



The Winning Secret

A Biblical Re-Focus of Spiritual Warfare

New Creation Realities

Forgiveness

Judgement

The Christian Confession

New principles that must govern the life of a believer.
They represent the glorious things that God Himself has
prepared for us.

Anyone who believes in Christ is a new creation.

The old is gone! The new has come!

2Cor. 5:17 NIrV

Revised by Revd Paul S Fermor M.Th.

Deal Pentecostal Church

69 Mill Hill, Deal, Kent. CT14 9EW

www.dealpentecostal.co.uk

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The Winning Secret

A Biblical Re-Focus of Spiritual Warfare

Unpublished manuscript presented by T.L.Osborn at
Global Gospel Conference, Brentwood. July 2002.

Foreword

Everywhere I minister, Christians want to know the secrets of our more than a half-century of unprecedented success in global ministry.

When our international ministry began in 1947, we struggled for more than a year to *unlearn* traditional concepts that we had espoused. When new knowledge is absorbed, one tends to forget traditions previously embraced. I have forgotten how I used to think. What is basic and essential to me now might be offensive to one who defends different traditions, as these truths would have been to me before the facts of redemption became a living reality in my life.

Sometimes when I attend conventions on the home front, I am shocked by concepts pontificated and publicly applauded that are not at all biblical and are even contradictory to the fundamentals of Gospel redemption.

So to share *The Winning Secret* of biblical Gospel ministry, a truth that might be the new and wondrous secret for some, is no doubt fundamental to others who are making their world better.

In this book, I will deal principally with what is being considered *spiritual warfare* — concepts that are popular, but delusional, relating to prayer, demons and global evangelism.

I feel responsible to give my answer to the exotic theories being marketed about demonic powers that rule nations and areas.

Christians are being convinced that the Gospel cannot prevail in these areas until satanic strongholds are first pulled down by prayer warriors in seasons of intercession known as spiritual warfare.

These idiosyncratic notions are based on expressions by Paul that are misconstrued to support theories popularized through religious media. These ideas proliferate because they are marketable among Christians who are not grounded in the redemptive fundamentals of the Gospel.

Some of Paul's statements being misrepresented are: *the weapons of our warfare are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds*^{2Cor.10:4}

Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.^{Eph.6:11} *Fight the good fight of faith.*^{1Tim.6:12} *We*

wrestle...against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.^{Eph.6:12}

I want to help to clarify some of the confusing and delusionary hypotheses that have so many good Christians confused and preoccupied, fighting demonic powers that have already been destroyed by Christ.

A great church leader said, "People who can build churches *build them*. People who can't, *write books or teach about it*."

People who have not proclaimed the miracle Christ to multitudes, who have not changed cities, provinces and nations, and who have not demonstrated the power of the Gospel to nations through signs, miracles and wonders as Paul did, are writing books and teaching about *wrestling against the rulers of the darkness of this world*. But their writings are theory because most of them have not done what they are writing about.

Since I have spent nearly 60 years proclaiming the miracle Christ and His Gospel to multiplied millions of people of practically every major religion in over 85 nations, what I have *proven* in witnessing to the unreached as Paul did, gives me license to address the subject of *The Winning Secret*, and to share a biblical re-focus of spiritual warfare for the 21st Century Church.

As an introduction, here is the redemptive foundation for all that I will express: God reveals Himself by His redemptive name, **JEHOVAH-NISSI** translated "**THE LORD OUR BANNER.**"^{Ex.17:15}

He is our victory in all Spiritual Warfare. **VICTORY** is a redemptive blessing, paid for on our behalf and in our name through the death of Christ, because God "*gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*"^{1Cor.15:57} By His sacrifice on the cross, He "*spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, TRIUMPHING over them, quickening us together with Him.*"^{Col.2:15}

Spiritual warfare is not a militant conflict waged in prayer. It is the task of Christ's witnesses in action, winning the lost to Him. First, it is the battle to get the attention of the unconverted. That means find ways to acquire money to sustain the costs of witnessing. For some, it is the struggle to get passports and visas. In many areas, permits to preach, for venues, to advertise or to invite the public are required, plus so many other difficulties that are constantly encountered. It took us over 6 weeks to obtain thirteen special permits for our open air mass crusades in Kiev, Ukraine – the first ever permitted in that nation's history. That is spiritual warfare.

Second, it is the struggle to overcome negative concepts and other opposition to the Gospel in people, to believe on Christ and in what He accomplished for them in His death on the cross. I am writing this book to share The *Winning Secret* of our nearly six decades of spiritual conquest, defeating satan on his own turf, delivering his captives out of the power of darkness, bringing them into the Light of Christ.

T.L. Osborn

Focus From The Frontlines

Believe me, I know what I am writing about. I have proclaimed the Gospel to multitudes of from 20,000 to 300,000 people in over 85 nations during almost 60 years. satan holds legal

dominion over people who do not believe in Christ. But when the Gospel is proclaimed and they believe it, satan's power is invalidated, his dominion is abrogated, and the people liberated by the power of the Gospel. The TRUTH sets them free.

I've often said that I do not pray the power *down*; I preach the power *out*. ***The GOSPEL IS THE POWER OF GOD*** *unto salvation to everyone who believes it.*^{Rom.1:16}

When I stand before a multitude of people interspersed with demoniacs, lepers, witch doctors, terrorists, bandits, pagan villagers, and all kinds of people who know nothing of Christ or His Gospel, I am utterly dependant on the supernatural power that is resident and active in the good seed of the Good News—in exactly the same way that a farmer who sows a field with good seed is utterly dependant on the supernatural power that is resident and active in the seed that was sown.

A farmer never calls a convention of friends to join in intercessory pray, pulling down strongholds that might prevent a harvest. **The Farmer SIMPLY BELIEVES IN THE SEED AND PLANTS IT. THE SEED THEN GROWS AND PRODUCES ITS HARVEST.** Ten thousand prayers will not improve that farmer's harvest. It does not depend on intercessory prayer. The harvest depends on the farmer planting good seed.

I was raised on a farm. We planted seed. It produced our harvest. When it was reaped, we did not run to the church and testify that we were anointed vessels and that the harvest was the result of our anointed hands touching the seed that we had planted.

No, we went to church and gave God thanks for His laws of sowing and reaping. Spiritual warfare is preparing the soil, planting the seed and reaping the harvest—not crying out against demons that reign over areas where un-converted people live.

A farmer who does not believe in the power of seed enough to plant it, will never reap a crop. He or she may pray for months, but unless they plant the good seed, they will never reap a

harvest. If Christians can be deluded by the enemy and convinced they must stay on their **KNEES** in the ministry of spiritual warfare and intercession instead of getting on their **FEET** for the ministry of witnessing for Christ, then satan's trick has succeeded in paralysing the Church by interdicting the dynamic flow of the gospel which alone is power of God unto salvation.

A Christian who does not believe in the truths of redemption enough to go out and plant those good seeds in the hearts of people, will never reap a soul-harvest. He or she may write books about it, or intercede for months, but unless the good seed of the Good News is planted in the hearts of the people, there will be no harvest.

Those who contend that prayer warriors must intercede and pull down satanic strongholds **BEFORE** the Gospel can be effective have reversed God's plan. He says, *While the earth remains, SEED TIME and HARVEST shall not cease.* ^{Gen.8:22}

Everything that God does begins in seed-form. After the seed is planted, a harvest follows. That is the secret of our decades of global ministry to millions. We plant the seed first. The seed of the Gospel, when preached and believed, is the power of God at work in lives. It is the liberating force. It is the truth that makes you free.

Like Paul, we have urged believers to *HELP US BY PRAYER* ^{2Cor.1:11} *so that the Word of the Lord might have free course,* ^{2Thes.3:1} *and so that we might speak the word of God with boldness.* ^{Acts.4:31}

SPIRITUAL WARFARE IS SUCCESSFULLY SOWING THE SEED OF THE GOSPEL.

It is the preaching of the Gospel, the witness of Christ that projects the transforming power of God among people. Not prayer, not fasting, not agonizing, not intercession, not contending with the powers of darkness.

Nothing substitutes for the **WITNESS OF JESUS CHRIST
CONFIRMED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT'S MIRACULOUS POWER.**

Paul said, *The preaching of the cross...is the POWER of God.* ^{1Cor.1:18}

Victorious Prayer

After we first learned about satan's defeat and the redemptive promises of God to confirm the Gospel, it required over a year for us to reform our prayer lives or manner of praying.

Because of our traditional manner of praying, we found ourselves interceding for blessings that God had already promised, provided and freely offered. **We realized that we no longer needed to plead for blessings provided by Christ's vicarious death.** Those blessings needed to be accepted by faith and appropriated by putting our faith into action.

If we did not need to beseech God for blessings or gifts that are already paid for through the death of His Son, and if we did not need to implore His Spirit to do what He sent us to do, then *what were we to pray for?* We struggled with the inconsistencies of our tradition seeking desperately to conform our prayer life to the redemptive facts that we had learned.

We soon observed that most of people's prayer time is wasted by asking for two things that God will never respond to:

- 1) **For Him to do what *has already been accomplished through Christ's sacrifice.***
- 2) **For Him to do what He *has commissioned us to do.***

Learning About Biblical Prayer

As we conformed our praying to the facts of redemption, we learned a greater depth in prayer than we had ever known before. We discovered that prayer is a time of communion and fellowship with the Father, not a time of imploring God for favours, or a session of asserting militant hostilities against the spiritual demonic powers.

There is no record of Jesus either pleading with God for blessings and power; nor of Him contending against the forces of darkness, dethroning their influence over areas before He went there to teach and preach. When He wept over Jerusalem, He said, *How often would I have gathered you as a hen gathers her brood, but YOU WOULD NOT!* ^{Lk.13:34}

According to popular hypotheses that believers must pull down the rulers of darkness before the Gospel can be effective, Jesus should have prevailed against the evil powers that ruled over Jerusalem before He tried to bring God's blessings to them.

Christ Taught Us To Pray

As we gained an understanding of redemption and what Christ's death provided, we realized that our tradition of praying needed to be conformed to the Gospel facts we had learned.

There are basic truths about prayer: ***Jesus prayed*** ^{Lk.6:12} ***He taught us to pray.*** ^{Mat.9:13} But the prayer He taught is not pleading for blessings, nor crying out against evil powers.

The prayer life that Jesus taught begins by contemplating our rapport with the *Father*. We are created in His likeness. We are His children. What a *hallowed Name* we bear! We are to express harmony with His *will*, agreeing that His Kingdom is to be realised through us.

The prayer that Christ taught us is a confession of His faithfulness in providing our *daily needs*. We appropriate His *forgiveness* to the degree that we *forgive others*. In temptation and evil, we express our trust in His deliverance and in His guidance.

Crowning each season of prayer we confess agreement with His *Kingdom* plan, appropriating His power to see it fulfilled in us and through us. We accept the glory that He bestows on us as His triumphant children. ^{Mat.6:9-13}

There is no hint of begging, or of imploring, or of fighting spiritual powers of darkness. The prayer that Jesus taught is composed of statements, confessions, assertions of harmony, of

confidence, of commitment, of receptivity before Him, of agreement, of rapport with Him and His will—**with no perspective of spiritual military belligerence.**

Spiritual warfare is not prayer; it is going into the *un*-saved world, getting their attention and persuading them concerning the Gospel.

The Power That Dethrones Evil

We are talking about the erroneous notion that spiritual warfare is supposed to be intercession to break satan's domain over lost people so the Gospel can be effective. There is no biblical record that early Christians prayed like that. To break satan's dominion over people, *they preached the Gospel.*

That is what we have done for nearly 60 years in nations around the world. It never occurred to us that we needed to pull down demonic powers that ruled an area before we could succeed in proclaiming Christ's salvation. Jesus commissioned us to preach the Gospel and He promised to be with us to confirm it with signs, miracles and wonders. He has always, and will always do that. No demonic power can prevent the triumph of the gospel.

Prayer In The Early Church

The Early Church prayed for believers who were out witnessing for Christ, that *they would speak the Word of God with boldness.*

Acts.4:29,31,33

The Apostle Paul urged believers to pray that *the **Word of the Lord** would have free course.* ^{2Thes.3:1}

He asked the Colossians to *pray that God would open to him a door of **utterance**, to **speak** the mystery of Christ.* ^{Col.4:3}

He asked the Ephesians *to pray that **utterance** may be given me that I may **open my mouth and speak boldly** to make known the mystery of the Gospel.* ^{Eph.6:18-19}

Paul knew that spiritual wickedness in high places and the rulers of the darkness of this world were already conquered by Christ.

When he went into *un*-believing territory, his priority was to proclaim *the mystery of the Gospel of Christ*; and to do that, it was necessary that *the Word of the Lord have free course*. So he urged the Christians to pray for that.

Wherever the Gospel is proclaimed, God's divine *Life* in the seed of His Word releases His presence in the hearts of those who embrace the Gospel. His *Life* in His Word nullifies demonic strong holds and invalidates the powers of darkness in those who believe the Good News.

Biblical prayer is never verbal militancy against demonic spirits. It is communion with the Father, drawing *Life* and peace and victory from His presence.

No amount of intercessory prayer would bring salvation to *un*-believing people without the *Word of the mystery of Christ being spoken boldly*. The mission of early Christians was to be *Christ's witness both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.* ^{Acts1:8}

PRAYER IS NOT WARFARE
IT IS NEITHER ASSAULT NOR DEFENCE
PRAYER IS COMMUNION
NOT ARGUING WITH DEMONS
BUT HARMONIZING WITH THE FATHER

What Are We To Pray For?

If we need not pray for God to do what *He has already accomplished through Christ's death*, and if we need not plead for Him to do the things that *He sent US to do*, then what do we pray for?

When Christian believers contemplate prayer, the focus should never be on struggling or wrestling or battling with demonic spiritual powers. That is a negative and counter-productive attitude to bring before the Father. *The warfare is ended.* ^{Isa.40:2} Jesus

won the victory at the cross. When He came back from the dead, He left an eternally defeated satan. Now, the believer's ministry is to report that victory to the world.

