





# *Made New*

© Sandy Haga  
2003

## **Table of Contents**

The Power of God's Love	7
You Are Not Stuck	13
The Sweetest Words Ever Heard	19
The Power of God's Word	25
Why Obey	30
Wo Are We	40
The Battle	44
Walking in the Spirit	53
Closing	57



## *Chapter 1.*

### *The Power Of God's Love*

To understand how God can change us, we first have to understand who He is and how He works in our lives. God is love. I John 4:8 tells us the basic nature of God. John 3:16 tells us what kind of love God is. He loves us so much that when He created man He knew that He would have to send His only begotten Son to die for the sins of all. Still He made man to walk and talk with, to fellowship with, and share our love. His entire motive in creating us (that includes you, too) is love. He loves our company. He loves our praise. He loves you as if you were the only one. You have, when you accepted Jesus as your Savior, officially become His Son--as precious to Him as Jesus Himself. I John 3:1 says, "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God." God has for you a love greater than the love an earthly father has for his sons. Sometimes in this world of broken homes and selfish people it's hard to comprehend God's love. It is hard to believe that it is just for you. It takes time to grow in a relationship with anyone--time to develop love and trust. It takes time to develop a strong relationship with God. You have to get to know Him and then develop a trust with Him.

If others have hurt you, it is hard to trust God and submit to His love and let Him work inside you. I was that way. God just kept working on the trust between us and proving Himself to be trustworthy. When I gave up that hurt, He healed it. But to give it up I had to let go of it. To let go of hurt you have to forgive the people that hurt you and not hold it against them. If you hold it against them you cannot give it to God. Things you won't commit to Him He cannot fix. Things that we do, He surely will repair. God will even help you to forgive when you can't do it yourself, if you'll make up your mind honestly that you want to. He can be, in you, the love that you don't have. When you forgive, He will love you and heal your broken heart until you can love Him in return. Isn't He a wonderful God with such a wonderful love for you, His child.

We can get to know Him through his Word and through the testimony and teaching of others. This is good. Unfortunately, this is where many people stop. Their relationship becomes based on the relationships of others and not one of their own. That would be like my starting a friendship with you based only on what everyone says about you. Not by my getting to know you at all. That is not a real relationship and cannot grow into a real love. To develop a real relationship I would have to take time to spend with you, listen and talk with



you, be real with you and invite you to let me get to know you and let you get to know me. Without this, how could I say, that I even had a real relationship with you at all. Our relationship with Him needs to be personal. We not only fail God but we also fail ourselves, when we think that being religious is all there is to a Christian walk. Some of the most perfect, outwardly-holy people that seem to be the most religious often have no personal relationship with God, but a relationship with what they think it should be like to be a Christian. They try to walk the Christian walk alone without relying on His love and support. These people, unless they find a true love relationship with Him-a talking with, walking with, obedient relationship with Him--will miss heaven. A real eye-opener is found in Matthew 7:21-23. In this scripture, these people had accomplished many things for the Lord. They had forever forgotten the one most needful thing. Having a real relationship with God. One in which He knew them.

Satan tries to destroy Christians before they are strong in that relationship. They can be easy targets for his accusations (when they fail or even when they don't). The Bible tells us satan is the accuser of the brethren both day and night (Revelations 12:10). He hates God and because he does, he hates the thing closest to God. That's you. It's his job to accuse you and

discourage you until you quit, because you think that there is no use to try. When you find that real relationship with God, his tactics no longer work. When satan says, "You are nothing and will never be anything." You can answer, "Yes, I am, because I know God loves me and I know I am special to Him." When he accuses you, you merely answer, "I am forgiven". When He tries to discourage you by showing you the circumstances around you, you can just ask God to show you His side of the picture. You have to have confidence in God's ability to keep you. You must be secure in your relationship with Him to be able to be steadfast as a Christian and to allow God to do His changing work in you.

The only way you can loose in your relationship with God is to take it for granted or quit trying. Sometimes we don't treat God as if He were real with real feelings. God is very tender- hearted toward His children. He loves us with a jealous love (Deuteronomy 4:24). He weeps when we fail to serve Him just as Jesus did when He wept over the city of Jerusalem. (Matthew 23:37). Luke 1:78 talks of His tender mercies. He is tender in His love for us. We often fail to consider His feelings. We go for days and fail to speak to Him or seek His guidance. We fill our prayers with grumbling instead of the praise that He delights to hear. We fail to honor Him in our relationships with

those around us and even denounce our relationship if it doesn't seem to fit in with what is happening at the time. We forget his benefits. We love Him and commit to Him when it is convenient and expect Him to love us unconditionally. A real love relationship is not that way. Jesus Himself said in Revelations 2:4, "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." We must fall in love with Jesus and let Him love us for us to be able to be new in Him.

We also should never take advantage of the love of God or His forgiveness. Many take the attitude that whatever we do is OK because God will forgive us. Beware of false teaching that more or less gives you the license to sin premeditated or thought-up-ahead-of-time sin because you are a child of God and He will forgive you. The Bible teaches that if you continue to willfully sin over and over after you know the truth of God there is no more sacrifice for you. (Hebrews 10:26). Another way to say this is don't spit in the face of Jesus on the cross. Don't ever take advantage of one drop of His precious blood that was shed for your forgiveness.

This is not to say that we cannot be forgiven. I John 2:1 says, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous". I John

1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Jesus loved us so much that while we were yet sinners, He died for us. I know He will forgive you. But also remember I John 2:5, "But whoso keepeth His word, in Him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in Him." With all your heart love Him and serve Him without excuses. Keep His Word.

When a baby first walks he often falls. Being a new person in Christ is sometimes like being a baby all over again. New Christians have a lot to learn about God and His ways. If you fall, keep trying to walk, just like that child does that keeps getting up until eventually he learns to run. Don't excuse away your failures and sins. Confess them, and trust God's love to forgive you. Don't let Satan accuse you into discouragement. When you stand forgiven you are indeed forgiven. Don't let Satan put a fear of failure in your life. Perfect love casts out all fear (I John 4:18). Don't forget the love of your heavenly Father that watches and waits to help you when you fall.

