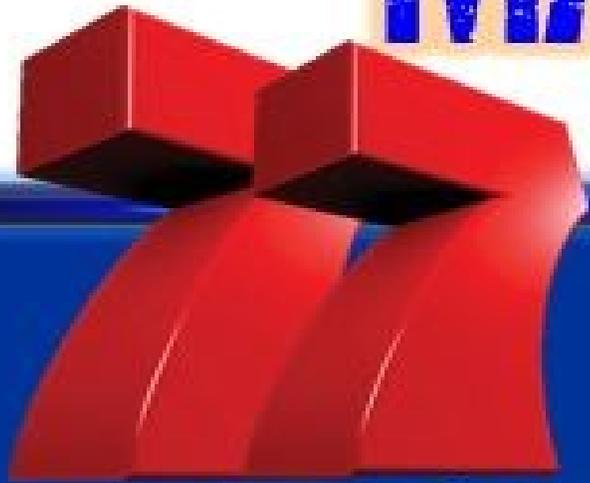




# IDENTITY MATTERS



Seventy Seven Identity Truths for Seven Areas of Life  
An extensive exposition on the practical workings of the "exchanged life."  
Forward By: Dr. Charles R. Solomon

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## **77 Identity Truths**

### FOR SEVEN AREAS OF LIFE

### **Introduction**

I am the kind of man that enjoys having a tool in my toolbox for all kinds of projects – not to say that I do, but it is certainly a goal. Tools have their true value when they are obviously used for their intended purpose. Just as you would not use a pair of pillars to hammer in a nail, you wouldn't use an unbiblical "Christian Counselor" to disciple a hurting soul with the Exchanged Life. Personally, I believe that a Truth trained Exchanged Life preacher, teacher and counselor is a choice tool in the Master Craftsman's (God) toolbox.

Owning a library filled with Bibles and Exchanged Life books does not make one a dynamic Exchange Life worker any more than owning a \$1,200 toolbox filled with \$7,000 worth of great tools makes one a great mechanic. The goal and purpose of this writing project is to put at the disposal of the Exchanged Life worker inspiration, information, scriptural insights, and resources. These will, when used through the power of Christ in you, enable the reader to minister meaningfully, purposefully and deliberately in regard to any of the seven areas of life.

This series is one of hope and renewal, aimed at equipping individuals and families to stand and walk free and complete in the indwelling life of Jesus Christ by the miraculous mystery of the Holy Spirit in us. This is the key to renewal in the Church as well. The 77 Identity Truths is offered to assist all indwelt Christians to be better equipped in communicating the Exchanged Life – for the beginner or advanced believer.

As a teacher of the Word, I see human life being divided into seven primary areas of life: physical, spiritual, psychological, social, financial, marital and parental. These areas address and apply to every person – past, present and future. Effectual living, however, has seven primary requirements, assuming one is indwelt by the life of Christ: Repentance (misusing the

vessel of God), Identification in Christ (putting away old self), Disciplines (learning to walk), Obedience (accepting the ways of God), Fruit of the Spirit (manifestation of the indwelling life of Christ), Victory (walking out the truth), and Vision (your calling). Relating these seven “requirements” with each of the seven areas of life produces a miraculous formula for living out the Exchanged Life.

## **The Exchanged Life Worker**

When I use the term “exchanged life worker” I am addressing each and every indwelt Christian who has a desire to learn more about how to allow the life of Christ minister (or live) through their mortal being.

*And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able also to admonish one another. (Romans 15:14)*

God gave us the ability through the life of Christ within us to admonish (put in the mind) one another in order to assist our Groom in keeping each of His Bridal members on the same road. The question begs to be asked as to what exactly are we to be putting into each other’s minds and that is the question this series will continuously address.

The commission to admonish one another does come with some restrictions and guidelines – for example 1 Timothy 3:6:

*And not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. (1 Timothy 3:6)*

A worker who is brand new in faith should not be given spiritual responsibility for others. The person who has not grown through obedience to the Word is not one who has been given wisdom of competence to minister to others (Heb. 5:12-14). Also keep in mind that an indwelt Christian who is aged as a believer but walked after their flesh most of their Christian journey is still to be classified as “new in their faith.” The reason for this is the wisdom of obedience has not settled into experience. The workers we should consider candidates for overseeing another soul, first, need to be well groomed in experiential knowledge of Truth. The life of a worker is to be characterized by the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Does this mean that these workers must be “perfect” in function and order? Absolutely not. It means that to be effective as an exchanged life worker they must show a record of a consistent and lengthy ability to walk after the Spirit. This person needs a historical genuineness, authenticity and evidence of the overflow of Christ

flowing through them. This is where we get the idea of a dynamic view of ministry being that of an overflow of one life into another. The obvious being that a life that is not full cannot function in overflow – overflow, walking by the Spirit in obedience to God’s truth. The evidence is seen in the believer’s response to Christ in them day-by-day to what the Holy Scriptures say and certainly able to withstand reproofs of life that come from the hand of God.

After all the many years of counseling and discipling God’s hurting souls, I have come to embrace one clear factor in determining their measurement of grace in understanding the Exchanged Life – how does the believer respond to the reproofs of life? Are they willing to be involved in confessing or confronting or forgiveness and are they willing to do whatever is necessary for their healing in order to make one’s life more at rest and peace? These seven “requirements” for victorious living need to be evidenced in the qualified worker in order to step into a life of overflow. That way, the worker will not minister to others because he or she must, or because they have to – they will because they are compelled to manifest the overflowing Life of Christ into another. In our present era of the post-modern church (everything is pointless), most minister to others because they are paid to, or minimally want something in return. What Christ Jesus is hunting for is an urgency in the worker to minister because of what He said: “out of His innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.” This is the most desired description of an Exchanged Life worker.

The apostle Paul described a Christ as Life worker as “filled with knowledge.” The type of knowledge that he is referencing here is not what he learned by the wisdom of men in the institutions of men but rather from the mind of Christ (Phil. 2:2). In our post-modern times, we lead people to Christ, require them to pay a minimum of \$80,000 for a degree in ministry, negotiate a salary and then commission them to work. In the days of Jesus, He often times would pick men of higher education but then He would “dumb them down.” Why? So that He can fill them with the purity of the knowledge of the mind of Christ. The scripture quoted below is my life passage as an Exchanged Life worker – please read it carefully. :

*And when I came to you, brethren, I **did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling, and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.***

Yet **we do speak wisdom** among those who are **mature**; a wisdom, however, not of this age nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away; **but we speak God's wisdom** in a mystery, the **hidden wisdom** which God predestined before the ages to our glory; the wisdom which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory; 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**; for the **Spirit searches all things**, even the depths of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, **not the spirit of the world**, but the **Spirit who is from God**, so that we may **know the things freely given to us by God**, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in **those taught by the Spirit**, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.

*But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. (1 Corinthians 2:1-14)*

I consider the above passage to be the absolute key to all believers who have a desire to minister to others. For the sake of illustration, I want to write a *paraphrase* depicting the post-modern version of ministry we are faced with today.

Post-Modern Incorrect View of 1 Corinthians 1-14:

*When I came to minister to my counselees, I did so in superiority of speech and wisdom, proclaiming to you what I learned in school. For I determine to know as much as I can from my studies, even how to add Jesus Christ and Him crucified to my method. I counseled you in strength and confidence and in much stability, and my message and counseling were in persuasive words & methods of wisdom I learned in school not by an uneducated view of laymen. And because of this, I implore you to grow in your faith but trust your counseling process to me since I am credentialed to help you psychologically. For I speak a wisdom among*

*those who are mature and degreed to assist the hurting. As for the wisdom of God, He uses the positions of the world to assist in His children's recovery progress.*

*As for me, the good Lord revealed the root reasons for your troubles through a skill I learned as a qualified counselor. I have learned to search out your social history, the very depths of your mind through the methods I have learned. For how can I know your thoughts unless I ask the write questions and test you accordingly? Much like my walk with God, how can I know Him unless I memorize and study His Word. I have received degrees from the world and the Spirit of God, so that I can deliberate on the wisdom I gained in school and those taught be the Bible, combining my degreed knowledge and Bible reflections.*

It does sound like I am down on information & education. Actually I am – at least when it comes to using it as a qualification to minister to others. Shame on us for implanting a covert and hidden sense of the need of educating Jesus within us once we become born-again! Nowhere in scripture does God even hint at sending converts back into the world to be educated to counsel, teach or preach to the souls of His hurting children – nowhere. Why has the Church gone emergent or Laodician? It is a very short walk in the park for that answer.

*The Preacher sought to find delightful words and to write words of truth correctly. The words of wise men are like goads, and masters of these collections are like well-driven nails; they are **given by one Shepherd**. But **beyond this**, my son, be warned: the writing of many books is endless, and excessive devotion to books is wearying to the body. The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person. For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil. (Ecclesiastes 12:10-14)*

The totality of the world's knowledge at the time of Christ, we are told, doubled by about 1750 A.D. It doubled again in 1900, again by 1950, again by 1960, and another by 1963. Upon the introduction of the information age (internet), I am told, it is presently immeasurable as to how much knowledge humanity is exposed to daily. What that means is knowledge has gone exponential (transcendently immeasurable). If our above passage is true, the more knowledge we take in the sicker we and our society will become. Every ounce of knowledge requires a pound of actions.

If a believer in Jesus Christ is to counsel/disciple, he/she must know the life of Christ from the inside out (that is, not only in thought of Him as Savior and Lord but in the experientially knowledge embracing that it is His life in us that gives us the source of all wisdom, knowledge and manifestations of the works of God) – and be willing to grow in that truth! It is only in the measure in which one knows God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit as the Source of power and wisdom that points others in the way, the truth and life of Jesus Himself.

*For the kingdom of God does not consist in words but in power. (1 Corinthians 4:20)*

Since our goal is not to be degreed, qualified or accepted by the standards and words of man or their institutions, what must a believer do to have this power?

*Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise, and apply your mind to my knowledge; for it will be pleasant if you keep them within you, that they may be ready on your lips. So that your trust may be in the LORD, I have taught you today, even you. Have I not written to you excellent things of counsels and knowledge, to make you know the certainty of the words of truth that you may correctly answer him who sent you? (Proverbs 22:17-21)*

First of all, a believer who has a desire to help others must accept the fact that unless a worker is born-again (received Jesus Christ into your mortal body through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit) – they have no ability or power to help others. Anyone who helps outside this requirement is simply putting a Band-Aid on a victim who is bleeding to death. You cannot have overflow unless one is filled.

Secondly, workers must know not only what the Bible says, but be able also to apply truth to life –situations. While it is valuable and critically important to know the theology of the Word, it is even more critical to know the application of scriptural truth to daily living. Jesus Himself demonstrated this on many occasions, lifting statements out of the Old Testament law and prophecy to explain His own actions or correct another’s wrong thinking. Not only did He do a refined job of this during His walk on earth, He uses the same technique and methods in and through the believer by making use of His overflowing Life and the power of the Holy Spirit that indwells each believer. Jesus often referred to this process as the “key of knowledge,” and was quick to correct the educated theologians of His day for their ivory-tower schooled arrogance which led them to “know the truth” by book but not by heart.

*"Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge; you yourselves did not enter, and you hindered those who were entering." (Luke 11:52)*

How much of the post-modern church suffers with that acute dilemma today?

*Always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. (2 Timothy 3:7)*

## **Seven Points Of Competence:**

1. Must be indwelt by the life of Jesus Christ – born-again.
2. Demonstrate a life style of obedience and victorious living.
3. Growing in the grace of the key of knowledge by being teachable & correctable.
4. A true and honest listener who fears not correcting in Truth.
5. A believer of the power of faith & the supernatural gifts of the Spirit.
6. Secure in one's identify in Christ.
7. Confident in the authority of Christ and authoritative structure of the Church.

There is a massive difference between a "Christian Counselor," a counselor who is a Christian and a Christ As Life counselor. The first, and most dangerous, could define any worker who systematically, or not, applies Biblical principles to their model. The second is the least threatening because they are not making claims to be "Christian" about their field of work. They are classically admitting to being a counselor who happens to have Jesus in their lives. They give counsel that is humanistic in orientation, having been based in the presuppositions of secular models and teachings from a "Christian" school of thought or not. The third, and truest, is the believer who not only wants to make it known they are born-again indwelt Christian but they desire to have Christ in them doing the counseling through them. All can have a "pure" motive in helping others but only one allows the power to do so.

For people helpers to truly to be able offer transformation in Christ while failing to embrace the Exchanging Life of Christ or to allow the great Counselor in them to do the work through them, is NOT only to lead them away from help but from Christ Himself. A helper in Christ must know the source of real life, as well as the practical application of that life and most importantly who offers this life. Moreover, he or she will be more effective if they embrace and understand how to use the Exchanging Life of Christ in its most practical way. Above all, they should have an intimate, personal relationship with Christ within them. The best practical help that a

counselor/discipler can have is to have the key of knowledge in hand when dealing with the troubled and hurting souls of the God's precious children.

# The Exchanging Life Process

## GIVING HIS LIFE AWAY

There are virtually as many forms and methods of ministering to others as there are counselors, disciplers and teachers. It could not, and should not, be said that any one method is “the” absolute correct way in helping another with the Exchanged Life. Much depends upon the philosophy, vain or not, of ministry to which the “Christian” worker subscribes. The objective determines the means.

Because the objective of an Exchanged Life worker is to assisting men and women to become victorious indwelt Christians and ministers of the Cross, we should not aim merely at helping ourselves or others at resolving “problems.” What most people perceive as the problems may be God’s instruments for accomplishing the most significant work in an indwelt believer – that of being brought to the end of oneself. Without those “impossible situations,” we might never have come to the place of brokenness and emptiness before our Groom and Savior and through this “death” entered into Christ’s resurrection power and life as a daily reality.

There is a nasty habit in the church today of thinking that counseling is the answer to all “psychological” issues in a person’s life. This is a fantasy resulting itself from a church who referred people away from the church when “counseling was needed.” The irony of this twist is that God works diligently to send hurting souls to the church, while 91% of American churches refer people away from the church when the hurting soul reveals “counseling related” issues that are beyond prayer or Bible reading! When in reality, God has empowered every believer with the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit to offer wise counsel and assist others in repentance in wrong attitudes and actions (sin). It is the experience of most Exchanged Life workers that when the Holy Spirit is released to be obedient to Christ within the worker – transformation is quick and certain. And when I was getting my Master’s degree, it was stated that the average stay of counseling is 10—12 years. There seems to be something wrong with that picture.

Anyone who has worked with a hurting soul knows that the process is dirty and messy and it is due to this mess that the discipler needs the mind of Jesus to do the work through them. This requires that the counselor/discipler must have self-reckoned to be dead as they are working with the desperate. If the indwelt Christian is functioning like a “texted-book” counselor, they will

focus on “giving advice.” If they focus on being a discipler, they will be more apt to invest their own life in another so that Christ will be formed in the one being ministered to. This certainly means that the discipleship process will not remain in the office. It may include helping the wounded walk through personal crisis after hours – and even socializing with them in order for the disciplee to be able to see that the Exchanged Life is real. It might result in looking like the way Jesus modeled it for his disciples.

It is critical that the worker that has embraced the mind of Christ within is able to give His life away through their mind, will and emotions. In other words, be committed to GIVE THEIR LIVES AWAY at any price. Indwelt Christians should not be quick to “give advice;” but rather be willing to invest their own life in that of another until the overflow of the life of Christ is formed in the person(s) they are ministering to. This means that significant segments of the ministry process may not take place in their office. It may include a frantic phone call, texting, e-mails or personal visit from time to time. Remember, most is caught rather than taught. That takes a serious level of personal investment as a brother or sister in Christ. Let’s face it – true discipleship requires “walking through” steps of obedience to God in order to be reconciled to another, to make restitution, to discontinue a legal action, or to take legal action where the law has been broken. In the most Biblical context there is requirement of a discipler to lay down their life for their ministry partner.

## **Rejecting the Helper**

*One of the toughest passages in the Bible for me as a discipler is Romans 8:7:*

*Because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, (Romans 8:7)*

Here is what that means – since people reach out for help when their minds are set on the flesh (or in the flesh/unsaved) and flesh is hostile toward God, when they come for help, they are classically hostile toward God. That is not the hard part. Since you as the discipler have your mind set on the Spirit (God), your ministry partner is going to express their hostility toward God on you as the helper. The truth is, the discipler ought not to be surprised at this, nor should they be thrown off by such hostility or let it divert you away from leading them into their liberty in Christ. I cannot tell you how many times I have had someone stomp out of the room in open hostility. Some will not return.

The harshest factor in Romans 8:7 is that hostile people are convinced that they are 100% right when expelling hatred and hostility. That makes it a massive challenge for the discipler. Sometimes we have to wait a month, year or more for the Holy Spirit to reveal to them the truth that will ultimately set them free. This is why we as disciplers must have our minds set on the mind of Christ within us at all times. If we do – when the ministry partner pitches their fit, become broken by God, they will return to the place of healing – your office.

*You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. (2 Timothy 2:1)*

Plus, there is a good chance that the person seeking help might not be ready to be ministered to. Given more time, Holy Spirit preparation and brokenness through circumstances, total willingness may emerge. Desperation is my greatest friend in counseling/discipleship – for a desperate soul allows God to say anything to them and odds are, they will be more than willing to do what He says as well.

You and I are to be watching for a person who does NOT oppose God's will but rather is really in the wanting to have their life exchanged for that of Jesus within them. I personally have tried to master the method Jesus used on people he ministered to – willing and not so willing. For example: the rich young ruler. The young man reached out to his potential discipler (Jesus) and began the first session. After a bit of dialog, the big test came into play:

*Looking at him, Jesus felt a love for him and said to him, "One thing you lack: go and sell all you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." But at these words he was saddened, and he went away grieving, for he was one who owned much property. (Mark 10:21-22)*

Did this young disciplee listen and do exactly as his Discipler (DR) asked? No he did not! He was not ready for such a challenge. Was Jesus' time invested worthless - of course not. Above all, Jesus understood the principle of planting the seeds but I will tell ya, if you study the manner in which Jesus handled people, you will find his "loving ways" to give the grave appearance of not being so loving. If we do not send our disciplees (DE) away with pointed challenges each and every time we meet with them – well, I don't think we are doing our job.