The Virus Of Hostility

Millions of Christians have been so infected by the *spiritual warfare virus* that their only concept of prayer is to do battle with the rulers of the darkness of this world.

BIBLICAL PRAYER is not militancy. It is a beautiful season of communing, of correlating, of harmonizing with the Father about His plans and about how we can represent Him and demonstrate His love to people.

We do not come to our knees to contend with demons or to fight with evil forces. We come to our knees to fellowship with the Father, to draw fresh inspiration, new strength and divine guidance from Him.

In pondering a time of prayer, never contemplate that sacred season with demons on your mind. Never project a war with darkness or anticipate a battle with evil forces.

Christ did all of that for us, in our name. Col.1:13; 2:15

People who approach prayer militantly, those who focus on doing spiritual battle with the powers of hell, can become ***belligerent, hostile and adversarial toward other people.*** Instead of peace and harmony, love and compassion, an offensive and combative spirit is engendered in their lives that does not reflect the Spirit of Christ.

Prayer—The Hallowed Season

As you approach your season of prayer, project the honour of being at one with your Lord. Anticipate fellowship, inspiration, rapport with God, communication with the Holy Spirit. It is time to absorb His love, to discuss with the Father His plans and how

you are to be involved; a time to express your confidence in Him and your gratitude for the high honour of being a partner with Him.

- ✓ **PRAYER** is communion with the Father.
- ✓ **PRAYER** is harmonizing our plans with His.
- ✓ **PRAYER** is pondering what His Word says about our ideas and conforming our concepts to His.
- ✓ **PRAYER** is harmonizing our spirits and emotions with His Holy Spirit and His Word.
- ✓ **PRAYER** is aligning our spirituality, our meditations, our concepts with the facts of Christ's redemption—with what and who He has made us to be and with what He has sent us to do as His representatives.
- ✓ **PRAYER** is a season of intimacy with our Lord, pouring our hearts out before Him as we contemplate our mission to represent Him to people.
- ✓ **PRAYER** is absorbing His love so that we may witness of Christ more effectively in a despairing and confused world.
- ✓ **PRAYER** is worshipping Him for all that He is and for all that He has provided for humanity.
- ✓ **PRAYER** is absorbing His *Life* and *Spirit* for our enablement in His royal service.
- ✓ **PRAYER** is thanking God for His gifts and callings in our lives, and listening for His directions in how and where to use those gifts for the good of our hurting world.
- ✓ **PRAYER** is correlating our disposition with His attitude toward people, making sure that we exhibit His compassion toward them, and not our prejudices.
- ✓ **PRAYER** is harmonizing our spirits, our emotions and our minds with His, then conforming our thoughts to God's Word so that the mystery of the Gospel will never be hindered through our lives.

- ✓ **PRAYER** is assimilating faith, hope and love from His person and through His Word, worshipping Him, allowing His dreams to be conceived in our spirits and demonstrated in and through our lives.
- ✓ **PRAYER** is being immersed in the emotions and attributes of God's Spirit toward the *un*-saved world so that no kind of person is shunned or marginalized by us as Christ's witnesses.
- ✓ **PRAYER** is bi-directional fellowship with the Father aligning our thoughts and dreams with His then listening to the response and guidance of His Word and of His Spirit
- ✓ **PRAYER** is interceding for the needs of fellow-believers and ministers, then listening for His ideas of what we can do about them.— of ways we can be part of the answer.
- ✓ **PRAYER** is correlating God's guidance and wisdom with our agenda for sharing His plan and His Love.
- ✓ **PRAYER IS THE HALLOWED SEASON.** It is never pleading and begging for divine favours, fighting demonic powers in so called spiritual warfare.

BIBLICAL PRAYER IS LIFE AND LOVE AND GROWTH AND RAPPORT WITH THE FATHER—IN THE NOW.

If you feel the need to reform your prayer-life as we did, I suggest that you open this book to these pages and lay it beside your open Bible. Then begin at the top of the check list and take time in prayer and contemplation over each idea that is listed. Your prayer life will be enriched.

Spiritual Warfare

Spiritual Warfare is **NOT** what Christian believers do **ON THEIR KNEES**. It is what they do **ON THEIR FEET**.

The believer's mission is to *GO into ALL THE WORLD*, [regions that are antagonistic, hostile, defiant, malicious and inhospitable,

as well as areas that are receptive] and *preach* [tell, teach, share, communicate] *the Gospel to every creature.*

Spiritual Warfare is the struggle to get the attention of people, then to persuade them to believe the Gospel, as Paul did. ^{2Co.5:11;}
Ac.13:43;18:4; 19:8,26; 28:23

Spiritual Warfare is paying any price, suffering any opposition, enduring any pain, braving any storm, climbing any mountain, sailing any sea, penetrating any jungle, facing any enemy, resisting any devil in order to witness of Christ in all the world.

Preparation

Before entering the devil's terrain with the message and witness of the Gospel, we prepare ourselves by prayer and intercession. For what? So that the *Word of the Lord might have free course*^{2Thes.3:1} and so that our presentation of the Good News will be persuasive and will convince people of the truths of redemption.

When we step onto a platform amidst a sea of humanity in a non-Christian area, we ANNOUNCE THE GOSPEL because it is *God's power for salvation.* We depend on Christ's promise, *Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.* He said, *I will never leave you nor forsake you.*

What can the rulers of darkness do? *If God be for us [and if Christ be with us], who can be against us?*

Biblical Warfare

Spiritual warfare is what I do on my FEET, out in public places, facing multitudes of people who have no knowledge of Christ, *fighting the fight of faith*, proclaiming and demonstrating the Gospel as Jesus and His followers did, *making the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God.* ^{Rom.15:18-19} Spiritual Warfare is **NOT** prayer. It is action as God's co-worker delivering people from darkness bringing them into the light and life of Christ.

Biblical Prayer

Biblical prayer is the preparation for this divine and hallowed Christian ministry of bringing the lost to Christ.

DO I PRAY? YES! On my knees in the holy presence of my Lord, I commune with Him. I harmonize my plans with His. I ponder His words and His ideas. I tune my spirit and my emotions to His Holy Spirit and to His Word. That is how I pray.

DO I PRAY? YES! I align my spirituality, my meditations and my concepts with the facts of His redemption and with who and what He has made me to be. I absorb his love so that I can witness more effectively in a despairing and unloved world. I worship Him for all that He is and for all that He has provided for humanity. I thank Him for His gifts and for believing in me as His witness. That is how I pray.

DO I PRAY? YES! I correlate my attitude with His attitude toward people. I harmonize my spirit, my emotions; my plans and my mind with His, conforming my thoughts to His Word. I assimilate faith, hope and love from His person and from His Word, allowing His dreams to be engendered in me. I immerse myself in the emotions and attributes of His Spirit toward people. That is how I pray.

DO I PRAY? YES! I pour out my thoughts and dreams to Him, then I listen to the response of His Word and of His Spirit. I correlate His guidance and wisdom with my agenda for witnessing of Him so I can be His effective ambassador in our hurting world. That is how I pray.

DO I PRAY? YES! I drink from His Spirit. I am inspired by His vision. I feed from His sayings. I grow in His grace. His love and compassion are engendered in me so that He can speak effectively through my lips, touch with my hands, walk in my feet, embrace with my arms, hear with my ears and see with my eyes, because He has said, “*I will dwell in you, and walk in you; and I will be*

your God, and you shall be my son... I will be a Father to you, and you shall be my son,"^{2Cor.6:16,18} That is how I pray.

DO I PRAY? YES! But do I agonize and beat the air and fight to pull down satanic strongholds where I am going to preach the Gospel? No! Never! I do that when I step onto the platform amidst an ocean of people. I preach, I announce, I demonstrate the Gospel. That is spiritual warfare. That is pulling down satan's strongholds. That is fighting the good fight of faith. That is persuading people about Christ in the way that Paul the Apostle did. ^{Act.13:43; 18:4,13; 19:8; 28:23; 2Cor.5:11}

Prayer to me is not a battle, a fight, a struggle, a warfare. Prayer is communion with the Father. Jesus fought our battles. He won our war. He triumphed in our name. *He delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us unto the kingdom of His dear Son, in whom we have redemption through His blood.* ^{Col.1:13-14} *He spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them.* ^{Col.2:5}

Witchdoctors And God's Anointed

Often in our crusades overseas, preachers warn me of powerful witch-doctors being present, resolved to invoke some great curse on me. Ministers sometimes want to lay hands on me and pray for my divine protection. **To do that would be a confession of doubt in the redemptive work of Christ.** I would never honour the lying deceiver, satan, by praying for protection from his disenfranchised emissaries that are rendered powerless when I arrive with the Gospel. God's Word states, *That Wicked One touches him not.* ^{1Jn.5:18}

When people tell me that witchdoctors are present, I urge them to bring them near the platform so I can see them and so they can see me and touch me. Being exposed to the power of the Holy Spirit present when the Gospel is preached, their witchcraft will never again be effective. *Greater is He that is in us, than he that is in the world.* ^{1Jn.4:4}

I want witchdoctors and sorcerers to be able to touch me so that they, and everyone else can see that no demonic curse can affect an ambassador of Christ.

No, we do not prepare for our crusades by long seasons of *pulling down evil strongholds* or by wasting our time fighting satanic powers that are already defeated.

Continuing What Jesus Began

We do prepare our spirits in prayer. How? For what?

We draw near to God by pondering His word; by reflecting on His plan; by rethinking His objectives; by remembering Christ's defeat of satan; by contemplating the Holy Spirit's power in our lives — all of that and much more.

Then we go in confidence, knowing that our Gospel witness is with power to break satan's rule over his captives. We will function as Christ's ambassadors and satan can do nothing to prevent the all conquering power of the Gospel.

We believe that the anointing that rested upon our Lord rests upon us as we **CONTINUE** the ministry that He **BEGAN**.

We enter the enemy's terrain with full knowledge of who we are, rejecting and resisting every deceitful tactic of satan that denigrates us or that contradicts redemptive truth. That is the way we *fight the good fight of faith*.

The Mission Of Believers

When believers announce the Gospel message of Christ to individuals or to multitudes, that is *wrestling against principalities, powers and rulers of the darkness of this world*. When the Gospel is believed, the *strongholds of satan are pulled down in people's lives*.

Captives are delivered from *the power of darkness, and they are translated into the kingdom of our God*. ^{Col.1:13}

That is the mission of the Church corporately and that is the mission of every Christian individually. *Christ gives us the victory* ^{1Cor.15:57} because *this IS the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith*. ^{1Jn.5:4}

We win the victory over the fraudulence and deception of satan in people's lives wherever we can *persuade* ^{2Cor.4:11; Gal.1:10} them to hear and to believe the Gospel.

This book is written to help clarify what biblical Spiritual Warfare. *Prayer* and *spiritual warfare* are not the same. We must distinguish between them.

Prayer is communion with the Father. **Spiritual Warfare** is entering satan's turf with the Gospel, witnessing for Christ and bringing souls into God's Kingdom.

Any mother knows the pain and struggle of birthing a child into this world. Soul-winners understand the struggle waged in birthing souls into the Kingdom of God. That is *Spiritual-Warfare*. That struggle is not waged on one's **knees**. It is waged on one's feet - in action out amidst the un-saved. As long as Christians stay on their knees instead of on their **feet**, witnessing among the lost, the enemy has prevailed.

New Creation Realities

Taken from "New Creation Realities" By D.O.Offong, Abuja, Nigeria

Forward

The fast casual reader will miss out a great deal on this booklet. It requires slow reflective reading to allow the Holy Spirit to give adequate illumination on the things being shared - the writing is pregnant with meanings. They are practical and apply to day-to-day Christian living. Without proper understanding, the reader will not be able to apply them and so the far-reaching positive results meant to be realised will be eluded.

This booklet is deliberately small to minimise the amount of information needed to chew upon, digest, assimilate and put to use at one time. It is a call for real serious business with the Holy Spirit. It is a call for transformation to attain the true state of excellence in Christ. It is a call to preparation for victorious living.

Treasures Of The Believer

There are vast treasures lying dormant and untapped in believers. This booklet seeks to unveil these unspeakable treasures and resources which remain largely unharnessed by a good proportion of believers.

Many believers live out their lives on earth without ever venturing into the very threshold of these treasures. They live more or less beggarly lives, never ever being able to take advantage of these treasures because they live totally unaware of them.

In order for believers to shine forth as the manifested sons of God they must understand their true state and position in Christ. Failure to do so means disaster and puts them at a great disadvantage. Such believers are “mince-meat” to the devil because they are not manifesting the glory of God or walking in the glorious splendour of His Kingdom.

God's Plan And Purpose

Our God is a God of plan, purpose and objectivity and this is seen in His strategy for the salvation of mankind. When He planned and implemented our salvation, His intention was not for born again believers to continue life largely in their old state of living. God designed something new for us and made great provisions for us in that grand design. These provisions of God are called “Realities of the New Creation” or “New Creation Realities”.

If any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creation old things are passed away behold all things have become new^{2Cor. 5:17}. For the believer, the old order of life has passed away and a new order has come in. The old pattern of life is out and a new pattern of life is in. The old pattern of thinking, seeing, talking, acting, behaving and reacting is out and a new pattern is in place.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ^{Eph. 1:3}. This is pregnant with meanings, implications and applications. It

means that believers are endowed with all the substance of God. We are enriched beyond measure. We are overdosed. We are loaded with untold resources.

The Great Irony

Many Christians are not enjoying these great provisions of God. They don't know what they were called into when they got saved. Many are living far below their true rights, privileges and potential in Christ. Many Christians are living conflict torn lives, embittered lives, struggling lives, battered lives, weak and defeated lives, greatly stressed lives, beggarly lives, obscure lives, handicapped lives, greatly burdened lives, troubled lives and compromising lives. Some are living in fear and worry, full of cares and anxieties. All sorts of manifestations, far from the real thing are seen all over the place.

Why Is This So?

Many Christians don't really know what became theirs when they were born again. *“My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge”*. ^{Hos.4:6} This scripture holds true of them and because of this lack of knowledge, they are unable to tap into the resources or provisions of their new birth state. Therefore they live at variance to their true state. They live robbed of their rights. The realities of their new creation state have not dawned on them. Certain things have been left undone which would have caused the realities to dawn on them and so they live far below their true potential in Christ.