If you hear others talk about God's love and how wonderful He is and how He blesses them, but you can't feel His love. If it seems like He isn't blessing your life, be careful not to get angry with God or angry with those that have found their place in his love. This will

lead to a jealous spirit and you will be bound from being able to find that love that God has for you. Hold on to the knowledge that a relationship with Him can be yours. Ask God to help you. Find out what might be hindering you. Are there other things in your life that you are holding on to that you might need to give up to have a relationship with God? The love of God is like a precious pearl that a man sold everything to gain (Matthew 13:36). If you are not forgiving others it can stop you from being able to feel God's love. If you are living in consistent sin or in your heart you would rather have sin in your life than to have the goodness of God then you will not be able to have His love until you repent and ask forgiveness. (Repent means to turn away from the wrongdoing.) Ask God to help you to find that relationship with Him and obey Him. If you do not follow Him as He leads, then you will not go in the same direction He is going.

Of course the first step in becoming a new person is to accept God's gift of salvation. Romans 10:9-11 says "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed." For you to begin the

change that God can bring in you, you must let Jesus, by the power of the Holy Ghost, come into your heart. You must realize what happens to you when you are saved. One young man, after overcoming a situation that had always, before his salvation, brought him defeat, remarked to me, "I know now that Jesus is in me". Jesus is truly in you to help you overcome and to help you to become new in Him.

The next step to changing to a new creature is to fall in love with Jesus. Fall in love with God. Understand Him and His love. Get to know Him. Most of all, let Him love you. His love has the power to transform you.

The next step is to want this relationship. If you do not want to have this relationship with God or you do not really in your heart want to change, then there is nothing that God can do for you. God will never overstep our free will.

We have to know, in order to change, that we are forgiven. "You are forgiven" are sometimes the most precious words that we can hear in a relationship with our loved ones. It is that way in our relationship with God. He loved you enough that He sent His only begotten Son to die for you? Will you receive that love and love Him in return?

## ***Chapter 2.*** ***You Are Not Stuck***

God is a God that is the same. He never changes. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. (Malachai 3:6). What He promised the saints of Bible times, He will also do for you. He was mighty enough to send plagues on Egypt, turn the sun back, divide the sea, stop the mouths of lions and quench the heat of the fiery furnace. He is still the same God and He has not changed. In this age of constant change, it is good to know that we serve a God that does not change. His nature is not going to change tomorrow. The God that we get to know today is going to be the same tomorrow. As time goes on and we get to know Him better, our perception of Him may change as we learn more about Him. He Himself will not change.

We are not the same way. We are not permanently stuck with what we don't like about ourselves. Too often we look at ourselves, our weaknesses, our personalities, the things about ourselves that we don't like and we become convinced that we cannot change. This is sometimes because we try to change ourselves and we fail. Then we give up. We begin to think that there's no need to try to change because we are the way we are and we cannot change. We are not like God. We can change. To think that we can't is not true. We

can change, because God is a God that loves to change people. The main goal He has for our lives is to ultimately change us into His likeness. I John 3:2 says, "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." We might say to ourselves that this change is just talking about a change that takes place when we get to heaven or when we are caught up in the rapture. The Bible, however, constantly talks about the Christian life as being a process of growth and surrender and a changing process. Read these verses. These verses aren't just talking about salvation but Paul is talking to God's children. Ones that have already been saved: Galatians 5:1, II Peter 3:18, Galatians 19:1, 2 Thessalonians 1:3, I Corinthians 13:11, Ephesians 4:13-15. If we are not growing in our relationship with God then it might be said that we are sliding backwards. The best way to be sure that we never get pulled back by the tricks of satan or the power of the world is to be sure that we are constantly moving forward in our walk with God. If we stop changing or growing, then we need to check out our relationship with Him and see what we need to correct in our lives.

We do not have to settle for our weaknesses and the things about ourselves that we do not like. When we try to change



ourselves and we fail, we think that we can't change. It is impossible for us to change ourselves. We can change on the surface and we can change small things about ourselves, but ultimately it takes these things to bring about a change inside us. It takes God, His salvation, His Holy Spirit living inside us, and His forgiveness. It takes His Word, His love, and His family of support around us to bring about a real change inside. And with all that going for you, how can you not change?

We must stop looking at the Christian life as something that we need to do on our own. This will only lead to frustration and failure. We need to look at it as a process of surrender, giving up and giving in, and letting God do the tremendous work that He wants to do in and with our lives. Yes, you can change, because He can change you. "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created, in righteousness and true holiness". (Ephesians 4:24.) "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." (Galatians 2:20) This verse doesn't say that we become like Christ because we are trying really hard and using the faith that Christ has given us. It says that we change by being crucified, by being dead, so that Christ can live in us. It doesn't say that we

have to use the faith that Christ gives us. It tells us that we actually use the faith of Christ. That we actually use His faith, because it is He that will do this work in us, if we will just submit and allow Him to. And the One who loved us enough to give Himself for us will surely faithfully work on us and stay with us until we are changed. That is if we just stay in His hands and yield to Him. Isaiah 64:8-"But now, O Lord, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand."

The change that we have in our life may not be an instant change. We often think that we get everything God has for us the instant we get saved. We get a lot. But we are also just beginning. There is a lot to learn about God, His ways, and His love. There is a lot to learn about His kingdom. The Christian walk is a day-to-day learning and growing experience. I once asked God when I would know all about Him and what His love was like. He answered me "Never". I would know Him and get closer to Him through eternity, but I would never learn all about His love that there was to know. We will always be growing, always be learning about Him--all the way through forever. And that is a very long time. We serve a wonderful and a very big God who has a very big love for us.