People that reach out for help rarely want help on the day that they ask. That does not mean that we turn them away – just know that it is a "rich young ruler" session. Dialog is needed, love expressed and challenge rendered. If they ask for more, then give it to them. Anyone who has

“set up a session” with me hears me say in that your *first session is not your first session*. I make use to that first session to simply evaluate their level of wanting. It is critical that they walk away knowing the ground rules that their discipler will function within, what the discipleship entails and what is expected of them. I don’t even ask for permission to disciple them until the next meeting. If they ask for another time to meet, I will begin reaching for my list of seven objectives:

1. **Right to Minister:** gain permission to minister
2. **Data Gathering:** gather presenting issue & historical data
3. **Core Causes:** list areas Godship, Rejection, Idols, Problems & Unforgiveness
4. **Repentance:** present list(s) before God unto repentance
5. **Identification In Christ:** administer the 7 Principles of the Exchanged Life
6. **Reconciliation:** reconcile & restore relationships
7. **Issue Application:** applying identity in Christ to the seven areas of life (spiritual, psychological, physical, marital, parental, social and financial)

I will be expounding on these seven phases throughout this writing project – in

Allow me to elaborate briefly on these seven phases of ministry.

## **PHASE ONE: Right to Minister**

One of the most common misunderstandings in discipleship is assumption of permission – believe me, I have stepped over this line one too many times. Just because someone is showing signs of needing help, does not mean that they are granting you permission to disciple them. One of the key principles in management is that *expectation cannot be managed unless mutual agreements to such expectations are confirmed*. As soon as you begin helping a body member, you will quickly see that in order for you to be able to truly help them, they will need directives in order to allow the Truth to set the free (John 8:32). Since most (if not all) humans do not like being told what to do – the greatest conflict of resolution begins - *who gave you permission to parent me?* Plus, most reach out for help with what they perceive as their need(s). Classically, these are “issues” that they expect to be addressed and resolved by the discipler (DR) sometimes in the first meeting, when in reality they may be the results of a lifelong habit of disobedience to God – with the possibility of not even being saved, which might be God’s point. Thus, gaining an agreement of expectations is a very influential way of establishing “cattle rails” for the whole discipleship process. First, there is the determining of expectations. Both the DR and the DE learn what to expect from each other.

Secondly, and most importantly, commitment is made to get to point “B.” A two-way commitment like this helps to *keep on keeping on* during times of temptation to quit. I have found that this to be a crucial avenue for God to bring His Truth to bear on the real needs of a person’s life. True ministry frequently involves hard choices in the mist of fiery trials and when the two of you are in the middle of said furnace, that agreement is going to come in handy! Since the general attitude of our post-modern church is *whatever*, my prediction is that maintaining mutual agreement of assistance will be your greatest challenge throughout all the years of your discipling others. People today have worked their entire lives to have a cavalier attitude toward assignments and being told what to do – which is outright disobedience, and/or an unreliability in being able to be managed or parented.

*Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.* (Hebrews 13:17)

The truth of the matter is that when you decide to disciple someone, your name pops up on Heaven side and an accountability process is enacted. Most Christians suspect this and I believe that is why you see little true to Christ life discipleship going on these days. Everyone is pretty much left to believe & do what they want – I call it the emergent church.

A couple of us disciplers in the late 70’s developed a fact-sheet (agreement) called the Right to Minister and I have used it since those early days and the times I have not, typically I was sorry I didn’t. It is important to introduce this agreement early on in the process, particularly when it is time to start “telling them what to do.” Most of the time, I will bring this fact-sheet out before the fourth meeting. For example: I might hand it out in the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting, ask them to carefully review it & bring it back to the following session. It is during that session that I verbally read each paragraph and ask if they have any comments or questions about what I just read – then go on to the next paragraph. Once I am done, I ask them to sign and date the agreement. Then I sign the document and we are now ready to actually disciple. Sounds simple huh? Well it is not – many see the level of commitment (particularly item #1) they must give and withdraw from the discipleship process, which is OK because there is a good chance that the form helped them see that they are not ready for true and long-term change. If and when this happens, ask them what it was on the form that hindered them from signing it. Allow them to share their reasons, explain to them why you cannot disciple them without an agreement and then gracefully let them know that they may need a little more time for God to ready them for discipleship.

Here is a sample of the form I use:

## **IOM RIGHT TO MINISTER**

Our discipleship exists to glorify God in and through the lives of its helpers and those who come for help. Our mission is to provide a unique, dynamic, bible-based discipleship service that God can use to transform lives. Though the approach is not new, the unique methods used have been proven repeatedly to be effective. Our team presses on toward showing people how to be set free from enslaving mental and emotional conflicts through scriptural teachings and consultations.

People come to us primarily through word-of-mouth. God working through this ministry accomplishes the significant changes in the lives of those who come for help. Our biblical disciplers/counselors are trained in the application of scriptural Truth regarding the Exchanged Life – “Not I, but Christ.” Our workers do not necessarily hold degrees in psychology or are licensed by the state – which usually prohibits the application of Jesus Christ being the only way, truth and life. We do not take the position that all problems are “spiritual,” but do believe that most “presenting problems” have a basic spiritual factor.

You have come for Biblical Exchanged Life counseling/discipleship and we do not consider that we have the “right” to minister to you unless you give us that right. Please read the following statements and sign this form stating you accept the condition of ministry:

### **1. AREAS OF LIFE**

We see biblical counseling/discipleship affecting seven areas of life: SPIRITUAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, PHYSICAL, SOCIAL, FINANCIAL, MARITAL, and PARENTAL. Personal problems often overlap several of these areas. Therefore, we ask your permission to go into any or all of these areas to the degree necessary to come to a solution of the problem.

### **2. DIRECTIVE COUNSELING**

While careful listening and empathy are a definite part of the ministry process, our biblical counsel is direct in nature. The style and approach to assisting needy people is straightforward and direct. Our goal is not to offend, but to use the strength of the Word to address the “issues” at large. This means that definite direction and assignments are given, which are based on the teachings and principles of the Scriptures.

### **3. CREDENTIALS**

The word “counseling” is often associated with the ideas of “licensed” counselors. We do not take the stand that “ministers of the Gospel” must be certified with a state agency to be qualified to administer counsel to the hurting. It should be understood that our ministry may or may not use “state certified” counselors/ministers to assist you.

### **4. NO DECISIONS**

No decisions will be made for you. You are the one(s) who will decide what you will do with the teaching given to you. However, if there is persistence in ignoring the instruction given or a refusal to complete assignments, the question may be raised as to the advisability to continuing the biblical counseling process.

### **5. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

We do not charge for servicing you with the Gospel (1 Cor. 9:18). We do have a suggested rate of donation based upon individual sessions (see front desk personnel for details). IOM America is a 501c3 non-profit. We would be honored to receive gifts and donations to assist us in accomplishing our mission (see IOM America Financial Beliefs form).

### **6. TIME FACTOR**

Each session lasts from 60 to 90 minutes. We do not have a definite minimum or maximum number of sessions required, but we will not keep you coming beyond a reasonable time. If outside help is needed in areas where other services have special expertise, referrals will be made.

### **7. APPARENT REGRESSION**

It frequently happens (though not always) that as a person begins to follow biblical Christ-As-Life principles, the life experience may actually get worse. This is no reason to quit or think that you are not making progress. On the contrary, it may be an indication that you ARE making progress. When a person’s life situation is unmanageable, there is usually the need for

unlearning and undoing certain things, so that progress can be made in a new direction. We mention this so that you will not be surprised and/or disheartened.

## **8. CONFIDENTIALITY**

We are committed to a rule of confidentiality regarding what is discussed. Certain qualifications, however, apply. Where further insight or guidance is needed, your discipler/counselor may consult with other IOM America team members. Secondly, where a crime has been or is being committed, particularly against a minor, it is required by law to report such activity. Further, knowledge of a threatened act of violence against someone also may be reported. Finally, when a counselor is ministering to multiple family members, there typically is an “overlapping” of counseling data that is exchanged.

When conducting “family/group counseling,” it is difficult to manage the personal data exchange. Your discipler is committed to encourage all group participants to keep the spoken data within the confines of the group. It needs to be understood that your discipler cannot be responsible for “gossip” within family or group members.

## **9. MUTUAL TERMINATION**

We ask that you seriously consider the teaching given. If you decide not to continue your counseling, we ask that you follow the guidelines contained within the Scriptures and share your concerns with your counselor. First, share your concerns one-on-one before terminating or bring a third party into the process. These guidelines are set in place in order to resolve conflicts according to biblical guidelines. It is your discipler’s desire for you to receive help even if you choose not to use our services.

This fact-sheet is not a legal document or commitment – if you sign it, you are granting your discipler (DR) permission to note that: *all the above criteria is understood by you, and is agree to & accepted freely by you, as pertinent to the process of you allow your discipler to assist you in your discipleship process.*

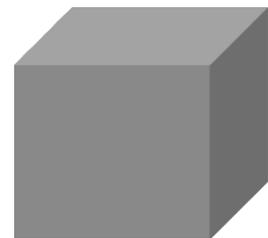
Before starting the discipleship process with IOM America, you will need to sign the Right to Minister Form and mail it to IOM America or bring it in with you to your first session.

By the way, you have our permission to use or revise this form for your own use.

## **PHASE TWO: Data Gathering**

The process of delving into past or present experiences of life is high risk, can be threatening but yet very important when it comes to the discipleship process. I have learned through the years that this general data gathering helps me understand how patterns of thinking and feeling and deciding have been formed and developed in my DE's life. Let's face it; there are experiences of trauma, abuse, rejection, or illnesses which have a major bearing on our self-life. Due to this, my main objective is NOT to do "psychoanalysis," but rather have discovery moments that will assist in contributing to the healing process of the DE (disciplee).

I cannot tell you how important it is that you do not view this process as gathering the "social history" as in classic counseling. It is not! Questions are being asked concerning early home life, childhood disappointments or traumas, peer rejection, efforts to perform, please and their motivations, experiences in the seven areas of life all for leading them to repentance before our Lord. That classically is not the reason you gather a social history in counseling. My goal is always to use their data to bring them to repentance, reconciliation and restoration – not to give them understanding in how to cope or better get along with their past. Warning: care must be taken during this process to avoid additional rejection from the DR that matches rejection patters from their past – like acting "shocked" when they reveal "shocking" things they did or had happen to them. You can show emotion in your response to their hurt but not rejection of disbelief or disappointment. In other words, never side with the perpetrator or disciplee – never. Keep in mind that the primary objective of human behavior is to create sides and competition. If the discipler shows signs of taking sides (even with the DE), from that moment forward, you will begin to lose your right and ability to be directive. Plus, the truth being said – you have only heard one side of the story. As I teach, there are not two sides to every story, there are six: offended, offender, observer, the law, God and Satan. A discipler must evaluate and pray about all six.



One of the key principles I keep in mind during data gathering is that God not only uses the DE's life circumstances but permits these very circumstances to bring the DE to the end of self-life in order to experience the Exchanging Life of Christ in a new and powerful way – sometimes for the first time. Although, I must state, if the DE has abuse going on in their lives, I do not idly sit by and do nothing, I work to bring safety into their lives right away. And yet, even if abuse is

going on in their lives, I never side with the abused – I use the data to review all four sides of the data cube. Many times I find two-sided aggression. Abuse is one of those discipleship things that usually tempts the discipler to take sides – don't do it. Remember the cube.

Some hurting souls will talk about their problems endlessly as long as they have a listening ear. Most of these people have been doped by the deception that there is healing in talking. We have to maintain the Biblical mandate of Isaiah:

*"Do not call to mind the former things, or ponder things of the past. "Behold, I will do something new, now it will spring forth; will you not be aware of it? I will even make a roadway in the wilderness, rivers in the desert. (Isaiah 43:18-19)*

If you allow yourself to allow your disciplee to get trapped in this violation, you can forget about the DE experiencing something new or have a roadway laid out in their wilderness or even taste from the rivers in their desert. Listen long enough to gain data that builds, reveals, discovers, and clarifies for repentance. Keep it simple!

In that process of keeping it simple, I like to focus my questions on information that includes personal responsibility of sin, specific enough to bring conviction, probing only as far as defining reactions that lead to sin and ultimately, gather information that will help me show them patterns in their lives that rise up against the knowledge of God. I usually follow a timeline; focus on key relationships, all while I watch body language closely to see if God is revealing what is concealed without words.

In the end, my data gathering should uncover their ways of attempting to take God's job (Godship), observe patterns of disobedience, list relationships that need reconciled, determine spiritual status, locate the real presenting problem and finally, list those nasty areas of deception – those ways Satan is able to lie to your disciplee without much of a fight.

### **PHASE THREE: Core Causes**

The core causes is what I use to describe the fundamental moral malady of all of human kind that has resulted from Adam and Eve openly inviting the enemy to pollute their purity. During this phase of ministry, I spend my time waiting for God to reveal the DE's areas of godship (attempting to play God), rejection (the consequences of godship), and idolatry (that which tends to replace God) – godship being the leading item I hunt for. Since this is the sin that got Adam and Eve in trouble and thus passed sin down to all generations, I am careful to make sure that my DE understands how being god of your own life is deadly. Once they embrace the reality of godship, they will not be so apt to take action of godship's prerogatives:

- Setting their own standards of conduct for themselves, others and God.
- Demand obedience of those standards.
- Judge those that fail being obedient to their standards.
- Endeavor to control all of life in and around them.
- Act out in total independence of the body of Christ & doing as they please.
- Seeking praise, approval and worship from self and others.

The truths behind **godship** are closely tied to **rejection**; in fact, rejection (giving & receiving it) is inevitable once we function in godship. Once godship and rejection unite and become working partners in the DE's life, **idolatry** is sure to form. Idolatry is an end result or a manifestation that occurs when self is at the throne of the person's life. Having idols in one's life forms all sorts of **problems** and problems acts like a fungus in our **flesh**, or self-life and once the self-life starts to manifest, it's time for repentance. This is why the core causes need to be carefully reviewed, noted and dealt with.

## **PHASE FOUR: Repentance**

Repentance is the most uncommon and least used phase of most "Christian" counselors. Many counselees come in with thoughts like "I need help with my marriage" and what does the "counselor" do? Goes after the marriage issues of course! Some will work to define the hidden issues behind a broken marriage but few actually use the issues to lead the DE (disciplee) to repentance. Repentance you say, yes – repentance. Most people helpers are focused on fixing the fix that God fixed on His children to fix them trying to fix themselves and others.

One of the most common elements in discipleship is to lead the DE to repent for their wrong thinking or reacting (sin). Repentance means a change in direction, a reversal of sorts. The Greek word *metanoeo* means to "change one's views." Right and righteousness thinking leads to right choosing, which in turn produces right living and ultimately reveals the life of Christ within the indwelt disciple.

Let's review a very powerful scripture that is applicable to discipleship:

*You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for*

training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:14-17)

Review the diagram "Components of Discipleship:"

## Components of Discipleship

2 Timothy 3:16

Scripture	Application	Action	Process	Result
Doctrine	Believing	Righteous Thinking	<b>DISCIPLESHIP</b> Producing: repentance, identity in Christ, discipline, obedience, first fruit, victory and vision.	Transformational Biblical Worldview
Reproof	Problems (Rejecting Lies)	Righteous Choosing		Living & walking in Truth and true Identity in Christ
Correction	Turning (Rejecting old patterns)			
Instruction	Training (Practical elements of change)	Living Righteous		

Obviously, righteous thinking, righteous choosing and righteous living comes from confession in repentance, application of our identity in Christ, being disciplined, which will cause us to be obedient to the Lord - the end result having a Biblical worldview that actually transforms lives. Keep in mind that the average disciple cannot have this unless they are disciplined by a person who is strong, immovable, loving, understanding and persistent in leading the DE into the actions of repentance.

This very well might be the point at which the DE appropriates for the first time the GRACE of God in forgiveness and accepts Jesus into their mortal being (salvation). This is when discipleship and evangelism join forces to produce new life. If the DE is already an Indwelt Christian, this may be a key point in God's work of sanctification through his brokenness and submission to their Husband Jesus Christ.

If the disciple hears the Biblical counsel and the Word of God concerning repentance, but makes a clear decision NOT to repent, then clear and direct warning should be given. Such warning must clearly spell out the principle of John 3:19-21:

*"This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. "For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. "But he who practices the truth*

*comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God."*

(John 3:19-21)

This really is the only possible outcome of rejecting the light & life of Christ – self condemnation. These type of individuals are what are referred to as “emergent believers.” Emergent believers like to claim that they are Christians but are not necessarily Indwelt Believers. They taste and are enlightened by the Holy Spirit but they have never been lead to ingest the life of Christ. It is like putting your favorite desert in your mouth, enjoying the taste and then spitting it out. These individuals can be lead to repentance but I must tell you, in 30+ years of ministry – I haven’t seen many!

*For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame. (Hebrews 6:4-6)*

It is also most common with the “unrepentant” type to NOT repent because of their friendship with worldly friends or with the world itself. There is a stark reality with those who choose friendship with the world over Christ – they become enemies of God, in fact, hostile.

*You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: "He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us"? (James 4:4-5)*

You see, the unrepentant not only stores up hostility between them and God, they cause God to be jealous, which He made to dwell IN us! This is a graven reality and should not be taken lightly by any of us. Willful sinning falls into a different category than just choosing to sin – willful sinning has a indwelt knowledge of Truth and then continues to function as if Christ did not sacrifice His life to cover those sins. Most “Christians” today have completely deluded the judgment of God in such cases. There should be a terrifying expectation of a self-proclaimed believer to willingly use the name of Christ to sin.

*For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a terrifying expectation of judgment and THE FURY OF A FIRE WHICH WILL CONSUME THE ADVERSARIES. (Hebrews 10:26-27)*

When you encounter a “believer” like this, there is a procedure – prayer and NO rejection. Keep in mind that you are not fighting flesh and blood but rather powers of the air and principalities that are of Satan himself. Once you know that this self-proclaimed believer is willfully sinning, you need to attempt to restore them with time, respect and with a gentleness of the Holy Spirit from within. If you do not conduct yourself in like manner – there is a good chance that you will be tempted with the same sins. Just choose to carry their burden when they either refuse to or simply cannot.

*Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ. (Galatians 6:1-2)*

One of the first and foremost items I try to remember in times like this – to speak with authority where defiance is in evidence.