A Glimpse At God's Provision

When God planned and implemented our salvation, His plan and purpose was for the born again believer to live at a new level of life higher than that of fallen humanity – it is called the “Kingdom of God”. *I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full (have it abundantly)*. ^{John 10:10} This full or abundant life of God’s Kingdom is a quality of life higher than the natural human life. This abundant life flourishes in plenty while natural human

life is plagued with lack, need and shortages. Abundant life is the life of God while the natural human life is the discordant existence of fallen humanity.

God also provided a new realm-of-life for the believer: *who called you out of darkness into his wonderful (marvellous) light.* ^{1Pet.2:9} Being called into the marvellous light of God implies that our lives should be wonderful and marvellous. The marvellous light should transform our lives into a marvel. The marvellous light should surround our life with its magnificence and make us magnificent. God provided a new life-pattern for us. *If any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creation old things are passed away behold all things have become new* ^{2Cor. 5:17}. The old order of life is gone and a new order is in. The governing principles for our lives have changed and the manner of life has also changed. Our behavioural pattern has changed. The way we act and react, take things or assess them have all changed.

In addition God has provided a new life-style for us. *For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light* ^{Eph. 5:8}. Our new life-style is to walk as children of light governed by a new principle of light.

God has made great, glorious and wonderful provisions for us: *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.* ^{Eph. 1:3} By this, God blessed us with the substance of all things.

The spiritual is the mother of the physical. All physical things proceed from the spiritual dimension. The spiritual is the substance of all things. God released spiritual substance through His words when He spoke to create the material world. Thus the spiritual is more tangible and more substantial than the material; it is more real and more durable. So God has blessed us with substance in the most durable state. With this substance we can produce anything. Oh, the unfathomable love of God for us. Oh, the breath-taking, measureless span of God's blessing on us - it is

beyond comprehension. This means that there are dimensions of our blessings that we have no knowledge of yet and of which we will never have knowledge of until we see Him face to face when He will take us on a new round of discoveries of our treasures. It will take an eternity to do that. We have been blessed far more than we will ever be able to utilise down here; we are blessed beyond measure; we are overloaded. There should be no talk of shortage - we are too full to run short.

What we have just shared under this heading represent a glimpse of the super-abundant provision of God for the born-again believer. It's breath-taking, it's mind-boggling yet many believers are living deficient and handicapped lives. There is a gap that must be filled. By discovering the treasures of God's Kingdom, believers may enjoy them by walking in the light of this new dimension and realm.

God's plan is for born-again believers to be governed by new spiritual principles which they have to discover and adopt. These new spiritual principles cover every area of life. The believer is to know them, get used to them, adopt them and adjust their life to run in line with them.

The Christian life is a life of continuous discovery and making appropriate adjustments to match the discoveries. It is an ever ascending life of continuous upward adjustments.

Result Of Application Of The New Spiritual Principles

These spiritual principles will promote the believer to a higher level of existence. Everything about the believer will be different and better. Change will permeate every aspect of the believer's life and this change will be for the better in every sense. In fact the application of the principles will usher the believer into abundant life. *Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth ...He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak ...but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and*

not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. ^{Is.40:28-31} The application of the new spiritual principles will cause believers to excel in life. They will be able to live a life of overcoming, a life of soaring above everything in their paths.

“The LORD will make you the head and not the tail, and you only will be above, and you will not be underneath, if you listen to the commandments of the LORD your God, which I charge you today, to observe them carefully” ^{Deut.28:13}. Here the promise of God to His people is that they will be above only and not beneath. The application of these principles will cause believers to really be above. They can expect to excel in every area of life for these principles span the whole spectrum of human life. No aspect of life is left out. These new principles that should govern the life of a believer are called **New Creation Realities**. They represent the glorious things that God Himself has prepared for the believer.

The Born Again Experience

Let's take a look at the “born again experience”. As has already been said, many believers don't know much about their born again experience. They don't really know what happened to them when they become born again. As a result they are disadvantaged on how to go about their new life effectively.

Analogy Of The Born Again Experience

What is the “born again” experience like? With what can we compare it? Being born again is like going into a new city. Everything about the city is new and different. For you to be able to enjoy the new city, you must take steps to familiarise yourself with the roads and infrastructures of the city. You must go through an orientation process or else trying to live in the new city will be problematic to you. The more familiar you become with the city, the more effectively you can live in the city. The same thing applies to being born again. Believers come into a way of life that is totally new; they enter a new realm of life and a

new dimension of life – they are part of the Kingdom of God! To be able to function effectively in this new dimension, they need to familiarise themselves with the principles and infrastructures of God’s Kingdom. They must take steps to discover what the rules and principles are of this new dimension of life and how they can avail themselves of them.

They must get to know the authorised procedures of God’s Kingdom; the go and the no-go areas; the do's and the don'ts. They must learn to live their lives within the framework of this new dimension.

The Problem Of Many Believers

The problem of some believers is that they enter into the new life with a lot of baggage or “carry-overs” from the old life. In many areas they continue life as before, not aware of the vast changes that have taken place in them.

They function in the new state by utilising their old patterns. For example they enter into the new life with their old pattern of thinking, their old way of seeing, their old attitudes, their narrow mindedness, self-centred tendencies, self-seeking tendencies, full of themselves and even self-willed. They do not know that these represent part of the old things that are passed away. They try to live their new life whilst still thinking in the old way: they try to put their new wine into their old wine skins. Unfortunately this will always spell disaster. They do not know that they need to discover the new principles that govern their new realm and yield to these principles.

Why Is This So?

In most cases this state of affairs exists because they are unaware of the implications of being born again; they have not understood the spiritual transformation and differences of their new life. The new birth is a spiritual experience. It is a spiritual occurrence. What happened, occurred deep down in their spirit. It is not sensed with the natural senses.

The realities of the new birth are spiritual. They need to be discovered and embraced and acted upon, in order to get results. Otherwise they will remain dormant within them and they will go through life without drawing on their God-given resources. Such a life will be greatly handicapped and much disadvantaged. It will be plagued with many avoidable problems and crises.

What Should Happen Immediately Following The New Birth Experience?

Believers should be led to discover the things that have occurred to them as a result of being born again. They should be led to discover the realities that exist in the spiritual realm into which they have been born. They should be led to discover the new principles that govern this new realm of God's Kingdom.

Believers should also be shown how to take advantage of the things of the God's Kingdom. They should be shown how to apply these new principles to their benefit. They should be taught how to harness the realities of their new realm. Failure to do so results in the life of struggling, of rising and falling. They live defeated lives; they become devil-molested and devil-abused. They live embattled lives. They live in fear, uncertainty and insecurity; they live jumbled lives of confusion.

What The Realities Are Meant To Achieve

These realities are meant to permeate and affect every aspect of believers' lives. These realities are to affect their thinking process, their thought patterns, their vision, their perspectives, the way they take things, the way they behave, their words, their actions, their inner attitudes, their dispositions, their reactions and even the positioning of their will. The realities are meant to completely transform them. The realities are meant to usher them into a truly new order or pattern of life. The realities wherever they apply are meant to govern and control the believer. The believer is meant to function on the basis of New Creation principles.

The Born Again Experience - What Is It?

Previously we have only given an analogy to the new birth. Now we want to look at the new birth and see what it really is.

The new birth is a spiritual occurrence and produces a spiritual experience. It is the supernatural intervention of God deep within the human spirit. It is not a physical occurrence. In fact no physical changes occur when someone is born again. For example, the colour of their skin does not change, neither the shape of their face nor their height. The new birth or salvation experience is a spiritual one. When someone repents of their sins and turns over their life to Jesus' rule and control, recognising Him as Lord and Saviour, God is performing a supernatural operation deep in the human spirit.

The human spirit is re-born into a new species of being called a 'new creation'. It is re-created to have a new configuration and different characteristics.

For example, the nature of sin in the human spirit is destroyed. The principle or the law of sin is eliminated from the human spirit: *For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin — because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.* ^{Romans 6:6-7} **In the place of sin nature, the nature of righteousness is implanted.**

Divine life is imparted to the human spirit: *you may participate in the divine nature* ^{2Peter 1:4}. The spirit of man is translated into the spiritual dimension of God....*called into His marvellous light.* ^{1Peter 2:9} The human spirit is invaded by the spiritual presence of God.....*For we are the temple of the living God.* ^{2Cor. 6:16} God now dwells in the midst of the human spirit.

Another consequence of this relocation of the human spirit, is that vast spiritual riches, treasures and resources are deposited in the human spirit: *who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.* ^{Eph.1:3}

These represent the immeasurable, far-reaching and indescribable changes that have occurred in the human spirit at the new birth. The new birth truly represents God's boundless, packaged deal to mankind. That is why salvation is the greatest of all the miracles that we can receive from God. It is an all inclusive package.

God established a new order in the human spirit, equipped it with new resources, bestowed it with new potentials, designed it with new capabilities and programmed it to attain feats far beyond the human intellect to grasp. Our spirit in the born again state is vastly superior to our intellect and that is why living spiritually is far different from living intellectually and far superior to it too!

As God's Kingdom is greater than the natural realm, so living by God's rules will achieve far more than living by this world's rules.

but we preach Christ crucified: ...the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength ...But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him. It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. Therefore, as it is written: “Let him who boasts boast in the Lord.”^{1Cor.1:23-31} Living spiritually will achieve far more than living

intellectually can achieve.

The Worth Of The Christian Life

For the Christian life to be worth its salt, the realities that now abound in the human spirit must be discovered, embraced, tapped and released to permeate and dominate the Christian's life.

The new potentials in our spirit, the new resources of the spirit and the new characteristics of our spirit need to be harnessed and utilised to control every aspect of the Christian's life. The soul must be won over and fertilised. The soul must begin to live and

flow in the rhythms of our new spiritual configuration and environment. It must be redeemed from the clutches of the flesh and redirected to concentrate on the resources in the re-born spirit. The soul must begin to live in the Kingdom of God and function on the basis of those resources.

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will. ^{Romans 12:2} This transformation through the renewing of the mind has to do with the soul re-aligning itself with the new resources in the re-born human spirit.

humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you[r souls]. ^{James 1:21} This scripture is addressed to already born again believers. From it we infer that even after being born again the soul of the believer is largely untouched and subsequently needs to undergo its own revolution of change, of renewal or transformation. The un-renewed soul will be a great problem to the believer. It hinders the manifestation of the potency of the new birth.

But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved (who have faith to the preserving of the soul). ^{Heb.10 39}

We are to be those who press forward in belief to the point where our soul benefits from our redemption, where our soul is engulfed by the realities of our salvation and is changed around (converted). Then the soul can begin to function on the basis of the resources of our re-born spirit. It is won over and captured by the realities of the new birth. It relinquishes its bias to the flesh and now has a bias to the re-born spirit. It dies to the physical senses, the natural and the outward circumstances and now yields to the inward resources of the re-born spirit. That is what it means to become spiritual.

The soul begins to live and speak, to act and react, on the basis of the resources and realities in the re-born human spirit. The worth and potency of the new birth is revealed when the soul

familiarises itself with those resources in the re-born spirit and functions on that basis. Until then, the new birth is only an experience with no far-reaching results that are visible.

Experience Of The New Birth

The new birth, as previously stated, is a spiritual experience and not a physical one, so as a result, we don't feel the new birth, we don't feel saved. Salvation is not a matter of feelings. To experience the new birth one needs to discover the facts of the new birth and act on those facts.

As we act on the facts, we enter into the experience of the realities of the new birth. Until we begin to act on the fact that we have been delivered from the power of sin and reject sin in every form, even when they seem to be menacing, we will never experience the reality of living above sin. The facts acted upon, brings on the experience of the reality. It brings the powers of the new birth into operation in our life and circumstances. Once the powers are at work, the experience is inevitable - it must surely come into being. It is not so much a matter of feeling but of discovery and appropriate action.

Discovering And Experiencing The Realities Of The New Creation

1. Find out from the word of God through Bible study, the truth or truths that convey the reality.
2. Meditate on the truths and realities to receive insights or revelations.
3. Visualise the unfolding revelations. Imagine them. Be sold out to them.
4. Discover through further meditation the operational keys to the revelations.
5. Apply the keys in your life in order to enable you walk in the revelation or act on the revelation.

Walking in revelation is acting on the facts of the new birth and it never fails to produce positive results. Revelation is basically

trusting God for yourself because you know that what God has said is true. Trusting God is having confidence that God tells the truth and that He keeps His word. Trusting God is faith. It is believing God. It is agreeing with Him and not quarrelling with Him. *Let God be true, and every man a liar. As it is written: "So that you may be proved right when you speak and prevail when you judge."* ^{Rom.3:4}
'Woe to him who quarrels with his Maker, ^{Is.45:9}

Note the central place of revelation:

1. We meditate to receive revelations.
2. We visualise unfolding revelations.
3. We receive keys to the revelations.
4. We apply the keys in order to walk in the revelation.
5. Walking in revelation produces reality of experience.

The realities of the new birth come to us by divine revelation.

They are not intellectually discovered. They are beyond the human intellect: ... *but just as it is written, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love him."* For to us God revealed them through the Spirit. ^{1Cor.2:9-10}

For example, the human intellect cannot grasp the fact that you have been healed when it still sees you attacked by sickness - especially when it sees symptoms and evidences of sickness. But when the revelation from God takes a hold of you, you are able to break the limitations of the intellect and defy every symptom and evidence of sickness and stand as healed right before them. When revelation comes from God, your human spirit is empowered and commissioned to take over from the intellect and subdue the inputs of the intellect. The human spirit takes over functioning at a higher consciousness. Revelation releases our consciousness from the clutches of the intellect.

Revelation plays a major role in experiencing the realities of the new birth. It plays a major role in bringing the realities into manifestation or in bringing them into force.

Jesus' Far Reaching Statement

'I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.' ^{Matt. 16:18} Here Jesus made a far reaching statement about revelation. He said that upon the Rock - the spiritual rock of revelation knowledge - He will build His Church and the gates of hades will not prevail against it. That implies that revelation beats the devil hands down. Revelation defeats the devil, knocks-out the devil cold. When you walk in revelation you beat the devil.

