



Accepting
Believing
Receiving

Deliverance

If ye
shall ask
any thing
in my
name, I
will do it.

John 14:14

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Forward

We live in a spirit world. Every move we make to bring comfort to our lives involves the spirit within us. The presence of the Holy Spirit brings peace. Evil forces that the devil uses to try to deceive and destroy all of God's creations are present to seek defeat against God's provisions.

When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him.

A story in the Bible tells how at one time the enemy had Elijah And his servant surrounded. The servant expressed his fear of the soldiers. Elijah asked God to open the eyes of the servant.

When his eyes were open, he could see a multitude of heavenly host who were waiting to assist Elijah and his servant.

That heavenly host is still there waiting to give assistance to you when you face an enemy.

As you enter into this study of Holy Scriptures pointing the way to deliverance, take heart. The blood that Jesus shed for your saving, healing and deliverance is forever present to believers.

You are worthy to be delivered, because Jesus is worthy. He stands in for you. Speak the word and the enemy will flee. Jesus has given all authority over all the power of the enemy.

Let today be your day to receive.

Chapter 1

The Holy Spirit Brings Deliverance Through the Word And the Blood of Jesus

The story of man needing deliverance is as old as the beginning of time. When Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, God made coats for them by taking the skins from a slain animal, whose blood was shed so they might be forgiven of their sin.

Before the time of Christ, the promise of eternal life was given only by the shedding of the blood of an animal. Today, the forgiveness of sins and Divine deliverance comes only through the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

In this study we will view the promises of deliverance throughout the Bible, and then with consider deliverance for specific things. You may claim God's deliverance today.

Deuteronomy 3: 22

You shall not fear them, for the Lord your God shall fight for you.

What encouraging news for Joshua, who was to lead his men against the persistent forces of evil in the Promised Land! Since God promised to help him win every battle, he had nothing to fear. Our battles may not be against godless armies, but they are just as real as Joshua's. Whether we are resisting temptation or battling fear, God has promised to fight with and for us as we obey him.

2 Samuel 22: 3-4

My God, my Rock, in Him will I take refuge; my Shield and the Horn of my salvation; my Stronghold and my Refuge, my Savior—You save me from violence. I call on the Lord, Who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies.

David calls God “the horn of my salvation,” referring to the strength and defensive protection animals have in their horns. God had helped David overcome his enemies and rescued him from his foes.

Psalm 144: 1

Blessed be the Lord, my Rock and my keen and firm Strength, Who teaches my hands to war and my fingers to fight

Life is short. David reminds us that it is “like a breath” and that our “days are like a fleeting shadow.” James says that our lives are “a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes” (James 4:14). Because life is short, we should live for God while we have the time. Don’t waste your life by selecting an inferior purpose that has no lasting value. Live for God—he alone can make your life worthwhile, purposeful, and meaningful.

Isaiah 54:17

No weapon formed against you shall prosper, and every tongue which raises against you in judgment you shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is from Me,” says the LORD.

These benefits are enjoyed by the servants of the Lord; their vindication will come from me. I, the Lord, have spoken!

Isaiah 59: 19

So they shall fear the name of the Lord from the west, and His glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him and put him to flight [for He will come like a rushing stream which the breath of the Lord drives].

Whether we sin once or many times, out of rebellion or out of ignorance, our sin separates us from God and will continue to separate us until God forgives us and removes it.

When the Holy Spirit dwells within his people, they change. Their former desires no longer entice them; now their chief aim is to please God. We who are Christians today are the heirs of this prophecy; we are able to respond to God’s will and distinguish between good and evil because the Holy Spirit dwells within us (John 14:26; Phil. 2:13; Hebrews 5:14).

Matthew 4:10

Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’ ”

Did the devil have the power to give Jesus the kingdoms of the world? Didn't God, the Creator of the world, have control over these kingdoms? The devil may have been lying about his implied power, or he may have based his offer on his temporary control and free rein over the earth because of humanity's sinfulness. Jesus' temptation was to take the world as a political ruler right then, without carrying out his plan to save the world from sin. Satan was trying to distort Jesus' perspective by making him focus on worldly power and not on God's plans.

The devil offered the whole world to Jesus if Jesus would only bow down and worship him. Today the devil offers us the world by trying to entice us with materialism and power. We can resist temptations the same way Jesus did. If you find yourself craving something that the world offers, quote Jesus' words to the devil: **“Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.”**

Luke 10:19

Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

The disciples had seen tremendous results as they ministered in Jesus' name and with his authority. They were elated by the victories they had witnessed, and Jesus shared their enthusiasm. He helped them get their priorities right, however, by reminding them of their most important victory—that their names were written in heaven. This honor was more important than any of their accomplishments. As we see God's wonders at work in and through us, we should not lose sight of the greatest wonder of all—our heavenly citizenship.