*This is a trustworthy statement; and concerning these things I want you to speak confidently, so that those who have believed God will be careful to engage in good deeds. These things are good and profitable for men. But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and strife and disputes about the Law, for they are unprofitable and worthless. Reject a factious man after a first and second warning, knowing that such a man is perverted and is sinning, being self-condemned. (Titus 3:8-11)*

## **PHASE FIVE: Identification with Christ**

When you are discipling an individual and they are able to stay with you long enough to reach “phase five” of your equipping process – then you and your disciplee is in for a real treat!

Before we move forward, allow me to do a quick review of the 7 phases of discipleship. Please review:

1. **Right to Minister:** gain permission to minister
2. **Data Gathering:** gather presenting issue & historical data
3. **Core Causes:** list areas Godship, Rejection, Idols, Problems & Unforgiveness
4. **Repentance:** present list(s) before God unto repentance
5. **Identification In Christ:** administer the 7 Principles of the Exchanged Life
6. **Reconciliation:** reconcile & restore relationships
7. **Issue Application:** applying identity in Christ to the seven areas of life (spiritual, psychological, physical, marital, parental, social and financial)

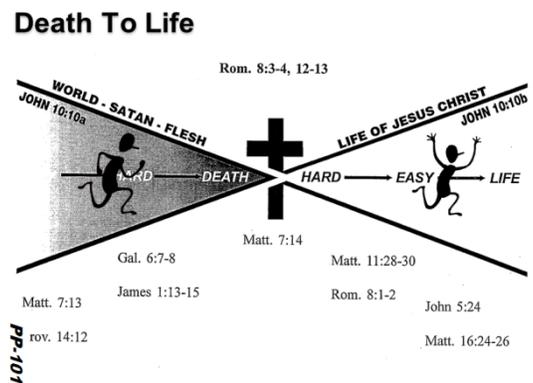
This phase unfolds the foundational concept for complete and effective living in Christ Jesus, through the indwelt Holy Spirit. It is not the end by any means but the starting place of the DE switching from self-effort to Christ doing the work through the disciple. Once the DE transfers their foundation from self to the indwelling life of Christ, real living starts.

*For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 3:11)*

Don't get confused, the foundation is NOT just Christ as one's Savior, but Jesus Christ as Life, in fact, through His atonement – and all that the believer is, IS IN CHRIST. True Christ as Life discipleship is to direct the disciple to enter into their true identification in Christ's death, burial and resurrection. When Christ died, the indwelt believer died. When He was buried, we were buried. When He arose from the dead, so did we in the newness of life in Christ Jesus. With all lies aside, all indwelt Disciples of Christ live with the same power and victory that Jesus Christ Himself lives and operates in on a daily basis – for eternity. If He can forgive, we can forgive. If He can win battles over the enemy, we can win those same battles. If He lives above circumstances, we can live above circumstances. The truth being said – anything TRUE and RIGHT about Jesus Christ, applies to us.

It is one thing to know what I just said and another to live it. In order to live the identified life of Christ from the inside out, all indwelt believers must go through a death process. There cannot be a resurrection without a death. Common sense right? Wrong – this is one truth that the enemy keeps far from us.

Each disciple must go through a death to life experience. The passageway of the Cross is as small as the passage way for a new born baby. God makes use of the world, Satan and our flesh as “cattle rails” to lead us to this passageway. The pathway of the Cross is either for salvation (justification) or for appropriation of the power of co-crucifixion (death), burial and resurrection (abundant living). Once you go through that small passageway of the Cross, life continues to be “hard” for a while but becomes easier to live as we surrender our daily living and choose to live within the new “cattle rails” offered to us – the very life of Jesus Christ.



There is certainly a massive problem in the church (Bride of Christ) today when it comes to the issue of an identity crisis. There are three primary statements to clarify when it comes to one's identity:

1. What you do is NOT who you are.
2. What you do is NOT the most important thing about you.
3. Who you are is more important than what you do.

The biggest reality I deal with in discipling others is – we're not what we seem to be. So much of the Body of Christ gets caught in the trap of thinking we are what we do but the reality is, what we do is NOT who we really are! There is Truths much deeper, like our identity in Christ. Science and Bible reveal to us that there is identity in the blood. Sin travels through the seed but identity travels through the blood line (1 John 3:9). This is why we are in need of having to be washed by the blood of Christ – to provide for us a washing out of the old identity and grant us the new identity that comes to us by the blood of Jesus. It is a reality that is impossible to man to understand unless the Spirit of God in the indwelt believers reveals it – for the blood of Christ takes us from the blood of man to be brought near (in Christ) to God, by way of the blood of Christ.

*Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "Uncircumcision" by the so-called "Circumcision," which is performed in the flesh by human hands—remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. (Ephesians 2:11-13)*

Sometimes it is helpful for me to paraphrase scripture for personal inspiration. Here are some words that came to mind after meditating on Ephesians 2: 11-12:

*Therefore Stephen, remember that formerly you, identity in the flesh (blood of man), whom you were called uncircumcised (of flesh) before you were saved (circumcised), which you performed good deeds by way of your flesh of human blood – remember that you Stephen were separated from Christ, excluded from the benefits of a new identity, and a stranger to the idea of a new identity in Christ, having no hope and being without the mind of Christ within you. But now in Christ Jesus you must appropriate that you have been brought near to God through the blood of your new identity – Christ.*

The Truth (Jesus) of the matter is, I am no longer of the former identity of my flesh but now have been placed into my new identity in Christ, sealed in Him, created for Him, made complete by His sacrifice (blood), been raised with Him and seated at the right hand of the Father who only dwells in Heaven (Eph. 1:13, Col. 3:1-4).

It is impossible for me to set my affections on things above without having the mind of Christ within me to do so (Phil. 2:2). It is even more of an impossibility to consider the members of my human flesh to be dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire and greed unless I first go through the passageway of the Cross for salvation and sanctification.

*Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory. Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. (Colossians 3:1-5)*

The reality of being crucified with Christ, buried with Him and raised with Him is only the beginning of Truth that sets me free. The fact that I, Stephen Phinney, have died with Christ, simply opens the door – the Truth of being “hidden with Christ in God” is the final piece that releases me to function at the right hand of God. I could live like some believers and stay hanging on the Cross, which would result itself in a focus on death. I could as many place my appropriation on the tomb (being buried with Him), which results in a focus on fighting darkness or principalities of the air but if I put my mind on things above and appropriate being seated at the right hand of the Most High, well, I cannot think of a more victorious position than looking down on my “problems” – like Christ does.

You see, Identity really does Matter! Once I know that what God says is true about me, I can apply I am not who I was. With my identity now being an expression of the life and mind of Christ, I can release Him to live His LIFE through me without much effort. Now it really does NOT matter what my “problem” is, I know that I know that He lives in me, His mind is in me and He has full ability to do the living through me as long as I reckon myself DEAD to my self-life and ALIVE to His.

I will be sharing many more details about our identity in Christ when we get to the chapters on the 7 Teachings of Discipleship but for now, know this, if you truly are an indwelt believer – you are free from the blood of man and fully enveloped in the redemptive blood of Christ!

Some of our readers might be experiencing conviction now and I do not want to ignore this opportunity – considering praying this prayer:

*Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for forgiving me of my sinful actions and clinging to the identity of my previous life and not appropriating my new sanctification in Christ Jesus. Thank you that because I am in Christ, I have died to my old identity by dying with Him and have been made free from my old identity through the power of the blood of Jesus.*

*Because of Your doing and NOT mine, You placed me into Christ literally, I am identified in His death, His burial, His resurrection, and His presence is now in my mind, will and emotions. Thank you that His perfect blood of righteousness is, and has been, perfected in and through me. His eternal Life is my life. His authority over sin is my authority over sin. I choose now by faith to affirm these facts and their reality for me on a day-to-day basis.*

*Father, I recognize my fleshly tendency to focus on my old identity rather than the mind of Christ within me. I ask and choose to trust the Holy Spirit from this day forward to make me aware of the Truth of who I really am! Due to this, I will choose to submit myself to You, Christ Jesus through the indwelling Holy Spirit in order that my body, soul and spirit will be sanctified even as I live in my earthly dwelling. I now ask that you use me as an instrument of righteousness in order to advance the Kingdom of God. It is Your Glorified name that I pray – Amen.*

## **PHASE SIX: Reconciliation**

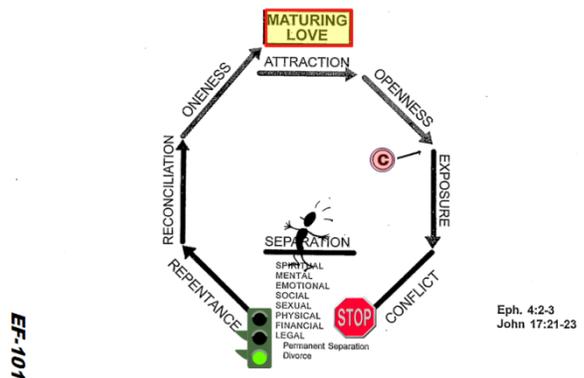
Have you ever tried to reconcile with someone whom you have not yet forgiven for their part? If you have, you know that things go bad at the first reaction of your attempt. It takes the mind (life) of Christ within you to do the extending and seeking forgiveness of another. As most us know, that can't happen until an indwelt believer appropriates their identity in Christ.

Once a Body member of Christ begins to function from their true identity in Christ, there is strength and grace released that is beyond ourselves – ability I might add that gives us the same abilities of Christ to resolve conflict with others. Keep in mind that this is “phase six” of our discipleship process – for we have gained the right to minister, gathered data on the flesh, brought them to repentance, revealed their identity in Christ and now we can put some “shoe leather” to the soldier of the Cross. This “shoe leather” is assisting the disciple to extend forgiveness to those that have hurt them, seek forgiveness for their part, and make restitution where the Holy Spirit deems necessary. This is why it is important to give assignments, as well as clear steps, for the disciple to follow in order to gain more real to life freedom. Keep in mind

that the whole area of forgiveness is one of the most misunderstood elements of “Christian Living” and least used. As a result, most of the Body of Christ is living under a “dark cloud” of oppression from the Accuser of the Brethren - Satan. The enemy has these confused souls bewildered as to what specific actions can be taken to obtain freedom in Christ. Your nominal Christian thinks that having “confessed their part to God” that this act clears their record socially as well as spiritually, and yet find themselves ineffective and unfruitful with an ongoing relationship with those they have hurt or those that have wounded them. The result is that they end up living a “Christian” life that is isolated and powerless.

Allow me to tell you a personal story of an assignment a discipler gave me while I was interning at Grace Fellowship in Denver years ago. This worker of reconciliation stopped my internship and asked me to list out all the ways my dad hurt me – so I did. I came up with 18 items that provoked ongoing pain. He then asked me if I was ready to extend forgiveness in prayer with God – at which time didn’t seem to be too much of a threatening exercise. As I was praying, many emotions flooded my soul but even with such emotion I pressed on to extend forgiveness in Christ over how my father hurt me. Boy was I glad when that prayer was done! To my surprise, my discipler gave me a new assignment that shook my soul to the core – he asked me to go back to my intern office and list out all my reactions to each of those 18 items. Since I loved and trusted Keith (my discipler) as my spiritual father, I went back to my office to begin my assignment and as I was going through this assignment, emotions swept over me to the point of swearing and cursing the birth of my father. Another intern came into my office to check out what the entire ruckus was about and found me on the floor beating my fist on the floor in a moderate rage. He reports to Keith my demise and Keith instructed him to leave me alone. To make a long story shorter, after three hours, I returned to Keith’s office with a list that was several times larger than the list of 18 items that I listed on my father’s offenses on me. I cannot tell you how humbled and broken I became – I was broken beyond human comprehension. Not over the sins of my father but over my own sins against my father. As expected, Keith lead me back to Christ to appropriate forgiveness for my own sins, but wait there is more – Keith then asked me to pack up my bag, travel back to Iowa (from Denver) and seek forgiveness from my father for the sins I committed against him, with a understanding that I could not bring up a

### Achieving Oneness



single sin that belong to my father. With a great deal of fear, off I traveled back to Iowa. The 18 hours it took to drive back were some of the longest in my life. By the time I got there, my heart was ripe and ready for this assignment. To my surprise, my father sat quietly for over an hour as I sought the forgiveness, item by item, for my sinful actions I committed against my father. When I got two-thirds through the list, I looked over and my harsh unsaved father had tears in his eyes and then he asked; *where did I get this kind of love?* Never believing a moment like this would come between my father and I – I shared my salvation story and how the grace and love of Christ in me has produced a new son for him. His response was not only *son I forgive you* but he said three words I had longed to hear my entire life – *I love you!* With a hug I might add.

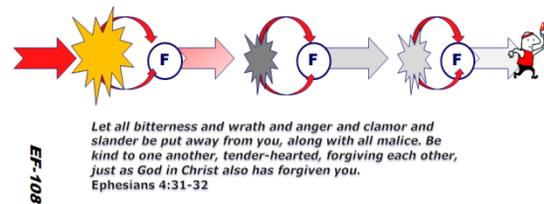
After spending a few days with my parents, back to Denver I went eager to report to Keith this wonderful experience. Thinking I was done, Keith instructed me to start the restoration process. He accomplished this by having me write and send a simple card once a week for an entire year. In these notes and cards I was only to share healthy and uplifting things about what God was doing in my life. After doing this assignment for a year, with no replies from my father, I was asked by Keith to share in a letter the steps to salvation – so I did. Now being in the habit of hearing God from within, Christ asked me to continue writing these notes until He asked me to stop. Almost to the day, two years down the road, my mother calls me. She said; *I know your father will never tell you but he kept you salvation letter under his radio by his chair until one day he pulled it out, not to re-read it, but to pray the prayer – your father accepted Christ Stephen.* This became a quiet memory only my father and I shared until his death and it wasn't until his death that I learned that my father's dying wishes were *to have Stephen at his side holding his hand* when he took his last breath. Not only did I do that, as I held his hand with one hand, I placed my other on his chest and as soon as I did that, I had a vision of my father reaching out to Jesus – he died 5 minutes later. At the grave site, I wept uncontrollably, gripped to his casket, fully realizing this radical homework assignment Keith gave me not only transformed me and my father but hundreds of lives since. You see, this assignment has become a “phase” of discipleship that I have used on hundreds of the Lord's disciples in fulfilling a critical mandate that God put upon Himself:

*"He will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, so that I will not come and smite the land with a curse." (Malachi 4:6)*

Conflict produces separation unless it is embraced by Christ from within! Relational separation is the most common reason why people seek out discipleship or counseling. With that being said, we are given an opportunity as disciplers to not only heal damaged relationships but introduce harsh unbelievers to Christ Himself. Reconciliation is not for the Body member to have a more peaceful life, it is to introduce the offender, and at times offended, to freeing life of Christ.

Separation is good as long as it brings the offended to evaluating their reaction list committed against the offender or vice versa. Many, if not most, need time and separation to be brought to the end of themselves, which becomes the time when the offended becomes willing to do what they are told to do by God Himself or through one of his disciplers – you.

### Conflict With Forgiveness



Even though we will be covering this topic extensively in a later chapter, when it comes to the issue of reconciliation, remember these three elements:

1. Extend forgiveness to the person(s) who hurt you.
2. Seek forgiveness for the sinful acts you commit toward others or your sinful reaction of offenses committed against you.
3. Rebuild those relationships if and whenever God provides a way.

None of this can happen unless there is a broken and contrite heart, not only in the hearts of our disciples but in our hearts as disciplers (Psa. 51:17). In either case, God's Truth has been violated by our sin, and there needs to be brought forward in a loving way to bear in repentance and reconciliation.

*"You have heard that the ancients were told, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER' and 'Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.' "But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell. "Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering. (Matthew 5:21-24)*

## **PHASE SEVEN: Issues & Discipleship Application**

### **Issues & Discipleship Application**

Issues are classically used by God to bring an individual to the point of desiring discipleship or help but my experience is, this is NOT the starting place with God. Issues like marriage, parenting, financial disaster or sin itself, are the result of a life of not appropriating one's identity in Christ or not having Christ to start with. Issues are perceived needs vs. the real need, which is the process of bringing someone to the end of their self-life.

Issues are also known as “presenting problems” and they are usually what the disciple wants addressed first – primarily because it is what brings them the most pain. Delaying the issues until this phase is very difficult. The critical factor here is that the “issues,” while painful, is usually not the real source of the disciple's conflict – it's the results, or symptom. As a discipler, you must listen carefully as they unravel their points of pain, empathize and show deep concern. If the “issue” has an emergency base to it, you will need to give immediate advice, particularly if it has legal ramifications. At the same time, the discipler must NOT become caught in the trap of thinking that if the presenting issue is resolved the disciple is “home free.”

Anyone who has deep rooted pain may in their agony focus all their attention on fixing what they believe is causing the pain. As with a physician, he will tend to the wound but if he is a responsible doctor, he will address the core reason for having the pain. Plus, most of the time, when the discipler focuses on the first six phases of discipleship – the “issue” is no longer an issue, or is considered by then to be a minor thing that may be easily settled, now that true repentance, identifications with Christ, and reconciliation have been effected.

### **Discipleship**

Increasingly, we experienced Exchanged Life disciplers consider this phase to be the most important. It is the reinforcing, the establishing, the building that ensure permanent changes in the life of the individual you are discipling. If discipleship was merely “problem solving,” it has no multiplying factor. My goal as a discipler is always to reproduce myself in the person I am working with and then teach them how to reproduce themselves in others. Throughout scripture the responsibility is laid upon those who “know how to live” in Christ. God will refer hurting a multitude of hurting souls to those Bridal members who preach, teach and walk out the Exchanged Life. A guaranteed ministry will be born in all your disciples.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. (2 Corinthians 1:3-4)

The word “comfort” is the Greek word para-kletos which means to come alongside not only to encourage, but also to exhort (disciple) and instruct (show how to walk). The Holy Spirit who is the empowered para-kletos, the Divine Counselor, who lives and breathes in and through the Christ as Life discipler, does all the work for the discipler. God knows which disciplers to use that He has the assurance that the discipler will secure in the disciplee the strength, freedom that comes with an embrace of their identification in Christ from within. As a discipler, you need to believe this is the ultimate goal in being a discipler of others.

Accordingly, the discipleship process advances toward encouraging the disciple in the study of the Holy Scriptures, in learning to worship, in consistent fellowship with like-minded Exchanged Life believers within the local church, in prayer and personal witnessing, and most importantly in spiritual obedience to Christ. To this end we should always ready those that we are ministering to advance themselves in further training and study of the deeper Truths of the Exchanged Life.