The triumphant life is the life that is built on revelation, the life that walks in revelation. Are you having problems in any area of your life? Make sure you have the revelation of the New Creation Realities, that you are walking in those revelations, that they are governing and controlling your thoughts, words and actions. Contrary forces are outwitted by revelation, they are paralysed and immobilised by revelation, they are outstripped by revelation. Revelation releases the resources of God to you.

Church And Revelation

The manifestation of the glorious Church, the victorious Church is a result of revelation. Jesus said, that upon the rock of revelation knowledge, He will build His Church and the gates of hades will not prevail against it. So the Church is to walk in revelation. Revelation light will pour into believers to elevate them and set them up on high. Even now the revelation light is pouring in. Are you in a place where you can receive these revelations and build your life on them? Ensure that you do not miss out.

Walking in revelation is the key to excelling or attaining excellence. It is the key to being inaccessible to the devil, the key to beating the devil hands down at all times. Revelation light blinds the devil and completely outsmarts and outwits him and his agents.

Revelation is the key to the devil not being able to withstand you. It is the key to breaking the devil's grip on your life. Revelation is the key to total freedom,

So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." ^{John 8:31-32} What Jesus is saying is that we shall come into the revelation of the truth; we shall come into a knowing that sets us free; we shall come into a revelation of the truth and applying the revelation. Walking in the revelation sets us free.

Prayers won't bring freedom to us permanently. At best it will only bring temporary relief, but walking in revelation sets us permanently free. Prayer alone won't get us to where God wants us to be, to the height He wants us to attain. But prayer and walking in revelation will. In fact we cannot even pray properly unless we pray in line with revelation. So even prayer - effective prayer - must be based on revelation knowledge.

Meditation

Meditation is the doorway into revelation - it holds the key to revelation. A Christian should be a person of meditation.

Meditation should be a consistent part of our daily life. A good number of hours should be spent in meditation daily. In fact meditation should permeate our daily activity. We should meditate continuously on the word of God. We should meditate on truths that strike us or capture our attention.

We should learn to write down the results of our meditation for future reference and use. *"This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success."* ^{Joshua 1:8}

Meditation: What It Is And What It Does

Meditation is pondering on truths. It is a spiritual exploration process carried out on truth to receive illuminations. It is the rolling over of truths for insight into them. It is the digging into truths for light enshrined in them. The process of discovery of the content of truth.

My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your sight; keep them in the midst of your heart. For they are life to those who find them and health to all their body. ^{Prov. 4:20-22}

Meditation is paying close attention to the word of God and speculatively considering it. It involves all of our being: our inner hearing, our inward vision, our reasoning faculties, our intuition and our consciousness. There is a discovery we need to make about the word of God that causes it to come alive in us and impart life and power to us. Meditation is the key to that discovery.

Meditation is remembering what God has said, refreshing your memory and reminding yourself of His word. *So I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have. I think it is right to refresh your memory ...And I will make every effort to see that ...you will always be able to remember these things.* ^{2Pet.1:12-15}

Dear friends, I have written both of [these letters] as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking. I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Saviour through your apostles ...Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen. ^{2Pet.3:1-2; 17-18}

What Meditation Does

Meditation brings revelation: *Reflect on what I am saying, for the Lord will give you insight into all this* ^{2Tim.2:7}. It breaks up truth to expose or

release its inner content. It breaks up the depths of truth to unveil its potency, dimension and application. It opens up the inner chambers of truth. It unfolds truth to us because truth comes to us as a folded package.

How To Meditate

In meditation we ask questions as we repeat the truth. For example: What does it mean? What are its implications? Where does it apply? How can it be applied? What results will it produce? Where should it take me to? How is it to affect my thinking, my seeing, my words, my actions, my stand, my attitude and reaction? How do I walk in the light received?

On asking any of the questions, we must learn to wait expecting answers from the Holy Spirit.

How To Know You Have Received From God

Answers from the Holy Spirit never run contrary to the word of God. They will always be within the scope and framework of the word.

Also answers from the Holy Spirit have elevating qualities or effects. They have illuminating, stimulating, enriching, refreshing and strengthening qualities. They have positive releasing effects and challenging motivating effects. They don't put you down or put you at a disadvantage.

We should write down the answers that we receive for future reference and also to help us to remember.

Application

We must learn to apply the results of meditation for until we reach the state of application our meditation is not complete. Our scriptural reference of Joshua 1:8 says: *be careful to do according to all that is written in it.* We must come to a point in our meditation where we are able to put to action what we have received.

Revelation And What It Does

As mentioned earlier revelation is trusting God for yourself because you know He is telling the truth – it is the basis of faith.

Revelation is the spiritual light inherent in truth. It is the inside information about a truth that enables us to reap the benefits of the truth. It constitutes the riches and splendours abounding in truth. Revelation represents what was in the heart of God when He spoke the truth into being.

Revelation takes us into the depths of truth. Revelation is the hidden manna in truth, the juice and the goodness of truth capable of nourishing, elevating and sustaining the recipient. Revelation unveils the riches and treasures of truth. Receiving of revelation is the impartation of divine light. It is the receiving of spiritual insights, illumination into the meaning, implications and the applications of truth. Revelation enlightens our spiritual perception, imparts spiritual understanding and wisdom. Wisdom has to do with the application of truth. Understanding grounds us, stabilises us while wisdom goes to work to produce results. If you can have spiritual understanding and function in the wisdom that comes with the understanding, all things will be possible for you. Spiritual understanding and wisdom hold the key to all things.

Counsel is mine and sound wisdom; I am understanding, power is mine. By me kings reign, and rulers decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, all who judge rightly. I love those who love me; and those who diligently seek me will find me. Riches and honour are with me, enduring wealth and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold, even pure gold, and my yield better than choicest silver. I walk in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of justice, to endow those who love me with wealth, that I may fill their treasuries. ^{Prov.8:14-21}

Revelation releases the life and power within divine truth. As we walk in revelation, life and power is released for results. Revelation causes truth to explode within us, or come alive within us empowering and elevating us. **Revelation causes truth to work for us.** Revelation causes truth to register in us. It is the inner substance of truth. All truths are pregnant and revelation unveils the pregnancy.

Revelation And Reality

Revelation acted upon produces reality and takes us into the experience of reality. That is why we have taken time to expound on revelation and the key to it: meditation. As we walk in the revelation of these truths, the realities of the new creation begin to function and work in our lives. *And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe.* ^{1Thes.1:13}

Revelation is vital to the experience of the new creation realities and to their manifestation in our experience. Revelation has to do with the facts of the realities. As we said previously, acting on the facts takes us into the experiences of the realities.

Enumeration Of The New Creation Realities

The realities of the New Creation: the treasures and riches deposited in the human spirit at the new birth; the spiritual blessings with which believers have been blessed; the great light that has shone on believers; the marvellous light into which believers are called; the resources with which believers are endowed; the resources with which believers should face everything that comes their way; the true light in which every born again believer should walk.

New Creation Realities

1. We are delivered from the power of sin. The principle and nature of sin in us is destroyed. *Rom. 6:6-7,14,18,22; 1John 3:9, Rom.8:1.*
2. We are a new Creature. We have a new nature, a new pattern of behaviour. *2Cor.5:17; Eph.5:8; Eph.4:31-32.*
3. We are made victorious over satan and every contrary circumstance. *1Cor.15:57; 1John 5:4, 18; Rom.8:37, 1John 4:4.*
4. We are redeemed from the curse of law. *Gal.3:13.*
5. We have the righteousness of God. *2Cor.5:21; Eph.4:24.*

6. We are the temple of the Living God. *1Cor.3:16; 1Cor.6:19; 2Cor.6:16.*
7. We are made a partaker of the divine nature. *2Pet.1:4.*
8. We have the potential for bearing the fruit of the spirit. *Jn.15:5.*
9. We have Divine abilities deposited in us. *Eph.1:3; Rom.5:17; 2Cor.9:8; Phil.4:13.*
10. We are made to sit together with Christ in heavenly places. *Eph.2:4-6.*
11. We are not just forgiven but made holy. *1Cor.3:16-17; Eph.1:4, 4:24; Col.1:21-23*
12. We are made to reign in life. *Rom.5:17; Rev.1:6.*
13. We have been made rich. *2 Cor.8:9; Eph.1:3.*
14. We have been made a priest unto God. *Rev.1:6.*
15. We have been made an heir of God and joint heir with Christ. *Rom.8:16-17; Eph.3:16; Gal.4:7.*
16. We are adopted sons of God. *Jn.1:12; Gal.4:4-7.*
17. We have the potential of being filled with all the fullness of God. *Eph.3:19*
18. We are complete in Him. *Col. 2:10.*
19. We can grow up into Christ in all things. *Eph. 4:15.*
20. We are not of this world. *John 17:14-16 21*
21. We are of God. *1 John 4:4, 1John 5:4.*
22. We have abundant life. *John 10:10*
23. We have healing & health as a legacy *Matt.8:16-17.*
24. We have the glory of God. *John 17:22-23.*
25. We have peace as a legacy. *Jn. 14:27, Jn.16:33, 1Cor.7:15, Col.3:15.*
26. We are delivered from the power of darkness. *Col.1:13, Gal.1:4.*
27. We are called into the spiritual dimension of God and made citizens of heaven. *1Pet.2:9. Col.1:13.*

28. We are given a sound mind, delivered from fear, doubt, worry, anxiety and every negative emotion. *2Tim.1:7, Luke 1:74-75.*
29. We are God's own possession. *1Pet.2:9.*
30. We are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. *Eph.1:3.*

All believers who allow these realities to dominate their life and lives out their earthly lives on the basis of them, are bound to excel in life.

As we learn to engage these realities to deal with issues in this life, the resources of heaven stored up in our spirit will be released into our life and circumstances to produce positive results by their supernatural potency.

The Great Exchange

Jesus exchanged our curses for His blessings

Punishment: *But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed Is.53:5.*

Forgiveness: *In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace Eph.1:7.*

Sickness: *He took up our infirmities and carried our diseases Matt.8:17.*

Health: *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed 1Pet.2:24.*

Sin: *God made him who had no sin to be sin for us 2Cor.5:21*

Righteousness: *so that in him we might become the right-eousness of God 2Cor.5:21.*

Death: *But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us Rom.5:8 .*

Life: *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord Rom.6:23.*

Poverty: *For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor 2Cor.8:9*

Riches: *so that you through his poverty might become rich 2Cor.8:9.*

Shame: *Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God Heb.12:2.*

Glory: *In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering Heb.2:10.*

Rejection: *About the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” Matt.27:46*

Acceptance: *to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves (to the praise of the glory of his grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved NKJV) Eph.1:6.*

Curse: *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree” Gal.3:13.*

Blessing: *He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit Gal.3:14*

Forgiveness

Petzer, M., *Forgiveness*. 1994.

Introduction

The majority of us have always believed that God forgives. It is just that we have had serious doubts about how far that forgiveness extends and how long it can hold out for in the face of persistent sinning.

For most of us, we measure how far we have gone when we think about God's capacity for forgiveness (or the limits thereof) rather than the lengths God went to in order to establish solid, unquestionable, legal grounds for our eternal forgiveness. In short, we are far more preoccupied with our wrongdoing than with Jesus' finished work.

The Foundation Of Forgiveness

Forgiveness never has depended on man's performance but on Jesus' death burial and resurrection. We are not forgiven because we did things worthy of forgiveness, but because Jesus paid for our sin. It is our blood-bought right to be forgiven for all our sin. According to the New Testament, neither feelings of regret nor sorrow but faith in the finished work of Jesus is the only ground for forgiveness.

The Bible says that, "*without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness*"^{Hebrews 9:22}. No, you cannot pray long enough, cry hard enough, plead sincerely enough, promise never-to-do-it-again enough, regret enough or even fast enough for forgiveness. If any of these were the basis for forgiveness, then Jesus need not have died. Forgiveness and salvation would be available without his shed blood. Just as it says, "*If righteousness comes through the Law [good works], then Christ died needlessly*"^{Galatians 2:21}. Will we make a Christ out of our repentance and regret? These are too vague and inexact conditions to stir up any faith. How will you ever know if

you have repented or regretted enough to be forgiven? This would move forgiveness out of the realm of faith in a final sacrifice and into the area of mere speculation and emotion. A forgiveness based upon variable human opinion and speculation, which have no absolutes, is totally unacceptable for faith since there can be no faith in the undefined. No, it is by faith and by faith alone. No human additives, but confidence in what God has done.

No Record Of Our Sins?

"... God was reconciling the world to himself, not charging men's transgressions to their account." ^{2 Corinthians 5:19} Or as the expanded translation of the New Testament puts it, *"Not putting down on the liability side of their ledger their trespasses."* God is not making a case against you. God is not making a list of your sins so that he can call you into account for them. He is not saving them up so that he can confront us with them and make us pay for them. God is not calling man into account for sins, but to account for his gift of life in Jesus Christ.

John the Baptist introduced Jesus to us as *"the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world"* ^{John 1:29}. John writes in his first epistle that Jesus is *"the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world"* ^{1 John 2:2}.

We are confronted in these verses with the startling truth that not only is God not holding the believer's sins against him, but he is also not holding the world's sins against it. When Jesus died he paid not only for the believer's sins (because there were no believers when he died) but he also died and removed the unbelievers' sins. Just as it says that *"God gives proof of his love to us in Christ's dying for us while we were still sinners"* ^{Romans 5:28}. As surely as he died for all men, just so surely have all men had their sins dealt with. Jesus has settled the sin issue for all men. There is no outstanding debt or any unpaid account as far as man's sin is

concerned. "*It is finished*" was more than just a cry of relief, it was a statement of fact!

Total Forgiveness

Scripture tells us that we were made alive together with him after he had "*forgiven us all our transgressions*" and "*cancelled out the certificate of debt*" *Colossians 2:13-14*. Yes, the certificate of debt or the invoice has been cancelled. It is as if we had never been billed. As if we had never owed anything. Sins that are forgiven are sins that are cancelled. They do not exist.