1 Corinthians 15: 57

But thanks be to God, Who gives us the victory [making us conquerors] through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Satan seemed to be victorious in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3) and at the cross of Jesus. But God turned Satan's apparent victory into defeat when Jesus Christ rose from the dead (Col. 2:15; Hebrews 2:14-15). Thus death is no longer a source of dread or fear. Christ overcame it, and one day we will also. The law will no longer

make sinners out of us who cannot keep it. Death has been defeated, and we have hope beyond the grave.

2 Corinthians 2: 14

But thanks be to God, Who in Christ always leads us in triumph [as trophies of Christ's victory] and through us spreads and makes evident the fragrance of the knowledge of God everywhere.

Non-Christians cannot understand God, and they cannot grasp the concept that God's Spirit lives in believers. Don't expect most people to approve of or understand your decision to follow Christ. It all seems so silly to them. Just as a tone-deaf person cannot appreciate fine music, the person who rejects God cannot understand God's beautiful message. With the lines of communication broken, he or she won't be able to hear what God is saying to him or her.

2 Corinthians 10: 3-4

For though we walk (live) in the flesh, we are not carrying on our warfare according to the flesh and using mere human weapons. For the weapons of our warfare are not physical [weapons of flesh and blood], but they are mighty before God for the overthrow and destruction of strongholds.

We, like Paul, are merely weak humans, but we don't need to use human plans and methods to win our battles. God's mighty weapons are available to us as we fight against Satan's "strongholds."

The Christian must choose whose methods to use, God's or the world's. Paul assures us that God's mighty weapons—prayer, faith, hope, love, God's Word, the Holy Spirit—are powerful and effective (see Ephes. 6:13-18)! These weapons can break down the proud human arguments against God and the walls that Satan builds to keep people from finding God.

When dealing with the pride that keeps people from a relationship with Christ, we may be tempted to use our own methods. But nothing can break down these barriers like God's weapons.

Chapter 2

Put on the Whole Armor of God

Ephesians 6:10-18

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.

In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all of the Lord's people.

In the Christian life we battle against rulers and authorities (the powerful evil forces of fallen angels headed by Satan, who is a vicious fighter, see 1 Peter 5:8). To withstand their attacks, we must depend on God's strength and use every piece of his armor. Paul is not only giving this counsel to the church, the body of Christ, but to all individuals within the church.

The whole body needs to be armed. As you do battle against "the powers of this dark world," fight in the strength of the church, whose power comes from the Holy Spirit.

These who are not "flesh and blood" are demons over whom Satan has control. They are not mere fantasies—they are very real. We face a powerful army whose goal is to defeat Christ's church. When we believe in Christ, these beings become our enemies, and they try every device to turn us away from him and back to sin. Although we are assured of victory, we must engage in the struggle until Christ returns, because Satan is constantly battling against all who are on the Lord's side.

We need supernatural power to defeat Satan, and God has provided this by giving us his Holy Spirit within us and his armor surrounding us. If you feel discouraged,

remember Jesus' words to Peter: "On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it" (Matthew 16:18).

Colossians 2: 15

[God] disarmed the principalities and powers that were ranged against us and made a bold display and public example of them, in triumphing over them in Him and in it [the cross].

The Colossian false teachers were encouraging worship of angels. But at his death, Christ surpassed the position and authority of any angel. So rather than fear angels or worship them, we are to view them as deposed rulers. Paul meant no disrespect toward angels, but he showed that they are not to be compared with Jesus Christ.

1 Timothy 6: 12

Fight the good fight of the faith; lay hold of the eternal life to which you were summoned and [for which] you confessed the good confession [of faith] before many witnesses.

Paul uses active and forceful verbs to describe the Christian life: flee, pursue, fight, and take hold. Some think Christianity is a passive religion that advocates waiting for God to act. But we must have an *active* faith, obeying God with courage and doing what we know is right. Is it time for action on your part? Don't wait—get going!

2 Timothy 4: 7

I have fought the good (worthy, honorable, and noble) fight, I have finished the race, I have kept (firmly held) the faith.

As he neared the end of his life, Paul could confidently say he had been faithful to his call. Thus he faced death calmly, knowing that he would be rewarded by Christ. Is your life preparing you for death? Do you share Paul's confident expectation of meeting Christ?

The good news is that the heavenly reward is not just for giants of the faith, like Paul, but for all who are eagerly looking forward to Jesus' second coming. Paul gave these words to encourage Timothy, and us, that no matter how difficult the

fight seems—keep fighting. When we are with Jesus Christ, we will discover that it was all worth it.

2 Timothy 4: 18

[And indeed] the Lord will certainly deliver and draw me to Himself from every assault of evil. He will preserve and bring me safe unto His heavenly kingdom. To Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen (so be it).

Here Paul was affirming his belief in eternal life after death. Paul knew the end was near, and he was ready for it. Paul was confident in God's power even as he faced death. Anyone facing a life and death struggle can be comforted knowing that God will bring each believer safely through death to his heavenly kingdom.