#### In Summary

The disciple seeks help because of a felt need in the functioning of his/her life. Life-style is determined by that in which one finds meaning, and meaning by one's basic IDENTITY. Thus the disciple's identity focused in personal ability, thoughts, appearance, possessions, heritage, accomplishments, self-righteousness – or whatever, is seen to be the fundamental error. I call this Godship (playing god) – a man or woman viewing themselves as the center of their world, and living life as though they were God. Because everything in life must please or satisfy or benefit SELF, this person's contribution to other people's lives cannot be genuinely selfless or truly committed to multiplying the Life of Christ in others.

The discipler's primary IDENTITY, centered in the Life of Christ determines his meaning in life; and that in which he finds meaning as a person will shape his life-style. Out of his life in Christ he gives the Life of Christ to another. The crucial multiplication process is put into motion as the discipler is moved on the basis of their identity in Christ and releasing the Life of Christ within them to accomplish the ministry unto others. This is a true servant discipler!

# Disillusionment Of Discipleship

## What Does A Discippler Look Like

Each of us is led to the truth and desires to disciple others at various points in our Christian walk. All come to the same gate – discovering the “how to” of leading others to Christ and growing that convert into a mature believer. This certainly cannot happen until a true believer understands the various forms and means to their spiritual growth, while learning to embrace God’s calling upon their lives for obedience and victory.

The church is in trouble! It is suffering from a serious case of “disillusionment of discipleship.” Many people today consider discipleship as “spiritual abuse.” The authenticity of true Christ as Life discipleship is rare.

What does a discipler in Christ look like? He/she is one who knows what it means to stand whole and complete in Christ, and who gives evidence that they are moving toward a life in which personal priorities are in scriptural order. This is a person who is deeply impressed with the impossibility of doing the work God apart from the enabling power of the Spirit of God – like those I call “self-lifers.” The discipler is one who has experienced, through practice, the enabling power of the Holy Spirit to bring change, wholeness, and spiritual vision to broken men and women – students of the Word. Skills have been learned and confidence gained. The concept of ministering out of the overflow of one’s life will have been put into practical operation through accountability between a discipler & disciple. The practice of “giving one’s life away” through serving others will have actually begun. (Jesus came not to have servants but to BE a servant, and to give His life ...)

Beyond this, the discipler sees the discipleship process not as an end in itself, but as a means to an end. That end is LIFE producing LIFE that will in turn produce more LIFE. Thus, multiplication, the basis of the Great Commission, becomes our goal within the Church and its Para-ministries that serve her.

This certainly is not going to happen in the local church without these three “life point” objectives:

1. Provide Christ as Life Biblical Discipleship to church staff & workers
2. Train & equip those workers in a strong Christ as Life Discipleship model

### 3. Establish a long-term & on-going Christ as Life Discipleship program for Church members

It seems clear that God is bringing a new emphasis to the Church that calls themselves true indwelt Christians or “Christ-centered.” Within the past hundred years, Christian institutions have blossomed and produced fruit – a type of fruit that is Holy Spirit inspired, through discipleship programs around the world. Many of these discipleship programs, interesting enough, began their roots, through one fashion or another, from Grace Fellowship International.

This does not mean that the work of the Cross is done. With the world’s population exploding and the “Lukewarm Church” emerging, we have plenty of opportunities to equip true believers with the absolutes of God’s Word and to push for a New Reformation. There are many responsible Christians begging to have someone show them how to disciple and equip others to do the work of ministry.

Believe it or not, Christ as Life Discipleship is just now being recognized as a certifiable approach to qualifying people helpers within the “Christian” community. Numerous ministries are being used by God to assist the real Church to come back to its roots and accepting the Word of God as the absolute Truth and the power of co-crucifixion as the manner in which one lives out the Word “so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:17)

True and honorable discipleship may be analogous to clearing away the collapsing elements that don’t seem to produce workers of the gospel contained within our local Churches. Discipling is the process of systematically constructing, by God’s grace and power, a new organizational structure on the very campuses of our Churches by way of the oldest design known to the Church itself – by Jesus Christ doing the work of service through each indwelt believer. When this is realized, a new appearance, new strength, new usefulness, new vision and certainly a new proof of multiplicity will be found blooming in the local Church. This is probably how this New Reformation will begin.

There is a significant difference between “discipleship” and Christ as Life Discipleship. Discipleship in general means the process in which an instructor, teacher or mentor uses to influence a willing learner to follow a particular leader in beliefs and deed. To put it bluntly, that Christ could be anyone or any spirit.

Christ as Life Discipleship means a servant leader (disciple of Christ) who is compelled to voluntarily instruct others how to become a follower of Christ Jesus in Truth and deed. One who

helps members of the body of Christ to experience, mature in, and communicate effectively the message of identification with Christ in His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension in their various spheres of influence, so that all may know Christ as Savior, Lord, and Life.

This type of discipler when fronted with lies (truth out of context), is not timid about reproving, correcting or re-instructing by making use of indwelling Divine Truth – along with the inspired written Word of God, the Bible. So you see this kind of discipler is one who embraces the reality that true Christians have no ability to serve without the indwelling mind/life of Jesus Christ. It is not only the one who chooses to allow the life of Christ to do the acts of service through them BUT leads others by way of example.

Increasingly, we find Discipling to be perhaps the most important aspect of the normal Christian life! It is reinforcing, establishing, and building that which ensures permanent changes in the life of all true born-again believers. If discipleship is like the world's form of discipleship (psychological counseling), it would only focus on "problem-solving," which has no transformational multiplying factors. Throughout scripture the responsibility is put on those who "know how to live" in Christ to reproduce themselves in the lives of others. Their focus is on the transformational element of Christ changing the follower through the power of the Holy Spirit in the disciple they are ministering to. A true and honorable discipler of the Word knows that it is not they who do the work (no matter how hard they try) but the life of Christ pouring Himself out through the discipler to the follower.

Discipler's are comforters while Christ, in them, is the counselor. The word comfort, para-kaleo, means to come alongside – not only to encourage, but also to exhort and instruct. The Holy Spirit who is the para-kaleo, the Divine Comforter, does this for the disciple, and frequently does this through the discipler. God desires, then, to use the disciple to strengthen, free, and secure his or her identity in Christ as one who ministers to others with effectiveness. Christ as Life disciplers believe this should be the ultimate goal of Christ as Life Discipleship. Accordingly, the discipleship process advances the disciple in the study of Scripture, in learning to worship, in consistent fellowship with believers within the local church, in prayer and personal witnessing, and most importantly, in spiritual obedience to Christ.

## **In Conclusion**

As we speak about Discipleship in the local Church, we must stay focused on what true Christ as Life Discipleship really is. This inevitably comes with the mission of training those workers within our local churches, community ministries and even those who are being ministered to, in

order to reproduce one's life (Christ's Life) in the lives of others by way of being ministers of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18).

Are you suffering from the disease of "disillusionment of discipleship?" That just might mean that you are attempting to do the work of service in and of your own training, education, certification or ignorance. I might suggest joining a New Reformation, one like my spiritual father describes as: "A New Reformation where discipleship or sanctification is given equal footing with salvation or justification."

## Authentic Discipleship

### What Really Is Discipleship

This proposal is in high-light form of a detailed description and function to answer this question. True and honorable discipleship may be analogous to clearing away the collapsing elements that don't seem to produce workers of the gospel contained within our Christian learning institutions. Discipling is the process of constructing, by God's grace and power, a new organizational structure on the very sites of our churches learning centers (colleges/bible schools) in design, new in appearance, new in strength, new in usefulness, new in vision and certainly new in proof of multiplicity.

#### Looking At The Greek

**Disciple** (mathetes) means "a learner" – one who willingly accepts instruction.

**Discipler** (didaskalos) is an "instructor," or "teacher," who produces followers of a discipline of a particular teacher.

**Discipline** (paldeuo) to influence conscious will and action through methods of correction to promote conformity to Divine Truth.

**Discipleship** = the process in which an instructor, teacher or mentor uses to influence a willing learner to follow a particular leader in beliefs and deed.

**Christ-centered Discipleship** = A Servant Leader (disciple of Christ) who is compelled to voluntarily instruct others how to become a follower of Christ Jesus in Truth and deed. When fronted with lies (truth out of context), the discipler is not timid about reproofing, correcting or re-instructing by use of Divine Truth – the Bible.

#### True Servant Leadership

### What Is Discipleship?

**Disciple** (mathetes) means "a learner" – one who willingly accepts instruction.

**Discipler** (didaskalos) is an "instructor," or "teacher," who produces followers of a discipline of a particular teacher.

**Discipline** (paldeuo) to influence conscious will and action through methods of correction to promote conformity to Divine Truth.

D-100  
SR Phinney

Servant leadership is the first and foremost requirement of a qualified discipler. A discipler of Christ is responsible for the position of a bondservant (the highest title in the universe). Possessing the mind of Christ will absolutely deliver any true believer from every frustrating thought and deed alike. One who is walking with the Lord and demands his way of others is fooled, or is trying to fool others, into thinking they are “servants” of Christ. In reality, they most likely are self-serving. The flesh (self-life) will not be able to imitate the true servant’s heart. It is too selfish!

**Diakonos** = Servant, the word is translated “servant, minister or deacon.” The most common meaning is to perform voluntary service to help others.

**Doulos** = Slave, the one who performs the work of a slave, who is dependent upon and who performs his service under the complete control of his superior.

**Katheetes** = Leader, master, a guide or teacher.

Before an effective discipleship program can be developed, each of the following components needs to be caught, and taught, to the leadership team:

- Our nature from creation is to serve
- Our bent to serve sin
- Key elements of Christ serving through us
- Serving leadership before fellow servants
- Releasing the mind of Christ
- Being directed by God through the Holy Spirit
- Embracing an honest appraisal
- Being willing to reap what you’ve sown
- Walking in one’s own identity in Christ
- Walking after the Spirit
- Walking with those we disciple in obedience

**Servant Leadership**

**One who embraces the reality that true Christians have no ability to serve without the indwelling mind/life of Christ.**

**It is NOT only the one who chooses to allow the life of Christ to do the acts of service through them BUT leads others by way of example.**

D-103  
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## **Components of Discipleship**

Increasingly, we find discipling to be perhaps the most important aspect of the normal Christian life! It is reinforcing, establishing, and building that which ensures permanent changes in the life of all true born-again believers. If discipleship is like world’s form of discipleship (psychological counseling), it would only focus on “problem-solving,” which has no transformational multiplying factors. Throughout scripture the responsibility is put on those who “know how to live” in Christ to reproduce themselves in the lives of others. Their focus is on the transformational element of Christ changing the follower through the power of the Holy Spirit in the Disciples are comforters while Christ, in them, is the counselor. The word comfort, para-kaleo, means to come alongside – not only to encourage, but also to exhort and instruct. The Holy Spirit who is the para-kaleo, the Divine Comforter, does this for the disciple, and frequently does this through the discipler.

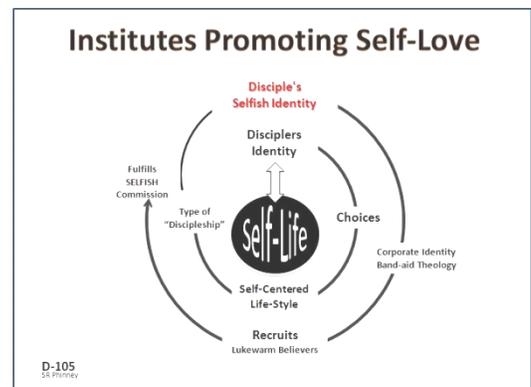
God desires, then, to use the disciple to strengthen, free, and secure his or her identity in Christ as one who ministers to others with effectiveness. We believe this should be the ultimate goal of Christian discipleship. Accordingly, the discipleship process advances the disciple in the study of Scripture, in learning to worship, in consistent fellowship with believers within the local church, in prayer and personal witnessing, and most importantly, in spiritual obedience to Christ. To this end the four primary Components of Discipleship:

### **In Conclusion**

As we speak about Discipleship & Student Life, we must stay focused on Biblical Discipleship. This inevitably must mean training those who are being ministered to, in order to reproduce one's life and ministry over and over in the lives of others.

## **Institutes Of The Self-Life**

Students, faculty and staff seek training, or help, because of a felt need in the functioning of his/her life. LIFE-STYLE is determined by that in which one finds meaning, and MEANING is determined by one's basic IDENTITY. Thus, the disciple's identity focuses on personal ability, intelligence, schooling, appearance, possessions, heritage, accomplishments, self-achieved goodness – or whatever is seen to be the fundamental error. I call this GODSHIP (playing god) – mankind viewing himself as the center of his own world, and living life as though he/she were his/her own god. Because everything in life must please or satisfy or benefit SELF, one's contribution to other people's lives cannot be genuinely selfless or truly committed to their best good. In short the person "falls in love" with themselves.



### **Christ-Centered Disciplers**

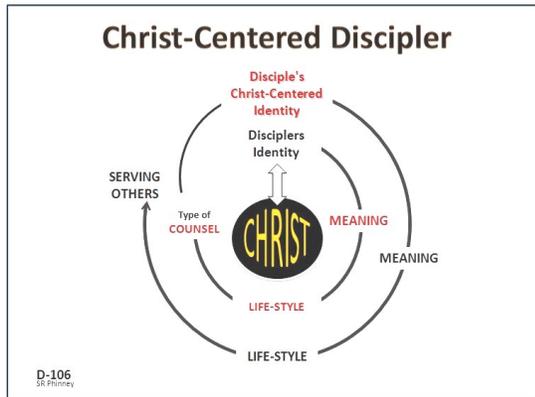
The discipler's primary IDENTITY, centered in Jesus Christ, determines his/her meaning in life. That in which they find MEANING, as a person, will shape his/her LIFE-STYLE. Out of their life in Christ they give COUNSEL to another. The crucial multiplication process is put into motion as the disciple is moved, on the basis of their own IDENTITY in Christ, to see changes brought about in his/her own life-patterns manifested through the indwelling life of Christ. Out of this, the disciple now is able to SERVE OTHERS. (See diagram D-106)

### **Institutions Promoting Christ-Centered**

It should be apparent by now that the focus on the type of discipleship promoted within a learning institution affects every aspect of student-life. In fact, I believe that the discipleship program that the school inherits, or lacks, will determine the level of honesty of the "Christian"

institution's claims. It is estimated that over 76% of all "Christian Colleges" that claim to be "Christ-Centered" actually are not! They tend to use the title to draw "Christian" recruits for financial stability – which in the end proves itself to be emergent (lukewarm). Within those same

institutions, it is estimated that about 60% claim to be "Christian," while in reality only 20% claim to have had a "born-again" experience. Needless to say – our "Christian" learning institutes are in trouble.



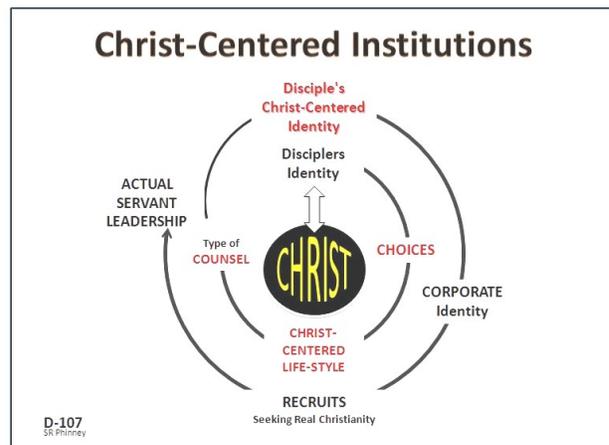
I believe that the pivotal positions within Christian learning institutions are those directly connected to the Discipleship & The Life of Christ programs. Since academia flows (follows) from the school's identity, the focus needs to be on strengthening the IDENTITY of the school. The best place to start is

in the student life programs. Here is the order I promote and suggest:

1. Change or enhance the school's identity to "Christ in You."
2. Pick your leader(s) who will train and maintain training.
3. Strengthen the Christ Identity of the schools Disciplers, which will determine lifestyle both CHOICES on and off campus. Life-style always offers a type of COUNSEL based upon personal victory, or lack of it. This truth determines the version of "Christianity" passed down to the followers/disciple.
4. Considering that the identity now is the Life of Christ, the CORPORATE identity becomes known for being truly Christ-Centered by experience. This will automatically draw RECRUITS that are seeking a "Christ-centered" institution that lives out their stated mission statement. (see diagram D-107)

### Effect on Christ-Centered Education

To many learning institutes, education equals transformation. In God's reality, it does the exact opposite – it promotes self and shrinks true faith – unless it flows from a truthful Christ-centered model. For this reason, the student life discipleship program should be in the forefront of all campus activities. It should be strategic, not because the programs disciplers are the ultimate model of spiritual living, but to give the school the opportunity to see firsthand, the depth of the discipler's lifestyle and walk with God.



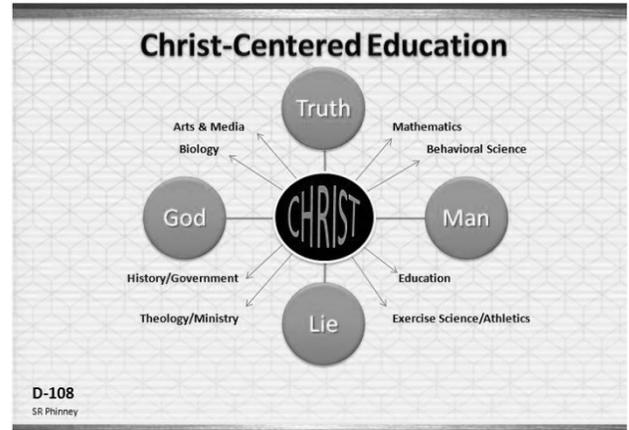
### Corporate Christ-Centered Instruction

"You are witnesses, and so is God, how devoutly and uprightly and blamelessly we behaved toward you believers; just as you know how we were exhorting and encouraging and imploring

each one of you as a father (discipler) would do his own children, so that you many walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.” I Thess. 2:10-12

Obviously, the things to which the apostle refers were not limited to formal teaching situations – as in higher learning. They included daily exposure to the various stresses he experienced in his life and ministry. I believe this is the idea of integrating the Christ-Centered model into higher education.

