spend eternity in hell. Let us run the race that is set before us so that we can win the prize. Ephesians 5:14 tells us, "Wherefore He saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." II Timothy 2:11 tells us, "It is a faithful saying; for if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him: if we deny Him, He also will deny us." Let's set that prize in our sights and win that race. Let's not deny Him.

I was blessed to be able to stay with my aunt who died with cancer. I have put here a section from my book, **Walking in the Spirit**. *I was blessed not long ago to spend a month taking care of someone I loved very much who was dying with cancer. I can without a doubt say that was one of the worst times of my life. I can also say that during that time I received more from God, and grew more than at any time I have ever been through. I wouldn't trade that experience for anything in my life, even the best of times when everything was great. Now you may be thinking that this was one of the best times in my life because God won the victory over cancer and she was healed. No, this may sound strange but hear me out, I really don't think that would have changed my life as much as what happened. We serve a mighty powerful God who has promised us that even our worst times can turn into miracles. (Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.") One of the blessings that came out of the fire with me was this. When my aunt lay dying, for days all she could do was swallow water dripped out of the end of straw. She had no strength left. She praised the Lord for each sip of water that she took. When all she had was strength to move her little hand that was just skin and bones up and wave it in praise, that was what she did. She did it until she went into the sleep when she died. I learned something that changed my life forever. We serve a mighty big and wonderful God. We don't have to be afraid of anything the devil or this world has. When we as children of God can lay in the chains of cancer, dying, and still find the victory in God to praise Him, what in this world do we have to fear. What can defeat us, other than we ourselves. I also learned that death is a precious thing. It is hard to watch someone grow helpless inch by inch and have their life slowly taken away. But through this I gained a life-changing glimpse, an understanding of what it means to surrender to God, and its importance.*

My aunt fought death in a tremendous battle that went on for weeks. Then I watched God deal with her to surrender. He was her strength to be able to help her with this last and greatest surrender that she would have to make. First she had to surrender the issues of her life that had to be resolved. I watched her go through a time when she had to let God's Spirit do its final conviction, when He groomed and made ready His bride. Then she went through a time when I knew she was interceding in her spirit for people that she had had burdens for in her

life. How did I know that this was so? Because one by one, as she surrendered them to God, He worked miracles. Then I watched her surrender herself totally to the hands of God. One night she passed away. I was asleep myself when she died. The quickening power of the Holy Ghost woke me up from a sound sleep. The Holy Ghost was so strong in the room. I knew before anyone told me that her last surrender was done. I caught a glimpse that night of God's glory that waited for her on the other side. Life is a succession of surrenders, and the last and greatest surrender leads to our last and greatest reward.

How could this last section have anything to do with the power of resurrection? In a chapter like this you probably expected me to put in that the Lord had come and raised her up from the dead. You know. He did just that. Because of the power of resurrection, death lost its hold. Death lost its sting. Sure she went through physical pain. But the sting of death was gone. She lay in its hold praising God for the victory that was hers. That is part of the resurrection power of Calvary. She knew that she faced a new day with a new hope and a new body. She knew that just on the other side of this pain was an eternal victory. How did she know? Because like Lazarus and his family, like Mary and the disciples, she walked with the One Who had declared, "I am the resurrection and the life."

Death where is your sting? Not even death could withstand the power of Calvary. Through Calvary, we are given life everlasting. Life in a perfect world without sin or a devil to cause us all those problems. The Bible doesn't tell us much about heaven and what life after death holds. I think that it is because heaven is the best that a perfect God has to give His dearly beloved children. God is so far above what we are that we can't even comprehend Him. I really believe that heaven, the best that He has for us, is so far beyond what we can comprehend that human words can't even describe it. That is why heaven is only glimpsed through the scriptures in a few verses. The few glimpses that we have though have been enough to keep zillions of saints of God on track and going through whatever they had to go through to serve God. Whatever Stephen glimpsed that day in Acts 7:55-56 was enough to make him glow like a heavenly torch in the face of one of the most cruelest deaths you could ever imagine. It has been enough to hold me on course. It has been enough to hold you. How do I know? Here you are reading this book about Calvary. No matter what the devil has thrown at you, here you are. Raise up your hands and praise the Lord. That same God and that same power of Calvary that has kept you so far will see you on through. Lay aside all weights. We have a race to win. Oh, what a glorious prize. Greater than any other you could ever gain. The resurrection of the saints and an eternal perfection in God is a prize worth giving it all up for. Walk with the One who said, "I am the resurrection and the life." Walk with the One Who gave His life so that you could have life everlasting. All because of Calvary.

Chapter 15.

Authority Over satan

We know that we have power over satan through the blood of Jesus. We may not fully understand why. The why comes because of Calvary. Colossians 1:12-18 tells us, "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son. In Whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins: For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers: All things were created by Him, and for Him: And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead: that in all things He might have the preeminence." Jesus forgave us of our sins and openly made a show over the powers and principalities in high places in the process. He triumphed over the powers of satan and his angels. He really made them eat dirt, as the old saying goes. Why did He have the right to do this? He tells us in His own Words in Matthew 28:18, "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." When He spoke this to His disciples, there was not one of them that wasn't fully and completely convinced that this was true. They had just seen Him rise from the dead. Even satan knew Jesus' destiny after Calvary. In Luke 22:69 Jesus told the disciples where He was going to be. "Hereafter shall the son of man sit at the right hand of the power of God." Philippians 2:6-10 tells us, "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth."

I pray that in this chapter you can catch a glimpse of the authority that Jesus possessed over satan. I pray too that you can see a glimpse of the authority that He gave to us, the church. Ephesians 1:17-23 tells us, "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him; The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when he raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; And hath put all things under His feet,

and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church. Which is His body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.” In order for us to fully take authority over satan, we have to realize two things. We have to see Christ’s authority over satan. And we have to see our authority that Christ has given us. That authority is not based on who we are in the flesh. It is based on who we are in the Spirit. Ephesians 2:4-6 tells us who we are. “But God, who is rich in mercy for His great love wherewith He loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved: And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.)” In Christ, we are sitting in heavenly places, raised up by the very hand of God. Because of this, we have authority over satan. Our authority comes because of who we are in Christ. We can have boldness with God. When we know where we stand in the Word of God, and we know who we are in Him, we know that we have authority over satan.

I have included here a section from my book, ***Your Authority As a Child Of God.*** *One of the best illustrations that I can give to explain what it means to take authority comes from my years of being a teacher/principal in both the public and private schools. One of the lessons that I had to learn early in my teaching years was how to take authority. I learned it in a small public school that actually had grades K-12 in one building. All teachers were required to take turns doing hall duty after school, monitoring the halls while the buses were loading. I was new at teaching, and I was totally new at having to deal with teenagers. I was new to them, and I was an elementary school teacher, which made things harder. It was beneath them to listen to me. I was nervous at having to tell them what to do, and I was a soft-spoken, mild mannered person. Often that doesn’t mix with teaching older students. I had not learned to take authority. I barely had learned how to take authority in my classroom, but my hall duty time was a nightmare. Nobody listened. I was too unsure to take the authority that was mine as a teacher. Some of the teachers who had been there for years had no problem with their authority. They knew their place. They knew their rank and they knew how to pull it. Most importantly the kids knew, too. When they walked into the hall, the place would grow quiet. If there was something going on that wasn’t supposed to, it stopped when they showed up. These older teachers walked in their authority. They were sure in that authority. Later on as I grew in understanding my place and how to take the authority that was mine, when I walked in I had the same affect. It took some time. It also took a little help from God.*

One day I noticed a remarkable change in the respect that the older students had for me. I started asking around to find out what the change was. Now this was back in the days before teachers got too educated to use corporal punishment. We were allowed to paddle. I had paddled several of my second grade students. They were an unusual group. It was a group that had been handpicked out of that class with the most discipline problems. When I asked about the change in attitude of the older students, one of the students told me that

it was because they had heard about how I had taken authority over my own class and it had made an impression. (Before you get off on corporal punishment, bear me out and hear about my message in taking authority.) This was the jump in authority that I needed. When I saw that I could take authority, it became easier. When the teenagers saw that I had started taking authority, they listened when I told them what to do. It wasn't long before my presence had the same affect on these kids that the older teachers had.