James 4: 7

So be subject to God. Resist the devil [stand firm against him], and he will flee from you.

Although God and the devil are at war, we don't have to wait until the end to see who will win. God has *already* defeated Satan (Rev. 12:10-12), and when Christ returns, the devil and all he stands for will be eliminated forever (Rev. 20:10-15). Satan is here now, however, and he is trying to win us over to his evil cause. With the Holy Spirit's power, we can resist the devil, and he will flee from us.

How can you come near to God? James gives five ways: (1) Submit to God (James 4:7). Yield to his authority and will, commit your life to him and his control, and be willing to follow him. (2) Resist the devil (James 4:7). Don't allow Satan to entice and tempt you. (3) Wash your hands. . . and purify your hearts (that is, lead a pure life) (James 4:8).

Be cleansed from sin, replacing your desire to sin with your desire to experience God's purity. (4) Grieve and mourn and wail in sincere sorrow for your sins (James 4:9). Don't be afraid to express deep heartfelt sorrow for what you have done. (5) Humble yourself before the Lord, and he will lift you up (James 4:10; 1 Peter 5:6).

1 Peter 5: 8-9

Be well balanced (temperate, sober of mind), be vigilant and cautious at all times; for that enemy of yours, the devil, roams around like a lion roaring [in fierce hunger], seeking someone to seize upon and devour. Withstand him; be firm in

faith [against his onset--rooted, established, strong, immovable, and determined], knowing that the same (identical) sufferings are appointed to your brotherhood (the whole body of Christians) throughout the world.

Lions attack sick, young, or stragglers; they choose victims who are alone or not alert. Peter warns us to watch out for Satan when we are suffering or being persecuted. Feeling alone, weak, helpless, and cut off from other believers, so focused on our troubles that we forget to watch for danger, we are especially vulnerable to Satan's attacks. During times of suffering, seek other Christians for support. Keep your eyes on Christ, and resist the devil. Then, says James, "he will flee from you" (James 4:7).

1 John 4:4

You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

It is easy to be frightened by the wickedness we see all around us and overwhelmed by the problems we face. Evil is obviously much stronger than we are. John assures us, however, that God is even stronger. He will conquer all evil—and his Spirit and his Word live in our hearts!

1 John 5:4-5

For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

Jesus never promised that obeying him would be easy. But the hard work and self-discipline of serving Christ is no burden to those who love him. And if our load starts to feel heavy, we can always trust Christ to help us bear it .

Chapter 3

Accept, Believe and Receive Deliverance

Romans 3:22

Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

These verses show us where we go wrong. Because of the law, we know that we are helpless sinners and that we must come to Jesus Christ for mercy. Second, the moral code revealed in the law can serve to guide our actions by holding up God's moral standards. We do not earn salvation by keeping the law (no one except Christ ever kept or could keep God's law perfectly), but we do please God when our lives conform to his revealed will for us.

John 10:10

The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

In contrast to the thief who takes life, Jesus gives life. The life he gives right now is abundantly richer and fuller. It is eternal, yet it begins immediately. Life in Christ is lived on a higher plane because of his overflowing forgiveness, love, and guidance. Have you taken Christ's offer of life?

1 John 4:16-18

And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. [17] Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.

[18] There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

The Day of Judgment is that time when all people will appear before Christ and be held accountable for their actions.

With God living in us through Christ, we have no reason to fear this day, because we have been saved from punishment. Instead, we can look forward to the Day of Judgment, because it will mean the end of sin and the beginning of a face-to-face relationship with Jesus Christ.

If we ever are afraid of the future, eternity, or God's judgment, we can remind ourselves of God's love. We know that he loves us perfectly (Romans 8:38-39). We can resolve our fears first by focusing on his immeasurable love for us, and

then by allowing him to love others through us. His love will quiet your fears and give you confidence.

Chapter 4

Healing is God's Will.

Hebrews 10:6

In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

This quotation is not cited in any other New Testament book. However, it is a central teaching of the Old Testament that God desires obedience and a right heart, not empty compliance to the sacrifice system (see the chart in Hosea 6:6). The writer of Hebrews applies to Christ the words of the psalmist in Psalm 40:6-8. Christ came to offer his body on the cross for us as a sacrifice that is completely acceptable to God. God's new and living way for us to please him is not by keeping laws or even by abstaining from sin. It is by coming to him in faith to be forgiven, and then following him in loving obedience.

The costly sacrifice of an animal's life impressed upon the sinner the seriousness of his or her own sin before God. Because Jesus shed his own blood for us, his sacrifice is infinitely greater than any Old Testament offering. Considering the immeasurable gift he gave us, we should respond by giving him our devotion and service.

Setting aside the first system in order to establish a far better one meant doing away with the system of sacrifices contained in the ceremonial law. It didn't mean eliminating God's *moral* law (the Ten Commandments). The ceremonial law prepared people for Christ's coming. With Christ's death and resurrection, that system was no longer needed. And through Christ we can fulfill the moral law as we let him live in us.