Most believers can accept that they have been forgiven of all their pre-salvation sins but what about our subsequent sins?

Firstly, Jesus died for all our sins. When did he die for our sins? The day we believed? No! He died for them approximately 2000 years ago. Jesus did not go to the cross and die for your sins the day you believed and were saved, but 2000 years before you were saved. When Jesus died for your sins 2000 years ago, how many of your sins were pre-salvation sins then? Yes, it is true, Jesus not only died for sins that were committed but also for sins that were yet to be committed.

Secondly, God is eternal, not only unrestricted by time, but timeless. Whenever God speaks, he speaks from his own point of view which is eternal. For him "all" is "all!" Without the restriction of past, present and future. In short, God's "all" is an unqualified "all" without any disclaimer attached to it.

In order for you to visualize this more clearly, imagine a long line that stretches to your left as far as you can see it and still continues. Next, continue the same line to your right as far as you can see it and it still continues. Now, place a 12" ruler on the line. This is time on the background of eternity. Now place your left hand at the beginning of the ruler. You are now at the beginning of time. Next, place your right hand at the end of the ruler. You are now at the beginning of time and the end of time at the same

time! From this perspective, your "all" includes all of time. Just so with God. When he dealt with all sin it was with absolute knowledge. God does not learn anything, he has always known everything. Because God already knows everything, his knowledge cannot increase. No sin you can commit can catch him by surprise. He knows every sin that has been committed and will be committed and because of this he is thoroughly qualified to have placed all our sins upon his Son. We will never do anything that he has not already made provision for. Total forgiveness!

The Perfect Sacrifice

The old covenant required constant repetition of the sacrifice because the sacrifice was limited in its consequences. It paid for the sins that were committed most recently by the individual or, as in the yearly atonement, it paid for the sins committed by the nation of Israel for the entire previous year. This left those under the old covenant with the unhappy situation of always having to live on credit for the next year. So the old covenant sacrifices were only concerned with former sins never with future sins. As such it was an imperfect covenant. The book of Hebrews calls it imperfect simply because it did not deal with future sins.

(Hebrews 7:11,19; 9:9; 10:1)

More than this, the scripture reveals that the sacrifices were themselves never the actual basis for forgiveness. On the basis of them God merely "*passed over the sins previously committed*" *Romans 3:25*. The sacrifices were only "shadows" of the perfect sacrifice and the perfect sacrifice would, when He came, have to pay for these sins also so that God could be just in having passed them over. Remember that it is on the basis of justice satisfied and punishment served that sins are forgiven. God could not just forget men's sins. He had to punish them to uphold his justice. So, through Jesus, he dealt with sin and its punishment. By this

he established the fact of his having forgiven men, as a righteous thing for him to have done.

Since there is no forgiveness without the shedding of blood, if there is still a need for more forgiveness then there must be another sacrifice brought. It is precisely this reasoning that caused the believers in the book of Hebrews to return to the old covenant sacrifices. For them, the blood of Jesus was no more effective than the blood of bulls and goats in that it only paid for their former sins. Subsequent sins therefore, needed subsequent sacrifices.

The only alternative to animal sacrifices, as far as they were concerned, is that Jesus should come down from heaven and die again. The writer of the book of Hebrews points out that this is unnecessary, since Jesus' sacrifice is perpetually valid. That is, no future sin, no matter how bad, can invalidate its effects and require an additional sacrifice. His single sacrifice has pre-empted all possible sins and paid for them for "all time." The book of Hebrews emphasizes no less than nine times from chapter 7 to chapter 10 that Jesus died once, for all sin, for all men, for all time. Thus he terminates the necessity for any additional sacrifice and the old covenant that required it. (Hebrews 7:27; 9:12,26-28; 10:2,10,12,14)

What About The Unforgivable Sin?

While the whole background of the argument in the book of Hebrews is still fresh in our minds, let us deal with the two difficult scriptures found there. In Hebrews 6 the teaching on the impossibility of renewal to repentance has specific reference to the rejection of the perfect sacrifice. If the new covenant is rejected, not by open rejection, but by insisting on adhering to the old covenant sacrifices, there is no power available in the old covenant to bring about a changed life. Since the animal sacrifice is a shadow of the final perfect sacrifice of Christ, the repetition

of the animal sacrifice is in effect a crucifying again of Christ in the type of the animal sacrifice. The writer could not possibly be meaning that there could be a literal crucifying of Jesus for a second time, or that he could even ever be made to die for sin for a second time. He insists that Jesus has died once for all.

This brings us to the verse in chapter 10. Chapter 10 is the great culminating chapter on the perfect sacrifice, that perfectly deals with sin and therefore never needs repetition since repetition is a mark of imperfection. No new sacrifice is needed because "we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" Hebrews 10:10. More than this, "He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" Hebrews 10:14. In the light of these two great truths the Holy Spirit brings us the revelation that "where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin" Hebrews 10:18. He does not mean by this that sin has exhausted or used up the effect of the offering, but that the offering has exhausted the effect of sin!

It is because of this that God says, "*Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more*" Hebrews 10:17. Not because God is forgetful, but because the perfect sacrifice has so perfectly dealt with our sin that God no longer remembers what no longer exists.

It is in this context that we must understand "*there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins*" Hebrews 10:26. No sin can ever annul the validity of the perfect sacrifice except the rejection of the perfect sacrifice - Jesus. This is another repetition of the truth already alluded to in chapter 6. That is, that subsequent sins will not need a subsequent sacrifice. Jesus is the end of the need of all sacrifice. The sin of these people here is that they have rejected the perfect sacrifice. They have "*counted the blood... an unholy thing*" Hebrews 10:29. That is, they have regarded it as defective or ineffective in some way. This they did by relying upon animal sacrifices again, the very thing that the book of Hebrews was written to stop them from doing. Do you think the blood to be an "unholy thing?"

Short lived in its effect and usefulness? Something to be used and discarded like you did with the dead animal you brought last year? Is he not the One who saves to the uttermost [perfectly] since He always lives to make intercession for us? (Hebrews 7:25)

Jesus' Teaching On The Unforgivable Sin

Jesus' teaching on the unforgivable sin in Matthew 12:32 and in Mark 3:28,29 has been a source of turmoil for many believers. For the sake of clarity it is first necessary that we eliminate what it is not.

Firstly, this does not refer to a perpetual sin repeated to the point where there is no longer forgiveness available because the believer has gone "too far." This is not a sin that was once forgiven but now can no longer be forgiven. The scripture clearly says that "*all sins shall be forgiven the sons of men*" ^{Mark 3:28,29}, but he who offends in this sin "never has forgiveness". That is, this sin was never forgivable in the first place.

Secondly, blasphemy against the Holy Spirit cannot refer to making fun or mocking at the working of the Spirit. The large crowd which gathered on the day of Pentecost mocked those who were filled with the Spirit by saying that they were drunk. A great number of these mockers, if not most, were part of the 3000 converts after Peter's sermon.

Thirdly, some have suggested that because the scripture says that Jesus was saying this because they were saying, "*He has an unclean spirit*," that this is the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. But it is evident that this insult was aimed at the Son of Man. He clearly was the subject of their mockery. And "*whoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him*" ^{Matthew 12:32}. So what is this unforgivable sin then?

The words, "*have insulted the Spirit of grace*" ^{Hebrews 10:29} give us the necessary insight. The blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is the rejection of the New Covenant also called the "*ministry of the*

Spirit" ^{2 Corinthians 3:8}. In short, a refusal to believe in Jesus and so receive him. This hardness of heart being evidenced by the need to explain away all supernatural phenomenon worked by the Holy Spirit to confirm that Jesus is the only way of salvation. Those who refuse to trust in Jesus for salvation commit the sin that never has forgiveness neither now nor forever.

What About Confession Of Sins?

There has been much abuse of confession which we cannot go into now, but we will deal with some fallacies and insecurities that have arisen because of the incorrect understanding of this doctrine.

Salvation depends on the believer confessing Jesus as Lord, (Romans 10:9,10 and Matthew 10:32,33) and not on him confessing all his sin. Salvation would then depend upon the effectiveness of the memory of men. Under the old covenant every time someone wanted to approach God, he had to confess sin because that is what stood between him and God. In the new covenant they have to confess Jesus because that is who now stands between them and God. **Sin no longer stands between man and God because Jesus' work of taking the sin of the world away is a success.** If sin is still there, then his work is a failure.

If man must confess all sin to be saved, what would happen if he forgot one? How could he ever be sure that he had remembered them all?

What would happen to a believer that died before he had a chance to confess just one sin? If we must confess every sin or else be unforgiven, would that mean that he would be lost forever and go to hell? Nonsense! We have already asserted that forgiveness is ours through what Jesus already did. We are the forgiven because we have placed our faith in Jesus as saviour and not because we remembered to confess every sin we ever have done. (Ephesians 1:7 Colossians 2:13)

Does that mean that there is no confession of sin, that it is unnecessary? If confession were unnecessary, there would be no purpose for *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* ^{1John 1:9}.

So what is confession and how does it fit in?

Firstly, why is God just in forgiving our sin? Because we remembered to confess them? In any court of law, mere admission of guilt is not the basis of pardon. Release is only obtained after the payment of the penalty. Would a judge be regarded as a just judge if he excused a murderer because he admitted to the crime? Never! Just so, God's justice in forgiving is founded upon the fact that Jesus has already paid the penalty for every sin and not because of confession.

Next, we need to have a better understanding of the word "confess" as used in the New Testament. According to W.E. Vine's Dictionary of New Testament Words, the widest used meaning of the word "confession" is to speak openly and freely as the result of "deep conviction of facts." In the case in hand, it is quite obvious that those facts, according to the context, are the forgiveness provided by Jesus' shed blood and personal sacrifice. *"The blood of Jesus... cleanses us from all sin,"* ^{1John 1:7} and *"he is the propitiation for our sins... also... for the whole world,"* ^{1John 2:2} are two verses that 1John 1:9 is sandwiched between. These are the facts about which there is deep conviction expressed in confession.

Lastly, what is the Greek meaning of the word? The Greek word "homologeō" means to think the same thing and therefore to speak the same thing. To be united in thought and speech. In fact, to think and speak the same thing about our sins as what God does is the basis of forgiveness. If we think and speak the same things as God does about our sins, then our forgiveness will be a reality for us.

Jesus declared to the prostitute in John chapter 8 that she was uncondemned and forgiven yet she did not even come to him but

was dragged there against her own will and she never confessed her sin to him.

The cripple man lowered through the roof was forgiven when Jesus saw the faith of the ones who had brought him there. There is no mention of him confessing his sins and yet he was immediately declared forgiven (Mark 2:3-5). Confession was not a requirement for forgiveness in either of these cases.

The Prodigal Son: An Illustration Of Forgiveness

Everyone is familiar with this parable, but a closer look at it will be a great blessing. The two sons illustrate the two types of people under the old and new covenants and through the father's actions there is an illustration of the heart of the Father as the Law was never able to reveal him.

In this story, when the younger, malcontent son comes to his senses, he carefully rehearses his confession of sin and unworthiness but he never gets a chance to confess. Before he even has time to explain why he is coming home, the Father runs out to meet him (a most undignified thing for an old man to do in middle eastern culture) and embraces him and kisses that wayward son. No, he does not make him work in the fields for a couple of weeks first to see if he is really serious about repenting. He restores him to a position that seems to be even better than the one he had before he had left. The one who had no inheritance, now shares in all of the Father's wealth and forgiveness.

Does this sound all too much? It was so for the older son. His self-righteous wailing bemoaned the Father's generosity, calling him unfair and only stopping short of calling the Father's actions unrighteous. A perfect example of the self-righteous legalist's attitude to the freely given grace of God.

Come forgiven one! Know, believe and confess that you are the forgiven and you too will experience the joy of your salvation.

Mike Petzer 1994

The Miracle Of Judgement

Mike Petzer (produced by Deal Pentecostal Church)

Past Judgment:

The single most liberating truth in the believer's life is this — judgment has already been passed on him. For the believer, the judgment that is past is the source of his confidence before God; judgment future is his consolation; judgement present is his security. *"mercy triumphs over judgment."* ^{James 2:13} *"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment."* ^{1John 4:18}

God's mercy and love are both founded on His holiness and justice. He does not ignore or even suspend one part of His being in order to exercise the other part. He does not override justice nor violate His holiness in order to show mercy. It is because God has already punished all sin in Jesus' perfect sacrifice that He can be merciful toward "sinners" and still be perfectly just, loving, yet still holy.

The believer's confidence springs from this fact, not that he has escaped judgment, but that judgment has been fully executed upon him and that his acquittal is firmly founded on judgment satisfied and not because it has been avoided. Just like the father who came home and found his son standing next to a broken vase that lay shattered all over the floor. He promptly informed the boy that he was going to spank him for the crime, but the little boy boldly responded, "You cannot Daddy, Mommy has already spanked me!" He who has been judged, found guilty and punished, cannot legally be made to pay twice for the same crime. The desire to have judgment over and done with — a thing of the past, is founded on the desire for fellowship.

When judgment is deferred, fellowship is strained. Insecurity and fear thrive. Judgment passed brings security and peace which are the essential foundations of a lasting, flourishing relationship.

I remember when I was a child that my father would ask me to do certain tasks from time to time. As any other child, for one reason or another, I would neglect to complete them as was required of me. When I would see my father returning after the day's work, I would suddenly realize that the "time of judgment" for neglecting his instructions was imminent. I was filled with a sense of guilt and an overwhelming desire to place as much distance between myself and him as possible. The only problem was that, in the process of avoiding judgment, I had lost my sense of peace. The low-level-stress of no peace finally became more unbearable than the prospect of a spanking. I faced up to the consequences, was punished and immediately was flooded with relief and at peace again with my father, with our fellowship restored.