Now you may ask what does this have to do with taking authority over the devil. The devil is just like an unruly teenager. You can talk to him all you want to, you can even quote scripture all you want to, it will have little affect until you take authority over him. This comes from knowing your place as a child of God and walking in it. As you grow in your relationship with God, and you grow in understanding of who you are according to God's Word, you will grow in the authority that you have over satan. Just as I grew in my authority with the teenagers on hall duty, you have to grow in your authority over the devil. You might say you are on permanent hall duty. It is your job to monitor the devil's behavior and see to it that he does not get into things that he isn't supposed to.

Now when I started teaching one of the main problems that I had as a newcomer to the school was that I didn't actually know what all the kids were supposed to be doing, and what they were not allowed to do. I didn't know their restrictions. It didn't help that they knew their restrictions, and they knew that I didn't. They were some of the best little con artists. They could talk me right into my giving them permission to do what they knew they weren't supposed to do. They could get by with doing things in front of me to break the rules, because they knew I didn't know the rules. As children of God, we face this same thing with the devil. We often don't know his limits. God has put strict limits on what he can and cannot get by with. For example, if you read the story of Job, you will find out in chapter 1 that for the devil to try Job, he had to get permission from God. Read the whole first chapter. Then reread Job 1:10-12. In this section of scripture the devil tells God that because of His protection, he can't touch Job. The devil knows the limitations that God has put on his work. The problem is that often we do not. The Bible is filled with teaching about our position as children of God and our spiritual authority in that position. That is why it is so important to know the Word of God. We run everywhere to find all the answers, but never to the one true source. We spend time doing everything else, but never have time to read the scriptures like we know we should. (By the way, watching TV will not insure our soul's salvation, rather it steals from our spiritual strength. If you think you don't have time, start recording how much time you spend in front of the TV.) Through God's Word we will find out the rules and just what the devil can do.

Besides knowing what the rules are, to be able to take authority, you have to learn who you are and what rights and privileges you have as a child of God. This doesn't mean that these rights and privileges are based on who you are in the

flesh. Many times we get this confused. We think that because we aren't perfect, or super-spiritual, or giant Christians, we don't have any rights as children of God. Now if we are not committed and submitted to God we loose many of our rights. For example, the Bible tells us that if we are double-minded, we won't receive anything from God (James 1:8). It tells us that if we are not obedient to God then we loose our authority over the devil. It tells us that if we submit to God, then we can resist the devil and he has to flee (James 4:7). Therefore we know that if we are not submitted then we cannot resist him and have him flee. There are certain conditions of heart and life that we have to have to be able to take the authority that God has given us, and to take our position as children of God. But many people are walking so far in condemnation of the flesh, that they can't see that their rights as children of God are not dependant in their strengths or weaknesses. As a teacher on hall duty, I was a lousy teacher, because I had not learned to take authority. However, my rights and the position I held as a teacher with all the authority that came along with it did not change just because I was a lousy teacher. I was still a teacher, and I had authority, even though I had not learned how to take it. That is the same way with you as a child of God. You just have to learn your position and walk in it. Then when you square your shoulders back and tell the devil to get off your premises, he has to listen.

Now the true test of my hall duty came one day when one of the teenagers had gotten hold of some bad drugs. He meant to do harm to teachers and students alike. I was able to help the staff to be able to take authority over him. He left the premises. That is how it is with the devil. He will come with the soul purpose of doing harm to you and those you love, and those you serve God with. When you know the rules and you know who you are, you can take authority, and the devil has to leave the premises. It is my prayer that through these pages, you learn that you can put him to flight.

Now before I go on in this book further, I want to take time to talk about casting out devils. This is our right as children of God to cast out devils. When people hear this they think of only one thing. They think of casting demons out of demon filled people. This is a genuine and very real ministry. I have seen this in our own ministry. There are people who come to the Lord as new Christians after a life filled with the occult and drugs, and they are possessed. I have seen these people delivered through the power of God. I want to say carefully though that this is not all there is to taking spiritual authority. Every day I have to take authority over the powers of hell who are trying to gain control of my life or the ministry that God has given me, especially in the ministry of working with young people. Especially if you are in some sort of ministry, you should know what I am talking about. We are in a spiritual battle and we had better learn how to take spiritual authority to be able to win this battle. The weapons that we have are not carnal, and we had better learn what they are and how to use them. If we never learn these things it will be easier for the devil to steal our day-to-day victory, and if we never learn them, he can eventually steal our soul. If we

are in a ministry, that battle is compounded by the fact that not only will the devil come against us personally, but he will also come against the ministry that the Lord has given us. He means to keep us from doing that which God intends for us to do. If you think that you are not in a spiritual warfare and you think that you don't really need all this, then you really need to beware. There is an old saying, "If the devil isn't fighting you, then he may already have you." The devil won't fight you if you are living a compromised life. He will blind you into thinking that there really is no warfare in your life. Look out. All of us are in this spiritual warfare, if we are children of God. Ephesians 6:12 tells us, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." I pray that through these chapters you learn to identify the battle, and you learn how victorious you are. Ephesians 1:18-23, "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under His feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all." Amen Amen Amen Amen.

Let's go back to the story from my hall monitor days. I was teaching at the public school. I was a teacher. That gave me certain rights. Because of those rights, I expected certain treatment from the students. These rights gave me authority to demand this certain treatment. I could also expect the students to treat one another in a certain way. I had authority to see that this happened as well. This, however, was my first teaching position. When I started, I didn't yet know what it was that I should expect from the students. That left me at a disadvantage. This made my authority shaky. I had to learn first who I was in my position, and I had to learn the position of the students. I talked to older teachers and to the principal. I gradually learned my authority. Just realizing this increased my ability to take authority.

We as Christians often face the same problem in spiritual warfare. We look at ourselves in the natural. We see our weaknesses and failures. We fail to see ourselves in the way that God's Word tells us that we are. We fail to see our position in God and we fail to walk in the authority that is given to us because of that position. We also fail to recognize the devil's position. We fail to realize that his position is planted squarely underneath our heel. (Genesis 3:15, "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.") Often this is because of our ignorance of God's Word. This may come because we have not been taught these things. God's Word is filled with scriptures that tell us both our position in

God and the devil's position as well. Here are some things that God tells us about who we are in Him.

1. *I am a living Son of a living Savior. (I John 3:1, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God....")*
2. *I am His inheritance destined to be one with Him as He is one with the Father. (John 17:21, "That they all may be one: as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.")*
3. *My inheritance is to be able to do all the things He did on earth and more. We can not only receive our healing, but we can seek God that we be given the gift of healing which comes through His Spirit that dwells in us. (I Corinthians 12:4-11, "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God, which worketh all in all. But the manifestations of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom: to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: but all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will.")*
4. *I have the keys of death, hell, and the grave that were given to me by my elder brother. (Matthew 16:19, "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.")*
5. *I have a God given right to be victorious in my life. (I Corinthians 15:57, "But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.")*
6. *I have a right to be in health and prosper even as my soul prospers. (III John 2, "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prosper.")*

7. *We have victory over death. (I Corinthians 15:54, "...Death is swallowed up in victory.")*

8. *I will **eternally** inherit the blessings of God. (John 5:24, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my Word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.")*

*We have to learn to see ourselves according to God's Word. If we are committed, submitted, and obedient children of God, then these things are true. Read these things over again in a personal way putting your name in the verses. **I** (your name) am a Son of God. Read them all this way and believe them, because they are the Word of God and the Word of God cannot lie. Read them everyday. Read them when the devil brings doubt, confusion, and self doubt. Read them to him. God's Word has a way of doing away with the devil's lies.*

We can spend all day looking at our weaknesses, our failures, our past, our sicknesses, our problems, and our flesh. It would be much better if we spent our time with our mind submitted in the Word of God remembering the verses that declare our victory and our rights as the children of God. We can spend all day looking at our weaknesses, or we can remember to submit these to Him so that He becomes our strength. (II Corinthians 12:9-10 "And He (Jesus) said unto me, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness.... for when I am weak, then am I strong.") If we concentrate on our flesh and our weaknesses, we deny the power of the Word of God to work in us. We deny the Holy Ghost Who is inside us. We deny Jesus Christ, Who is our only hope of glory. (Galatians 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me.") We need to stop seeing our flesh, and start seeing Jesus in us. We need to stop concentrating on our weaknesses and begin to see the promises of God's Word. We need to know who we are in Him and stand up and claim our God given authority.