Matthew 7:9-11

Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? [10] Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? [11] If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

The child in Jesus' example asked his father for bread and fish—good and necessary items. If the child had asked for a poisonous snake, would the wise father have granted his request? Sometimes God knows we are praying for “snakes” and does not give us what we ask for, even though we persist in our prayers. As we learn to know God better as a loving Father, we learn to ask for what is good for us, and then he grants it.

Matthew 10:7-8

And as ye go, preach, saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.

The Jews hoped for a political and military kingdom that would free them from Roman rule and bring back the days of glory under David and Solomon. But Jesus was talking about a spiritual kingdom.

The gospel today is that the kingdom is still *near*. Jesus, the Messiah, has already begun his kingdom on earth in the hearts of his followers. One day the kingdom will be fully realized. Then evil will be destroyed and all people will live in peace with one another.

Jesus gave the disciples a principle to guide their actions as they ministered to others: “Freely you have received, freely give.” Because God has showered us with his blessings, we should give generously to others of our time, love, and possessions.

Jesus Brings Healing to Many.

Matthew 4:24

And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.

Jesus was teaching, preaching, and healing. These were the three main aspects of his ministry. *Teaching* shows Jesus’ concern for understanding; *preaching* shows his concern for commitment; and *healing* shows his concern for wholeness. His miracles of healing authenticated his teaching and preaching, proving that he truly was from God.

Jesus soon developed a powerful preaching ministry and often spoke in the synagogues. Most towns that had ten or more Jewish families had a synagogue. The building served as a religious gathering place on the Sabbath and as a school during the week. The leader of the synagogue was not a preacher as much as an administrator. His job was to find and invite rabbis to teach and preach. It was customary to invite visiting rabbis like Jesus to speak.

Jesus preached the gospel—the Good News—to everyone who wanted to hear it. The gospel is that the kingdom of heaven has come, that God is with us, and that he cares for us. Christ can heal us, not just of physical sickness, but of spiritual sickness as well. There's no sin or problem too great or too small for him to handle. Jesus' words were good news because they offered freedom, hope, peace of heart, and eternal life with God.

Prayer is an important part of Ministry

Matthew 12:15

But when Jesus knew it, he withdrew himself from thence: and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all;

Up to this point, Jesus had been aggressively confronting the Pharisees' hypocrisy. Here he decided to withdraw from the synagogue before a major confrontation developed because it was not time for him to die. Jesus had many lessons still to teach his disciples and the people.

Matthew 8:16

When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick:

Matthew continues to show Jesus' kingly nature. Through a single touch, Jesus healed (Matthew 8:3, 15); when he spoke a single word, evil spirits fled his presence (Matthew 8:16). Jesus has authority over all evil powers and all earthly disease. He also has power and authority to conquer sin. Sickness and evil are consequences of living in a fallen world.

But in the future, when God removes all sin, there will be no more sickness and death. Jesus' healing miracles were a taste of what the whole world will one day experience in God's kingdom.

The Works of the Devil will be destroyed.

1 John 3:8

He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

We all have areas where temptation is strong and habits are hard to conquer. These weaknesses give the devil a foothold, so we must deal with our areas of vulnerability. If we are struggling with a particular sin, however, these verses are not directed at us, even if for the time we seem to keep on sinning. John is not talking about people whose victories are still incomplete; he is talking about people who make a practice of sinning and look for ways to justify it.

Three things are necessary to find victory over prevailing sin: (1) seek the power of the Holy Spirit and God's Word; (2) stay away from tempting situations; and (3) seek the help of the body of Christ—be open to their willingness to hold you accountable and to pray for you.

Chapter 5

A Look at the Covenant

Isaiah 53:5

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.

How could an Old Testament person understand the idea of Christ dying for our sins (our transgressions and iniquities)—actually bearing the punishment that we

deserved? The sacrifices suggested this idea, but it is one thing to kill a lamb, and something quite different to think of God's chosen servant as that Lamb.

But God was pulling aside the curtain of time to let the people of Isaiah's day look ahead to the suffering of the future Messiah and the resulting forgiveness made available to all mankind.

Hosea 4:6

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

God accused the religious leaders of keeping the people from knowing him ("destroyed from lack of knowledge"). They were supposed to be spiritual leaders, but they had become leaders in wrongdoing.

The people may have said to one another, "It must be OK if the priests do it." Spiritual leadership is a heavy responsibility. Whether you teach a church school class, hold a church office, or lead a Bible study, don't take your leadership responsibilities lightly. Be a leader who leads others to God.

You are Worthy to Receive

Romans 3:21-26

But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

There is a way to be declared not guilty—by trusting Jesus Christ to take away our sins. Trusting means putting our confidence in Christ to forgive our sins, to make us right with God, and to empower us to live the way he taught us. God’s solution is available to all of us regardless of our background or past behavior.