If the learning institution claims to be a Christ-Centered school of thought, it should support itself in all branches of established education and training. (See diagram D-108)



It is agreed that it is next to impossible to restore a well-established institution of learning back to a Christ-Centered model. But, it is possible to restore the hearts and minds of faculty, staff and students to a view that focuses on identity in Christ – which will ultimately change the institution. This can be accomplished through a well thought out Discipleship plan. This plan would equip individuals for the purpose of building up the Body of Christ, assist in empowering men & women to have a greater impact on the communities they serve, and would place a foundational emphasis on IDENTITY in Christ.

## Principles of Integration

### Primary Principles

There are many principles used in an effective Discipleship program but, I believe there are THREE primary ideologies we should consider.

#### Defining Discipleship: (Seven Lessons)

1. Defining Discipleship
2. Understanding the Plan
3. Fears of Discipleship
4. Stages of Learning
5. Communication Skills
6. Revealing the Model
7. Role of Servant Leader/Discipler

#### 12 Keys of Discipleship: (Twelve Lessons)

1. Playing God (Godship)
2. Ins & Out of Rejection
3. Dealing with Idolatry (External/Internal)
4. Purpose of Problems

Principles of Integration	
Principle	Explanation
<b>Defining Discipleship</b>	<b>Seven Lessons:</b> Defining Discipleship, Understanding the Plan, Fears of Discippling, Stages of Learning, Communication Skills, Revealing the Model and the Role of the Servant Leader/Discipler.
<b>12 Keys of Discipleship</b>	<b>Twelve Lessons:</b> Playing God (Godship), Ins & Out of Rejection, Dealing with Idolatry (External/Internal), Purpose of Problems, Understanding Your Flesh, Repentance, Identity in Christ (What's New), Accepting Your Righteousness, Extending Forgiveness, Seeking Forgiveness, Resting in Christ and Love Life.
<b>Practical Principles 7-Areas of Life</b>	<b>Seven Lessons:</b> How the 12 Keys influence the 7-Areas of Life; Physical, Spiritual, Psychological, Social, Financial, Marital and Parental.

D-109  
SR Phinney

5. Understanding your Flesh
6. Repentance
7. Identity in Christ (What's New About You)
8. Accepting your Righteousness
9. Extending Forgiveness
10. Seeking Forgiveness
11. Resting in Christ
12. Love

The "Structuring Principles" section will reveal the practical elements of the integration process.

## Structuring Life Principles

### Elements of Defining Discipleship:

- This principle and its seven sub-categories are to be placed within a teaching series that can be presented in a small group, conference format or workshop setting. This level of equipping would be a requirement for attendance of advanced training – i.e. 12 Keys and 7-Areas of Life.
- Initially it is taught by the Spiritual Life Director or Campus Ministries Director and later taught by key Disciples who have been trained.
- These seven lessons take 4 hours to teach.
- The Elements of 12 Keys of Discipleship:
- These 12 topics are sectioned off into 12 Lessons. As with the above teachings, they can be taught in a small group environment or in a classroom style setting.
- The requirements to attend this course are attendance of the Elements of Discipleship by way of DVD or live training.
- Initially, this level is taught by the Director and later by mature Disciples.
- These 12 lessons take 14 hours to teach.

Structuring Principles	
Principle	Structured Framework
Defining Discipleship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This principle and its seven sub-categories is to be placed within a teaching series that can be presented in a small group, conference format or workshop setting. This level of equipping would be a requirement for attendance of advanced training – i.e. 12 Keys and 7-Areas of Life.</li> <li>• Initially it is taught by the Spiritual Life Director or Campus Ministries Director and later taught by key Disciples who have been trained.</li> <li>• These seven lessons take <b>4 hours</b> to teach.</li> </ul>
12 Keys of Discipleship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These 12 topics are sectioned off into 12 Lessons. As with the above teachings, they can be taught in a small group environment or in a classroom style setting.</li> <li>• The requirements to attend this course are attendance of the Elements of Discipleship by way of DVD or live training. Initially, this level is taught by the Director and later by mature Disciples. These 12 lessons take <b>14 hours</b> to teach.</li> </ul>
<b>D-110</b> <small>SR Primney</small>	

**Key Note** These messages are designed to provide the student with an education that centers upon the integration process of faith and worldview. The matriculated student will become more established and pronounced in their Christian faith.

### Elements of the Seven Areas of Life:

- It is of absolute importance for all true believers to experience and manifest the Truths of the Indwelling Life of Christ presented in the first two levels in the Seven Areas of Life.
- The sub-categories of the 7-Areas are; Repentance, Identification Truths, Disciplines, Obedience, Fruit of the Spirit, Victory and Vision.
- The 7-Areas of Life training should be presented in a classroom format. The structural elements require it.

- Ideally there should be 7 class periods at 2 hours per class.
- Classes are to be presented by the Director.

### Elements of Topical Principles:

- This arena is for learning institutions that desire to integrate specific discipleship topics into their program.
- The advanced categories are: Abortion, Authority, Children, Marriage, Eating Disorders, Evangelism, Strongholds, Grief, Homosexuality, Parenting, Premarital, Servant Leadership, Sexual Problems, Single Parenting, Singleness, Domestic Abuse, Substance Abuse, Suicide, Time with God and Uncovering Trauma.
- These topics are designed to be selected by a team for additional equipping.
- Each topic can be presented in a 1-2 hour teaching time.
- These messages are also designed to follow each topic with a small group discussion. A 3-hour block of time is recommended for this approach. (see diagram D-111)

Structuring Principles	
Principle	Structured Framework
7-Areas of Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is of absolute importance for all true believers to experience and manifest the Truths of the Indwelling Life of Christ presented in the first two levels in the Seven Areas of Life.</li> <li>• The sub-categories of the 7-Areas are; Repentance, Identification Truths, Disciplines, Obedience, Fruit of the Spirit, Victory and Vision.</li> <li>• The 7-Areas of Life training should be presented in a classroom format. The structural elements require it.</li> <li>• Ideally there should be 7 class periods at 2 hours per class.</li> <li>• Classes are to be presented by the Director.</li> </ul>
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D-111 SR Phinney	

Implementation of these principles is based upon the governmental structure and allowance of the learning institution.

### Implementing the Plan

Implementation is going to require a great deal of team work. There is no way any learning institution can implement this level of Discipleship unless the full student life team becomes unified in vision, structure and implementation. Even though the specifics

depend upon the organizational system of the school and collaborative effort of student life and administration, there are NINE steps I believe should be taken.

### Achieving Our Results:

1. Pray – individually and corporately for God’s guidance.
2. Make a Plan – Campus Spiritual Life/Ministry Director is to develop basic plan.
3. Team Meetings – team finalizes final details through collaborative efforts.
4. Authoritative Approval – Director presents plan to Student Life President & Vice President (or equal positions), makes recommended changes and gains approval from school administration.
5. Student Life leadership Department presents new Discipleship plan to college leadership. Department makes recommended changes and gains approval.
6. College-wide introduction & implementation of plan.
7. Team Leadership Training classes begin – mentors equipped in following new system.
8. Student Life Implementation – students are invited into equipping classes.

9. Staff, faculty and students begin Discipling others.

### **In Conclusion:**

The Discipleship & The Life of Christ is designed to provide the Discipler with teaching materials and training for use in the discipling process. Diagrams are used in the program for the sole purpose of assisting others in spiritual growth.

The tools are used in applying God's truth to one's individual life, as well as the discipleship process of others. The diagrams are graphic expressions of scriptural truths. They illustrate in some instances, how man got into his present state in regard to a given area of life; they picture, in other cases, what God has done and is doing on man's behalf; they show the progressive steps man must take to be obedient to God. In still other instances, they convey practical truth by depicting definitions of such terms as faith, obedience, love, repentance, forgiveness, etc.

These concepts have come out of the Biblical-discipleship process embraced through IOM AMERICA and Grace Fellowship International. The concepts deal with all areas of life and point up the truth that God's Word has instruction for us in every area in which we find ourselves and every condition that we experience.

The Discipleship & The Life of Christ plan and proposal is devoted to Biblical/Christ-centered teachings. With it carries a love and passion for preserving the next generation with God's absolutes.

## **Leaders Who Embrace The Author**

### **The Embrace**

In order for the discipleship process to work effectively, the disciple and discipler must accept and embrace the original structure of authority.

Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. (Hebrews 13:7-8)

The purpose of this work is not to write a textbook that can be read for the reading but to develop a teaching tool that can be used by other leaders and their disciples. The purpose for our ministry, the Institute Of Ministry, is to develop emerging leaders and their students into more passionate, skilled, effective Exchanged Life workers through an experiential, mentoring and interactive training model with the idea of training these very learners (readers) to teach their students what they have learned and this cannot be done unless each embrace the issue of God ordained authority.

### **Imparting Hope**

We as a people of God have a responsibility to help meet the needs of Christ's disciples. Our society, particularly the church, has developed a bad habit of being dependent on our

government and church leadership to do the work of discipleship instead of the individual church members – who really are the church. We need to take back the ground that we as a people have given over to the systems of church government.

We need to listen to the voice of the quiet heroes, workers who don't desire to be recognized but have a strong desire to simply help those who are in need. In history we have found that leaders of stature typically are the ones that are used to help and better the Body of Christ as a whole. It is time that we join hands with leaders from all walks of the Exchanged Life, educated, as well as uneducated leaders. We simply need to embrace these quiet heroes as partners. This will give us compassionate results vs. compassionate intentions, outcome based vs. income driven. As leaders, we need to enlist, equip, empower and expand the heroic works of workers of the Cross who are not necessarily considered "professional Christians."

### **Recruiting the Armies of the Cross**

The Church as a whole has a long standing commitment to aiding and assisting individuals, families, and communities who have not fully shared in the growing prosperity of the western civilization – or at least use to be. In spite of this commitment, many of our fellow members of the Body of Christ still suffer spiritual and physical poverty and despair in a Church that is blessed with abundance in Christ.

As a great and prosperous people of God, we need to unlock the spiritual resources available to us in and through Christ.

These untapped resources are the very compassionate results of the true Church. The Exchanged Life is the answer to providing training for leaders or leader "want-a-be's" regardless of the position in the organized Church.

### **Changing Communities Through God's Authority**

The point is to help our communities achieve interdependence and personal responsibility, through discipleship that build their leaders skill levels by making use of Christ within true indwelt believers. In order for this to happen, all indwelt disciplers must become focused on compassionate results of Christ and become more tailored to local needs in the local Church. This can be done by devolving the most accurate Christ as Life training for our leaders, with the understanding of moving this knowledge and experiential understanding to the people who are in need in our local church communities.

This cannot be accomplished unless we as Church leaders have the mindset of dwelling upon the Truth and Knowledge of the Holy from within – the indwelling mind of Christ (Phil. 2:2). Leaders need to be working together to accomplishing mutual community & Church goals through a Christ as Life model.

There are thousands of local Churches that are not only successful but have a track record of making a difference but is the "difference" advancing the flesh or Christ Himself? We must tap into those individuals and ministries that have an experiential understanding of the Exchanged Life.

### **Building On Christ Success**

As leaders we need to continue to build on what has proven to work of the Cross, not hunt for new and unproven ways to grow God's people with BIG ideas or programs. This cannot take place if we neglect those who have a solid understanding of the Christ Life from within and continue to maintain their independent ways. We also need to encourage all workers of the Cross who do not hold "respectable" positions in the Church or community.

In many cases, our Church leaders are the specialist in people helping. They typically know the heart of the people. They have abilities that the nominal "Christians" do not have but this does not assure us of their ability to tap into the Exchanging Life of Christ through the indwelling Holy Spirit. Because of this, most pew sitting Christians have put the lion's share of discipleship upon the paid (or not) Church leadership.

Most of the Church leadership is privately funded by those who sit under their leadership. With this understanding, it must be noted that most expect services they fund to do the actual work of the Cross. Money has become the thorn in the Churches side when it comes to recruiting God's workers of the Cross. The end result is the Church builds their fortress on the success of Church programs and outreach. In the meantime, most of the True and qualified workers remain in the backseat of discipleship.

The local Church, as well as the Church as a whole, should not only make funds available to these qualified workers, they should make use of their individual ministries, which will save the Church governments millions, if not billions, of dollars each year in nations throughout the world. By doing this, we will be empowering (or releasing) the indwelling Life of Christ, rebuild our Churches as a Christ as Life organism and build and establish better local Church communities which in turn build upon the successes of Christ. This probably will not happen unless Church governments see that our "lay-workers" are being trained to handle everyday discipleship and requirements in a Christ responsible way.

We need to train our leaders to identifying and eliminating improper barriers to effective discipleship through equipping them with the necessary skills to do so. This is my goal in writing this textbook!

This is the effort that will be an effort from, now the writing of this work to the time it is used in individual and institutions that believe in the Exchanging Life of Christ, because I am confident that this initiative, when fully implemented, will help the real Church (Body of Christ) realize the original objective of just why God put Himself in Christ and Christ in the indwelt Body of Christ.

### **ARE YOU READY FOR SUCCESS?**

Are you ready as a worker of the Cross to live out the Life of Christ within you: to develop and establish the His Mission that you believe you have been called to fulfill? Each of us needs to be committed to raising disciples to not only become experiential workers of Christ within but be True community and world changers.

It is imperative that we leaders get matched up with experience mentors and leaders who share our passion for the Exchanged Life. Minimally we need to be trained in the basics in how to lead and disciple those God brings to us for transformation. As for me, I will never refer another

hurting soul to a “Christian” who has been trained to advance the flesh – no matter how “qualified” they are by our perverted system of “Christian Education.”

## **WORKER ATTRIBUTES**

It is my goal to have all students that God puts in my pathway to have the following attributes once they finish reading this textbook.

- Visionary – each reader will have a clear understanding of their identity in Christ and know how to bring it into their reality.
- Mission Minded – these workers will clearly understand Christ’s mission and know how to communicate it to others. They will know the reason for their existence, know how to provide purpose for those they have been called to minister to, and know how to function as a leader for those they are called to lead.
- Implementation – will know how to implement the goals and aspirations of Christ Jesus from within.
- Support Development – ability to access new revenues, efficiently use existing resources and diversify the funding base that God makes available to them.
- Performance – effectively link Christ’s mission to Christ as Life performance measures and improve discipleship delivery.
- Response – ability to respond quickly and efficiently to new circumstances the Lord allows to come their way and challenges that their ministry will face.
- Community Focus – will develop the ability to become community focused, including the ability to become less “Church program” focused and more Christ within oriented.

Each Body member of Jesus Christ needs a wakeup call from the Creator to be an effective provisionary discipler. Provisionary disciples [pro-active] carry out the Vision that has been imparted to them by the mind of Christ within. All leaders are designed to receive their Vision and Mission from an Authority much bigger than themselves. Leaders that believe and understand that the author of eternal life actually lives and breathes within their mortal beings can actually begin to the first step on honoring all authority.

## **Embracing Our Weakness**

Leaders who emerge from and accept their weakness become effective managers of the Vision and Mission that has been given to them to steward. Most of us leaders focus on building upon our strengths before we accept our weaknesses. This develops a non-relational style of leadership. Embracing weakness keeps the leader humble, dependent and left with a sense of needing help. Once the leader knows and experientially accepts their weaknesses, they now can fill in the gaps of their weaknesses and build upon their strengths.

If you are “feeling” a bit incompetent and weak, you are in a good place. The power of Jesus Christ is actually and Biblically released in you when you accept your weaknesses. That also means that Christ will NOT join Himself, or be released, if a worker of the Cross builds their ministry on their strengths. God works endlessly to weaken us, while man typically is training to build upon their strengths. This is what put the Church in a position of advancing the flesh and empowering others to do like minded.

Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me-- to keep me from exalting myself! Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me. And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong. (2 Corinthians 12:7-10)

### **In Summary**

Paul himself was a bit overqualified when Christ blew him off his hoarse on his day of conversion. God had to assign a “messenger of Satan” (demon) to sand off those areas of self-confidence. In fact, once Paul got tired of fighting this weakness, he appealed to God that “it” might depart from him. Not only did God leave it in place but He made clear to Paul that is was there to make him weak and that it would be most prudent of him to make use of the weakness. Paul not only “got it,” he decided to start bragging about his weaknesses instead of fighting them. His conclusion was that Christ’s grace from within is enough and that the power of the indwelling Life of Christ was perfected in his weakness. After this powerful lesson was embraced, the power of Christ dwelt within Paul like never before.

Here is my question to each of us: do we prefer to have our “ministries” overflowing with the abundance of Christ’s power or would we rather build OUR work upon the strengths of man?

In my older age, I am learning to be content with my weaknesses, Body members insulting me, walking in the distresses of ministry, being persecuted for what I believe and doing all this with a constant state of difficulties. Keep in mind I didn’t say it was easy but I certainly am more willing to be empowered by the Life of Christ within by embracing and accepting my weaknesses. Any “takers” to join me in this?

## **SEVEN AREAS OF LIFE:**

### **Repentance for the Physical Area**

Most of the time, exchanged life workers do not apply the identity truths to the seven areas of life but primarily focus on the spiritual area. Because we are born into this fallen world as members of the fallen race, repentance and identification has become one of the most important responsibilities of our lives – particularly the discipler. Since sin is a moment-by-moment occurrence, application of the Cross must be applied to the sin that dwells in us that is not us. Even for indwelt believers in the Lord that know their identity in Christ, need to consistently be

reminded that they are redeemed out of the fallen race and that there are temptations that are subtle deceptions of the flesh that frequently bring defeat – as temporary as it is.

There are seven applications that must be applied in appropriation of the Cross in the Seven Areas of Life: Repentance, Identity Truths, Discipline, Obedience, Fruit of the Spirit, Victory and Vision. Once these applications are appropriated in and through Christ within the indwelt believer, victory can be seen, said and situated.

**Repentance:** is definite contrition of the core of an indwelt believer, which results in a change of action. Without repentance, there is no true and lasting change of behavior. This step is a ceasing, a going back or reversal of direction. The Hebrew word picture of “repentance” is a burning tent” – which means there is nothing to go back to. One of my most favorite verses that clearly defines this step is Psalm 119:59:

*I considered my ways and turned my feet to Your testimonies.*

As most understand, a consideration of your ways followed by turning, constitutes a sincere repentance.

In regard to our physical bodies, these frail vessels that we live in are miraculously the temple of the Holy Spirit and we do not belong to ourselves.

*Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)*

As convicting as it is for me to write this, any misuse of the property of God, by abuse or overwork, by laziness, indulgence, or employing it for wrong purposes is SIN against the Owner and requires repentance on our part.