These things that we talked about in the previous paragraph are not things that we can see in the natural. To accept the work of God's Word, and the things that it promises, we have to walk in the Spirit and not in the flesh. These are not things that are based on who and what we are in the natural, but who we are in the Spirit of God. They have little to do with who we are in the natural. We are required to be committed and submitted. We may be very imperfect. We may be just rising up from being the biggest failure in the world, no matter. If we are God's children, then we have a position in His love. We have a position in His kingdom. This position comes with authority. Read this section of scripture found in Ephesians 1:17-23. Verses 22-23 summarizes the section. "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,

which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.” Condemnation and discouragement are two tools the devil often uses to come against us to cause us to loose authority. When we walk in the Spirit and we realize that our position and authority is based on who God is, not on who we are, then we move to a place where the devil can’t control us with these.

Let’s go back to my school situation. There were many days in my early teaching experience when I went home feeling like a complete failure, and to put it plainly, I had failed. But I didn’t stop there. I kept trying. I learned and I overcome. I learned that I had authority and learned to take it. No matter whether or not I had failed miserably, I learned that my authority didn’t change. You have a position in God. Even when you are weak, discouraged, buffeted by the devil, and down and out, you still have a position in God and the authority that comes from that position. This authority comes from God’s Word and it isn’t based on how you feel about that situation, just as my authority didn’t change as a teacher, whether I felt victorious as one, or not. Ask God to give you strength to rise against those things that are coming against you. Ask Him to help you to take the authority that is yours. Ask God to make your forehead to be like a flint rock and your backbone like a crowbar. (Ezekiel 3:8-9, “Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their foreheads. As an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead....”) Then rise up and take your authority as a child of God. God’s Word tells you who you are and what authority you have in that position. That is not conditional to how you may feel about yourself. God’s Word gives you the victory if you will take it. God’s Word gives you authority, if you’ll take authority and walk in it. This book is filled with great verses concerning your authority over satan. Write them down. Memorize them. They are great ones to quote to the devil when he comes against you. God’s Word gives you authority. The devil knows God’s Word better than you do. Use it against him.

It is also through God’s Word that we find satan’s limitations. We have to learn how much he is allowed to get away with. If we don’t, we will fear him and that in itself will give him power to destroy us. When I was afraid of the older students at the school, I couldn’t take the authority over them that was mine. Job illustrates some of the boundaries satan has. Read this part of his story in the book of Job. In this story we know that the devil went before God. God told him, have you considered the faithfulness of my servant Job. The devil said, I have, but I can’t do anything to shake him. You have put a hedge up and I can’t reach him. God took down the hedge and allowed satan to try Job for a season. This part of the story is found in Job 1:6-12. When the season was over and Job had remained faithful, God restored and blessed and multiplied everything that he had lost. God limits what satan can do to us. In Job 1:10, satan himself said to God, “Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side?...” The devil can only do so much to hinder us. God gives us power to overcome him. I John 2:14, “I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have

known him that is from the beginning, I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the Word of God abideth in you and ye have overcome the wicked one.” Like Caleb said to the children of Israel in Numbers 13:30, “...Let us go up at once, and possess it (what God had given them) for we are well able to overcome it.”

We have a hedge built around us. There is something here to consider, however. If we are not submitted and committed and walking in the Spirit, we may cross over that hedge and put ourselves in harms way and not even know we have done so. For example, there have been so many times in my life when regretfully, God nudged me to go here or not to go there, or to do this, or not to do that, and I failed to heed God’s voice. When I disobeyed, I walked over that hedge that God had built around me. I walked over it and right into harms way. If we are not in the habit of walking in the Spirit and obeying God, then we automatically walk right into the devil’s territory. That is what comes when we walk in the flesh. Romans chapter 8 is a great chapter to read about walking in the flesh and the dangers that it brings. We can see clearly through this chapter that we cannot bind the devil if we are walking in the flesh. Our flesh will actually take the devil’s side. Human nature would like to think that because God loves us, we can do whatever we want. We are protected by His love that is true. His Word, however, tells us that disobedience will earn certain things. Study out those people in the Bible who walked in disobedience and contrast them to those who walked in obedience. Through this you can see that we must walk in obedience to have a victorious and peaceful life. Those who obeyed walked in victory. Those who refused to do so suffered, and their life was filled with turmoil.

For an example let’s say that I as a teacher told my kindergarten class to stay out of the four-lane highway because if they didn’t, they would suffer bad consequences. Let’s say they refused to and went ahead and played there. What would probably be the result? Would they suffer because of their disobedience? Would it be my fault that they suffered? I had warned them. God warns us. When we disobey, it isn’t His fault that we suffer. Disobedience even nullifies, or does away with the promises that God give us in His Word. It also takes away the authority that we have. For example let’s go back to my hall monitor days. If I had been a disobedient teacher, one that was breaking all the rules myself, would the students have listened when I tried to take authority over them? The devil recognizes whether or not we are obedient or disobedient. To walk in authority, we have to have a sound relationship with God, so that we are absolutely sure of our authority, and we have to have an obedient relationship with God so that the devil is absolutely sure of our authority. We have to know our position and our authority according to God’s Word. We have to know the limitation that God has put on our enemy. We have to be sure that we don’t fear our enemy. And when all that is done, when we say devil you have to flee, then he has to flee.

When I was on hall duty, there were two main reasons why I didn’t take authority. First, I wasn’t sure of my place and the place that the students were to

have. Second, I was afraid. Fear is one of the main reasons why we are not able to take authority, especially authority over satan. When I first started learning to take spiritual authority, I found myself in with a group of people who really played at taking authority over satan. They talked constantly about all the spirits that were around them and how they had to bind them. They spent more time dwelling on the devil than they did on praising God. The devil was their focus. I think that they did this because they were actually afraid of the devil. They looked for him everywhere. Guess what? They found him everywhere they looked. When you are afraid of the enemy, and you let him know that he is important to you, you might as well look out for an ambush. The more that you pay attention to satan, the more he will be there to bother you. Especially if you are afraid of him. When I was afraid of those students, they almost laughed in my face when I tried to take authority over them. They knew that I was afraid. The devil is the same way. When you are afraid, you cannot bind him. He doesn't have to flee as long as he has you running scared. One example of this-have you ever heard someone testify in church about all the devil was doing. They eventually got around to praising God after spending 20 minutes talking about everything the devil had done. You can believe they are going to have a worse week coming up. We can ask for attacks from satan if we aren't careful. We have to learn the devil's limitations. We have to learn our place as children of God. We have to learn that we have nothing to fear, but fear itself. Then we can stand in the authority that God intends us to have.

As children of God, we have no reason to fear. The Bible tells us time and again to "fear not". Get a Strong's Concordance, or another comprehensive concordance and reference how many times the Bible says to fear not. One example is found in II Timothy 1:7, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." Here are some more "fear nots". Read these. Genesis 26:24, I Kings 17:13, II Kings 6:16, Isaiah 41:10, Isaiah 43:1, Isaiah 43:5, Matthew 10:31, Revelations 1:17, and Revelations 2:10. God's Word has given us authority over satan. I John 4:4 tells us, "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world." Greater is He that is in you. We have no reason to fear. When we stand in that position in God where we know that we have nothing to fear from satan, and we know our place in God, then when we speak, the devil has to listen. And he has to flee. Not because we are extra special, but because our God is. Not because we are super spiritual giants, but because God's Word says he has to flee.

Another thing that stops fear from controlling our lives is growing in a relationship with God. When I first got saved, I was almost afraid to obey God. Every time that I would, the devil would launch an all out attack against me, even threatening my life. I became afraid to make a stand. God put me in an extreme situation to teach me that I didn't have to fear satan. One of the best jobs that I ever had was a job at a Christian, Spirit-filled half way house that worked with

some of the most troubled young people from all over the US. It was one of my best jobs, because there I learned not to fear satan. Many of these young people had been involved in witchcraft and satan worship. This was one of my first experiences with people who were literally so devil possessed that they would actually turn violent. I never will forget the first time that I heard a man's deep voice come out of the mouth of a sixteen-year-old girl. I learned very fast not to be afraid. I learned that if I showed fear, I was going to be in for rough time. There was one very large girl that taught me a lot about fear and our authority in God. She had tried to do me bodily harm on several occasions. I remember this one time especially. She was determined to leave the halfway house. I wasn't really smart in some ways and I made the mistake of standing at the head of the stairs to stop her from going down the stairs. She was so big that she would make up three of me. At the head of the steps was not the best position to be in. She would run at me intending to push me down the stairs. She would get within a couple of inches from me and she would stop just like there was a physical barrier between us that kept her from touching me. Try as she might, she could not touch me. Then in a man's voice she yelled at me, "Why can't I touch you?" The devil that was controlling her was determined to kill me that night. God said otherwise. When I saw that she couldn't touch me, I must admit, I even got a little cocky and did a little victory dance mocking the devil. It was easy to be cocky when I saw what God had done. The more that we walk with God and we grow in our relationship with Him, the more we realize that we are loved, the less fear that we'll have. We are cared for. We are protected. We serve a God that is able to keep us. He proves Himself time and time again. We have no reason to fear.