Some sins seem bigger than others because their obvious consequences are much more serious. Murder, for example, seems to us to be worse than hatred, and adultery seems worse than lust. But this does not mean that because we do lesser sins we deserve eternal life.

All sin makes us sinners, and all sin cuts us off from our holy God. All sin, therefore, leads to death (because it disqualifies us from living with God), regardless of how great or small it seems. Don’t minimize “little” sins or overrate “big” sins. They all separate us from God, but they all can be forgiven.

Justified means to be declared not guilty. When a judge in a court of law declares the defendant not guilty, all the charges are removed from his record. Legally, it is as if the person had never been accused. When God forgives our sins, our record is wiped clean. From his perspective, it is as though we had never sinned.

Redemption refers to Christ setting sinners free from slavery to sin. In Old Testament times, a person’s debts could result in his being sold as a slave. The next of kin could redeem him—buy his freedom. Christ purchased our freedom and the price was his life.

Christ is our sacrifice of atonement. In other words, he died in our place, for our sins. God is justifiably angry at sinners. They have rebelled against him and cut themselves off from his life-giving power. But God declares Christ’s death to be the appropriate, designated sacrifice for our sin. Christ then stands in our place, having paid the penalty of death for our sin, and he completely satisfies God’s demands. His sacrifice brings pardon, deliverance, and freedom.

What happened to people who lived before Christ came and died for sin? If God condemned them, was he being unfair? If he saved them, was Christ’s sacrifice unnecessary? Paul shows that God forgave all human sin at the cross of Jesus. Old Testament believers looked forward in faith to Christ’s coming and were saved, even though they did not know Jesus’ name or the details of his earthly life. Unlike the Old Testament believers, you know about the God who loved the world so much that he gave his own Son (John 3:16).

Believers are justified by the Blood of Jesus.

Romans 10:17

So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

We must take God's great message of salvation to others so that they can respond to the Good News. How will your loved ones and neighbors hear it unless someone tells them? Is God calling you to take a part in making his message known in your community? Think of one person who needs to hear the Good News, and think of something you can do to help him or her hear it. Then take that step as soon as possible.

Psalm 103:12

As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

East and west can never meet. This is a symbolic portrait of God's forgiveness—when he forgives our sin, he separates it from us and doesn't even remember it. We need never wallow in the past, for God forgives and forgets. We tend to dredge up the ugly past, but God has wiped our record clean. If we are to follow God, we must model his forgiveness. When we forgive another, we must also forget the sin. Otherwise, we have not truly forgiven.

Chapter 6

You have Authority over Sickness

Acts 3:6

Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.

The crippled man asked for money, but Peter gave him something much better—the use of his legs. We often ask God to solve a small problem, but he wants to give us a whole new life and help for *all* our problems. When we ask God for help, he may say, “I’ve got something even better for you.” Ask God for what you want, but don’t be surprised when he gives you what you really *need*.

“In the name of Jesus Christ” means “by the authority of Jesus Christ.” The apostles were doing this healing through the Holy Spirit’s power, not their own.

Matthew 10:8

Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.

Jesus gave the disciples a principle to guide their actions as they ministered to others: “Freely you have received, freely give.” Because God has showered us with his blessings, we should give generously to others of our time, love, and possessions.

Chapter 7

The False Theory that God wants you to Suffer for His glory.

Paul’s thorn in the flesh was to make him strong in the Lord.

2 Cor. 12:7-10

And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. 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. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

The thorn in Paul’s flesh was an evil spirit that was sent to trouble Paul. .

This thorn was a hindrance to his ministry, and he prayed for its removal; but God refused. Paul was a very self-sufficient person, so this thorn must have been difficult for him. It kept Paul humble, reminded him of his need for constant contact with God, and benefited those around him as they saw God at work in his life.

This throne would not allow Paul to become self-exalted because of his many revelations. How different Paul’s Epistles would have read if he had boasted of himself.

Verse ten tells what the thorn was. It was infirmities, reproaches, necessities in persecution and in distresses.

Job's time of testing was to magnify the faithfulness of God and those who trust in him.

Job 38:2

Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?

Job 42:3

Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.

Job's problem was caused by the devil and evil spirits. Job did not have a convent of healing as we have. Jesus not yet died on the cross for our salvation and our healing.

Now, the believing children of God have authority over sickness because of the atonement.

Believer now have authority of sickness and evil spirits.

Acts 3:6

Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.

The crippled man asked for money, but Peter gave him something much better—the use of his legs. We often ask God to solve a small problem, but he wants to give us a whole new life and help for *all* our problems. When we ask God for help, he may say, "I've got something even better for you." Ask God for what you want, but don't be surprised when he gives you what you really *need*.

"In the name of Jesus Christ" means "by the authority of Jesus Christ." The apostles were doing this healing through the Holy Spirit's power, not their own.

Matthew 10:8

Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.

Jesus gave the disciples a principle to guide their actions as they ministered to others: “Freely you have received, freely give.” Because God has showered us with his blessings, we should give generously to others of our time, love, and possessions.