**Chapter 3.**  
***The Sweetest Words Ever Heard-I Forgive***

I went through a time in my life that I turned away from God's love and was involved in every type of sin imaginable. I would, through the prayers of those around me, occasionally get a clear mind. However, the guilt that I had for what I was doing would overwhelm me and I would start again. That cycle of guilt and sin nearly destroyed not only my life, but my soul as well. The ones around me who prayed nearly gave up out of frustration, but God never did. One day I finally felt His love for me. It was almost as if I could actually see with my eyes the nail scars in his hands. He spoke to me and said, "I forgive. I did this for you. You are forgiven." Those were the words that turned my life around. It took time for me to finally accept His love and complete and total forgiveness. Only then could I submit to His love and let Him work in my life. That moment was the beginning of a change in me. It took me even longer to forgive myself. When I accepted forgiveness and forgave myself, then I had to forgive others. When I did these things God's delivering power set me free from the hold satan had in my life. The sweetest words I hear now are I forgive. Later I read the scripture, "Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands", Isaiah 49:16

(read 15 and 16). Those palms are graven with the scars of the cross He suffered for our forgiveness. The love He has for you is what He sees when He looks at those scars. He doesn't see the sin that He hung there to erase. Your sins, because of His death on the cross and the blood He shed, are forgiven (Colossians 1:14). The Bible tells us they are not only forgiven but also forgotten. Jeremiah 31:34 says "...I will forgive their iniquity and will remember their sins no more."

One of the greatest things that separate us from God's love is our concept of forgiveness. We do not live in a world where people readily forgive. "Get even" is the message the world preaches. It is little wonder that it is so hard for people to accept the love of God and the love of one another. Even in our churches, sinners are not loved back home, but condemned and judged and scorned. Not only are sinners treated that way, but we treat our own brothers and sisters that make mistakes in a way that drives them away. We have our own standard of perfection that may not be God's at all and we judge everyone around us that way. People unconsciously begin to see this as the way Jesus is. After all, aren't we His body? Jesus faced a group of men that would easily have fit into most of our congregations in Luke 7:36-50. A woman of a not-so-reputable reputation came to a banquet that was honoring

Jesus. She, with sweet ointment and tears, washed the feet of Jesus. The Pharisees criticized Him saying that if He knew what kind of woman that she was He would not even speak to her. They questioned His spiritual discernment. (Is this familiar. Spiritual discernment is fine. But if it operates without love it is a tinkling brass and sounding cymbal just like any other gift without it. It probably isn't discernment by the Spirit of God at all, but judging in the flesh. Remember there are only two spirits. One is God and one is satan. And satan's discernment and judging can destroy a child of God.) Jesus (who judges a righteous judgment) answered their critique by saying "You have not treated me as well. Her sins are many but they are forgiven. And they that are forgiven of much love me much." This is the love we need to accept from our Savior who loves us so much. This is the forgiveness and love we need to accept for ourselves. He will not judge us, but welcome us into His love. One who will die to forgive you would not turn His back on you when you ask for it. He gladly runs to you. Read the story of the Prodigal son in Luke 15:11-32. Jesus Himself told this to illustrate the love of His Father. God loves you in spite of your sins and your weaknesses. Let Him forgive you. Let Him change you. Those that are forgiven are not the ones He judges. He judges those that excuse their sin, those that

refuse to ask for or accept His forgiveness, those that think that it isn't for them. He calls the forgiven blessed. (Romans 4:7)

Do you remember when as a child you did something wrong and hid it from your parents. Remember how your guilt put in question your love for them and their love for you. Remember how good it felt when you finally confessed. The punishment was easier to take than the guilt. That's why it is so important to accept God's forgiveness, because guilt can stop you from receiving His love. It can leave a door in your life open for satan to bind you. There are ways to deal with guilt. Often we blame it on others. Or we excuse it away. Or we hide it from ourselves. None of this gets rid of it. We must go to God quickly when we sin. That way we always have His love.

Let's go back for a moment to the story of the woman at the dinner in the previous paragraph. The woman in the story received the forgiveness, love and recognition of Jesus. The Pharisees did not. It is so easy to let a critical and judgmental spirit take over our thinking. A critical spirit will cause us to look at everyone around us and find fault in everything they do. One big problem with this is that it causes us to be even more critical of ourselves. Satan does enough accusing without us joining in. Matthew 7:1 says "Judge not that ye be not

judged.” Judging others can turn against us so easily. We will reap what we sow from others. If they feel a critical spirit from you, they will be critical back. When this is combined with our being critical against ourselves, we will quickly come to the point that we feel there is no use to try.

Luke 6:37-38 says, "Judge not and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned, forgive and ye shall be forgiven". Verse 38 completes this statement (still talking about forgiveness), "Give and it shall be given unto you: good measure pressed down, and shaken together, and running over shall men give to your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." If you have a critical and condemning spirit, others will not forgive you and God will not. The same measure of forgiveness that you give to others will be given back to you. The same love that you give to others will be given back to you. Even the Lord's prayer teaches us that we have to forgive to be forgiven. "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those that trespass against us."

How do you change a critical spirit? Ask God for His forgiveness. Often a critical spirit is caused by our own guilt that we are failing to deal with or that we are not accepting forgiveness for. Ask Him to love you. Let His love soak you and change you. When you let

Him love you, it will be really hard for you not to love those around you. And we need His love-you need His love and you need the love of those around you, especially if you have convinced yourself that you don't.

To be a new person you must allow the old person to be forgiven. Forgiveness wipes sin away so that it no longer can rule our lives. The old is gone and the new is just ahead. When you accept God's forgiveness satan will still try to accuse you. Just tell him all that was settled on the cross, and in the name of Jesus the blood of Jesus covers you. You are free from your sin and your past. You are ready for a bright, new, wonderful future in God's love as a brand new creature in Christ.