We serve a God that created the devil and his angels. They were not created for harm but to serve God. They turned away and rebelled. Because of this they were turned out of heaven. God made the devil. He certainly rules over him. When the Word of God says that He gives authority, then He has a right to turn that authority over to us. What He says goes. Whether we feel like it, or not. Whether we want it to be so, or not. That authority has been given over to us. What if I had not continued in the authority that the Lord had given me that night? What if I had not conquered fear, and I had backed up? I believe that I would not be here today to write this book. Maybe the situations in which the devil is trying to control your life, your ministry, the lives of your family, and others that you love is not as dramatic as the one I illustrated. But it may be all the more deadly. The situations that the devil will bring against you will either be physically or spiritually deadly. We may not see them as clearly as I saw that huge girl that night. But they are there nonetheless, and they are just as real. If we don't learn to identify satan and his tactics, then we will not be able to stand against him. If we don't stand against him, we will suffer the consequences. Our enemy is very real. If we don't take authority over him, he will control our lives. Even though all this is true, we take God at His Word when He tells us to "fear not". Know

where you stand in Him and take authority over satan. Your victory is guaranteed. We have nothing to fear.

You can get an idea from this section from my book, ***Your Authority As A Child of God***, that when we know who Christ is, and we know who we are according to the Word of God, then we can take that authority that is given us according to God's Word. Why is it so important to take that authority? Think back just a minute over the times when you failed to recognize satan at work and you failed because of this to take authority. What price did you have to pay? Satan is your enemy. He will do everything that He can to destroy you. It is only through the power and promises of God's Word, and God's presence and grace that we can overcome. I went through a time not long ago in which God told me that satan was going to try to destroy me. I watched him try everything that he could. I watched that hedge that God put around me hold against his attacks. I watched God's mercy and love keep me. I watched God's authority that He had given me work when I called on the name of Jesus. Know what? I am still here. God's presence kept me. It is God's presence that gives us authority as well. When you walk with your hand in God's hand, the devil hasn't much chance, does he? God's Word kept me. That was when I started writing this book about the power of Calvary. That was strength to my spirit. God's grace held me through the rough times when my flesh would have given up. All these things give us authority over satan. We can stand in authority knowing how God has kept us before, and knowing that He will do it again. I praise God for that authority that was paid for at Calvary.

Chapter 16. Healing

We can't consider Calvary without considering the power of healing that was unleashed there. It was through those stripes that Jesus bore that we receive healing. It is a wonderful thing to consider that one of the first places that Jesus' stripes purchasing our healing is mentioned is in Isaiah many many many years before Jesus was even born. Wow! Isaiah 53:5 says, "But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with His stripes we are healed." All the way in the Old Testament it was mentioned that Jesus would be beaten for our healing. I am sure that those Roman soldiers that whipped Him that day had not read the scriptures. They were not doing this so that the Word of God would be fulfilled. The prophecy that you could receive healing went out hundreds of years before Calvary. Isn't that powerful. Notice that this section of scripture tells us that with His stripes we are healed. We are healed. This is already done. That healing power that flowed from Calvary flowed all the way through time to touch you where you are in your need. If you need healing, that power is for you. That is God's Word. We surely serve an amazing God. I have enclosed here some sections from my book ***How To Walk In Healing***. This section of the book talks about knowing that it is God's will for us to be healed.

The Bible tells us plainly that it is good for us to be in health and prosper. (III John 2, "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.") Here are other verses that tell our rights as children of God to walk in healing:

***Isaiah 53:5** tells us, "But He (Jesus) was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed."*

***Luke 4:18** tells us, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me (Jesus), because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance of the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised."*

***Proverbs 4:22** tells us, "For They (God's Words) are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh."*

***Jeremiah 30:17** tells us, "For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord...."*

***Jeremiah 17:14** tells us, "Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for thou art my praise."*

Exodus 15:26 tells us, “...If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in His sight, and wilt give ear to His commandment, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the Lord that healeth thee.”

Psalms 91:16 tells us, “With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.

Isaiah 65:22 tells us, “They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.”

Here are accounts of some of the healings that Jesus did while He was on earth: (Read them. I have chosen the ones recorded in Matthew to make them easier to look up. There are many more. If you have a concordance, or cross reference Bible, look these up. There is strength in God’s Word. It is the only book that you can read that can build your faith in the powerful way that it can.)

Matthew 8:14-15, Matthew 8:2-4, Matthew 9:2-8, Matthew 12:9-13, Matthew 12:15, Matthew 12:22, Matthew 8:28-34, Matthew 9:23-26, Matthew 9:27-34, Matthew 9:27-32, Matthew 15:22-28, Matthew 20:29-34

It is important to know that you are a child of God, and that part of your inheritance is the right to be healed. Stand on this knowledge and know who you are in God. When we are well, or sick, the devil specializes in condemning us. The best way to fight this condemnation is to ask God to reveal any sins that we haven’t confessed and repented. Then we put God’s Word in the devil’s face. If you have accepted salvation, and your sins are under the blood, you are a child of God. Instead of concentrating on trying to defend yourself on who you are in the natural, stand on who you are according to God’s Word. God’s Word declares some things about you. You need to start seeing yourself in the light of God’s Word. Declare who you are and stand on it. As children of God we have the right to these things:

Galatians 3:29 tells us, “And if ye be Christ’s then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.

John 1:12 tells us, “But as many as received Him to them, gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.”

Romans 8:14 tells us, “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”

Galatians 4:7 tells us, “Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”

Ephesians 1:18 tells us, “The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.”

Some people believe that healing is not for today. That it was only for people in Bible times. It might be easier to accept that if I had never seen anybody healed, and I hadn't been healed myself. God's Word can build your faith, and so can the testimonies of those who have been healed. One of the greatest healings I have gotten was one that I didn't even ask for, because I didn't at the time know I needed it. It was an instantaneous healing. I had been in a major car wreck. I was pinned in with my car upside down. The emergency people at the scene said, “Wait, we can't pull her out, she is bleeding too bad.” When they got me out I had blood down my arms and legs, even on my car seat, and on things lying there. To my amazement and theirs, by the time I was gotten out of the car, God had healed me completely. There was not a scratch on me. It wasn't an internal injury because I had no problems later, and there was no blood around my face. I don't even know what was hurt, but I do know that He fixed whatever was wrong. God has healed me many times. One of the first times I remember Him healing me was when I had broken my foot. It swelled up about twice its size and turned black and blue. I had one problem. I was to drive someone to a town 8 hours drive away from home. I was their only transportation. I couldn't even put my weight on it, and to make the problem worse I had a straight drive car. We all prayed that night. The next day, I made the trip without a problem. My foot was healed. I heard a friend tell about how at a revival meeting they saw a little boy without an eye in his eye socket. His socket was empty. They prayed for him to be able to see. God did one better than that. The little boy can see now out of a beautiful little blue eye that God made especially for him. In another service a lady who had been in a wheel chair all her life rolled up to our pastor's wife and asked her if she wanted to take a walk with her. Our pastor's wife didn't know that the lady couldn't walk. She agreed. The lady got out of her chair and walked with her. By the end of the service she was running around the tent. I remember a lady who was in the hospital waiting a life saving surgery. She couldn't have the surgery because of another complication. She started to get better. The doctor did more tests. Much to the doctors amazement they found a new valve had been put in her heart. The Master Surgeon had been at work. Another lady was dying because cancer had eaten away parts of her stomach and intestines. She was in the hospital basically to die there. Much to the doctor's amazement she began to get

better. Tests revealed that she had a new stomach and intestines that had been recon- structured without human hands. Another friend was in the hospital. A car had struck him and the bone in his arm had been shattered. X-rays started showing a new bone that grew in the place of the one that was shattered. The purpose of my telling how God has healed me, and others that I know is not to make you feel bad or bitter as to why God hasn't healed you. The purpose is to encourage your faith. God's Word teaches that God is no respecter of persons. What He does for one He will do for others. He will do for you.