Mark 13:34

For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.

You dare not postpone your preparations because you do not know when his return will occur. The way to prepare is to study God’s Word and live by its instructions each day. Only then will you be ready.

Dealing with Unhealthy Emotions

The Problem with Unforgiveness:

Matthew 18:21-25

Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.

Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. but forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children also sold, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

The rabbis taught that people should forgive those who offend them—but only three times. Peter, trying to be especially generous, asked Jesus if seven (the “perfect” number) was enough times to forgive someone. But Jesus answered, “Seventy-seven times,” meaning that we shouldn’t even keep track of how many

times we forgive someone. We should always forgive those who are truly repentant, no matter how many times they ask.

If we forgive, we will be forgiven. If we refuse to forgive, we will not be forgiven. Become excited about the gift of healing.

Chapter 8

The Laying on of Hands

Physical contact is at times used in praying for people:

Acts 9:11-12

And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prays, [12] And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight.

Ananias said when God told him of Saul's conversion. After all, Saul had pursued believers to their death. Despite these understandable feelings, Ananias obeyed God and ministered to Saul. We must not limit God—he can do anything. We must obey and follow God's leading, even when he leads us to difficult people and places.

Mark 16:17-18

And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; [18] They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

God gave Jesus authority over heaven and earth. On the basis of that authority, Jesus told his disciples to make more disciples as they preached, baptized, and taught. With this same authority, Jesus still commands us to tell others the Good News and make them disciples for the kingdom. Jesus told the disciples that when they laid hands on the sick, they would recover.

Deliverance from Condemnation

Rev. 12:10

And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. The devil is not a symbol or legend; he is very real. Originally Satan was an angel of God, but through his own pride, he became corrupt. The devil is God's enemy, and he constantly tries to hinder God's work, but he is limited by God's power and can do only what he is permitted to do (Job 1:6-2:8). The name *Satan* means "accuser" (Rev. 12:10). He actively looks for people to attack (1 Peter 5:8-9). Satan likes to pursue believers who are vulnerable in their faith, who are spiritually weak, or who are isolated from other believers.

Even though God permits the devil to do his work in this world, God is still in control. And Jesus has complete power over Satan—he defeated Satan when he died and rose again for the sins of mankind. One day Satan will be bound forever, never again to do his evil work (see Rev. 20:10).

Many believe that until this time, Satan still had access to God (see the note on +Job 1:7ff). But here his access is forever barred (see also Rev. 9:1). He can no longer accuse people before God. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ bared the entrance to God's throne for ever more.

Matthew 23:4

They bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.

The Pharisees' traditions and their interpretations and applications of the laws had become as important to them as God's law itself. Their laws were not all bad—some were beneficial. The problem arose when the religious leaders (1) took man-made rules as seriously as God's laws, (2) told the people to obey these rules but did not do so themselves, or (3) obeyed the rules not to honor God but to make themselves look good. Usually Jesus did not condemn what the Pharisees taught, but what they *were*—hypocrites.

Jesus exposed the hypocritical attitudes of the religious leaders. They knew the Scriptures but did not live by them. They didn't care about being holy—just looking holy in order to receive the people's admiration and praise. Today, like the

Pharisees, many people who know the Bible do not let it change their lives. They say they follow Jesus, but they don't live by his standards of love. People who live this way are hypocrites. We must make sure that our actions match our beliefs.

People desire positions of leadership not only in business but also in the church. It is dangerous when love for the position grows stronger than loyalty to God. This is what happened to the Pharisees and teachers of the law. Jesus is not against all leadership—we need Christian leaders—but against leadership that serves itself rather than others.

2 Cor. 3:6

Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter kills, but the spirit gives life.

The letter kills, but the Spirit gives life” means that trying to be saved by keeping the Old Testament laws will end in death. Only by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ can a person receive eternal life through the Holy Spirit. No one but Jesus has ever fulfilled the law perfectly, and thus the whole world is condemned to death. The law makes people realize their sin, but it cannot give life. Under the new covenant, which means promise or agreement, eternal life comes from the Holy Spirit. The Spirit gives new life to all who believe in Christ. The moral law (Ten Commandments) still points out sin and shows us how to obey God, but forgiveness comes only through the grace and mercy of Christ (see Romans 7:10-8:2).

Galatians 5:4

Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.

Trying to be saved by keeping the law and being saved by grace are two entirely different approaches. “Christ will be of no value to you at all” means that Christ’s provision for our salvation will not help us if we are trying to save ourselves. Obeying the law does not make it any easier for God to save us. All we can do is accept his gracious gift through faith. Our deeds of service must never be used to try to earn God’s love or favor.

2 Cor. 12:5

Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities.

Deliverance from self-hate, rejection or abuse.

Luke 7:7

Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed.

Psalm 139:13-18

For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. [14] I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. [15] My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. [16] Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.

[17] How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! [18] If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee.

Binding or Loosing

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.