## *Chapter 4.*

### *The Power of God's Word*

Isaiah 55:11 says, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing thereto I sent it." God's Word is the most powerful force in the universe. Nothing can stop it. Mark 13:31 tells us that not one tiny part of His Word will fail to come to pass. II Samuel 22:31 says, "As for God, His ways are perfect: the Word of the Lord is tried". First Kings 8:56, "There has not failed one Word of all His good promises...." Psalm 107:20, "He sent His Word and healed them and delivered them from destruction." It was the Word of God that created the heavens and earth. Genesis 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14 all start with "and God said" and end with the words "and it was so". God's Word actually set in motion the laws that hold the universe and all creation still today. God's Word is a living power source for His people. It Works!!!!

When the word "WORD" is cross-referenced in a concordance you will find many times these phrases "the Word of the Lord was spoken" or "the Word of the Lord came to them". After these phrases you will find these words repeatedly, "It was done according to the Word of the Lord". God's Word and His

promises for us have the power to change our lives, our circumstances, and ourselves.

We need to realize how powerful His Word is and how it can work in our lives and how it can change us. John 14:23 tells us the key. "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." We have to read God's Word, understand it, take it into our hearts, and then obey it. John 8:51 has a powerful promise. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my sayings he shall never see death." If we keep God's Word and obey Him there is nothing that can stop us, not even death. We must, however, study His Word and apply it, and obey it for us to receive the benefits of it.

Picture yourself at a huge buffet. You walk to all the serving tables and return to your table with an empty plate. You sit down, and watch everyone else enjoy their meal and listen as they talk about how delicious it is. You will not reap any benefits from this meal at all. Too often we do not read God's Word. Or when we read it, we do not take it to heart and obey it. Many people only listen to what others think about it or read books about what others have experienced. That's like sitting at the buffet and listening to others talk while your plate is empty. You need to taste God's Word for

yourself. Psalm 34:8 says, "O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in Him." Get alone with God and let Him open up His Word to you. Let Him reveal things that you need in your life and circumstances. Let Him reveal His love for you. Let Him personally reveal the blessings and promises He wants to pour out on you. Let Him open up to you the areas of your life that need to be fixed and let Him reveal His correction and strength. Then when He speaks to your heart, put into practice what He tells you. His Word is powerful and can change you, but just like that banquet and empty plate--if you don't eat you will go away hungry.

Often we are how we are because of how we think. How we think about our circumstances, the people around us and ourselves determine whether or not we are victorious as Christians. Watch the people around you. Are those that think and speak negative thoughts full of doubt and fear accomplishing great things in their lives? Are they living a healthy and prosperous life? Are they blessed in the victory of the Lord? Now consider yourself. Are you negative in your thoughts? Do you need to change the film in your camera so that it takes a better and more accurate picture of what is around you? Do you need to take off your dark glasses so that you can see the world around you, and yourself,

through God's eyes that are full of faith? Do you need to stop seeing yourself through your negative perception that always sees faults? What about the things you say? A good rule is, "If you can't say anything good, don't say it at all". What we confess has power in our lives. Negative talk can often bind us. We can change how we think and talk by reading God's Word. God's Word is positive. We can change how we see our circumstances, others, and ourselves by filling our mind with His perception. Let His Word change how you think. When you read it, it will become a part of you and you can start thinking with the mind of Christ. Philippians 2:5 tells us to "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus". Jesus is not negative in His thinking. His Spirit is in you. Let His Spirit and His Word redirect how you think.

When you begin to study God's Word in earnest, satan will try to stop you. He will cause your mind to wander, sleepiness, distractions, anything to stop you from taking it in. James 4:7 says, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." When satan messes with you, just tell him, "Devil, it is written in God's Word that you have to leave me alone. In the name of Jesus get away from me." He has to leave. This works any time you are bothered by him.

It may take several times to convince him that you mean business, but keep it up--it works.

One warning, we live in a world full of false teaching. II Peter 2:1 says, "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction." Don't let people be your controlling guide to understanding God's Word. Study it for yourself and let His Spirit lead you in understanding it. Then listen to people. If you hear something taught that doesn't fit with His Word, stay away from it. Mostly people are trapped in false teaching because they have sin in their life that they don't want to repent of. God's Word says not to sin so they change God's Word to excuse their sin. It doesn't work that way. God's Word will stand and we will be judged by what it says. When we sin, we need to recognize it. We don't need to hide it or excuse it away. Then we need to repent. To repent means to feel so sorry that we are never going to do that again. People who try to excuse their sin often get involved in false teaching. Also, people who are gullible and fall into following other people instead of following Christ. Know God. Know His Word. Get a real relationship with Him. Then you will not have to worry about false teaching.

## *Chapter 5.*

### *Why Obey?*

We live in a society filled with the slogans of: "Doing all you can and still getting by." Or "If it feels good, do it." Even, "What's right for me may not be right for you and what's right for you may not be right for me". This leaves us (especially the young people) doubting our own standards of what is right and what is wrong. We often deal with our wrongdoing and our sin by excusing our faults, blaming them on others and not accepting responsibility for what we do wrong. Even the church often has a life-style of getting by, and our own standards, character, and morals have almost disappeared. Churches are even starting to teach that it's OK to do anything and have any kind of lifestyle because God is a loving God that doesn't want anyone to go to hell. He will forgive you, so you can do whatever you want to. We know what the world has to say about obeying God. Let's read some scriptures that tell us what God's Word has to say.

Romans 1:5 tells us that "...we have received grace for obedience." This tells us that we have received grace, not to give us free reign to do whatever we want to, but we have received grace to enable us to obey God.

Jeremiah 7:23: "Obey my voice and I will be your God and ye shall be my people..."

According to this verse, what will we be if we do not obey God? We will not be His people.

Hebrews 5:9: "And being made perfect He became the author of eternal salvation unto all that obey Him". According to this verse only those that purpose in their heart to obey Him will receive eternal salvation.

Deuteronomy 11:27-28: "A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the Lord your God which I command ye this day or a curse if ye will not obey..." This verse tells that the way to be blessed is to obey God and the way to receive His curse is to disobey Him.