*God is still in the healing business. I have written a song that is called **Jesus is a Healer**. He is still a healer. I'll share the words with you.*

Jesus is a Healer

Verse 1

*As He stood in the courtyard, a Roman soldier was called in,
To give Him a punishment, the soldier couldn't understand.
As he tore the back of Jesus with the whip in his hand,
He could not see down through time down to where **you** stand.*

Chorus

*Jesus is a healer. He is a healer.
No matter what **your** problems are,
He'll make **you** whole again.
He is a healer, Jesus is a healer.
And He will make **you** whole again.*

Verse 2

*So your body's tired and weary from the sickness that's upon you.
Your mind is so far from faith in satan's battleground.
Just think upon that courtyard, on that price He paid for you.
As He looked down, down through time, with eyes of love on you.*

*Yes, Jesus is a healer. He bore those stripes on the back for **you**. In those days the Roman soldiers used strips of leather, sometimes 10 in a bunch, with pieces of metal or glass tied on the ends. We know that He was also beaten so badly that you couldn't tell what His features looked like. Through these stripes we are healed. (I Peter 2:24, "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by Whose stripes ye were healed.") He took that pain and bore that suffering so that we don't have to. I know it is His will for us to be healed. So do you. Not only that, I also know that His Word tells us that we **are** healed.*

It is important to know who you are in God and who you believe in. We all know who we are in the flesh. We know what we look like. We know if we are comely, or not so comely, as the Bible says. We know if we are maybe a little bit heavier than what we should be. We know if we are tall or short. We know our weaknesses. Most of us don't know our strengths. It's easier to find our weaknesses than our strengths. We know our gifts and talents, or lack of them. Most of us are not very confident in who and what we are, especially if we are fighting the battle of sickness. To be able to walk in healing we have to be able to see ourselves as we are in God. The Bible tells us these things about who we are as sons and daughters of God:

- 1. I am a living Son of a living Savior. (I John 3:1, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God....")*
- 2. I am His inheritance destined to be One with Him as He is One with the Father. (John 17:21, "That they all may be one: as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.")*
- 9. My inheritance is to be able to do all the things He did on earth and more. We can not only receive our healing, but we can seek God that we be given the gift of healing which comes through His Spirit that dwells in us. (I Corinthians 12:4-11, "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God, which worketh all in all. But the manifestations of the Spirit given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom: to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: but all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will.")*
- 10. I have the keys of death, hell, and the grave that were given to me by my elder brother. (Matthew 16;19, "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.")*
- 11. I have a God given right to be victorious in my life. (I Corinthians 15:57, "But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.")*
- 12. I have a right to be in health and prosper even as my soul prospers. (III John 2, "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prosper.")*

13. *We have victory over death. (I Corinthians 15:54, "...Death is swallowed up in victory.")*
14. *I will **eternally** inherit the blessings of God. (John 5:24, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my Word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.")*

*We have to learn to see ourselves according to God's Word. If we are committed, submitted, and obedient children of God, then these things are true. Read these things over again in a personal way putting your name in the verses. **I** (your name) am a Son of God. Read them all this way and believe them, because they are the Word of God and the Word of God cannot lie. Read them everyday. Read them when the devil brings doubt, confusion, and self doubt. Read them to him. God's Word has a way of doing away with the devil's lies.*

We can spend all day looking at our weaknesses, our failures, our past, our sicknesses, our problems, and our flesh. It would be much better if we spend our time with our mind submitted in the Word of God remembering the verses that declare our victory and our rights as the children of God. We can spend all day looking at our weaknesses, or we can remember to submit these to Him so that He becomes our strength. (II Corinthians 12:9-10 "And He (Jesus) said unto me, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness.... for when I am weak, then am I strong.") If we concentrate on our flesh and our weaknesses, we deny the power of the Word of God to work in us. We deny the Holy Ghost Who is inside us. We deny Jesus Christ, Who is our only hope of glory. (Galatians 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me.") We need to stop seeing our flesh, and start seeing Jesus in us. We need to stop concentrating on our sickness and begin to see the promises of God's Word. We need to know who we are in Him and stand up and claim our right to healing as a child of God.

We need to look beyond how we see ourselves in the natural and how we see our sickness. Elisha and his servant were about to be in a pickle. Elisha had stood up and preached what God had anointed him to preach. That had gotten the attention of the king. Elisha had said some things about the king and his wife that weren't exactly flattering. That happens when God is using you. You won't always say things that tickle people's ears. The truth hurts a lot of the time. Well this king and his wife got mad and sent a whole army after them. That was a bit of a problem, because Elisha didn't exactly have an army (at least he didn't at the beginning.) He only had one servant. But he stood bold. When his servant looked out and saw the army on its way to kill them, he was shaking. Elisha wasn't even worried. Why? Read the story in II Kings chapter 6. Elisha had learned to look beyond. He had learned to look beyond the circumstances and the things that his eyes saw to what God was doing in the supernatural. What did he see when he looked beyond? II Kings 6:16-17 tells us, "And he answered, Fear not: for they

that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.” All the army that had come against him was smitten with blindness and Elisha told them, “ I will lead you to the one that you seek.” Of course Elisha led them into the middle of their enemy’s camp. They were destroyed. Elisha saw beyond.

Especially when we are sick, it is hard for us to look beyond the flesh and the natural. We need to see past our pain and our symptoms into the Word of God and His love and His promises for us. We need to look past what we can’t do to what we are going to do. We need to look past our symptoms to see and declare our healing according to God’s Word. That is what it takes to have faith. Faith means looking past what we see and standing on what we don’t see. (Hebrews 11:1, “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen.”) We have to refuse to accept sickness because you know it is God’s Word for you to be healed. Refuse to let thoughts of doubt and your pain control your mind. Fill it with God’s promises of healing from His Word. You can’t think of two things at one time. Think on those things which are positive and full of faith even when you don’t feel like it. (Phillipians 4:8, “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things.”) If someone asks you how are you, tell them, “Healed in the name of Jesus, thank you.” When the devil comes knocking to tell you everything that is hurting and how bad it is, tell him, “Oh but look at what is working good today.” Keep thinking and talking positive and before long even he will be convinced you are healed. One tribe in Africa has a word that I love, “namenado”. This is translated as being “God’s grace is sufficient”. When someone asks you how you are answer, “namenado”. Your problem is not greater than what God’s grace can fix.

Sometimes you have to declare a healing in the face of a doctor’s diagnosis. Just refuse to accept it. I remember Brother Goad telling about how his daughter, Suzanne, had been in a bad bicycle wreck when she was small. She’d had her front teeth knocked out leaving their nerves dangling exposed. She was in so much pain. On top of that the doctor told him that her arm was badly broken. She was in so much pain already. Brother Goad refused to accept a broken arm with all the complications that it promised to have, too. He looked beyond the doctor’s report and caught the eye of Jesus. He told the doctor that he refused to accept that report. When the doctor brought back a second X-ray he still looked beyond and refused to accept it. The third time the doctor brought back the X-ray to try to convince him her arm was broken he was shocked to see there was no sign of a broken bone. God had healed. Sometimes we have to look beyond what our natural understanding tells us and have faith that God is doing

something we might not see. I wrote a song for someone who was seeking a healing from God. They had just gotten a bad report from a doctor. The Lord impressed me to write this song, "X-ray from Heaven".

X-ray From Heaven

Verse 1

*I went to the doctor, he said things just don't look good.
The situations bad, he shook his head with gloom.
Fear began to fill me till I shook myself inside.
I went for a second opinion, an X-ray from God's eyes.*

Chorus

*I want an X-Ray from heaven, a look through God's eyes.
To tell me the problem with a look from paradise.
I want a second opinion through Dr. Jesus' light.
An X-Ray from heaven with healing in sight.*

Verse 2

*The situation is bad, can't find any good.
The circumstances worsen can't make it if I could
Things look so terrible they shake their heads with gloom.
Till a light from heaven fills the darkness of the room.*

Chorus

*I got an X-Ray from heaven, a look through God's eyes.
To tell me the problem with a look from paradise.
I got a second opinion through Dr. Jesus' light.
An X-Ray from heaven with healing in sight.*

We know we need to look beyond the natural to see what is happening in the supernatural. Elisha's servant had to have God touch his eyes so that he could see beyond the natural. Sometimes we have to have God touch our eyes so that we can see things in a better way. When we are sick it is easy to become negative in our thinking. When we do, everything looks bad. It looks like there is no good in anything, in any situation, and even in God. In our struggle with our sickness, our physical bodies get down, our mind gets weak, and our emotions get down. When this happens, you may as well know that the devil will come in to make this even worse. When this happens, we need to ask God to help us to change the film in our camera.