The religious leaders thought they held the keys of the kingdom, and they tried to shut some people out. We cannot decide to open or close the kingdom of heaven for others, but God uses us to help others find the way inside. To all who believe in Christ and obey his words, the kingdom doors are swung wide open.

Mark 3:27

No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.

Although God permits Satan to work in our world, God is still in control. Jesus, because he is God, has power over Satan; Jesus is able to drive out demons and end their terrible work in people's lives. One day Satan will be bound forever

Luke 13:12

And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.

he synagogue ruler could not see beyond the law to Jesus' compassion in healing this crippled woman. Jesus shamed him and the other leaders by pointing out their hypocrisy. They would untie their animals and care for them, but they refused to rejoice when a human being was freed from Satan's bondage.

Chapter 9

Casting out Demons

Matthew 10:7

And as ye go, preach, saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

The Jews were waiting for the Messiah to usher in his kingdom. They hoped for a political and military kingdom that would free them from Roman rule and bring back the days of glory under David and Solomon. But Jesus was talking about a spiritual kingdom. The gospel today is that the kingdom is still *near*. Jesus, the Messiah, has already begun his kingdom on earth in the hearts of his followers. One day the kingdom will be fully realized. Then evil will be destroyed and all people will live in peace with one another.

Mark 1:21-25

And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the Sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught. [22] And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes. [23] And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, [24] Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. [25] And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.

Because the temple in Jerusalem was too far for many Jews to travel to regularly for worship, many towns had synagogues serving both as places of worship and as schools. Beginning in the days of Ezra, about 450 B.C., a group of ten Jewish families could start a synagogue. There, during the week, Jewish boys were taught the Old Testament law and Jewish religion. Girls could not attend. Each Saturday, the Sabbath, the Jewish men would gather to listen to a rabbi teach from the Scriptures. Because there was no permanent rabbi or teacher, it was customary for the synagogue leader to ask visiting teachers to speak. This is why Jesus often spoke in the synagogues in the towns he visited.

Evil spirits, or demons, are ruled by Satan. They work to tempt people to sin. They were not created by Satan—because God is the Creator of all.

Rather they are fallen angels who joined Satan in his rebellion. Though not all disease comes from Satan, demons can cause a person to become mute, deaf, blind, or insane. But in every case where demons confronted Jesus, they lost their power.

Thus God limits what evil spirits can do; they can do nothing without his permission. During Jesus' life on earth, demons were allowed to be very active to demonstrate once and for all Christ's power and authority over them.

The evil spirit knew at once that Jesus was the Holy One of God. By including this event in his Gospel, Mark was establishing Jesus' credentials, showing that even the spiritual underworld recognized Jesus as the Messiah.

Luke 3:10-12

And the people asked him, saying, what shall we do then? [11] He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise. [12] Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do?

John's message took root in unexpected places—among the poor, the dishonest, and even the hated occupation army. These people were painfully aware of their needs. Too often we confuse respectability with right living. They are not the same. Respectability can even hinder right living if it keeps us from seeing our need for God. If you had to choose, would you protect your character or your reputation?

Mark 3:14-15

And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, [15] And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils:

From the hundreds of people who followed him from place to place, Jesus chose 12 to be his apostles. Apostle means messenger or authorized representative. He did not choose these 12 to be his associates and companions because of their faith; their faith often faltered. He didn't choose them because of their talent and ability; no one stood out with unusual ability. The disciples represented a wide range of backgrounds and life experiences, but apparently they had no more leadership potential than those who were not chosen.

The one characteristic they all shared was their willingness to obey Jesus. After Jesus' ascension, they were filled with the Holy Spirit and empowered to carry out special roles in the growth of the early church. We should not disqualify ourselves from service to Christ because we do not have the expected credentials. Being a good disciple is simply a matter of following Jesus with a willing heart.

Luke 10:17

And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.

he disciples had seen tremendous results as they ministered in Jesus' name and with his authority. They were elated by the victories they had witnessed, and Jesus shared their enthusiasm. He helped them get their priorities right, however, by reminding them of their most important victory—that their names were written in heaven. This honor was more important than any of their accomplishments. As we see God's wonders at work in and through us, we should not lose sight of the greatest wonder of all—our heavenly citizenship.

Mark 6:12-13

And they went out, and preached that men should repent. [13] And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.

The disciples were not to blame if the message was rejected, as long as they had faithfully and carefully presented it. We are not responsible when others reject Christ's message of salvation, but we do have the responsibility to share the gospel clearly and faithfully.

John 14:12

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

Jesus is not saying that his disciples would do more amazing miracles—after all, raising the dead is about as amazing as you can get. Rather, the disciples, working in the power of the Holy Spirit, would carry the gospel of God's kingdom out of Palestine and into the whole world.