God's judgement is essentially redemptive. Unquestionably the greatest judgment that has ever been upon any man, is that judgment which fell upon Jesus as being the representative of the whole human race and all its sin. It is through this judgment that God established for all men, "Such a great salvation". Through this judgment we see that the ultimate purpose of every judgment is not to write us off but to redeem us. Not to destroy man, but to deliver him. Not to hurt men, but to heal them. Not to crush but to change. This is also illustrated throughout the Old Testament book of Judges. The judges were men who "judged Israel". Their judgment was characterized by acts of deliverance for Israel from all their oppressors. With the result that Israel was made prosperous again as a nation after a period of great, albeit self inflicted, hardship. The judges' judgments were against the people's enemies and they ensured that the promises of God remained Israel's experience.

In the New Testament, Paul writes, "*I have been crucified with Christ.*" ^{Galatians 2:20}. This is in fact true for all believers just as it says, "*One died for all, therefore all have died.*" ^{2Cor.5:14} Since Jesus' death was

the penalty for all of mankind's sin, and we died with him, then we are already effectively punished for all our sins. He, by the grace of God, did *"taste death for everyone."*^{Hebrews 2:9b}

He died for all sin. Sins we have committed, do commit and even those that we may yet commit. When the Father placed all sin on his Son and punished him in our stead, he did so with absolute knowledge. "All sin" for the Father is every sin whether they were past, present or future. He died once and for all. There is no sin that will require him to die a second time. Jesus' final cry from the cross of, "It is finished!" proclaimed that man's outstanding debt of sin was cancelled once and for all. There is nothing that we can do as believers that will catch God by surprise. There is no sin that we could do that he has not already paid for. He has settled the sin issue so thoroughly in the believer's life, that, when he comes a second time, it will be just as the scripture says, *"Without reference to sin"*.^{Hebrews 9:28}

There is no condemnation for us who are in Christ Jesus. Neither now, nor in the future. Jesus put it this way, *"He who hears my word, and believes him who sent me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life."*^{John 5:24}

We are now living in the realm of life. And this life does not come into judgment, because we are partakers of His own spotless life the moment we believed. We are joined to Him. We were one with Him when he was put to death, crucified, punished, raised and ascended to the Father's right hand (Ephesians 2:1-6). We are now one with Him in His blameless life. *"For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."*^{Romans 6:5}

No present or future judgment can ignore this past judgment. It is the very foundation of our salvation and confidence before God.

Present Judgment:

Judgment And Punishment

We have established that the believer has been judged, found guilty and punished in Jesus' death. His punishment was Jesus' death. It is for this reason alone that we are not judged for our sins. *"He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already."* ^{John 3:18} The Gospel of John then goes on to say that this judgment is one that the unbeliever has passed on himself. They have chosen darkness rather than the light (John 3:19).

Therefore the unbeliever's judgment is self imposed. It is a true statement that, "God sends no man to hell, they choose to go there of their own free will." The unbeliever has rejected real life and is therefore, by default, condemned to an inferior, base existence in this life and a fearful punishment in eternity. All of this is the result of his own choice just as Paul said to the unbelieving Jews *"It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; since you repudiate it, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles."* ^{Acts 13:46} Hell is not the result of a wrong life, but of the ultimate bad choice — the rejection of Jesus.

Wrath, As Understood In The New Testament

We are in the habit of viewing wrath as something that only happens in the future, but the New Testament speaks of it as the present tense experience of all unbelievers. *"He who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."* ^{John 3:36} This same concept is expanded on in Romans chapter one. Paul tells us here that since they *"did not honour Him as God"* (v21) and because, *"they exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man, birds, four-footed animals and crawling creatures"* (v23), that God withdrew his restraining hand from them and allowed them to pursue their own course of self-degradation, self-denigration and self-destruction. These verses are a commentary on the truth stated in verse 18, *"For the wrath of God is revealed [not,*

will be revealed] from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness."

The use of the words "*God gave them over*" in verses 24, 26 and 28 clearly illustrate the point that wrath is not that God is actively punishing sinful men, but that he is allowing them to experience the resultant fruit of their own errors without intervening to stop them. Just as he says in Romans 1:27b, they are "*receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.*" Effectively this wrath is the by-product of their errors and not the action of an "angry God".

There is, of course, a wrath yet to come, but we are dealing with present judgment. Man, not God, is the cause of the present suffering and hardship in this world. He is experiencing the moral, social and personal confusion that is the effect of a lost identity and greed.

Neglecting or rejecting the revelation of God produces terrible results. If we look at the effects of false religion on the peoples of India and the other eastern countries, where children die of malnutrition in the streets while people feed slick, fat cattle as gods, we see this clearly illustrated.

They have no room for pity or compassion in such a belief. To help someone in a poor condition is to ensure that they come back and live in the same condition again, because to help them is to short circuit the process of their punishment for bad "karma" because, as the Hindu believes, their current condition is a reward for their deeds in a supposed "former life." So why bother? Even killing someone is not considered a bad thing by the Hindu. For the Christian we pass through this world but once but according to the Hindu, this is but one of many lives that he is living. So why should sending someone on his way to the next life earlier than what he expected be such a terrible thing to him after all?

Discipline - The Chastening Of The Believer

"But if we judged ourselves rightly, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord in order that we may not be condemned along with the world." ^{1Cor.11:31,32}

The believer can escape all judgment by simply obeying the clearly revealed will of God for his life in the Word. Much of what people term "learning from experience" is learning under judgment. It is far better for you to experience God's promise than to experience the fruit of your neglect of His of word.

"It is for discipline that you endure, God is treating you as sons." ^{Hebrews12:7} The son the Father does not discipline, is the son the Father does not love. God will not let you do your own thing. When God puts a bit in your mouth and turns your head the way you ought to go - that is not hurtful to you. Just as the Psalmist says, *"Do not be as the horse or as the mule which have no understanding, Whose trappings include bit and bridle to hold them in check, Otherwise they will not come near to you."* ^{Psalms32:9} Only when we choose to operate without insight or ignore the clear revelation of God does it become necessary to use drastic measures.

It would be harmful to you if he let you get your own way when it is opposite to his will for your life. This is the action of God's love. We need to settle in our hearts that the best thing for our lives is God's will.

When God judges, he does it to preserve the quality of life he always intended for us to enjoy. God will not pamper your weakness. Sometimes we want to hang onto our weaknesses that are actually killing us and so God has to wrest them violently from us. The rocks on which the ship of our false confidence is wrecked are not dangerous to us. They are a blessing because they expose the fact that our confidence is not completely in God. God's chastisement is seen in those difficult times when our false confidences are permitted to be destroyed. God's present judgment of the believer is essentially revelatory. It unmask our

bad decisions. My loss is only apparent — not real. Those things which I thought that I could not live without, I find that I can do without them all and yet enjoy more happiness in my life than ever before. I am permitted by the resultant bad experience to see the true folly of each deception so that I may find my fulfilment in God alone.

Those troublesome times are a blessing. This is not God proving that he is right and we are wrong. It is to our advantage that we are made stronger by the removal of the things we were deceived into trusting in. Discipline cuts us off from things that we are dependent on or were enslaved to which are detrimental to our physical, spiritual and emotional well being. All discipline seems not to be joyful at the time, and yet, it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness (Hebrews 12:11). For the believer there is a great blessing in judgment. For example, the rain that fell during the flood in Noah's days destroyed the world of sin but elevated the believers to the highest place — Ararat. What began as judgment, rainfall, is considered a blessing now and is essential for growth. This should be proof enough that judgment causes growth.

Now, you can grow through obedience to the Word (that is, confronting yourself with the Word and overcoming your own disobedience) or through the judgment/discipline that comes through disobedience to the Word (that is, being confronted by your own disobedience). This judgment is when God permits us to experience the difficulty inflicted on us by our own wrong choice so that we may come to our senses and see the error of our bad decision. You have a choice! You can avoid being trained by "discipline" by believing the Word and by acting on it. However, if we are not trained by the Word, then we must eat the fruit of our unbelief. I have told our congregation that there are two ways to grow. One way is by listening to the Word and putting it into practice and the other is by going through a hard time and then listening to the Word and putting it into practice. A

good idea is to avoid the hard time bit and just put the Word into practice first time around. God wants us to live. He hates death and death is anything outside his will for our lives. God is out to kill death. In whatever shape it appears.

To clarify, God is not the source of these problems, our bad choices are. Yes, he has the power to stop them, but he will not override the human will. Man's freedom of choice is a sacred thing to God and he will not violate it. God does not force his will on any man. God will not force you to be blessed. You are free to live outside of and with less than what He has promised. It was because of this freedom to exercise his free will that Adam is rightfully regarded as being solely responsible for the fall. God had nothing to do with it. Yes He had the power to stop it, but he would not interfere with Adam's choice even though the fall of man was not his will. **Once again, it is wrong to think that everything that happens to us is God's will.** You cannot escape discipline if you are disobedient to the Word. There will always be a negative result for living outside of the will of God as it is revealed in the Word of God. Peter tells us that *"they stumble because they are disobedient to the word."* ^{1 Peter 2:8} We cannot escape the law of cause and effect. Peter calls this, *"Suffering wrong as the wages of doing wrong."* ^{2Peter 2:13} and speaks of those who through destructive heresies and by denial of the truth *"Bring swift destruction upon themselves."* ^{2 Peter 2:1} Remember, God lets us see the error of our ways so that we can correct them. God would be doing us great harm by permitting us to continue in disobedience under the illusion that it is not harmful to us.

When we are judged, we are disciplined so that we are not condemned together with the rest of the world (1Corinthians11:32). **Judgment for the believer is not condemnation.** The scripture is clear that there is no condemnation for the believer (Romans 1:8). It is far better for us to experience God's judgment (i.e. his discipline) now, than to

wake up at the end of the age and find ourselves condemned. Condemnation, as far as discipline is concerned, is when we are not judged.

What are we to endure then?

Some have held, mistakenly, to the opinion that to "endure hardship as discipline" or "chastening" includes the idea of sickness.

Firstly, is the discipline from God? If the discipline is the result of God's dealing with us, surely we should respond to it and correct the problem rather than "endure" it. "Enduring God" or any of God's actions does not conjure up a positive image and cannot be considered as a godly thing that the Word of God would encourage us to do. But we are told to endure discipline, so how should we understand this verse?

The believer is not told to endure sickness, sin or temptation. Concerning sin and temptation he is told to resist them (Hebrews 12:4). Sickness is not mentioned anywhere in the book of Hebrews. So what must we endure?

Paul told Timothy to, "*Suffer (endure) hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.*" ^{2Tim.2:3.} The "hardship" in this instance was Paul's imprisonment, being treated as a criminal for preaching the gospel. The same kind of hardship is in mind when the writer to the Hebrews encourages the recipients of his letter to endure hardship or persecution.

Consider the heroes of faith mentioned in chapter 11. Verses 33-37 give us an account of how they suffered terrible persecution and still did not give up on the divine promise. The recipients of this letter are also called upon to remember the former days when they "*endured a great conflict of sufferings... made a public spectacle... reproaches... tribulations... seizure of your property.*" ^{Hebrews 10:32-34} These are the kind of hardships they were to endure without giving up on the Perfect Covenant together with the Old Testament saints as their "*cloud of witnesses.*" ^{Hebrews 12:1} Jesus also is a faithful witness who

"endured such hostility by sinners against himself." ^{Hebrews 12:3} They were, and we are, to endure without giving up on our faith, the inevitable hostility of the unbeliever against us. Persecution is to be endured, temptation is to be resisted and sickness is to be healed.

Persecution

"For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God." ^{1Peter 4:17}

Much has been said about this verse, but any verse out of context can become a pretext for misunderstanding. The preceding verses contain these clauses *"do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you which comes upon you for testing"* (v12) and *"if you are reviled for the name of Christ"* (v14) and *"if anyone suffers as a Christian"* (v16). These show clearly that the judgment that is in mind here is persecution. Paul wrote, *"And indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted"* ^{2 Timothy 3:12} and Jesus assured his disciples that, *"In this world you shall have tribulation."* ^{John 16:33}

Firstly, nowhere in 1 Peter 4:17 does it say that God is the source of this judgment. God is not persecuting his own children! On the contrary, all persecution of believers is not from God but from the devil. He is the spirit that troubles the believer and stirs up persecutions all over the world.

Secondly, these persecutions are not because the believer has done something wrong, instead, they are proof of a godly life. They come upon us to test us and are an opportunity for God to be glorified and the world to see the effect of our testimony. We are encouraged to be *"in no way alarmed by (our) opponents which is a sign of destruction for them, but of salvation for you."* ^{Philippians 1:28}. This persecution is always to be an opportunity for rejoicing (James 1:2-4; Matthew 5:10-12; 1Peter 3:14).

So what exactly is this judgment and who is passing it and upon whom is it being passed? This judgment is passed on the believer

by the world. Communicating to us that we are considered by them to be *"men of whom the world was not worthy"* ^{Hebrews 11: 38}, and that we are unwelcome here. Just as Jesus said, *"But beware of men; for they will deliver you up to the courts, and scourge you in their synagogues; and you shall even be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles."* ^{Matthew 10:17-18} This is proof for us that we are saved. And in their case, through them passing this judgment on us, they are in fact judging themselves as those who are to be destroyed. Which destruction they have no power to inflict upon us and so they are not to be feared.

Future Judgment:

Future Judgment Of The Believer

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad." ^{2 Corinthians 5:10}

The believer will be judged for deeds done in the body, whether good or bad. We must avoid all confusion here. Salvation is not based on what we have done, but on what Jesus did for us. The unsaved are not lost because of their deeds, their deeds merely reflect how lost they are. Man is not unsaved because of what he has done, but because of what he has not done - he has not received Jesus Christ.

This judgment of the believer at the judgment seat of Christ is a judgment of his works and not his sin. The believer's sin has already been effectively and permanently judged in Christ Jesus. God will not dishonour his promise nor insult his Son's finished work by calling into question the guiltlessness of those for whom Jesus died.

The judgment of the believer is a testing of the quality of the work that he has done and not the quantity. It is on the basis of quality that the believer will be rewarded or lose his reward for his good works.