II Corinthians 10:5: "Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ". This tells us that even our thoughts must not exalt themselves against God but must be obedient to God.

Romans 6:16: "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". Whose servant are you? Who are you obeying??

II Thessalonians 1:7-8: "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel

of our Lord Jesus Christ". Those that do not obey Him will suffer His judgment.

We will always fight a sin nature as long as we are in the flesh. We will sin. But we do not have to be in rebellion and consistently disobey God. If we do, the Bible tells us plainly that we will be judged. It also tells us how to overcome our nature to sin so that we can live victoriously as Christians. It tells us how to be filled with Jesus, and let Him live that life in us. It is so dangerous this age of permissiveness that we live in. The church itself is so lax in its standards that there seems to be no difference in it and the world, in the eyes of most sinners. It is no longer a light but a hindrance to the lives of many who look at it searching for God. God's Word tells us plainly the standards we are to live by and tells us plainly that to be His child we must obey them.

To know the standards in God's Word we first have to understand how God speaks to us. He speaks to us in His written Word. It is our God-given responsibility to read that Word and let Him reveal it to us so that we know how to live. Another way that we are given God's Word is His speaking to us through His people. This may be through preaching or a word of knowledge. Another way is His speaking to our hearts, directly and personally to us. This is still God. This is the same God whose Holy Ghost inspired His Word. If God is speaking,



whether through His Word, through others, or to your heart, whatever He says will always agree with each other. In other words, if someone tells you something that is contrary to what God says in His Word, they are not telling you something from God. Or if you believe God is speaking to your heart, but it is something that does not line up with God's Word, then what you hear is not God, but satan trying to tempt you or lead you astray.

Christians today are failing to listen to God in their relationship with Him. If you are a parent, remember the times you corrected and gave guidance to a child. Remember how you felt when that child turned a deaf ear to your words and did what you warned them not to do. Remember the pain you experienced as you watched them suffer. Just as a disobedient child suffers when they refuse to hear sound advice, we suffer when we neglect or refuse to hear God's voice speaking to us. We suffer when we refuse to obey Him when He is guiding us, or chastising us, as a good Father does. Remember the times your children listened and obeyed you. Remember the feeling of being pleased with them. We can touch the heart of God when we show Him that we are willing to be obedient to Him, especially if that obedience brings about a sacrifice in our life. What better thing can be said about us than we touched the

heart of God and pleased Him? What better thing can we have than God's favor?

Obedience is an attitude that we need to have every day, every minute. This is the key to a victorious life and a life filled with our changing to be more like Him. Every second you should be tuned into God's voice. Listening to Him in your relationship should be something that you do almost without thought. It should be the number one priority in your life. Not the thing you do in the first or last few minutes of your day. I visited friends in Bucharest, Romania. It had been only a short time since the revolution there where hundreds of men women and children were killed in the street. Christians there today still pray and ask God for guidance before they even leave their homes. If He tells them not to go, they don't go, for fear of their lives. It is almost coming to that place in our own country. The day is fast approaching that every time we leave the safety of our homes we will need God's guidance just to protect us. Think of the many times that when you obeyed God you were blessed, others were reached, you were protected, or God used you. This is how we need to walk every day. Not just remembering the times in the past when these things happened, but rejoicing every day in what He has led you into. We ask God for a fulfilled life full of being used by Him, but we only occasionally seek out His guidance and

obey it. How can He lead you into a wonderful life if you don't obey Him?

We can do our very best, but most of the time that is not enough. Sometimes all it does is to prevent God from being able to work. How many times has someone caused you great pain by doing their best to help you? All too often we don't know what is best. We don't know all God knows. Isaiah 55:8 and 9 says, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts neither are my ways your ways saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts". We can do what we think is best with all our heart. We can even sacrifice to do it. But often that can only fail God or cause harm to what He is doing. If we listen to Him and obey what He says, we can be used in miraculous, super-human ways, because isn't our God a miraculous, super-human God?

In Christian service it is very important that we obey God. We can reach out to others just by what we think they need, when we think they need it. Or we can reach out in total submission to Jesus, reaching out when He desires to touch their life, speaking what He wants to say, doing what He is longing to do for them. We can obey Him and become His love, His hands, reaching out. The world does not need you reaching out. It needs the hands arms, mouth, and love of Jesus Himself. The only

way to do this is to die to yourself, commit yourself totally to Him, and obey Him in every step you take and word you say.

To be able to fully obey God we have to ask Him to take our self-will and be willing to let Him live in and through us. We cannot have a victorious life by obeying what is in our own minds that we think God wants us to do. We have to hear His voice and let Him lead us. We have to submit ourselves, our motives, our emotions and let Him lead us. Our obedience is a precious thing in the eyes of God. He will bring us to the place that we are submitted to Him if we really want Him to. He will bring us into obedience if we are willing to give up our self-will and really follow Him. If we let Him work in our lives He will bring us to this place in our relationship where we totally trust Him enough to obey Him and trust our relationship with Him enough so that we know when He is speaking to us. We have to practice listening to His voice. At first it may be hard to recognize His voice and tell it apart from our own or satan's voice. The more we hear it the more familiar it will become.

Some people try so hard to come to this relationship of obedience with God. By their very trying they are hindered. When you try, you are filled with more of yourself and less of God. You need to give up and let Him do what He so easily can do. Remember He is inside

you. He can do anything inside you that you freely allow Him to do. He can work on the inside and when you submit to Him, you become more of Him than you do yourself. Then you can find this life of obedience is easy. It's just like becoming a child before your perfect Father, loving Him, trusting Him. Letting Him work on the inside of you, and letting His love cause you be submissive to Him. You are listening to His voice and letting Him use you. The hardest part is letting go of your self, and letting God do it. God can even help you do that if you want Him to.

The Bible says God gives these things to those that obey Him: the Holy Spirit, healing, deliverance, as well as salvation. Most of God's promises found in his Word are received only through obedience. If we want to change to a new creature, we have to obey Him. He will, everyday, send new experiences that can shape us and mold us if we will only obey Him and find them and walk through them.