Here are a few questions we must ask ourselves and our disciples:

1. Are you satisfied that the care you give your body is in keeping with the purpose God has for it?
2. What are you doing to or with your body that violates or hinders God’s purpose for it?
3. Is God pleased with the way you manage your body?

*For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; and that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter because the Lord is the avenger in all these things, just as we also told you before and solemnly warned you. For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification. So, he who rejects this is not rejecting man but the God who gives His Holy Spirit to you. (1 Thessalonians 4:3-8)*

We need to allow the Holy Spirit to search ourselves and those we are discipling for statements bearing on abuse of the body by poor habits or eating, sleeping, using of alcohol, drugs, exercise, sexual activity, working, occupation with appearance, enticing others sensually with

the way we dress and other forms of uncleanness. Christ in you is quick to bring these to mind.

All of these bodily manifestations and abuses are evidence of Godship, attempting to play God in our given world. These areas of “playing god” are usually a result of rejection inflicted upon us by our self-life and by others throughout our lives. If a person is not ready or willing to have these sins addressed, they will reveal attitudes of resistance or even arguments. God is interested in lovingly revealing these manifestations of the self-life and begin the healing process through the mind of Christ within us and by external scriptures – the Bible. He wants us to understand the principles of sowing and reaping. He is also interested in helping us see how rejection may have resulted from our own Godship.

### **Identification Truths for the Physical Area of Life**

*But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh-- for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. (Romans 8:11-13)*

We are told in Romans 8:11-13 that as indwelt believers we have no obligation to the “flesh” – that the tendency of self-serving sin within us to which we have so often yielded and do what it says. A nasty weakness we all have to bear. Rather we are told that life results when the deeds of the body (flesh) are mortified, or put to death.

*Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. (Colossians 3:5)*

Colossians again reveals this, only this time it is a commandment. This command is predicated in the fact of the indwelt believer’s identity in Christ – “If then you have been raised up with Christ.” (v1)

Exactly what are these deeds of the body which are to be put to death? They are simply listed in Colossians:

*Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience, and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them. But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices... (Colossians 3:5-9)*

Since we have been crucified with Christ, each of the deeds of the flesh have been put on the Cross with Christ. When we are asked to “put these to death,” it is an appropriation of what is already true for us – an appropriation of our death, burial and resurrection with Christ. Yet, these very things are used by the enemy to tempt us to curb, control, or eradicate these deeds by self-effort, rather than the efforts of Christ within us. The spiritual secret being – we have Christ in

us to do the reckoning of the death of the flesh. If any person is not truly saved and filled with the life of Christ, it is a fruitless attempt – they can only manage flesh with flesh, because their identity is flesh.

How is it then that the indwelt believer wars with such deeds of the flesh? Well, since sin still lives in our mortal bodies, we are tempted by the enemy to default back to the memories of the old man. Again I say memories – the old man is dead & buried with Christ but God has decided not to redeem these impure bodies and give us a new one on the other side. Our soul (mind, will & emotions) have been damaged by these deeds of the flesh. Our spirits have been made new and perfect upon salvation and our souls are in a constant state of being sanctified – daily.

So be assured that our “old man” truly has been crucified with Christ (Gal. 2:20). But since sin does remain in our bodies, it continues to war with our new Nature, the life of Christ, and finds no victory in doing so. Thus, indwelt believers are constantly fighting a battle of the flesh waging war with the Spirit.

*For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. (Galatians 5:17)*

Keep this straight, our sin does not appeal to the old nature, for it IS dead, but rather it appeals to our self-life to make use of what exists in our mortal body.

*Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace. (Romans 6:12-14)*

We are being instructed not to let this sin in our bodies reign by submitting to the lust that it is so good at presenting to our minds. Rather, we are to present our earthly bodies dead to its power and yield our temples as instruments and vessels of righteousness for God’s sake. God clearly tells us that sin shall NOT have master over us and when we choose to allow such deception, we are functioning under the law. We know what the law does – it kills and destroys but grace on the other hand breeds life and life eternal.

Now, let’s get our terms straight. When we choose to sin, we are walking AFTER the flesh – not in it. When an unsaved person sins – they are walking IN the flesh because they are flesh. Indwelt believers have a new identity and nature and are tempted to buy into the lie that their old nature is still alive and well. Unsaved people have an old identity of the old man, so they live in it, walk in it and talk from it. The believer on the other hand, chooses to live a lie thrown against them from the father of lies – Satan.

The secret or mystery here is that we need to be disciplined into functioning IN and THROUGH our new identity in Christ. Identity comes from the mind and since we have the mind of Christ in us (Philippians 2:2), our new identity comes directly from His mind within us – not ours. Once this is a reality in our mortal minds, we then can allow the Holy Spirit to keep that awareness alive for the purpose of releasing the Spirit within us to do the living and choosing.

## Discipline for the Physical Area of Life

The overall message of the Scriptures is that an indwelt believer should exercise the fullest potential of all that he is in Christ. To appropriate this, it takes a great deal of discipline – that of the disciplines of the Lord’s life within each believer. This discipline starts in our minds by appropriating the mind of Christ through the Spirit life, which lives and breathes in the Spiritual area of the trinity of man. Since our bodies are inundated with sin and our minds are damaged by this sin, it will take a completely different mind and discipline to eradicate it – that of Christ very Life within us.

*For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself. (Philippians 3:20-21)*

*Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. (Colossians 3:1-3)*

Our first discipline is setting our affections on things above, accepting that our citizenship is presently in Heaven – not will be, but already is. We have been raised up and seated with Christ at the right hand of the Father. This is the discipline that must be appropriated before we can reckon ourselves dead and hidden with Christ IN God. How much more can we ask? Nothing compares to this truth. How can Satan get at something hidden in God? He can’t and he knows it. Due to this reality he is faced with – he moves to form lies in our own minds to block the positional reality of our identity in Christ with conditional reality of the flesh, our mortal bodies.

Most indwelt believers know that in a moments time when we start to set our minds on our flesh, our bodies become the vehicle for the expression of our many sinful ways. After all, it is with our bodies that we eat too much, or too little, say words that should not be uttered, take actions that bring us shame and dishonor with self, others and God.

*Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. (Romans 1:24)*

There is a reality that God gives an unsaved person over to the deeds of their flesh in order that their bodies would be dishonored by all. It is through this downward spiral that God brings them to the doorway of salvation. As for indwelt Christians, He uses the deeds of the flesh to remind us that our identity is not IN the flesh but rather in the Spirit. The ungodly who work in opposition to the truth are said to be given over to their bodies but the believer is exhorted to “let no sin reign in in your mortal body,” but to continue to present these frail bodies as a living sacrifice unto Him.

The apostle Paul took all of this quite seriously, treating his body severely and leading it as a slave, lest he himself should be disqualified even after having ministered to others.

*Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified. (1 Corinthians 9:26-27)*

Do you know anyone who enjoys and works to make their body a slave? I know few but the truth being applied here is that our bodies are required to be slaves to Christ our Husband. That means that whatever the master requires of these bodies must be yielded to such activities. That means all of its demands and appetites, its cravings and legitimate functions, the physical body of the believer, unless it is disciplined and cared for properly, can become one's master instead of our being in full service to our Lord.

This exercise and discipline must be applied or else our bodies will become an idol before the Lord. Once this discipline is applied, we can use our bodies as instruments for revealing the Life of the Son of God who lives and breathes within us. If and when we suffer abuse as indwelt Christians, then our bodies become the vehicle for "carrying about...the dying of Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal bodies.

*But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. (2 Corinthians 4:7-10)*

Evidence of true and honorable identification with Christ in the area of physical care is not in trying to look like Him by wearing externals. Obviously this misses the mark entirely. Jesus never stood out in a crowd as "holier than thou" but was Himself as His Father made him. Isaiah even warn us that there would be nothing distinctive about Him. His own cousin John the Baptist had to have Him pointed out. He was so relaxed externally that even the children loved Him before they knew who He was. Christ was very disciplined in His appearance and demeanor. We too are to allow Him to personify His very disciplines through us. The point here is that spiritual identification with Jesus in us will always show itself in appearance and discipline that is appropriate to the situation and culture one is in. That is not a good description of the Bride of Christ (Church) today!

Making your identity in Christ the root of all that you think, do or say – is the fruit of the Spirit in its most practical application.

It is critical that the indwelt believer establishes right disciplines of physical care and appearance in their daily living. Maintain fellowship with the indwelt believers who believe in this manner. Stray from teachings and teachers who put an emphasis on external Christianity, which leads to further ungodliness. Choose to allow the Lord to be disciplined in and through you by way of setting your affections on things above.

### **Obedience for the Physical Area of Life**

The indwelt Christian's body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who resides in their spiritual area of life, and it does not belong to the individual believer.

*Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)*

It is therefore an incredible vessel of the living God, belonging to the One who designed it for its eternal purpose, purchasing your body, and then came to live in it in order to provide a way of escape from the sinful acts of the flesh. But at the same time it is under franchise to the human tenant for its functioning in the world without being of it. That poses a conflict for the believer but certainly not a problem for the Creator.

The Creator built in our mortal being certain limitations. These limitations vary from “temple” to “temple” and also change with the passing of from this life to the next. We see these limitations vary in speed of obedience, mental choosing, beauty, articulation, wit, completeness or incompleteness of the physical body, memory, voice abilities, and directional sense, quality of vision or hearing, internal well-being, muscle strength, balance, condition of physical abilities, nervous system and a host of other attributes. These characteristics make every “temple” different and unique, yet equally useful as a means of glorifying God.

Accepting our limitations has several applications. First, it means that each believer is responsible to accept himself/herself as distinct and different from every other believer, stronger in some physical areas, weaker in others. It is incumbent upon each indwelt believer to acknowledge to themselves and to others without pride that such strengths exist, and without self-depreciation and deception that such weakness exists. It is only in this truth that cooperation and harmony within the body of Christ can facilitate and live working together to glorify God. How liberating is that? If we choose not to live with our limitations, we will find ourselves being filled with envy and jealousy.

Next, one’s limitations could be part of God purpose to do a work that match our weaknesses, which could not be done through any other vessel. Even to Paul God gave a definite physical limitation to keep him from exalting himself. Each weakness is given to us for revealing the life of Christ within that particular believer.

*Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me-- to keep me from exalting myself! Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me. And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong. (2 Corinthians 12:7-10)*

All limitations are given in order to bring glory to the living God.

*As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?" Jesus answered, "It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him. (John 9:1-3)*

Most importantly, emotional and spiritual growth dictates an acceptance of the limitations assigned to us by our Father. Always keep in mind that the outward body is in constant decay.

*Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. (2 Corinthians 4:16)*

It is imperative that we regard our physical being and its capabilities that to be matched for our personal sanctification – not to be compared to others. What was given to us in birth and in circumstance is typically beyond our control and for a good reason. We are called to be thankful in all things – especially our design. Think on how your designed for God’s eternal

purpose for you. We need to give Him thanks and permission (so to speak) to do with our frail human bodies as He desires and to function within those limitations to glorify Himself through us.

*For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, so that no man may boast before God. But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, so that, just as it is written, "LET HIM WHO BOASTS, BOAST IN THE LORD." (1 Corinthians 1:26-31)*

We are to consider our upward calling in and through our weaknesses - accepting each weakness in order to allow His strength to manifest through us. We need to stop being wise in our own eyes by attempting to improve our weakness. God enjoys using frail humans to accomplish His work – for it puts the entire emphasis on His doing and not ours. He literally has chosen the foolish and frail things of life to display His eternal glory and Life.

Obedience requires sacrifice and sacrifice is doomed unless it is appropriated through the sacrifice of the Lamb who has chosen to house Himself in each indwelt believer.

### **Fruit of the Spirit for the Physical Area of Life**

The fruit of the Spirit is not something that practiced or applied – it is a result of the appropriation of knowing and accepting who you are in Christ. Most Christ followers have to memorize, practice and work to replicate the manifestations of the Spirit, whereas indwelt Christians (those who have the life of Christ living in them, don't replicate but appropriate a resource that already exist in them – the very life of Jesus.

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. (Galatians 5:22-23)*

This passage is to remind us what it looks like to have the Spirit's work demonstrated through the life of the indwelt Christian. This is perhaps the evidence of the life of Christ being freed up in the child of God. We find throughout scripture that this fruit is the chief manifestation and evidence of life within. This does not mean that a person who does not have this evidence is not loved and accepted by their Savior but it is evidence that they are doing the doing and not Christ in them.

*Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified. (1 Corinthians 9:25-27)*

One of the key grapes of the manifestations of the Fruit of the Spirit is self-control. When humans compete in earthly sports, they work to achieve accolades from humans, whereas with indwelt Christians, we are to mix our faith (of Christ in us) with works in order to achieve a reward that is registered in Heaven – eternal weight of glory. Therefore, we are to run our earthly race in such a way that we are focused on disciplining our bodies by making our slave NOT the other way around. If we don't have this become our focus, we weaken our testimony by "disqualifying" ourselves before a very observant world. Most of the time, we indwelt

Christians are the only Heavenly view unbelievers have of our Savior and Father. Due to this reality, we need to enslave our bodies for the purpose of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Keep in mind, unsaved people have the ability to discipline their bodies but they have no power to enslave their bodies to Christ within – because Christ isn't present within them. The twist is that unbelievers use their bodies for proof of being their own god, whereas the children of God demonstrate that their bodies are subject to their Master and Husband – Jesus Christ. Biblical self-control, however, is “of the Spirit” and not “after or in the flesh.” What is the significance of this?

The Spirit's self-control in the indwelt is evidenced in what they eat, drink, resting, breathing, sexual activity, working, cleansing, the use of their five senses and most importantly – how they spend their money.

It would seem that the Spirit's self-control must have to do basically with inward motivation through the life of Christ. For what purpose, to what end do we control, govern, discipline our body's activities if it is not Christ providing the self-discipline in and through us? For if it is not Christ who does the doing, our self-life is sure to steal the glory of such fruit. If it is for anything other than the sake of Christ Jesus and the furthering of the Kingdom of God here on earth and in Heaven, it is simply the indwelt Christian “walking after the flesh (self-effort).”

*Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Peter 1:5-8)*

The application of self-discipline is difficult, if not impossible, for believers to appropriate if Christ is not revealing His life in the Christian. We cannot apply all diligence unless it is united with the faith that He Himself invest in us. We can't even muster up faith without His life doing the manifestation in us. Moral excellence is the result of Christ as Life NOT the practice. Once we allow His Life to flow through our mortal being, we can have the knowledge (mind) of Christ to function effectively in self-control. Then and only then, can perseverance have its perfect way in us to perform Godliness, kindness and Divine love. These qualities of His Life are in us and increasing in effectiveness as long as we keep first things first.

Godship (playing god) has a major effect on the appropriation of these life truths. If the believer uses their “will power” to practice the fruit of the Holy Spirit – self is sure to be glorified. The end result is more rejection from self and others when the flesh fails them in such self-life performance. Believers who practice instead of manifest are in need to repentance, for without true repentance – there is NO permanent change of character. But, once repentance occurs, identification in Christ can be lived out and reconciliation can be applied without any effort on our own but through Christ, who will reconcile with others according to His efforts within us.

### **Victory for the Physical Area of Life**

The Holy Word of God says in plain words that if a person can control what he or she says, this is the key to total victory in the physical area of life.

*For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well. (James 3:2)*

This is no news flash but all of us stumble in many ways BUT if we do not stumble in what we say, we show and reveal the perfection of Christ within us. Speech has much to do with evidence of Christ within us. This context makes clear that the “stumbling” spoken of here is not any technical inaccuracy of speech, but rather refers to moral problems – like, dishonest, criticism, condemnation others, blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. How easy it is for us, even as indwelt Christians, to say things that we devoutly wish only in moments later that we could retract.

*The one who guards his mouth preserves his life; The one who opens wide his lips comes to ruin. (Proverbs 13:3)*

Victory in speech requires the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. The tongue is a powerful tool to breed destruction in the lives of God’s children. With our tongues, we confess multitudes of beliefs and it is through these confessions of beliefs that bear witness, or lack of it, of the Life of Christ within us. With our mouths we insult others, say regretful things in anger, pledge our fruitless promises, tell “off color” stories, which bear false witness to the Life of Christ that lives within us. God grants us the preservation of our souls by and through our speech.

*He who guards his mouth and his tongue, guards his soul from troubles. (Proverbs 21:23)*

We can literally protect our lives from many troubles if we make use of our mouths by tapping into the Words of Christ in us. We can maintain victory just by walking after the Spirit and guarding our human words from slipping out.

*The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life, but the mouth of the wicked conceals violence. (Proverbs 10:11)*

Violence is birthed through the mouth because from the heart springs true intentions and beliefs. Peace follows a well-guarded tongue. When we by choice guard our own minds from spewing forth words that produce division, we are able to release the Holy Spirit within us to shout Christ’s Words, which produce righteousness and wisdom.

*The mouth of the righteous flows with wisdom, but the perverted tongue will be cut out. The lips of the righteous bring forth what is acceptable, but the mouth of the wicked what is perverted. (Proverbs 10:31-32)*

*The words of the wicked lie in wait for blood, But the mouth of the upright will deliver them. (Proverbs 12:6)*

*A man will be satisfied with good by the fruit of his words, And the deeds of a man's hands will return to him. (Proverbs 12:14)*

*A man has joy in an apt answer, And how delightful is a timely word! (Proverbs 15:23)*

One of the most real and true principles of life & the scriptures regarding our speech is given in Proverbs 18:21; *Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit.* Men and women alike are given by their ability to speak, together with their position in and through the Life of Christ, the power over words that either produces life or death. Victory shown in the believer comes by way of the mouth first and deeds second. Those times when we use our own words to advance our lives, we classically are attempting to aspire to positions of influence or authority over others – to be a little bit better than and when we do this, we must reckon with the effects of our words returning to glorification of the self-life.

How wonderful and glorious to know God’s great forgiveness and healing for the past misuse of our tongues, and the prospect of growth and victory in our speech through daily appropriation of

Christ as our life. It should always be our goal to have every word that proceeds out of our mouths to be coming from the mind of Christ within us.

The key element of victory in our daily living is to remember that our tongues are the gateway to evil or righteousness –for if we forget this, victory is postponed for another day.