"According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building upon it. But let each man be careful how he builds upon it. For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire."^{1Corinthians 3:10-15}

This reward will not only be for those who are in full time ministry or merely for those who do "truly spiritual" things like praying for the sick or leading people to the Lord. The believer will be rewarded even for the seemingly unspiritual, mundane, ordinary, day-to-day things, like how you did your job. *"Knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free."*^{Ephesians 6:8}. Notice that it is *"whatever good thing we do,"* that we shall receive a reward for from the Lord. Slaves in Paul's day were not able to leave home and become involved in the more obvious Christian service of being a missionary. They were owned by their master and had to do his bidding. Paul assures them that this serious restriction will not be a disadvantage to them on judgment day. They will be just as surely rewarded as the most eminent apostles since they did their daily work faithfully. The future judgment of the believer will be a positive judgment. A judgment of reward. True, some will lose their reward but all will be saved.

Calling Jesus Lord, And Yet Still Lost?

*"Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' 'And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; **DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.**'"*^{-Matthew 7: 22-23}

The words "***I never knew you***" are the key to understanding this verse. Notice that it does not say, "*You did not know me,*" but, "***I never knew you.***" Speaking of the Galatians' salvation Paul makes it clear that, "*Now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God.*" *Galatians 4:9* Salvation is correctly, God knowing us, rather than us knowing God. So when Jesus said, "*I never knew you,*" He is letting us know that these people were never saved. It is not that they once were and then fell away for then He would have said, "*I knew you once...*," but he said, "*I never knew you.*"

Does not the evidence of the miraculous prove that these were saved? No! The seven sons of the high priest, Sceva, in the book of Acts were in the habit of doing certain miracles in the Name of Jesus also. "*...Some of the Jewish exorcists, who went from place to place, attempted to name over those who had the evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus...*" *Acts 19:13*. The man with the demon that stripped them naked was not the first time they had attempted to cast out a demon using Jesus Name. They had attempted it over a couple as the use of the plural "those" in the above verse also indicates. These were unsaved men.

The Future Judgment Of The Unbeliever

Although this booklet was written especially for believers, it would not be complete without dealing with the final condition of unbelievers.

"And I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds." *Revelation 20:11,12*

Every unbeliever will appear before the "great white throne" of judgment. These are called the "dead" and are part of the "second resurrection," and because they are part of this "second resurrection" (unlike the believers) they are subject to the second

death. The believer is part of the first resurrection, *"Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years."* ^{Revelation 20:6}

The dead are judged according to their deeds according to what is in the "books". But the final criterion for judgment is *"anyone whose name was not written in the Lamb's book of life"* (Eternal life is not a reward but a gift and not because of good deeds, but faith in Jesus Christ.) Those whose names are not in the book of life are cast into the lake of fire. *"And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."* ^{Revelation 20: 15}.

Since they have rejected Jesus as their saviour they are subject to the second death. This death was never intended for man, but for the devil and his angels just as the scripture says, *"Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels'"* ^{Matthew 25:41}

The scripture also teaches that this is a punishment of eternal, conscious, torment without any break, day or night. *"And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever."* ^{Revelation 20:10}

The believer has nothing to fear concerning this judgment of eternal punishment because *"God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,"* ^{1Thessalonians 5:9} On the contrary, it is because of Jesus that we are saved from the wrath of God. *"Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him."* ^{Romans 5:9} *"and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come."* ^{1Thessalonians 1:10}

Mike Petzer

The Christian Confession:

How to obtain all Redemptive Blessings

by F F Bosworth

Many people fail to receive what they pray for because of the lack of understanding about confession. In Hebrews 3:1, Christianity is called a "**confession.**" *Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, even Jesus^{ASV}.*

What Confession Means

In the Greek language "Confession" is **ὁμολογος homologos** [literally: same (*homo*) word (*logos*)] meaning of one mind; to speak the same, to agree. Thus "Confession" is to "say the same thing."

It means, to believe and say what God says about our sins, our sicknesses, and everything else included in our redemption.

Confession is an affirmation of a Bible truth that we have embraced. Confession is simply believing with our heart and repeating with our lips God's own declaration of what we are and have in Christ.

In I Peter 2:24, the Holy Spirit says: "*by his wounds you have been healed.*" We are to believe and say the same thing. When our affirmation is the Word of God, He watches over it to make it good (Jeremiah 1:12).

Confession is faith's way of expressing itself.

"The High Priest of Our Confession"

In Hebrews 3:1 we are commanded to "*consider Christ Jesus the Apostle and High Priest of our confession.*" As our High Priest Jesus acts in our behalf according to what we confess, when it is in accordance with God's Word.

Paul tells us that he preached "*The Word of Faith,*" that "*if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and*

are saved" [*For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation*^{NKJV}] (Rom.10:9-10).

The Relation of Confession to Manifestation

Notice that the confession — saying the same thing that God says — is by faith, that is, believing and confessing before experiencing the result. The confession comes first, and then Jesus our High Priest responds with the New Birth. **It is not salvation unto confession, but confession unto salvation — confession before possession.**

There is no such thing as salvation without confession.

Faith is acting upon God's Word; and this always puts God to work fulfilling His promise.

What are we to Confess?

Few Christians today have recognized the place confession holds in God's plan for our appropriation of His blessings. Whenever the word "confession" is used, many instinctively think of confessing sin, weakness, and failure. This is only the negative side of this great question. Our negative confession of sin was only to open the way for the positive confession "*Unto salvation*" — of a whole life-time of believing with our heart and saying with our lips everything God says to us in His promises.

Confessing unto salvation in its initial form, and then in each of its successive forms. First in the form of the new birth, then in the form of every blessing promised us in the Word of God. The Christian is to act on every phase of his salvation that he knows about. We are to believe with the heart and confess with our mouth to the extent of "*The Word of Faith*" which Paul preached. He preached "*all the will (counsel) of God.*" (Acts 20:26). He preached "*the unsearchable riches of Christ.*" (Eph.3:8). He said that he "*kept back nothing that was profitable (or helpful)*" unto them. (Acts 20:20)

All that Jesus did in His substitutionary work is the private property of the individual for whom He did it. So throughout our

Christian life God wants us to believe with our heart and say with our lips all He says that we are in Christ. We are not to ignore or neglect our legal standing in Christ, for it is the basis for the acts of faith which puts God to work fulfilling His Word to us. We are to confess or whisper to our own heart, "*In Him I am complete*" or "*given fullness*" (Col.2:10) When we know that God in His Word says, "*I am the Lord that heals you*" (Ex.15:26) we are to believe it and confess it with our lips, and then Christ will act as our High Priest and make it good.

We are to confess that Calvary was our "**Emancipation Proclamation**" from everything outside the will of God, and act accordingly. We are to confess that our sicknesses were laid on Christ, and that we are redeemed from the curse of disease. "*Let him that is weak say, I am strong*" (2Cor.12:10).

Our confession includes:

- The whole of Scripture truth;
- All that Christ's sacrifice provided.
- All that Christ's High Priesthood covers;
- The whole of God's revealed will.

We are to confess that our redemption is complete.

Satan's dominion is ended, for Calvary has freed us. Like the slaves of the south, we are to believe that we are free on the basis of our Emancipation Proclamation, never on the basis of our feelings, or on the evidences of our senses.

Remission is the wiping out of everything connected with the old life. We are a "*new creation*." The old things have passed away, and all things are become new. (2Cor.5:17)

Of course we are not to say to others that our healing is manifested before it is. God does not say that. But you can say to those who ask you, "*I am standing on the Word of God*".

Wrong Confession

We never rise above our confession. A negative confession will lower us to the level of that confession. It is what we confess with our lips that really controls us. **Our confession imprisons us if it is negative, it sets us free if it is positive.** Many tell of their failings and their lack of faith. Invariably they go to the level of their confession. Confessing lack of faith increases doubt. Every time you confess doubts and fears, you confess your faith in Satan and deny the ability and grace of God. When you confess doubt, you are imprisoned by your own words: "*you have been trapped by what you said, ensnared by the words of your mouth*" (Proverbs 6:2). When we doubt God's Word it is because we believe something that is contrary to that Word. Wrong confession shuts the Father out and lets Satan in.

We are to refuse to have anything to do with wrong confession. When we realize that we will never rise above our confession, we are getting to the place where God can use us.

Disease gains the ascendancy when you confess the testimony of your senses. Feelings and appearances have no place in the realm of faith. Confessing disease is like signing for a package that the Express Company has delivered. Satan then has the receipt from you showing that you have accepted it. Don't accept anything that Satan brings. "*Give no place to the devil.*" (Eph.4:27) "*If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God*" (I Peter 4:11). In Ephesians 4: 29, we are commanded to speak only "*what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.*" We are not to testify for the adversary. We are to act faith, speak faith, and think faith.

A spiritual law that few recognize is that our confession rules us. It is what we confess with our lips that really dominates our inner being. **Make your lips do their duty. Refuse to allow them to destroy the effectiveness of God's Word in your case.** Some confess with their lips but deny in their heart. They say, "*Yes, the*

Word is true," but in their heart they say, "*It is not true in my case.*"
The confession of your lips has no value as long as your heart repudiates it.

The Right Mental Attitude

In Philippians 4:8 the Holy Spirit says, "*Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things*".

The Holy Spirit says in Proverbs 23:7 "*As a man thinks in his heart, so is he*"^{NKJV}.

In II Corinthians 10:4-6, the Holy Spirit says, "*The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete.*" We are to "*demolish arguments (cast down reasonings^{KJV})*" and give the Word of God its place in our minds and on our lips. We are to have "*the mind of Christ*" (1Cor.2:16).

Jesus remembers when He bore our sicknesses, and the Holy Spirit commands, "*Forget not all His benefits: who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases*"(Ps.103:2-3).

God's spiritual and physical transformations are to come to us "*by the renewing of our minds . . . present your bodies [the home or laboratory of the five senses] a living sacrifice . . . and be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will*" (Romans 12: 1).

"Demolish Arguments"

In II Corinthians 10:3-5, the Holy Spirit tells us that "*We do not war as the world does (according to the flesh^{KJV}) [or senses]: for the weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds*".

What are the strongholds? "*We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God [or Word of God], and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ*".

Faith is not based upon sense-governed reason, nor upon things men can see, unless the thing they see is the Word of God. Faith deals with facts. The Word of God has no speculations, no theories, just declarations of facts. The Word is a present tense living Voice from heaven. We can act on the Word as we would if God had just spoken to us. The Word is the Father speaking - it is a part of Himself.

Sense-governed reason is a stronghold which we must pull down if we are to be men and women of faith. The battle of faith is with the sense-governed reasonings of the unrenewed mind.

Sense-knowledge is faith's worst enemy, because it will not give the Word of God first place. It admires the Word but does not practice it. It is a battle, and a difficult one, to give sense-knowledge a second place and the Word of God first place. In "*the fight of faith*" there is but one weapon, the sword of the Spirit – the Word of God. Reason must give place to the Word. Faith leads us where sense-governed reason cannot walk. Self-governed reason has never been a mountain climber.

Reason would have conquered had Abraham listened to it. But he believed God in the face of all the evidences of sense-knowledge. Our whole struggle in the faith-life is to take the Word of God instead of the word of man, and that we act upon it independent of any evidence that the eyes can see, or the ears can hear, or the body can feel. **Your fear to act upon the Word is unbelief gaining the ascendancy.** When faith gets reason's place, Satan

is defeated. Abraham could consider his body as good as dead without its weakening his faith (Romans 4:19). **Reason must give place to the Word. We are to think God's thoughts instead of man's thoughts, so we will be inspired by the Word of God rather than by the word of man.**

Ephesians 6:4-18 gives a picture of our spiritual warfare. **Faith's armour is truth - righteousness - peace - faith, and the Word.** You cannot see or feel or hear or smell or taste righteousness or any of the things in our armour. The Christian confession has not one physical thing in it.

In Galatians 5:16-18 God says, "*Live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature [senses]. For the sinful nature [senses] desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature [senses]. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law*".

"Hold Fast your Confession"

"Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess [let us hold fast our confession^{KJV}]" (Hebrews 4:14), the confession of our faith in the redemptive work that God wrought in Christ.

I am to hold fast to the absolute integrity of the Bible.

I am to hold fast to the confession of the work of Christ in all its phases.

I am to hold fast to the confession that "*God is the strength of my life*". (Ps.27:1)

I am to hold fast to the confession that "*Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows,*" and that "*the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.*" (Is.53:4-5)

God says this, and we are to believe and say the same thing. We are to know what our rights are as revealed by the Word, and then hold fast to our confession of them.

When you know that Christ "*took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows,*" hold fast to your confession of it.

When you read, "*Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world,*" (1Jn.4:4) hold fast to this confession.

We are to hold fast our confession of what Christ has done for us, in order that it may be done in us. We are to hold fast to the confession of our redemption from Satan's dominion.

We are to hold fast to our confession in the face of all contrary evidence.

God declares that "*by his wounds we are healed.*" I am to confess what God says about my sickness, and hold fast to this confession. I am to recognize the absolute truthfulness of these words in advance of any visible change. I am to act on these words and thank God for the fact that He laid my sicknesses on Christ, the same as He did my sins.

Healing is always in response to faith's testimony. Some fail when things get difficult because they lose their confession. Disease, like sin, is defeated by our confession of the Word. **Make your lips do their duty; fill them with the Word. Make them say what God says about your sickness. Don't allow them to say anything to the contrary.**

Believing God's Word with our heart implies our having "*put off the old man*" (Col.3:9) with his habit of judging by the evidence of the senses. Faith regards all contrary symptoms as "*worthless idols (lying vanities^{KJV})*" as Jonah did, and puts the Word in the place of the senses.

Our only problem is to keep in harmony with God's Word and not allow the senses to usurp the place of the Word. We cease to live with doubting Thomas who says, "*Unless I see. . . I will not believe.*" We are to prove Christ's Words, "*Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believe*" (Jn.20:24-29). The Word is lifeless until faith is breathed into it by your lips. Then it becomes a

supernatural force. **Make your lips harmonize with the Word of God.**

Jesus' High Priestly Office

Jesus' High priestly ministry meets our every need from the moment of our new birth until we enter heaven.

Why are we to hold fast our confession?

Because Christ is the *High Priest of our Confession* (Hebrews 4:14).

Because Christ is a "*great High Priest*" (Heb.2:17).