One of the keys to having an obedient heart and attitude before God is that we understand God's motive for requiring obedience. Sometimes we try to obey, but satan consciously accuses us. This drives us into rebellion against God in an "I can't so why try attitude". The thing satan is using against us is our very desire to please God. Sometimes failing comes about if we are following God far

off. We fail if our relationship with Him hasn't yet gotten to the place that we hear His voice. We have to also understand that God is good and the motive He has in leading us is pure, complete and perfect love. God loves you. He will tell you the things to do that are best for you. You might not agree or understand, but you don't know everything. Trust Him. Trust His love for you. Let Him love you. Spend time with Him and get to know how wonderful He is. The more you get to know Him and His love, the easier it will be to want to please Him in all you do.

A wonderful picture of obedience and how it works is Jesus, God, and the Holy Spirit themselves. When Jesus was on earth, He did totally what the Father told Him to do, even submitting to death. The Bible tells us that the Holy Spirit speaks and acts only in accordance to what the Father wants. At one point in time, God will place all things at the feet of Jesus. What a beautiful picture of obedience and submission. What a beautiful picture of love. Isn't that what love is--putting yourself at the feet of the one you love and seeking their own good above your own. That love is what makes submission and obedience easy. The angels themselves submit to God, and those that stayed true to Him after the fall have been true since their creation. They don't have to obey. They too were created with their own will to choose

who they serve. How do we know? Because we read that one third rebelled against God. Why have the ones that remained with God chosen to obey Him since the beginning of time? From the very beginning, they have watched the love of the Father for His Son and that wonderful love He has for His creation. They have watched in detail all that He has done and they know His nature probably more than we may ever know, after spending eternity with Him. And they love Him. That's why they follow Him and serve Him. We serve and submit to and obey God because He is so wonderful. We have only started to glimpse how wonderful He is. At first we have to accept how wonderful He is by faith. The more we serve Him and the longer we know Him, the better we see how wonderful He is. At first, we just have to take everybody's word about Him and His Word about Himself, but the more we get to know Him, the easier it is to serve Him because the easier it is to fall in love with Him. When we come to the place that we love Him with all our heart, it will be our great delight to sit at His feet and wait for the tiniest detail of anything that we can do for Him.

## *Chapter 6.*

### *Who Are We?*

We have seen that we are precious in the eyes of God. We have seen that we were created with a specific purpose in mind. We were created for the purpose of serving and praising and obeying Him. We have seen that our own opinion of ourselves matters little, but it is His opinion of us that makes a difference in who we are and what we accomplish. We have seen that we have the Spirit of God living inside us to give us the power to accomplish anything. We have seen that we have the power of the Word of God inside us, changing us into His likeness. Then, you may well ask, why do I fail? Why do I always do the things that I know not to do and do the things I wish I had never done? Paul says it so well in Romans 7:18-25. "For I know that in me (that is in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." To understand the battle inside us we first have to understand how we are made.

We are made of three parts. Much as an egg has three parts: the shell, the yolk, and the white, we also have three parts. You can't have a whole egg without having all three parts. You are made up of flesh, spirit and your soul. The



flesh part of us is the part that, sadly, all too often gets the most attention. It is the part that even animals have, our outside container, our physical body, it's needs and desires. But Genesis 1:26-27 tells us that we were created different from the animals. We were made in the image of God. We were given an eternal spirit and soul. To be victorious Christians and new in Christ we need to understand these three parts and how to put each in their proper prospective.

The flesh part of us is the outside shell, our physical body and mind. It has cravings and desires all its own. It has a way of thinking apart from God and His Word. It is the part of us that is separate from God. We inherit our physical traits from our parents and so on for generations. We also inherit a nature to sin that has been passed down to us from every generation from the beginning of time. Adam and Eve were our original parents. Because they disobeyed God they passed on to us the inherited trait of rebellion and disobedience. Because of that, our flesh has an inherited tendency to sin. Romans 7:18 says, "For I know that in me (in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing." It is hard to do right. It is natural to do wrong before God comes into our lives. That's why the best we can be without God is but filthy rags in the sight of a very, perfect God (Isaiah 64:6). That's why Jesus had to die for

our sins. The wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). What sin earns us is death. Death here is eternal separation from God. After Adam and Eve messed up there was no way we could be without sin, and sin separated us from being with God. Until Jesus came. When we have repented of our sin, we no longer have to be separated. God did not just leave us with flesh and nothing else. He Himself can come inside our hearts and live through the power of His Holy Ghost. This is why we can become new in Christ. It is no longer you but Christ that lives in you. We forget the miracle that we have inside of us. We do everything, but rely on it. We fill ourselves with our own thoughts and wants and feelings, but He is there all the time, waiting for us to find the joy, and peace that He can bring right on the inside of us. We faint because of lack of strength while inside of us we have enough power to raise the dead. We have the power source in us that created the heavens and earth and all we think about is our weaknesses. When we justify and excuse our failures we, are denying His existence and His power inside us. We forget and we fail, when He was inside of us all the time, waiting to take control. This is why we can become new in Christ. We have inside of our spirit a new man, a spirit man, the Holy Ghost. We have all we need to be victorious, but we have to learn to let Him control our flesh.

Our wages that our flesh would earn us is death-eternal separation from God. However, God, in His love, made a new way. Thank God that He didn't just create us as flesh, but that He also made us with a spirit and soul. These two parts of us are eternal. We have inside of us a "built in container" to hold God's Spirit. Before we were saved, that empty lost feeling we had was because we were created to hold God's Spirit and if it is lacking we are empty inside. This soul part of us is eternal and will spend eternity in heaven or hell. Which place is dependant on the choices we make. Understanding the flesh and soul helps us to overcome the battle we have with ourselves. Understanding the difference in our spirit and our flesh and learning how to let God have control of our flesh is how we can win the victory in this battle and make heaven a sure destination.