We live in a negative world. Think about it. Have you ever heard someone say go to the second go light and turn right? Have you ever heard a weatherman say we have a 70% chance of sunshine? How many times does the news report

good things that have happened? It is easy in this negative world to get caught up in thinking negatively, especially when you are sick. When we become negative, we can easily loose hope. Our faith gets weaker. God's Word looses power. We stop trusting Him. How can we get deliverance from a negative attitude? First we have to identify it. The devil will disguise this so that we don't realize it is happening. God can bring it to our attention. We have to be close enough in our relationship with Him to hear Him when He does. We have to be able to allow Him to change how we are thinking. One way to overcome negative thinking is to bury yourself in God's Word. This will lift up your faith. God is not a negative God, and His Word is definitely not negative, but full of faith. It is one of the most positive life changing forces on the face of the earth. Another thing to do is to watch your conversation. Also, refuse to let negative thoughts dwell in your mind. Satan can put thoughts in your head. Like a friend of mine once said, he can fly over your head, but don't let him build a nest in your hair. Also, remember that the joy of the Lord is your strength. (Nehemiah 8:10, "...for the joy of the Lord is your strength.") When the devil steals your joy he can take your strength. When you are sick, your sickness itself takes your strength. When the devil steals your joy, you will grow weaker even faster. Find joy in every circumstance that you can. Sometimes when I get so busy that I don't look around me, I overlook the things that bring me joy. I forget to think about the wonder of God's love, and the miracles that He does for me every day. Instead of burying yourself in self-pity, look at the positive things that He has done. We have to admit. No matter how sick you are, He has still done more good things for you than the bad things that you are enduring.

Especially when we are sick, we need to concentrate on His great love for us, on the miracle of salvation, on the promise of eternity with Him, on His goodness every day, on the joy of His friendship, on the blessedness of His peace, the power of His Word, the comfort of His Holy Ghost, how everyday He touches and blesses us. Concentrate on these things and the bad won't seem so bad. One of my favorite verses is not about how strong we are in God, but it is about how weak we are. It must be a very important scripture, because it is one of the few passages that you will find red-letter words between the Acts and Revelations, red-letter words meaning the words that Jesus Himself said. In this scripture Paul is quoting what Jesus Himself spoke to him. "And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." Paul had learned the secret to finding strength. When we are the weakest is when we put ourselves in neutral and allow God to be our strength. When we do, we have supernatural strength. His grace is sufficient. We may never find that out until we come to the end of our own. When we do, our strength will be renewed as an eagle's. (Isaiah 40:31, "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.")

When we can see the power of healing that was unleashed at Calvary, it is easier to believe in healing. If we can see God's promises for us according to His Word, then it is easier to trust His healing is personally for us. When we can see the love behind it all, that makes it even easier. That healing for you was purchased and paid for at Calvary. Reach out. God is reaching for you.

Chapter 17.

The Power of Prayer

I believe that the power of prayer was part of the power that was unleashed at Calvary. I am not saying here that people couldn't pray until after Calvary. The scripture bears out many times that that people had powerful prayers in the Old Testament. At times whole nations gathered and fasted and prayed. Wouldn't that be wonderful to see? Here are some of the most notable prayers of the Old Testament. Prayer was first mentioned in Genesis 4:26, "And to Seth, to him also there was born a son and he called his name Enos: then began men to call upon the name of the Lord." Abraham's prayer for Sodom in Genesis 18:32, "And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but this once; peradventure ten shall be found there, And He said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake." Elijah's prayer for dry weather talked about in James 5:17, "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months." Moses' prayer for the disobedient in Deuteronomy 9:18, "And I fell down before the Lord, as at the first, forty days and forty nights: did neither eat bread nor drink water, because of all your sins which ye sinned, in doing wickedly in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger." Hannah's prayer for a son in I Samuel 1:27, "For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him." Samuel's prayer for Saul in I Samuel 15:11, "...And it (Saul's disobedience) grieved Samuel and he cried unto the Lord all night." Daniel's prayer in Daniel 6:10, "Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house: and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime." The Old Testament is filled with powerful examples of prayer and faith. I believe though that Calvary changed the whole realm of prayer.

At Calvary, we are able to receive forgiveness. We are able to receive total and complete remission for our sins. We are able to become new creatures in Christ. Because of Calvary sin no longer separates us from the fullness of God. The veil in the temple was rent into. There is no separation for us any longer. We can enter into the holy of holies and stand before God with no need for a priest. These priests were set aside often from birth and sanctified to be allowed to go in to the holy of holies into the presence of God to offer sacrifices for the sins of the people. Because of Calvary there is no longer a separation. We not only can go personally into the presence of God, but we can go boldly. Hebrews 4:16 tells us, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Calvary made it possible to stand in the presence of God as His sons. (John 1:12, "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.") That power that was unleashed that day was something that the Old Testament saints did not have. Sin separates us from God. Calvary separated us

from our sin. It enabled us to go directly to the throne of God with boldness with our requests and petitions.

Calvary also enabled us to go directly into God's presence with our praise. God inhabits the praise of His people. I love to get caught up in thanking the Lord for how good He is and praising Him, and feel His presence reach down and surround me. Not only does the Holy Ghost inhabit our praise, but He also inhabits us as we praise God. That is something that couldn't happen before Calvary. The battle can be pressing in on all sides with little hope of relief. When we lift our hands in praise in spite of our circumstances, God inhabits our praise, and the powers of hell tremble and back away. When God blesses our praise the enemy falls on either side leaving a path of hope down the middle. Praise God Praise God. When the saints of God praise Him in the midst of the storm we can find favor with God. Because of Calvary the Holy Ghost can not only inhabit our praise, but He can inhabit us as we praise.

Another part of the power of Calvary regarding prayer came because of the Holy Ghost. Because of Calvary we can be filled with the Holy Ghost. We can be baptized, filled up to the brim. One of the gifts of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost is praying in tongues. Praying in tongues is the most powerful prayer that you will ever be able to pray. Romans 8:26-27 tells us, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." The Holy Ghost knows how to pray. When we pray in the Spirit and pray in tongues, we put our human flesh and its intellect on hold and we let the Holy Ghost pray through us. The Holy Ghost directly prays through us. The One who knows all things and holds all wisdom prays. Have you ever wished that you knew just exactly what to pray and how to pray? The Holy Ghost does. Let Him pray through you.

If you have the Baptism of the Holy Ghost see if any of these things are familiar. How many times has the Holy Ghost nudged you, starting you to pray? You found out later why. Or He exploded in you rebuking the devil, and later you found out how a trap that satan had laid had closed. How many times have you been through spiritual warfare, and the Holy Ghost rose up to take authority? And you knew the victory was won even before you saw it come about? How many times has someone interceded for you, and they didn't know you were going through anything. Through their praying in tongues, the Holy Ghost interceded for you. Not only do we pray more powerful prayers when we pray in the Spirit, but our spirit is strengthened when we do so. Jude 20 tells us, "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost." Praying in the Holy Ghost strengthens our spirit. Any time that we connect with the Holy Ghost and allow him to consume us we are strengthened in our spirit. That is why it is so important never to quench the Holy Ghost, but when you feel His presence, back up flesh and let Him have His way. I Thessalonians 5:19 tells

us, “Quench not the Spirit.” We need to let the Spirit of God move us. To be able to do this we have to daily live a life that is committed and submitted to Him. We can’t expect to have this kind of experience in our prayer life, if our priorities are set on everything else and we barely have time for God. If the Spirit of God isn’t controlling our lives, then He won’t be in our prayer life either. We need to be yielded to God and His Spirit every day so that when we pray, that Holy Ghost flows freely from us. Prayer is one thing that helps us to come to that place in God.

Another part of the power of prayer that was unleashed at Calvary came because of Jesus’ death and resurrection. After His resurrection, He now sits at the right hand of God praying for us. Wow. Romans 8:34 tells us, “Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.” It is no wonder that the next verse makes the statement, “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ..” With Jesus making intercession for us, who can separate us? Jesus is praying for you right now. He is taking your petitions to His Father in your behalf.