*So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things. See how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire! And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell. (James 3:5-6)*

When our speech is boastful, based in pride, we set aflame to relationships here on earth, with the primary emphasis being put on destruction of the Body of Christ. When our speech is based on the mind of Christ, we build the Body of Christ and provide a solid example of the gospel to self and others. Misuses of words is nothing short of godship and remember that godship leads to further rejection and rejection builds the self-life to be destructive and independent.

Godship requires repentance but this will not happen until there is brokenness. It is only through brokenness that we find humility (a little less than human). Humility then becomes our gateway to victory! Victory is dwelling place of experiential understanding of our identification in Christ.

### **Vision for the Physical Area of Life**

I know few who do not want physical health. We typically view life through the state of our physical bodies. This of course is not a good way to view life! Many who have health are quick to judge others regarding their lack of health, and many who are unhealthy have to face that judgment but the truth being said – it is these believers who have fabulously rich lives in terms of meaning and identity in Christ, oftentimes are more effective, purposed at communicating the “sufferings of Jesus.”

The vision for physical health has been such a major factor in the development of the church, that there are many Christian denominations formed around this deception. Some church branches claim health like it is some kind of “right” for the believer. Well, that twisted principle works with “healthy people” but not so much with the impaired. Don’t get me wrong, I do believe in physical healings of Jesus but not as a “name it and claim it” doctrine of life. When physical healings occur, God is to be glorified and that is the purpose of such physical miracles – but I am not of the belief that we should order God around like He is some type of healing slave.

God enjoys using these frail and dependent bodies of ours. Strong people often times have strong flesh! Let’s take a look at Paul’s physical state and his appeal for deliverance.

*Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me-- to keep me from exalting myself! Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me. And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong. (2 Corinthians 12:7-10)*

Without question we know that Paul desired earnestly to be freed from this physical ailment that continued to buffet his body but Jesus’s response is simply put – *My grace is sufficient for you (Paul), for power is perfected in weakness.* Jesus was more interested in Paul connecting with

the truth that the power of Christ within him is literally made perfect by his acceptance of the weakness that it is housed in. Christ was more interested in life within by making use of his physical limitation. That should be our perspective in all physical difficulties. Since Paul got this message instantly, he decided to actually start “boasting” about his weakness and as soon as he did that he became *well content* with the external issues that prompted his physical weakness: *insults, distresses, persecutions with difficulties*.

Paul’s view and vision of the physical became the tool of contentment – a quality few Christians bear today. The church today would prefer to remove the very tools God using to advance life within.

Don’t get me wrong, health is of God but so is the lack of it. Just as a farmer makes plans to grow his crop, the farmer still must accept the *rain falling on the just and the unjust*. Living in a farm community, I watch the intensions and prayers of farmers go up to God for a sturdy and health crop but they too must accept that droughts and floods are a measurement of God’s grace as well. Once the farmer accepts the fact that he is not God and he has no control over such environmental weaknesses, he becomes a blessed man – thankful in all things. To cooperate with God requires thanksgiving and that means that we ensure, as best we are able, that our bodies are given proper amounts and kinds of measurements of health.

Our vision of health should be invested in taking care of our bodies as best as we can through proper eating, sleeping, walking, cleaning and common sense protection. Outside of this, we entrust our physical health to our Maker and Creator.

Wellbeing, however, may not always mean health or the ability to claim it. Some of God’s greatest servants are those whose bodies were anything BUT healthy. One of my all-time favorite characters is Hudson Taylor – who suffered with lung problems until his death, which actually is what God used to take his life when his mission was done. This is only one of millions of testimonies through the ages – each having a sense of well-being in that they recognized God’s gracious sovereignty in the matter of their earth suits, and yielded themselves to Him for His greater joy and glory within them.

*The LORD said to him, "Who has made man's mouth? Or who makes him mute or deaf, or seeing or blind? Is it not I, the LORD?" (Exodus 4:11)*

Stop believing the lies that certain branches of the church are proclaiming – that all Christians are suffering physical limitations due to Satan’s attacks! It is the Lord Himself that said that He is the one who makes the man mute or deaf or seeing or blind! Even with the case of our beloved Moses that God made him *leprous* in an instant, and then removed the leprosy just as quickly. Just as in the case of Miriam (Moses sister), God gave her a physical limitation due to her unwillingness to rightly regard God’s choice in human leadership. Christians need to stop giving credit to the enemy when God is the One who decides physical limitations. Our view of the physical area of life should rest in this.

And let’s not forget the trials of Job, as well as Jeremiah, in regard to physical health! Both being examples of God selecting affliction of health by making use of the enemy but in keeping our doctrines righteous – God came up with the idea.

*The LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?" Then Satan answered the LORD and said, "From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it." The LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil." (Job 1:7-8)*

In summary, in order to have a Godly vision of the physical area of life, we much consider the seven identity truths of viewing life: *repentance, identification, discipline, obedience, fruit of the Spirit, victory and vision*. Without the appropriation of each in the one area – indwelt Christians are quick to twist the scriptures and life of Christ to indulge their morbid beliefs of the self-life.

## **SEVEN AREAS OF LIFE:**

### **Repentance for the Spiritual Area**

As we review the story of Samuel and the powerful words spoken: *Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry*, we see that God abhors the sin of rebellion and stubbornness. This is verified countless times in the Old Testament where we see Him wiping out whole nations because of it. Even Israel was not spared from God's judgment over these two sins. Witchcraft and idolatry are the two primary acts of rebellion of Satan himself. This is why He has such vehemence against such acts. They reflect the will of His enemy and those that follow him – both demonstrating and defiance of God and a denial of His existence and sovereignty in man's affairs with Him.

Man's default is to function as his own god and that is at the root of rebellion. But man-as-god operates in relative contentment until he is put under authority, which is when man becomes face to face with the real God. When authority crosses the pathway of a man with such stubbornness, rebellion is sure to ensue. It may not be outward in bitter words or physical resistance; those are the visible attributes. Rebellion is an attitude of the heart, a hardening or stiffening of the will, a determination to resist what God orders for us, either directly or through delegated authorities. Due to this reality, Satan is constantly at work to dethrone all authorities of God.

There is a subtlety to the rebellious ones that colors the rebel in more acceptable tones, but he is a rebel nonetheless. For example, procrastination is the worst form of rebellion, which is a quiet refusal to do what should be done now. He always has reasons for not obeying – usually being a lack of trust in the leaders of God due to their weaknesses. Rebels always have reasons for doing their own thing and for them, reasons that are logical. God's leadership in leaders has nothing to do with the weaknesses of the leader, in fact – He uses the weaknesses to display His power.

One of the most blatant rebellions recorded in Scripture is that of Lucifer aspiring to usurp the throne and authority of God. Man in his fallen state has followed this method of madness in step and form. Resulting itself in man thinking he is his own god (godship).

The simple facts are a rebel must repent. He must recognize his willfulness, lay down his arms of resistance and change his direction – quickly. Secondly, he must realize that the fight is not against human leaders but against the father of lies.

*For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ... (2 Corinthians 10:3-5)*

Rebels just don't get this passage, in fact it is impossible for them to understand this until they are brought to repentance – then the Holy Spirit can reveal such profound truths. One of the tricks of Satan is to get humans to think that the warring in life is against frail humans, which is

simply the farthest thing from the truth. By being deceived into believing the truth, men will walk in what they have determined as truth – human on human. This trick is so effective; it has become the primary tool used by the enemy to keep the church functioning under the authority of God.

Some of the common areas the enemy works in regarding this trick is in the role of their pastor, mentor, parents, husbands and employers. All authority is clearly established by God and those who resist in these relationships resist and oppose God Himself.

*Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same; for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil. Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake. (Romans 13:1-5)*

We need to allow the Holy Spirit to evaluate our attitudes regarding authority! Authority is the gateway to spiritual freedom. When we embrace God's ordained establishment of authority, we can find a more restful place in submitting to Him directly. Since it is true that those who resist governed authority are resisting God, the one who is resisting will find it difficult to obey the living God directly.

About right now, you should be thinking about the important to resist certain authorities that cause harm. There is a right and proper resistance that should be noted and exercised by indwelt believers where the Word of God is clearly violated by civil or familial authorities.

*But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men. (Acts 5:29)*

Anytime an authority figure requires you to break the mandates of God, we are commanded to *obey God rather than men*. Although, I must state that many Christians use this passage to gift wrap their own morbid independent acts of rebellion. These types perverse the mind of Christ within them by thinking that any authority or regulation that displeases them or infringes on what they perceive as right in their own eyes.

It is our responsibility to show all those under authority that there is a direct relationship between godship and rejection. To reveal that all rebellion is birthed through those do weaknesses. Rebels are attempting to be their own god and they are quick to reject self and others who do not support their twisted views of self-government. If and when this reveal is true for them, we can lead them to repentance with the kindness of Christ within. As we have noted before, identification in Christ follows repentance and the ministry of reconciliation follows understanding and embracing one's identity in Christ.

*Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. (2 Corinthians 5:17-19)*

## **Identification for the Spiritual Area**

Without question the greatest event in all of history for God and man is the Incarnation – God, the infinite Creator, Sustainer, taking on human flesh, becoming a man upon this earth, died for us, crucified our old nature and placed His very life in the Bride of Christ – the church. A truth that is so simple but made complex through the morbid beliefs of fallen man.

*By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, was vindicated in the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, taken up in glory. (1 Timothy 3:16)*

This confession and Incarnation, this profound mystery that was literally revealed in the flesh by the birth of Jesus Christ, was the greatest act of God for man. What is the significance of this? It means that the incarnation was the pattern by which God would continue to show Himself in human flesh, by means of indwelling selected humans to become the Bride for His Son. All humans, both male and female, become potential receivers of the eternal provision of eternal woman – Bride of Christ. That means that the whole incarnation purpose and process was for the strict purpose of selecting a Bride for His Son in order to seal the covenant of promise He made to His Son.

Clearly and most certainly every indwelt believer has been given the very life of Jesus Christ. The truth and reality of this fact is not only staggering but impossible to understand without the Holy Spirit making it Truth to each believer. Jesus said to the Father, in words of the Old Testament prophecy, "Sacrifice and offering Thou has not desired, but a body Thou has prepared for Me (Jesus).

*Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says, "SACRIFICE AND OFFERING YOU HAVE NOT DESIRED, BUT A BODY YOU HAVE PREPARED FOR ME; IN WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS AND sacrifices FOR SIN YOU HAVE TAKEN NO PLEASURE. "THEN I SAID, 'BEHOLD, I HAVE COME (IN THE SCROLL OF THE BOOK IT IS WRITTEN OF ME) TO DO YOUR WILL, O GOD.'" (Hebrews 10:5-7)*

Who is this body that God has prepared for His Son – during the incarnation it was His physical body and then after the ascension, it became His temple through the indwelt believers, who are now the literal Body of Christ. God did not do all that He said He would do to rid the world of sin but to gain a Bride for His beloved Son. This is the purpose of all of Creation.

Today the indwelt believes body houses His very Life and Nature. This is why our old nature had to be removed from our mortal bodies through co-death & burial. Once the old man was crucified (Gal. 2:20), His nature could come and house itself in the final temple – us. This temple or church today is the vessel that He uses to accomplish His work.

*And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. (Ephesians 1:22-23)*

The Life, the Nature, which the body of Christ possesses, is possessed also by each individual member of that body. We as indwelt believers in Christ are all partakers of this Divine Nature – the very Life of Jesus. This is what joins us together as one body and spirit.

*For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust. (2 Peter 1:4)*

Since this is true, the indwelt life then is the Divine Nature expressed in and through human form. That means that it is God's Life expressed in His Son through the Holy Spirit by means of demonstrating His Life through His Son's Body – the Church.

One of the main arguments in the Christian world today is the fight over old and new nature. By buying into the lie that the old nature is still alive and well within the believer – it would dismiss the Divine purpose and function of the Nature of Jesus living in the believer. The Nature of God cannot share a temple with a nature belonging to Satan – this is why it had to be put to death. Those who teach the old nature being alive in the indwelt believer are deceived and know not their identity positioning in Christ. They are literally proclaiming that God will share His temple with Satan – since the old nature is the very nature of Satan. Just the thought of writing that makes my spiritual skin cringe. God shares His glory with no one and His Divine Nature is the inward Life of His glory and this IS the reason of putting to death the old man.

This is all at the core of leading a believer into the Exchanged Life – Not I, but Christ. People of the false teachings of old nature are suffering a severe case of godship (playing god). They not only need to be brought to repentance but they need the Holy Spirit to bring a completed reformation to their entire belief system. Each needing to appropriate their identity in Christ through the means of brokenness, surrender and choosing to believe what God, Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit says is already true about them. A truth He sealed on the Cross many years ago. For it they don't make such a transition, they will be forced to walk "after" their flesh in order to do the works of the Father.

Possessing the Divine Nature is diametrically opposed to a fleshly belief of godship. The Christ as Life way of living should be a fresh cup of cold water to all souls that believe such lies. If it doesn't, there will remain a life that works endlessly to manage the things of God through a fleshly mindset of the flesh.

### **Discipline for the Spiritual Area**

The indwelt believers need to experiential understand what it means to "abide in Christ" is probably the most relevant and necessary Truth to embrace.

*"Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. (John 15:4-5)*

It cannot be made any clearer than this. By making use of the Lord's illustration here, abiding means being connected as a branch to a Vine, possessing no independent life of godship of its own but drawing moment by moment upon the Life of the Vine for strength, nourishment, and power to bear fruit and live day to day. There must be no splitting or cutting that would cause the branch to be in anything less than perpetual participation with the sap (Holy Spirit) that flows freely through the Vine for function, growth, and purpose of living.

The above Truth for the indwelt holds the secrets to victorious living. Jesus Christ is the believer's very Life.

*For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. (Colossians 3:3)*

Not only has the old nature died, but we are now hidden in Christ. In Him, we are given everything pertaining to life and life abundantly. Abiding in Him means walking with Him in harmony. To do this means accepting the fact that the only reason we have resources to live the Christian life each day is by what comes through the Vine to the branches – the Holy Spirit. This is why the Holy Spirit had to be placed within the indwelt, for without this reality, we simply would not be connected to the Vine – meaning we would not be saved to start with.

The miracle is this – Christ living within the believer provides the beliefs, through the mind of Christ, which enables us to walk with Him and abide in the Vine. No human can understand this simple truth without the Spirit making it evident within them. We are able to walk in the Light because He is the Light.

*If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. (1 John 1:6-7)*

To truly abide in Christ by practice means to experience Christ's Life flowing through our being. It is to know His resources in the place of our weaknesses. It will take discipline of Christ's thoughts to take hold of this. Once we behold such truths, true worship will manifest. True and honorable worship of God is perhaps one of the rarest commodities in the Church today. The church today sing songs, shout out statements of praise and confess open worship of Him without truly understanding that the Spirit within us is who desire to worship the Father.

*Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: "He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us"? (James 4:5)*

We have made worship so much about us that we forget the real desire of the Father – He jealously desires to have fellowship and worship with the Spirit who He MADE to dwell within each of the Body members. When we truly abide in Christ – we are allowing a release of the Spirit to have Holy Communion with the Father. We are given the gift of joining a Holy worship that is actually supposed to take place in our souls. Therefore when we preach, pray, sing and give our offerings, we are actually joining the Spirit within us to maintain unity with the Father and Jesus Christ.

All this is dependent on our discipline of joining Christ in us to believe His beliefs He retains between the Father and Himself. If our attitudes, motives and concentration as worshipers becomes anything less than this – flesh will need to muster up worship to offer the Father, which by the way, He will not accept. Concluding, our mental, personal attitudinal and mechanical forms of worship distract from allowing the Life of Christ within us have true worship with the Father.

To worship God "in Spirit and in Truth" must surely speak of what it says – let the Spirit of Truth worship freely through us as indwelt believers of Truth – Jesus Christ. This can only be done by disciplining our minds to yield to the mind of Christ within us and be one with the Spirit at all times.

*But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him. (1 Corinthians 6:17)*

By joining ourselves with the indwelling life of Christ – we are able to experientially understand what it means to be one Spirit with Him. His Spirit is the Holy Spirit and housing the Spirit as indwelt believers, we can be release to a practical living of Not I, but Christ.

Now that we understand that the Spirit of God has been commissioned by the Father to have freedom in us to worship in unity, we can magnify Him through our adoration and through our lips the very character, power and presents of our Husband can return to His Father.

So you see, abiding in Christ is at the core of our being. For without true and Christ as Life understanding of abiding, it is impossible to please Him, let alone worship Him in Spirit and Truth.

Discipline comes from the root word *disciple* and disciple is the label we are given by our Husband to identify ourselves as Bridal members. To be disciplined is to function as an honorable and obedient servant of our Teacher – Jesus Christ.

### **Obedience for the Spiritual Area**

To be a Christ as Life worshiper, is to be taken up with Him in Spirit, awed by His presence, overjoyed by His righteousness and gracious acceptance, bound by His immeasurable greatness, freed by His everlasting love. It is giving to Him oneself and all that one knows of honor, adoration, allegiance, obedience and exaltation.

When indwelt believers gather together to worship God, it may be said that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. For together their praise can be maximized, their appreciation of God deepened through sharing His wonderful works through the act of worship, their hearts challenged to fuller occupation with Him by the speaking of His Spirit through each Body member as each grow in Christ. When an individual Body member understands Christ as Life, they can make use of their choices to release the Spirit within them to do the worshiping of God. Obedience in worship is critical, for when individual parts are inhibited and restrained in the practice of worship – it hinders the gathering of the Saints as a whole.

*Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near. (Hebrews 10:23-25)*

The Holy Scriptures exhort us not to forsake the assembly of the Saints and as we gather, we are to confess our hope without hesitation, fears or the restraint of being inhibited. When we deny the attacks of the enemy in worship, we begin to stimulate one another to love & good deeds while we worship. One of the most encouraging ways to lift fellow Bridal members up before the Lord is through the act of “observational worship.” The members who are freed up enough to praise our God with our hearts, hands, feet and songs, other more inhibited members begin to follow in suit – thus, encouraging one another to love each Body part of Christ as a whole. This cannot be done without the willful choice of obedience.

Even though it appears to be ministering from Body member to Body member, it fulfills a greater commission of exalting our Husband and Savior. As each are drawing near to Abba Father in corporate worship of Him, we fulfill a mandate given to the Church to magnify and exult His name together.