Because Christ is a "*merciful High Priest*" (Heb.2:17).

Because Christ is able to "*sympathize with our weaknesses*" (Heb.4:15).

Because Christ "*always lives to intercede for us*" (Heb.7:25)

He is always ready to give us "*grace to help us in our time of need*" (Heb.4:16).

Our Success is Assured Because Jesus is "the High Priest of our Confession."

When you confess that "*by His wounds I am healed*" and hold on to your confession, no disease can stand before you. Just thank the Father and praise Him whenever a need confronts you that is covered by redemption, and it is yours. Faith is thanking God from the heart for healing that has not been manifested but that we are as sure of as if it were manifested.

The confession of your lips that has grown out of faith in your heart will absolutely defeat the adversary in every combat. Christ's Words broke the power of demons and healed the sick. The Word will heal you if you continually confess it. God will make your body obey your confession of His Word; for "*no Word of God is void of power^{ASV}*" (Luke 1:37).

If I dare say that Psalm 34:10 is true, "*those who seek the Lord lack no good thing*" and stand by my confession, God will make good all I have confessed. Nothing will establish you and build your faith as quickly as confession.

Confess it in your heart first.

Confess it out loud in your room.

Say it over and over again.

Say it until your spirit and your words agree.

Say it until your whole being swings into harmony and into line with the Word of God.

Christ's Words are filled with Himself, and as we act on them, they fill us with Christ. We are to obey as we would obey Jesus if He stood visibly in our presence.

Confessing Christ as Lord

When coming to God for salvation in its initial form, and then in every other form afterwards, our confession of and surrender to Christ's Lordship is required. In Colossians 2:6, the Holy Spirit says, "*just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him*" "*For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living*" (Romans 14:9). Appropriating faith for the fulfilment of any promise implies our surrender to Christ's Lordship.

It is while we are surrendered to Him as Lord over our lives that He is ready:

To heal us;

To baptize us with the Spirit;

To give us "zoe" — God's own Life in abundance;

To be within us a fountain springing up unto everlasting Life;

To make our legal standing our experience;

To manifest His Person in the form of every blessing promised;

To be Himself our strength, our portion, our all;

To give us the unlimited use of His Name;

To enable us to cast out demons in His Name;

To anoint us for preaching;

To enable us to lay our hands on the sick for their recovery, etc.

Your success and usefulness in the world is going to be measured by your confession and by the tenacity with which you "hold fast" that confession under all circumstances.

God can be no bigger in you or to you than you confess Him to be. In the face of every need, confess that the Lord is your Shepherd and that you do not want.

The Christian Confession

The greatest of all secrets of getting God's promises fulfilled, is to confess — to say what God says to us in each of His promises. While Jesus was being tempted, He defeated Satan by saying, "*It is written*" and then by repeating His Father's Words. You can defeat Satan in the same way. When you persistently confess, or repeat God's Word, to Satan, as did Jesus, Satan must depart (Matthew 4:3-10).

Satan stands utterly helpless before the Word of God when it is "*in our heart and on our lips*" because then God is always watching "*over His Word to see that my word is fulfilled [perform it^{KJV}]*" (Jeremiah 1:12). When Satan finds that we have discovered the secret of using God's Word against him, his defeat is certain, and he knows it. However, he does not want us to know it.

Romans 10:8-10 shows us that "*The Word of Faith*" — The Promise of God — is to be in our mouth and in our heart before the promise is fulfilled to us. Then it is that Christ, "*the High Priest of our Confession*," manifests His faithfulness by fulfilling the promise. This establishes the fact that a promise of God in our heart and mouth is our Confession.

"*CONFESSION (saying what God says in each of His promises) is made UNTO salvation*" — salvation in the form of every blessing for which we have "*The Word of Faith*".

It is while we are still sick or in pain that we are to get "*The Word of Faith*" (*I am the Lord that heals you*" or "*With His wounds I am healed*," etc.) "*into our mouth and into our heart*".

The appointed way to get rid of sin, sickness and pain, is first to get "*The Word of Faith*" (or what God says) into our heart and on our lips. This is faith, and this is Confession.

We are to keep on believing and saying, "*With His wounds I am healed,*" as long as we believe Jesus is "*The faithful High Priest of our CONFESSION*".

It is not telling a lie to say what God says about your body.

For instance, to quote, "*With His wounds I am healed,*" while you still feel pain. You are to say what God says to get rid of the pain. To quote God's Word is not saying that you do not feel pain, but you are simply ignoring the pain you feel and confessing the Word of God to get rid of the pain. Keep on believing and repeating "*The Word of Faith*" until you are well. Then you can testify that the pain is gone.

The fact that Jesus "*is the High Priest of your Confession*" is proof that the Confession must come first. This is one of the most important messages regarding a life of health for soul or body that can be declared to you. You will treasure these truths for years, and will find that this secret of correct confession will assist you in obtaining and retaining the fulfilment of any Bible promise that you may find needful.

It is our Confession which causes "*the High Priest of our Confession*" to grant us what we believe with our heart. **Believingly speaking God's Word regarding any promise He has made, is confessing it.** We are always safe when we are confessing the truth. It then becomes the truth that sets us free. When you are sick you can boldly confess, "*With His wounds I am healed*" (I Peter 2:24) and God will always cause you to become what you confess. In Romans 10:6-8 the Holy Spirit says, "*Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' " (that is, to bring Christ down) "or 'Who will descend into the deep?' " (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming."*

You do not have to ascend into heaven to be with Christ, for He is in His Word. He is not separated from His Word when it is "*in your mouth and in your heart.*" He is "*The Word.*" His Word in your mouth and in your heart is His Personal presence officiating in the work of redemption — fulfilling His Word.

God's way for our appropriation of salvation in all its various forms is to get His Word into our mouth and into our heart. In this way the Word always becomes "*the power of God for the salvation [in the form of any promise fulfilled] to EVERY ONE who believes.*"

(Rom.1:16) Then He always watches "*to see that my word is fulfilled*" (Jeremiah 1:12).

God's Word in our mouth and in our heart is equivalent to His VOICE, and excludes all reason for doubt. It is then that the "*seed*" is in "*good ground*" where it ALWAYS brings forth fruit. There can never be failure when we thus get into harmony with God's Word. It is in this way that we prove Christ's Words to be "*Spirit and Life,*" as He says they are. "*I am the Lord that heals you,*" "*in your mouth and in your heart*" will do away with "*all sickness*".

When Mary said unto the angel Gabriel, "*Be it unto me according to your Word,*" (Luke 1:38) that was "*The Word of Faith*" in her heart and in her mouth, and it turned the Words of the angel into creative power and gave the world a Saviour. All your blessings have been the result of "*The Word of Faith*" in your heart.

God's Word in our heart and in our lips is as effective as when God said, "*Let there be light,*" and as when "*the worlds were framed by the Word of God.*" Mary said, "*Be it unto me according to your Word,*" (Luke 1:38) with faith, in the face of the humanly impossible. This was "*calling the things that be not as though they were,*" as Abraham had done. Every promise is God speaking to us, so instead of neglecting them, let us say with Mary, of each promise, "*Be it unto me according to your Word.*" We will thus prove that "*No Word of God is void of power*" (Luke 1:37).

The Right Attitude

The right attitude toward any Divine promise will always bring about its fulfilment.

All that Moses had to do was to get the dying Israelites into the right attitude toward God's Word to them. The result was mass healing (Numbers 21:9).

The right attitude brought healing to "*every one*" of the sick brought into the streets of Jerusalem (Acts 5:15-16). The right attitude toward the Redemptive Name, **JEHOVAH-RAPHA**, brought mass healing to all the sick in the entire nation of Israel (Psalm 105:37).

The right attitude healed the souls of 3,000 sinners on the day of Pentecost – all at the same time (Acts 2:41).

The right attitude toward the Word of God can save or heal a million people – all at the same time.

Mass healing for both soul and body is what God has provided and what the Holy Spirit accomplished through an enlightened and Spirit-filled Church.

The wrong attitude made it impossible for Jesus Himself to work any miracles in Nazareth (Mark 6:5).

The right attitude toward any Divine promise or redemptive declaration is to have "*the Word of faith. . . in your mouth and in your heart*" (Romans 10:8).

The right attitude switches you into the divine current from God's power house, which is always in operation. Every radio is dumb until it is connected with the electric current.

A promise of God in our heart and on our lips always becomes "*the power of God unto salvation,*" in the form of each promise fulfilled.

Every blessing promised in the Bible is included in our salvation. Christianity is a series of divine promises fulfilled. We can all get the rest of God's promises fulfilled in the same way we got the first one fulfilled.

How You can start Your Healing Now

It is not after but before your healing of soul or body begins that "*The Word of Faith*," to be effective in your case, must be "*in your mouth and in your heart*".

God begins and continues our salvation, from the time of our new birth until we are full grown, by responding to "*The Word of Faith*" which He finds in our heart and on our lips. The Psalmist says, "*All His work is done in faithfulness*" (to His promises). The sure way to put God to work is to believe and say what He says to you in His Word.

Since Jesus "*tasted death for every man*," the Redemptive Name, **JEHOVAH-RAPHA**, translated, "*I am the Lord that heals you*" is God speaking to you personally. Therefore reverence for, courtesy to, and confidence in Him require that you answer back to Him, "*Yes, Lord; You are now healing me*".

It is your privilege and duty to believe and say what you know God is saying to you in His promises.

God is always, **JEHOVAH-RAPHA**. That is, He is the Healer all the time, night and day. He is at this moment healing every one who has His Word in their heart and on their lips. You can put Him to work on your case at once, by simply believing and steadfastly affirming with your lips what He is saying to you in His Word.

God takes every problem which is covered by a Divine promise as soon as it is definitely "*committed unto Him*." Jesus said, "*whoever comes to me [for any blessing promised], I will never drive away [never cast out]*". (Jn.6:37)

God's promises always become effective on our case, when we believe them and steadfastly affirm them with our lips.

And "**NOW**" is always "*the accepted time*" (2Cor.6:2)— the time that God accepts.

Accept God's Present Tense

When God speaks to us through His Word in the present tense, we have no right to change His statement into the future tense. Coming to Him "*today*" for the healing of either soul or body, while not expecting the healing to begin until sometime in the future, is the sin of unbelief. It is changing God's declaration from the present to the future tense.

You will thus tie God's hands and delay your healing by putting hope in the place of faith. **Hope is future, faith is now.**

God's present tense declarations are not to hope, but to faith. His promises are called "*The Word of Faith*;" and they are all prescribed for our heart and our lips as soon as we know what they are.

We are not regenerated or healed by hope, but by faith, which is always "*NOW*." **It is wrong to procrastinate to the future what we should do today.**

God is waiting for you to "*gladly receive the Word*" (Mk.4:16) as a present tense fact in your case, just as you did in the matter of forgiveness. Nothing else is believing God in the Bible sense.

All the sick in an entire nation, by taking the right attitude, made God's declaration, "*I am the Lord that heals you*" a present tense fact. "*There was not a feeble person among their tribes*" (Psalm 105:37). "*The Word of Faith*" in our heart and on our lips, is "*seed*" planted "*in good ground*," where it always produces.

By His Redemptive Names, God is speaking to us continually; therefore, until your healing is complete, continue the affirmation, "*You are healing me now*".

Jesus lays down the condition, "*If My words remain [continue] in you.*" (Jn.15:7) His Words here are the equivalent of the command in Hebrews 4:14, "*hold firmly to the faith we profess [your confession].*" The Holy Spirit also, in Proverbs 4:21-22, says to those needing healing, "*Do not let [God's Words] out of your sight, keep them within your heart; for they are life to those who find them and health to a man's whole body*".

After definitely committing the matter of your healing to God, you are not to accept any thought or utter any words contrary to your affirmation of what God is saying unto you by His Redemptive name, **JEHOVAH-RAPHA**. God has been waiting for this to be your attitude toward Him as your Healer.

Have Your Own Faith Life

The sinner, who is spiritually dead, must believe "*unto righteousness*" — the healing of the soul — the new birth — the greatest miracle.

Christians expect sinners so do their own believing for this greater miracle. Then why should Christians, who are spiritually alive through their own faith, depend on some one else to do their believing for the lesser miracle — the

healing of the body? Why should not Christians, who are spiritually alive, have as much faith for the healing of their body, as sinners must have for the healing of their soul?

Moses required each person to do their own looking at the type of Calvary. It was look or die.

God wants us to appropriate every other phase of our salvation, in the same way we appropriated the first phase.

After we have gotten the first promise fulfilled, which gave us God's Life, why shouldn't it be still easier, after being made spiritually alive, to get God's other promises fulfilled?

If, to get rid of sin, sinners must believe and say what God says, why shouldn't Christians believe and say what God says, to get rid of sickness?

No Christian should go through life depending upon the faith of others. In Hebrews. 6:11-12 we are told that "EVERY ONE" should "*show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure. We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience [steadfastness] inherit what has been promised.*

In Romans 4:12 the Holy Spirit speaks of Christians as those "*who also walk in the footsteps of the faith of our father Abraham.*" All Christians should learn to treat the promises which God has

made to them, in the same way that Abraham treated God's promise to him. And we are told in Hebrews 6:15 (Moffat's translation), that it was "*by steadfast faith Abraham obtained what he had been promised*".

The Holy Spirit speaks of God's promises as "*exceeding great and precious*" (2Pet.1:4). And they were made for your heart and lips, as well as for those whom you ask to pray for you. **By inspiring the Scriptures, the Holy Spirit has worded your affirmations for you.** Learning how to use God's promises is a much greater blessing than your healing. Living and walking in the Light of the Word is the most beautiful and thrilling experience known. And nothing is impossible when we give the Word the same place we would give Christ if He were physically in our presence.

In the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20), Jesus said: ". . . *teaching them [all converts] to obey everything I have commanded you*".

It is the purpose of God that every babe in Christ shall go on to spiritual manhood.

Jesus said, "*anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these*" (Jn.14:12). He also declared that believers could cast out devils, and lay hands on the sick for their recovery.

By practicing the important truth discussed in this instruction, you will find yourself ever going forward in the glorious program of God for your Christian life.