## ***Chapter 7. The Battle***

So if it is so easy to obey and serve God why do we have such a struggle? Paul explained the battle so well in Romans 7:14-25. "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." The flesh part, as we learned in the previous chapter, is not good. It leads us to feel and think wrong and often to make wrong choices for our life. It leads us to sin. The wages of sin is death and eternal separation from God (Romans 6:23). So we must not let the flesh control us. How do we overcome it?

Romans 8:2-6 says "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." The law is God's rules of how to live. If we didn't have those we wouldn't know what was right and what was wrong. We have to know these. But the law in

itself doesn't give us the power to do right, when we know that, by ourselves, we can't. So how do we? God sent His own Son to die so that we could be forgiven, but He didn't leave it there and doesn't expect us to either. Some Christians make the mistake of settling for forgiveness, but He wants us to have enough victory in our lives to be able to do what is right. When we just settle for forgiveness, then we are in danger of walking on the edge. That is too close when the devil like a roaring lion seeks to push us right over the edge. When Jesus was resurrected and ascended to heaven He sent His Spirit to come into our hearts and souls and that is what gives us the power to overcome.

We have our flesh still, but we also have the living Son of God living in us through the power of the Holy Ghost. That is how we overcome the flesh. We let Jesus do it in us. Galatians 2:20 says, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live yet not I but Christ that liveth in me, and the life I live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me." He gives us a "new man" inside of us that can control our flesh nature "the old man". That's when we become a new creature, a new person. When Jesus on the inside works on the outside, it makes a change in us and in our lives. In this verse it tells us that "we live this life by the faith of the Son of

God who loved me and gave Himself for me". Notice this does not say that we live it by our faith that we have in Jesus, but in His faith. How much faith does Jesus have? Absolute faith. His faith in His ability to keep us is very sure. That battle comes when we fail to let Him control our lives and our flesh. It comes when we fail to submit our flesh to Him.

God didn't save us, send His Son to forgive us, then leave us as we are without hope of becoming better. Here's an illustration. The children of Israel had the faith to come out of Egypt and into the desert. They did not have a strong enough experience to get out of the desert into the Promised Land. I want a Promised Land experience. I don't want just enough of God's Word, power, and a relationship with Him to keep me wandering in the desert for eternity. I want a relationship that will give me what I need to march into Canaan with all the victory God intends for me to have. Where is your experience? Are you still in Egypt, afraid to take God's hand to go into the desert? Are you wandering in the desert with just of enough of God to make you miserable? Have you found that promised land where your relationship with God is on a sure foundation, where you have tried His Word and found it's promises to be true? Do you know how He will reveal His power to keep you? You can't do it alone. By doing it alone, you will stay in the

desert. Just trying in yourself to do better will lead to failure. Learn to let God's Spirit control your flesh. Sure we have a battle, but armed with the right ammunition God's Spirit and His Word, how can you loose?

The key to winning is in the scripture Galatians 2:20, quoted in the last chapter. We consider our old ways, our past, our flesh, our inheritance (even those things we inherited in family blood-lines, like alcoholism, lust, etc.) we consider all these dead. We strengthen the Spirit man inside of us and learn to let Him have control. We commit these things to God to keep (II Timothy 1:12). Then it isn't our battle any longer, but it's God's, and God will win. We can win by faith in Him, not by faith in ourselves.

For this to work we have to want to submit our will to God and give our whole self to Him. Anything that we fail to commit to Him will be the thing that can destroy us, whether that thing be sin, a relationship with someone, lack of faith, weakness, an attitude of rebellion or any attitude not lined up with God's Word. Whatever it is we have to denounce it and turn loose of it completely to give it to God. If you make up your mind, you can overcome ways of thinking, habits, feelings and thoughts that are contrary to God. You must give them to Him. You cannot be double-minded about giving all these things up and receive anything

from God. James 1:7-8 says, that a double-minded man is unstable in all his ways, let not that man think that he shall receive anything from God. Also, you have to live a life of total commitment to God. What you commit is what you get? You have to give it all for Him to keep it all and change you. We can have victory over our flesh if we submit it all.

We can make the battle harder. Of course, willfully sinning and not submitting to God causes us to be defeated before we start. Also, if we fail to keep a steady diet of God's Word, prayer and fellowship with Him and with other Spirit filled saints, our battle will be almost impossible. However there are other things that can keep us from changing. Just like what you eat becomes a part of your physical body, what you take into your spirit becomes a part of it. Be careful what you take in. We are surrounded with a culture dominated by rebellion. This world is so bound in fear that they can't even plan for a decent future. We live in a world with so little hope, bound in depression and controlled by satan himself. If you read the world's books, their magazines, listen to their music, feed yourself with a steady diet of T.V. and movies, you will begin to think like the world and not realize it. If you feed your spirit with a steady diet of prayer, God's Word, preaching, Gospel music, etc. the Spirit of God in you will grow stronger. Which of the



two you feed, flesh or spirit, will be the stronger. If you want peace, joy, and love in the Holy Ghost the Bible says you have to come out from the world and be a separate people (II Timothy 2:4). Many people who sincerely want to change, don't give up old friends, and old ways of life. They still try to act like the crowd, afraid of rejection. I would rather face the rejection of old friends than the rejection of God on Judgment Day. Don't court God and dance with the world. It will only destroy you. If you make a stand, you may be the one to lead your friends to eternal life with God.