Prayer is so important to our lives. Through prayer we can maintain our victory. The Bible tells us to pray without ceasing. I guess you could say that prayer should not only be something we do, but it should be a way of life. In I Thessalonians 5:17 it tells us, “Pray without ceasing.” If our minds are stayed on God, what room do you have for the devil and his thoughts to get you down? Prayer lifts you up out of flesh into the presence of God. The most powerful prayers are those that are born in faith. Mark 11:24 tells us, “Therefore I say unto you, what things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.” Also those prayers that are born from sacrificial obedience are powerful prayers. Powerful prayer also comes when we abide in Christ. John 15:7 tells us, “If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.” That kind of prayer comes from submitting and committing it all.

Is there anything greater than the power of prayer? Is there anything more miraculous than the fact that we can pray to God in heaven, and He hears us and answers our prayers. He hears our prayers all individually even though a whole world full of people is praying. He answers our prayers individually meeting our own personal needs with a very personal love. How miraculous can you get? We serve an awesome God. Psalm 91:15, “He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honor him.” Isaiah 65:24, “And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.” Jeremiah 29:13, “And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.” When we seek Him with all our hearts, because of Calvary, He will be there.

Chapter 18.

Mocking Calvary

The scripture that best illustrates this chapter is found in Romans chapters 1, 2, and chapter 6. Here we find that Paul is speaking to the Roman church. We know by history that as a whole, the Romans were totally given over to flesh. They were the partiers. At one time they ruled the world. They lost it all because they became so wild they could no longer rule it. Barbarians conquered them. That is what sin does to us. This didn't happen all at once. I'm sure it was gradual. That is how it happens. I have watched a lot of people who little by little allowed "barbarians" to control their life. These barbarians were crueller than the ones that attacked Rome. Sin will destroy us from the inside out. I am sure that you have either watched this happen or have had it happen to you. This church in Romans reminds me so much of what is happening even in the churches in America today. Matter of fact, the United States can compare to Rome right before its fall in many ways. One of the ways is the lack of morals. The lack of understanding what is right and wrong has left our nation as a whole. I work with a lot of young people and have for over 20 years. That is the number one battle that young people face. They are lost in a long line of compromised generations. For generations "if it feels good do it" has ruled even in the church. Don't let anyone make you feel bad over what you do and don't make anyone uncomfortable is the thinking that has taken over the church. Altars were taken out because we didn't want to make people feel uncomfortable. The Holy Ghost convicts us of our sin. Believe me He makes us uncomfortable. The Word of God is a sword cutting down to marrow. Because we didn't want to feel uncomfortable these left out of our midst. All that was left for the church to become was a social club, minus God.

We grew up our children in this atmosphere. Now they are a generation removed from the knowledge of right and wrong and they don't even understand the power of God's conviction. They are a generation removed from allowing God's Word and Holy Ghost to bring them to repentance. Most of them have no knowledge of these things. When we criticize the morals and the violence of today's youth, we need to point a finger in our own directions to the church as a whole. We may need to look at our own lives. We need to go back to Calvary. We are the next generation's only hope. We are their legacy. We need to stop mocking the precious things of Calvary. There is a right and there is a wrong. We need to step out of our compromise, commit ourselves to God, and get right and get real. We need to obey God. Disobedience leads to eternal damnation whether we talk ourselves out of it or whether we believe that disobedience is OK. There is no compromise with God. We don't get it our way. We need to get back to the place that we find out what God's way is. It is God's way or no way. There is one truth, the Word of God. Denominational doctrine will not get you to heaven. We can distort the truth any way we want to, but any other way than the full truth will

lead us to eternal damnation. There is a truth and His name is Jesus. We need to find a true genuine relationship with that truth, and He and the Holy Ghost will lead us into all truth. We will not make it to heaven by following after our church, or our pastor, or our parent's religion, but we have to know that truth and it is the truth that will set us free. There is still a narrow way that leads to the right path. Matthew 7:13-14 tells us, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

One of the rulers that I use to measure out which way I need to go is the question, how many people are beating down the bushes to go that way. If the majority of the people are all headed in that direction, then I can almost know even before I check it out with God that direction is not the one I need to head in. If the in crowd is pushing a certain idea, a certain way of thinking, a certain way of life, or even a certain brand name of shoes, then I know that is not the thing that I need to do. I know that it is foolish to walk there. The majority of people are not choosing to walk in the truth. Because of this they are mostly foolish. Their thinking as a whole is not sound thinking. Why go along with the crowd on anything that the crowd comes up with? The majority of the people are going to hell. We are not going to change that. Why is this so? Because the majority of the people are going to choose the easy, broad path. That means that a majority of people is going in a totally opposite direction with their entire life than I am. Does it make sense to say "this is the in thing to do, everybody is doing it, so I need to go along with the crowd"? I'm not just talking about the moral or religious things that we do, though that is included in this. I am talking about any of the "fads and fashions" or ways of thinking that the world comes up with. Why go along with the losers? Let's get into the winning crowd. For example, an extreme majority of people in the United States claims to be born again. Only 10% say that they believe in any moral absolutes. Does that mean that we need to disregard moral absolutes because the majority has? What does this statistic say about the church world today? I believe that says that the majority of the church world is not on that narrow path that leads to a victorious life in Christ now and eternal life to come. I hope that this isn't true because some of them are just "going along with the crowd". What a sad way to mock Calvary!

Calvary is mocked when we fail to walk in the truth. When we can't even admit our sin, we mock the blood that was shed there for our forgiveness. When we make excuses and cover up our wrongdoing, or our wrong attitudes, and we fail to let the Holy Ghost convict us, we mock Calvary. When we run away from repentance in our self-righteousness, we mock Calvary. When we say, "God loves me so I can do what I want to. He'll forgive me" we mock Calvary. When we say, "What is right for me might not be right you and what's wrong for me might not be wrong for you", we mock Calvary. When we walk upright in our own eyes but we are far from a real relationship with the One Who died there for us, we

mock Calvary. When we say we are a Christian, but that only goes surface deep, we mock Calvary. When we say I am eternally saved no matter what I do, and we use our salvation as a cloak to do wrong, we mock Calvary. We mock Calvary when day after day we do our own thing and the One who died for us is an after thought at the end of the day. We mock Calvary when we choose our own will over His. We mock Calvary when we make other things the Lord of our lives. It is time to get real church and get right with God.

Sin brings death. Sin is disobedience to God and His Word. Sin is failing to allow His Spirit to work in your life. Sin is failing to do those things that you know you should do, and doing those things that you know you shouldn't do. Sin is failing to put Jesus as number one and committing and submitting to Him. Sin is failing to obey what He speaks in your heart. The Word of God plainly warns us about sin. Calvary gave us the power to become sons of God. Calvary gave us the forgiveness for our sin, and the power to rise up above it. When we sin, we have an advocate with the Father, that highest priest of all, Jesus, sitting at His Father's right hand pleading for us. That doesn't mean that we willfully continue to sin. When we do we are in danger of becoming like those mentioned in Romans 1: 21-32. That is summed up in verse 28, "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient."

Should we continue in our sin because of Calvary? Romans 6:2-6 tells us, "God forbid, How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Jesus paid a precious price so that you could be set free. Don't waste one precious drop of His blood. Get to know Him. The closer that you get to know Him and the more you understand His love for you, the less likely you will be to get caught in sin. He has given all you need to be victorious. You have the power of His Word to guide you. You have within you that same Holy Ghost that has kept the saints so well for thousands of years. That is part of the power at Calvary. You can make it. You are really without excuse like Romans 6:1 says. Lay down your sin. Lay down that old flesh man. Commit yourself to God. Submit to His Spirit. Take up the new man that comes when you let that New Man, Jesus in you through the power of the Holy Ghost rise up. You can overcome. Don't mock Calvary.

Chapter 19. **The Rapture**

We find one of the greatest powers of Calvary manifested days after Jesus' resurrection. We read about it on the day the disciples are left standing on the ground speechless. Luke 24:51, "And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven." We already talked earlier about part of the power of Calvary being the resurrecting of the dead. That is about as powerful as you can get. Even more powerful than that though is another power that was unleashed. That is the power to raise the dead and the living on the day that the rapture of the Saints of God takes place. That power will be the quickened power of the Holy Ghost made possible because of the events at Calvary. We will be able to be consumed by that power on that day because of Calvary. The power of the Holy Ghost to keep us in Christ, to make us able to be the Sons of God, will be what keeps us until that day. It will also be what will raise us up on that day to be with Jesus. It will be that power that I John 3:2 talks about, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."