*O magnify the LORD with me, And let us exalt His name together. (Psalms 34:3)*

Obedience in the physical area of life, as in using your body to magnify and exalt His Holy Name, is the starting place of obedience. The New Testament is replete with instances of indwelt believers meeting together to break bread, to remember and worship the Lord, to hear Him speak, or sing, from the inside of each Body member, and to give Him praise for placing the Holy Spirit within each to inherit the eternal ability to worship in Spirit and Truth. Each indwelt believers true worship of God in concert with other believers, whether with their faces to the ground in silent awe, or lifting hearts and faces and hands to Him in praise, ought never to be forsaken by any! To do so would be robbing God of His rightful and deserving place as God, plus it weakens the Body of Christ and promotes impoverishment of each individual soul. Obedience in worship is the place where the Body of Christ regenerates the soul for daily living.

Here are a few questions you might ask yourself:

1. What importance are you now giving to the act of corporate worship of God and His Holy name?
2. When you miss worshiping with others, what does it cost you spiritually?
3. When in corporate worship, do you allow your body, soul and spirit to draw near to Him, to enter in and be taken up with God by way of the indwelling Spirit within you?
4. How do you participate with others in their worship?
5. What do you believe God is saying to you about corporate worship in your life?
6. What do you plan to do about your lack of obedience in worship?

*Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD gave attention and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and who esteem His name. "They will be Mine," says the LORD of hosts, "on the day that I prepare My own possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him."*  
(Malachi 3:16-17)

Obedience starts with a proper fear of the Lord, not the kind that paralyzes but rather the type that confesses awe before the Lord. In this fear of God, we are commanded to speak to one another in order for the Lord to give attention and hear the worship & adoration of His people. Through this appropriation of fear, God shouts His possession of His children before all of Heaven – thus He gets the glory of His chosen ones. The action of our God is, He will spare us just as we would spare our own children when they honor us as parents.

We need to take personal responsibility of our own prejudices against active worship as we gather as a Body. As we take the time to separate Church relationships (those we don't get along with) from the act of corporate worship, we can then begin to heal in those very relationships – for those we worship with become the vessel God uses to promote love and encouragement with one another.

The Holy Spirit is always ready to convict of acts of fear of man in worship. The Spirit will lead us to repentance with kindness for such displaced fears. Keep in mind that it is the Spirit who does the worship through each individual worshiper. Worship is an act of Christ in you that springs up in corporate worship.

One of the greatest blessings of obedience in corporate worship is the *ministry of reconciliation*. It is next to impossible to worship with a fellow Body member that you are not reconciled with.

Worship promotes healing of earthly relationships. This is why many seek forgiveness from others after they spend quality time in corporate worship.

As for the stubborn at heart – those who refuse to loosen up in worship and keep their focus on the people around them, well, their phony acts of worship must be tolerated until the Spirit brings them to freedom in Christ Jesus.

### **Fruit of the Spirit for the Spiritual Area**

Each of the grapes of the cluster of the Holy Spirit are equally as important but I want to focus on one individual grape that seems to be considered the greatest among them - love! Love is seen to manifest or express itself in all the other grapes listed in the Scriptures.

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. (Galatians 5:22-23)*

*If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing. Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away. (1 Corinthians 13:1-8)*

This passage clearly differentiates between self-love and Christ as Life love. If we speak and perform miracles but do not have love, we become nothing more than a *noisy gong* in the Body of Christ – and certainly to the world. I have attended many churches that make use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, confessing great things of God through their faith but have un-reconciled relationships all around them. God is not impressed with Body members who conduct deeds of the Kingdom of God, He is more moved by those Body members who LOVE. The evidence of God's love in and through the indwelt believer is seen by the accompaniment of the other grapes of the Holy Spirit and when this occurs from within; we will not be apt to impatient, unkind, jealous, and brag or be arrogant. The Christ as Life believer therefore is one characterized by love. First, love for God in Jesus Christ, and secondly the love of God through the believer to the saved and unsaved world around them.

Since God is love and God is in each Body member through the representation of Jesus Christ by way of the Holy Spirit, true love is demonstrated by a Life from within. We as humans, have no ability to muster up the attributes of the fruit of the Holy Spirit – for it is Christ within us that provokes not, does not take into account a wrong suffered, will not rejoice in unrighteousness, but only rejoices in Truth. When we choose to allow the life of Christ manifest through us, He is able to bear all things, believe all things, hope in all things, endure all things and never fail to perform His great deeds through the indwelt believer.

The love of God is foundational for all daily living. In fact, it is the evidence that we are of God.

*Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith. (1 John 5:1-4)*

First and foremost our love toward God reveals our love for His Son and since we possess the Son within us, we should show this evidence by loving other Bridal members – children of God. Secondly, if we truly love God, we are quick to keep His commandments. This is where it gets a little dicey – if we don't keep His commandments, does it mean that Christ doesn't live within us? No, not necessarily! It does mean that we are not walking in victory and in the identity of Christ within us. If we truly walk after the Spirit, we prove that we are overcomers and are born of God. Although I must say, this reality of not allowing Christ to keep His Father's commandments through us just might be evidence that Christ does NOT live within us – this is why this principle is a discerning factor.

Love must be expressed accordingly and through the Spirit – not by way of mustering up “love” for the unlovely because we are mandated! The fruit of the Holy Spirit may be described as moral excellence in acts of loving kindness and mercy beyond legal requirements but rather through a life that has been placed within each born-again believer. Love is the primary characteristic of Christ in us because it reveals the very Nature of God through His Son. Our job is to allow the fruit of the Spirit to germinate, develop, manifest, mature and express itself in and through the indwelling Life of Christ.

Consider these questions as you ponder this lesson:

1. By obedience to Christ in you, are you allowing the Love of God, who is God, to reveal Himself through the Spirit?
2. What choices are you making that might inhibit the expression of the Spirit in you?
3. What ways do you see the Love of God manifested in and through you?
4. Who are those individuals that you find difficult, if not impossible, to love unconditionally?

*Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God. (1 Peter 1:22-23)*

All indwelt believers desire to be obedient to Truth! Those who claim to be self-proclaimed Christians and do not desire such obedience – are most likely not saved. When we are motivated to be obedient to Truth, we actually become purified in our mind, will and emotions. Once we embrace such purification, we immediately start loving on other Bridal members unconditionally, which becomes the “proof of purchase” that we truly have gone through the born-again process.

We need to allow the Holy Spirit to search our hearts for ways and means by which we are twisted in our beliefs regarding love. This twisted view of love often times comes by way of our parent's lack of affection towards us or perversions of love relationships we have encountered

from our past. Rejection experiences have a lot to do with our view of being loved and loving others. Allowing God to heal us in such rejection patterns could be the start of true and lasting love relationships bestowed upon us by the Father, including those we would classify as our enemies.

You have heard me speak of Godship and its effects on spiritual and human relationships. Godship is simply this: setting standards of conduct on others, including God, and demanding obedience regarding those standards. Even standards that might be Biblical in nature but this kind of love is manifested from our self-life NOT Christ in us. Selfishness mixed with God's love turns into self-love, which accomplishes nothing. True and honorable love can only be expressed through the saving Life of Christ within us.

This is why self-love must be repented of! We cannot make the switch from our own form of love to God's love within us without such repentance. Once repentance occurs, we can appropriate the identification truths of who we are in Christ Jesus. And once our identification in Christ is manifested, we are freed up to go and reconcile with those whom we found difficult to love with our own strength.

### **Victory for the Spiritual Area**

Victory in Christ is almost always directly connected with the power of prayer. Those who don't find the spiritual secret of prayer find themselves "fainting" on a regular basis. Jesus gave a parable in Luke to teach us the importance of prayer.

*Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart... (Luke 18:1)*

The connection between prayer and not quitting or losing heart is obvious. To faint is to quit, to give up the effort required truly to know the Father AND His will.

Let's face it, prayer is the door to fellowship with God. No one who does not pray can really know God. We can study His Word and practice His attributes but unless we come before His throne boldly, we will NOT truly know His heart. This is why we found Jesus going off to spend time with His Father often. We should follow a like-minded example. To pray is to soak in the presence and person of the Lord. It is to focus first upon His being within us – Jesus Christ. This way we will be identified with His Life and purpose from the inside out. We tend often to come hastily into prayer with our own desires and start ordering God around as if He is a servant of ours. The Word tells us to let our request be known to God but not to manipulate God into fulfilling our request or somehow make them requests that He is obligated to fulfill. The key to letting our requests known to God is knowing the Giver, that the requests we bring according to His Divine and Holy will are the request He will fulfill.

*Do not be hasty in word or impulsive in thought to bring up a matter in the presence of God. For God is in heaven and you are on the earth; therefore let your words be few. (Ecclesiastes 5:2)*

I am going to step out in saying that many, if not most, of the request that the Body of Christ bring before the throne are hasty and impulsive in thought and deed. We must be careful as to the types of things we supplicate before Him. Have you ever been in a prayer meeting and

certain individuals go on and on about things that don't really seem to matter? This is the kind of hasty and thoughtless prayers that Ecclesiastes is talking about. I enjoy being in prayer gatherings that the individuals are careful as to what they pray and how they appeal to the Father in Heaven. These individuals have an awe and reverence for the Lord by abstaining from coming before the Lord in a casual or presumptuous way. Keep in mind that our perfect acceptance in Christ places us in a relationship to the Father that makes our praying as welcome to Him as was that of Jesus Himself – as long as the Spirit is doing the “groaning” through us as vessels of Christ.

*"In that day you will not question Me about anything. Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask the Father for anything in My name, He will give it to you. "Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be made full. (John 16:23-24)*

How is it then that Jesus tells us to ask freely of the Father for all things in His name and we will receive it? The answer is in knowing the heart of the Father before we make requests. If we do not handle our prayers with such reverence in knowing Him, we will default into doctrines of demons such as the “name it and claim it” mentality – prosperity doctrines.

Two important parts contributing to victory in prayer are faith and obedience. One, we pray by the faith of Christ within us and secondly, we are obedient to pray only the things He puts upon our hearts, which comes by relationships with Christ from within. God makes no promises of answering the prayer of the disobedient person. To do so would reduce the practice of prayer to a slot-machine act before a Holy Father – God forbid! It is God's greatest delight to answer the prayers of His people as long as the birthing place of a request is from the mind of Christ.

If anyone lacks in wisdom as to how to pray in this fashion, we are to first pray for a Holy wisdom.

*But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. (James 1:5-6)*

This is a prayer that WILL be answered in all indwelt believers. God is quick to give such profound and Heavenly wisdom to His children – for it guarantees request that are pure, righteous and certain to be answered.

Honestly, spiritual victory is won or lost in the place of prayer. For the enemy to keep an indwelt believer in defeat he will either cause them to be hasty in prayer or not pray at all.

Victorious prayer should be a part of your daily living and experience. If it is not, you should consider the hastiness of your prayers or evaluate the method by which you pray. Praying in hastiness is Godship and we have learned what that is – demanding that God keep to our requests and standards. If there is evidence of Godship praying in your life, consider repenting and turning to God for His heart and requests. Follow the general rule of Christ in you having the proper and honorable requests – that are sure to be answered. You will find life and life abundantly in such a prayer life.

## **Vision for the Spiritual Area**

Most self-proclaimed Christians aim in life to be happy, thus requiring God to make them happy. These types of believers expect God to change His doctrines to match their morbid beliefs – particularly the ones that make them “un-happy” or uncomfortable. One of the most common used against God is the doctrines of divorce. Many of Christians in my office have made the statement that “God does not want me to be un-happy in this marriage.” With this morbid belief, comes a twisting of doctrines that surround the issue of divorce. They somehow believe that any marriage relationship or work situation or life-experience that hinders them from being happy is a violation of their happiness.

It is imperative that an indwelt believer has the same vision for their lives as Christ has through them! The most spiritual & logical means of determining what your vision ought to be, is to discover God’s vision for you and I can assure you that it is not to be happy. God’s vision for the believer is to be Holy and blameless.

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. (Ephesians 1:3-4)*

We have been blessed with EVERY spiritual blessing known to Jesus Himself in us. A significant part of those blessings is that He chooses us literally before the foundation of the world to BE Holy and Blameless before Him. In other words, we have everything we need to live the life of an indwelt believer from the point of Salvation forward. We don’t have to beg or ask for “more” of Him or His blessings – everything we need is already implanted within us. We simply need to appropriate these “true things” in our daily walk. This is one of those impossible things to do without the Life of Christ doing the appropriating through us.

So how do we share in His Holiness?

*For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness. (Hebrews 12:10)*

As in parenting, we discipline our children in order for them to share in our goodness as parents. God in like manner uses discipline as the process in which we can share in His Holiness. Nobody likes to be disciplined but it is through the things we suffer that we learn obedience. By accepting discipline from the Lord, we become partakers in His Divine and Holy attributes. Another word for Holiness is “sanctification.” This word has the meaning of being reserved or designated for a particular use and therefore not available for some other deed or function. Sanctification is the process we believers yield our self-life to the Cross and embrace the eternal purpose and function of Christ within us. It means being set a part for God and God alone.

As indwelt Christians we have been redeemed out of darkness, willfulness, and rebellion. Some have come out a defiling background so far as our past lives are concerned. How can a former worker of iniquity be used by the King of kings?

*Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of*

*God. Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God. (1 Corinthians 6:9-11)*

This passage alone clears up many of the political arguments of our day! We have been washed of such Satanic identities – sanctified, set apart by the justification (just as if we did not sin) of our Lord and Savior through the placement of the Holy Spirit within.

This Holiness, this sanctification is actually “Christ in us,” for by God’s doing you and I are in Christ Jesus for life eternal – who became our sanctification.

*But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption... (1 Corinthians 1:30)*

The Word goes on to tell us that there is a working out of this sanctification and Holiness, in our daily living. Holiness is to grow in us through the function of Christ moving and breathing through us.

*Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. (2 Corinthians 7:1)*

All of this is to enable us to worship God in the beauty and splendor of His Holiness, thus sharing in His beloved attributes.

*Ascribe to the LORD the glory due to His name; Worship the LORD in holy array. (Psalms 29:2)*

What higher spiritual vision can a believer have for him or herself? Life does not get any purer than this.

1. Where do you place personal Holiness in the priorities of your life?
2. Have you allowed this vision to grip your soul, so that it becomes an eternal desire for your daily living?
3. If Holiness becomes a high priority for your life, what would it cost you?
4. Are you willing to pay the price?

*Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. (Ephesians 1:4)*

## **SEVEN AREAS OF LIFE:**

### **Repentance for the Psychological Area**

Man’s default from birth is to be equal with God, if not rise above Him. Not only is this a sin but it is entirely fruitless. So why do we attempt to do such a ridiculous thing? The sin that became our identity in the garden was and is to be like God. Even though the thought of such and act is absolute idiocy – we practice such futility on a daily basis. Seriously, how could the Creator and Sustainer of all the universe and beyond; the Designer of everything spiritual psychological, and

tangible; the Controller and Lord of all thrones, dominions, and powers both visible and invisible; the Architect of eternity – how could He possibly have an equal?

*"I am the LORD, and there is no other; Besides Me there is no God. I will gird you, though you have not known Me; That men may know from the rising to the setting of the sun That there is no one besides Me. I am the LORD, and there is no other..." (Isaiah 45:5-6)*

For mankind to think that they can know the mind of the Lord by making use of their own futility is nothing short of ridiculous.

*For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, OR WHO BECAME HIS COUNSELOR? Or WHO HAS FIRST GIVEN TO HIM THAT IT MIGHT BE PAID BACK TO HIM AGAIN? For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.*  
(Romans 11:34-36)

Playing God is the most pervasive attitude, because it characterizes every single descendant of Adam. No human endeavor, objective, or relationship is free of the ramifications of man's will set in opposition to or in competition with God's will.

One of the first things we need to look at is one's own sin of challenging, opposing, or usurping God's sovereignty, and then to repent of this affront to Him is of the utmost importance. This is all mustered up in the psychological area of life because it is clearly a war of the wills of man vs. God.

We might ask ourselves the following questions:

1. What is our mind-set toward God Himself when His will for us crosses our own will?
2. Do we find ourselves mentally setting standards of conduct that those around us must follow – in order for us to feel accepted?
3. What goes on in our minds when others, and God, does not meet those standards?
4. Do we function frequently with an independent spirit, without regard for the plans of others and God?
5. Do we expect to be praised, commended, or rewarded for every good thing we do?

These questions drive to the heart of our psychological area of life!

*"How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, You who have weakened the nations! "But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, And I will sit on the mount of assembly In the recesses of the north. 'I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.'" (Isaiah 14:12-14)*

This mind-set comes directly from the enemy. In our Isaiah passage, we see what happen to Satan when God casted him from Heaven. He was put on this earth to weaken the nations. Why? Because he tried to raise himself to God's throne and attempt to function as God and be like God. When he was cast to the earth, he attempted to replicate this sin by manifesting temptations for man to do the exact same thing. We call this Godship.

Godship is the most evident and destructive element in mankind's relation to God and others. For some, Godship is subtle aspect of the mind, will and emotions, cleverly disguised or even hidden from view unless and until a certain combination of circumstances triggers it into expression. This is when the sin of completion comes into play with God before the eyes of all in Heaven and on earth. Such a person functions with a covering of what he considers sound reasons for what he does and how he lives – and may not realize it is a covering until the Holy Spirit brings it to the front by way of conviction.

For many of us, these are expressions of genuinely egocentric attitudes, but for many they show up in many forms of selfishness – inward selfishness and self-pity. Covert as they may be, it is sin!

As with most self-life expressions, rejection needs to be identified as a contributing factor in playing God. We must identify these areas of rejection and gain understanding of our reactions, but in no way excuses them but rather is brought to repentance on each.

Because a proud, self-sufficient, or self-occupied mind is so opposite of the mind of Christ within, true redemption becomes difficult to appropriate and process. This is why teaching individuals who have the indwelling life of Christ their identity is of utmost importance.

The psychological area of life is the “control center” where all appropriations of one's identity in Christ must begin. Discipleship is the process of addressing all the psychological road blocks to appropriating identification in Christ.

This entire writing project is addressing this area of life. Since all truth comes through renewal of mind, the psychological area of life becomes our field of appropriation.

*For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, THAT HE WILL INSTRUCT HIM? But we have the mind of Christ. (1 Corinthians 2:16)*

The only way we can have a renewed mind is through the mind of Christ that is within us. To attempt to be free from our sins through our own mind-set is Godship. To allow, or release the mind of Christ from within, we can find an easy pathway to renewal and experiential freedom.

**Stop**

## **Identity for the Psychological Area**

Man's default