Also what you fill your mind with makes a difference as to whether flesh or spirit is strongest in your life. If you constantly think about the latest movie, what your plans are for the day, what clothes everyone is wearing, what is this or that person doing and what are they thinking about you, you will not be strong in your Spirit. Worry and fear also is harmful. "Be careful for nothing but in everything... make your requests know to God (Philippians 4:6). Read Philippians 4:8. It tells us what we should think about. Also watch the people around you. They may tremendously influence your life in a way you might not be aware of. If they are extremely negative, don't let this influence you. If they are not trying to live a spirit -filled life, this can hinder you too. But don't get a "holier than thou" attitude. They are

loved by God. Love them and you can help them to find God's love. You just have to be strong and overcome them. Also, be careful not to let anyone control your life. Often people have manipulative attitudes. They may have a lot of fear and feel that they have to control others to be able to have a relationship with them. Jesus is the only Lord of your life. Don't let people manipulate you or control you in any way. If you do you will be placing your life in satan's control, because he may be controlling them. The circumstances around their life will be full of confusion because God does not control it. This will cause your life to have this same confusion. One example is their constantly having strife going on that keeps you away from your relationship with God and His peace. Another problem may be that they will need you to do this or that, always at a time when you need to be obeying God. If it is parents or husband or a family member, that makes it harder. You have to submit but at the same time draw a line on how much they are allowed to dictate your decisions. Ask God for help. Be firm and make a stand against certain things as God leads you, no matter what it may cost.

It is important, too, to choose a spiritually strong church that believes and practices the entirety of God's Word. Make sure that they believe and practice the Baptism

of the Holy Ghost and speaking in tongues. Make sure they let the gifts of the Spirit operate in a Biblical way in the body. Make sure they have positive attitudes that encourage a walk in faith.

Another way to strengthen your spirit side is by fasting. FAST to a lot of Christians is a four letter dirty word. What is fasting? It means depriving your flesh of things that it craves. It means saying no to your flesh to weaken it and saying yes to your spirit to strengthen it. The most accepted way of fasting is not eating for a set length of time. It could be a week, or two weeks as God leads. (Make sure, when you fast, to drink plenty of liquids, and when you stop your fast don't eat heavy just because you can eat again). You could even fast certain meals if for medical reasons it isn't good for you to completely fast. However fasting shouldn't stop there. What about depriving your flesh of that extra morning sleep time to pray and study. Or what about depriving it of that extra T.V. relax time to visit those that need God. What about saying no to the things our flesh desires, harmful things that damage our body, like cigarettes, or bad eating habits. If we cannot control our body then we are one step closer to hell. We will not be able to stand against the temptation of the devil. The Bible says we are tempted when our flesh leads us to do wrong and we don't or can't resist it.

This may be because we have let it have its way in our life until it rules over the Spirit of God in us, (James 1:14). If we don't feel like it for the day, we may not even act like we are a Christian when we let our flesh control us. What if Jesus returns on the day that we are letting our flesh control our life? If you need to stop eating a few days to remind your flesh who is boss--do it. The most important thing to do is to lead a fasted life. That means to consistently practice putting your flesh in line so that God's Spirit in you can be the main influence. The battle between God and Satan, and the battle between our flesh and spirit is real. We may read this book and decide this type of commitment is not for us, that there are some things that our flesh does not want to give up. This is not a choice. To make it to heaven we must give God 100% and stand for Him 100% committed.

We can overcome by His Spirit in us and be a new creature in Christ. II Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

**Chapter 8.**  
***The Benefits of Walking in the Spirit  
and the Dangers of Failing To***

Remember, from our last chapter you learned that walking in the spirit means to let God's Spirit have control of your life from the inside of you and to submit your flesh to Him. Let's make a list of the benefits of letting God's Spirit control your life:

1. Being able to hear God's voice. God speaks to us in many ways: thru prayer, the Bible, thru pastors, prophets, teachers, thru other saints. Most important He speaks to us in our own hearts. Read John 10:1-5. I love to hear God's voice. It leads me into a wonderful life. It will lead me also into eternal life with Him. It has kept me out of danger and away from traps of Satan. It has strengthened me, encouraged me, comforted me, and loved me. The old flesh man cannot hear God's voice because it is a spiritual voice. It can't have that relationship with Him, because He is spirit. The flesh is an enemy to God (Romans 8;7-8) and there is no way you can have a walking talking loving relationship with God and walk in the flesh.

2 No condemnation. When you walk in the spirit you no longer have to feel condemned. Old ways and sin is gone because you are a new creature in Christ. If you have confessed and truly repented of your sins, when satan tries to

accuse and condemn you, you can say, that is my old man and my spirit man cannot be condemned.

3. Being able to obey God. God has a journey mapped out for you--the most exciting life you could imagine with the prize at the end being eternal life with Him. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord and He delights in His ways", (Psalm 37:23). God delights in giving us the best life possible, if we will only submit and obey Him so that He can lead us in the right directions.

4. Having a happy, joy, love, and peace filled life. The fruits of God's Spirit are: meekness, gentleness, long suffering, love, joy, peace, goodness, and faith. If we let the spirit of God rule inside us this is what we will feel no matter what our circumstances are.

5. Being able to serve God and do a good job at reaching other. The world is full of hurting people dying to hear what Jesus has to say to them. He uses us to reach them. There is no greater satisfaction than knowing that God is using you to reach the needs of those around you and those you love. If you let His Spirit control you, you can reach out to them and be His arms extended. What you do in the flesh can only destroy, no matter how good your intentions. What you do in the Spirit can only build up.

6. Being able to fight satan. Satan is God's enemy and he hates the things that God loves, that means you. He wants to destroy you before you can have eternal life with God because he himself can never have it. The battle with him is very real. It is also a spiritual battle because he is a spirit. If you walk in the flesh there will be no way you can fight him. But if we walk in the spirit we don't have to fear or worry about satan (II Corinthians 10:4). God helps us to spiritually discern satan's traps and walk around them.

7. Being a new creature in Christ. Only by walking in the spirit can we really change to be that person in God we long to be.





## *Closing*

In closing, like Paul said in II Corinthians 5:17, 'Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.' You are a new person. Old things are behind you. Hold on to all of God's promises. Grow in Him and in your relationship with Him. Who knows what one day you will become. I believe that one day we will be just like Jesus. I hope that this book has helped you understand more about God's love for you and what He wants to do in your life. You have a wonderful life ahead of you filled with God's blessing. After all, whether you are 9 or 90, you have only just begun.