I hear of many that have fallen away to believe that the rapture has already taken place and we are living in the post rapture world. That means that we are now living in the perfect world that God has in store as a reward for all His children that persevere. No, I don't think so!! My God is bigger and better than that. I also hear of many that say that there will be no rapture at all. My Bible is thicker than that. You can tear out all the pages you want to, but as for me, I prefer to leave them all there. Especially the ones that concern promises of blessings for my eternal future. How foolish can we be to take out these or twist these scriptures? When we study the rapture as a whole, we know that it is a real event that is to come. We know that it is on its way and it won't be very long. That hour will be soon. Instead of arguing that it isn't real, or that it has already been, wouldn't it be much wiser to get ready for it.

I won't discuss this any more in my words. Here is what the Word of God has to say. Matthew 26:64 tells us, "Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." Acts 1:11 tells us, "Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." Hebrews 9:28, "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Matthew 24:27, "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the son of man be." Matthew 24:36, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." Luke 12:40, "Be ye therefore

ready also; for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.” I Thessalonians 5:2, “For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.” Revelations 16:15, “Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.” Hebrews 10:37, “For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.” Matthew 24:24, “For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” Luke 19:13, “And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.” I Thessalonians 5:23, “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” I Timothy 6:14, “That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Titus 2:13, “Looking on that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ. And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.” Philippians 3:21, “Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto Himself.” Colossians 3:4, “When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.” I John 2:28, “And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.”

We need to recognize that His coming is real and it could be any day. We need to live like this is true. We need to get real with ourselves and with God. We need to commit and submit to the working of the Holy Ghost that will keep us and one day carry us to Him. We need to recognize all that took place at Calvary and walk in the victory that was purchased there for us. We need to make it a number one priority, not an after thought, planning that we will go in the rapture. We spend more time planning for the future in an economic sense, or planning for events in our future, than we do a conscientious effort to be ready for the rapture. The rapture determines our eternal future. We need to be ready. A twinkling of an eye is too fast to make many last minutes adjustments to our mind, soul, heart or lives. Are you ready? Jesus is coming for a bride that is without spot or blemish. No, I don't think that means only the perfect will go. Why do I say that? Because the Bible says that no one is perfect. I believe that this means that those born again children of God who let the Lord wash out their spots and continually iron out their wrinkles will be the ones that will go. Those who are washed clean by the blood of the Lamb, convicted, repentant, and forgiven will surely take to the air. As surely as Jesus did on that day so long ago.

We have such a wonderful victory ahead of us. We can overcome and see Him. When we see Him we will be like Him. No more flesh. No more flesh filled people. Just the perfection that God has will be in us all and around us. We'll be

perfect to enjoy a perfect world surrounded by perfect people all wrapped in a perfect God. Won't that be wonderful. That will be because of Calvary.

Calvary Study Questions

Chapter 1.

1. How is Calvary more than just for our salvation?

- 2 Summarize Colossians 1:12-22.

3. According to Colossians 2:12-15 how are we given victory over satan?

4. Colossians 1:23 tells us what will keep us. What is that?

5. List key scriptures covered.

Chapter 2.

6. Hebrews 4:15-16 tells us some things about our “high priest”. What are they?

7. In John 19:28, how do we see that Jesus values the keeping of the Word of God?

8. According to Romans 8:34, where is Jesus now and what is He doing for us?

9. List key scriptures.

Chapter 3.

10. Describe God's love for you.

11. Romans 8:37-39 tells us what will keep us?

12. What will separate us from the love of God?

13. In regards to the circle of children illustration, which circle do you place yourself in? Don't discuss this or tell us on the test. Just do some self reflection.

14. List key scriptures.

Chapter 4.

15. What is the difference in salvation in the Old and New Testament?

16. According to Jesus in Luke 10:18-20 what is one of the greatest miracles that we can see or experience?

17. Think for a minute. Where would you be now if you had never experienced salvation?

18. List key scriptures.

Chapter 5.

19. Why did Jesus have to shed His blood for our forgiveness?

20. Remember the last time that Jesus' blood purged your conscience. Write how you felt afterwards.

21. How does the blood of Jesus give us power over satan?

22. Remember the last time that Jesus' blood purged your conscience. Write how you felt afterwards.

Chapter 6.

23. What are some ways your sins will find you out?

24. List key scriptures.

Chapter 7.

25. Discuss the story of forgiveness found in the passage Luke 7:36-50.

26. According to I John 1:9, what is one condition of forgiveness?

27. According to Romans 8:1, how can we avoid condemnation?
28. List key scriptures.

Chapter 8.

29. Discuss Galatians 2:20.
30. Discuss the battle between the flesh and the Spirit.
31. How do we win the battle mentioned in question 30?
32. What is the importance of fasting?
33. List key scriptures.

Chapter 9.

34. How are we made new in Christ?
35. Romans 6:4-7 tells us how we are crucified with Christ? How is this so and what does this have to do in relationship to us and sin?
36. In what ways do we need to be renewed?

37. List key scriptures.

Chapter 10.

38. Discuss how we are to be crucified to the world and why it is important.

39. Why is 100% commitment crucial to our walk with the Lord?

40. List key scriptures.

Chapter 11.

41. Who is the Baptism of the Holy Spirit for and how do we receive it?

42. Explain the gift of speaking in tongues and how do we receive it?

43. List key scriptures.

Chapter 12.

44. Why was obedience an important part of Calvary?

45. Why is it important for us to obey?

46. Discuss II Thessalonians 1:8 and I Peter 4:17.

47. List key scriptures.

Chapter 15.

- 56. Explain our authority over satan and how we have this authority.

- 57. List key scriptures.

Chapter 16.

- 58. List scriptures that tell us that it is God's will to heal us.

- 59. How does the devil use condemnation against us when we are sick?

- 60. Discuss a time when you or someone you loved received a miracle of healing.

- 61. List key scriptures.

Chapter 17.

- 62. How did the power of prayer change at Calvary?

- 63. List key scriptures.

Chapter 18.

- 64. How can we mock Calvary?

- 65. Why is it so important not to mock Calvary?

66. Remember the last time that Jesus' blood purged your conscience. Write how you felt afterwards.

Chapter 19.

68. Discuss the rapture

69. List key scriptures.

TEST FOR THE POWER OF CALVARY

1. How is Calvary more than just for our salvation?
2. Summarize Colossians 1:12-22.
3. Colossians 1:23 tells us what will keep us. What is that?
4. Hebrews 4:15-16 tells us some things about our “high priest”. What are they?
5. According to Romans 8:34, where is Jesus now and what is He doing for us?
6. Romans 8:37-39 tells us what will keep us?
7. According to Jesus in Luke 10:18-20 what is one of the greatest miracles that we can see or experience?
8. Why did Jesus have to shed His blood for our forgiveness?
9. What are some ways your sins will find you out?

10. Discuss the story of forgiveness found in the passage Luke 7:36-50.
11. According to I John 1:9, what is one condition of forgiveness?
12. According to Romans 8:1, how can we avoid condemnation?
13. Discuss Galatians 2:20.
14. Discuss the battle between the flesh and the Spirit.
15. How do we win the battle mentioned in question 30?
16. Romans 6:4-7 tells us how we are crucified with Christ? How is this so and what does this have to do in relationship to us and sin?
17. In what ways do we need to be renewed?
18. Who is the Baptism of the Holy Spirit for and how do we receive it?

19. Discuss II Thessalonians 1:8 and I Peter 4:17.

20. List the outcomes of the persecution of Christ at Calvary?

21. What does it mean when we say, “death has lost its sting”? Why is this true

22. Explain our authority over satan and how we have this authority.

- 23 List scriptures that tell us that it is God’s will to heal us

24. Discuss a time when you or someone you loved received a miracle of healing.

25. How can we mock Calvary?

Continue for Remainder of Test

Upon completion of the test, students can also do a general summary of the course as a whole. Write a 3 page summary of the course. At the end of the summary, answer the following:

- ❖ What were the main parts of the course that ministered to you?
- ❖ How will you use the knowledge that you gained in your ministry?
- ❖ How would you rate this course on a scale of 1 to 10?
- ❖ How would you improve this course?