Mark 16:15-18

And he said unto them, Go ye into all of the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. [16] He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. [17] And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; [18] They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

Jesus told his disciples to go into all of the world, telling everyone that he had paid the penalty for sin and that those who believe in him can be forgiven and live eternally with God. Christian disciples today in all parts of the world are preaching this gospel to people who haven't heard about Christ. The driving power that carries missionaries around the world and sets Christ's church in motion is the faith that comes from the resurrection. Do you ever feel as though you don't have the skill or determination to be a witness for Christ? You must personally realize that Jesus rose from the dead and lives for you today. As you grow in your relationship with Christ, he will give you both the opportunities and the inner strength to tell his message.

It is not the water of baptism that saves, but God's grace accepted through faith in Christ. Because of Jesus' response to the criminal on the cross who died with him, we know it is possible to be saved without being baptized (Luke 23:43). Baptism alone, without faith, does not automatically bring a person to heaven. Those who refuse to believe will be condemned, regardless of whether or not they have been baptized.

There are times when God intervenes miraculously to protect his followers. Occasionally he gives them special powers. Paul handled a snake safely (Acts 28:5), and the disciples healed the sick (Matthew 10:1; Acts 3:7-8).

Chapter 10

Dealing with Regrets, Guilt or Shame.

You must know that God loves you.

Isaiah 53:4-5

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. [5] 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 sacrifices suggested this idea, but it is one thing to kill a lamb, and something quite different to think of God's chosen servant as that Lamb. But God was pulling aside the curtain of time to let the people of Isaiah's day look ahead to the suffering of the future Messiah and the resulting forgiveness made available to all mankind.

1 Peter 5:7

Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

Carrying your worries, stresses, and daily struggles by yourself shows that you have not trusted God fully with your life. It takes humility, however, to recognize that God cares, to admit your need, and to let others in God's family help you. Sometimes we think that struggles caused by our own sin and foolishness are not God's concern. But when we turn to God in repentance, he will bear the weight even of those struggles. Don't submit to circumstances, but to the Lord who controls circumstances.

Col. 3:15

And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

All the virtues that Paul encourages us to develop are perfectly bound together by love. As we clothe ourselves with these virtues, the last garment we are to put on is love, which holds all of the others in place. To practice any list of virtues without practicing love will lead to distortion, fragmentation, and stagnation (1 Cor. 13:3).

Christians should live in peace. To live in peace does not mean that suddenly all differences in opinion are eliminated, but it does require that loving Christians work together despite their differences. Such love is not a feeling, but a decision to meet others' needs (see 1 Cor. 13). To live in love leads to peace between individuals, and among the members of the body of believers. Do problems in your relationships with other Christians cause open conflicts or mutual silence? Consider what you can do to heal those relationships with love.

The word rule comes from the language of athletics: Paul tells us to let Christ's peace be umpire or referee in our hearts. Our hearts are the center of conflict because there our feelings and desires clash—our fears and hopes, distrust and trust, jealousy and love. How can we deal with these constant conflicts and live as God wants? Paul explains that we must decide between conflicting elements by using

the rule of peace—which choice will promote peace in our souls and in our churches? For more on the peace of Christ, see Phil. 4:9.

James 5:16

Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

Christ has made it possible for us to go directly to God for forgiveness. But confessing our sins to each other still has an important place in the life of the church. (1) If we have sinned against an individual, we must ask him or her to forgive us. (2) If our sin has affected the church, we must confess it publicly. (3) If we need loving support as we struggle with a sin, we should confess that sin to those who are able to provide that support. (4) If, after confessing a private sin to God, we still don't feel his forgiveness, we may wish to confess that sin to a fellow believer and hear him or her assure us of God's pardon. In Christ's kingdom, every believer is a priest to other believers (1 Peter 2:9).

The Christian's most powerful resource is communion with God through prayer. The results are often greater than we thought were possible. Some people see prayer as a last resort to be tried when all else fails. This approach is backward. Prayer should come first. Because God's power is infinitely greater than ours, it only makes sense to rely on it—especially because God encourages us to do so. 2 Peter 3:9

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

God may have seemed slow to these believers as they faced persecution every day and longed to be delivered. But God is not slow; he just is not on *our* timetable (Psalm 90:4). Jesus is waiting so that more sinners will repent and turn to him. We must not sit and wait for Christ to return, but we should live with the realization that time is short and that we have important work to do. Be ready to meet Christ any time, even today; yet plan your course of service as though he may not return for many years.

Prayer of Deliverance

In the name of Jesus Christ, and by the power of the cross, by the blood of Christ and his resurrection, I take authority in Jesus name over all witchcraft assignments, all generational curses, and over every evil practice.

I break their influence over my life by the power of the blood of the risen Christ. I command these curses to leave the planet earth and curse no other.

I ask forgiveness for, and renounce all negative silent or spoken vows and agreements that have made with the enemy.

I apply the blood of Jesus over every area of my life, relationships, ministry and finances. I thank you for your enduring love, your angelic protection and, for the fullness of the Holy Spirit and for your abundant blessings.

We pray and declare all in the name of Jesus and through the blood of Jesus.

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