

# “Spiritual Survival Manual”

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## **Chapter 1: The Biblical Basics**

### • **“God is love, and all who live in love live in God.” 1 John 4:16**

Regardless of our race, gender, or age, all of us need God's love to spiritually survive. For God's perfect love is the only element that is guaranteed to calm all our fears. “Love has no fear because perfect love expels all fear.” 1 John 4: 18

### **1. What is God's definition of perfect love?**

It's found in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8: “ Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. Love does not demand its own way. Love is not irritable, and it keeps no record of when it has been wronged. It is never glad about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance. Love will last forever...”

This is the type of love God has for us, unconditional and without any favoritism.

**“God's love for us isn't blind, he just doesn't tell us all that he sees.”**

### **2. In addition to God's love, what are the basic tools of spiritual survival?**

- Possessing a personal relationship with God through his Son, Jesus.
- Engage in spiritual training, which involves daily prayer and Bible study.
- Be proactive by putting into action Biblical principles.

When we become involved in these, we are becoming prepared to spiritually survive whatever we are experiencing now and whatever our future may hold.

### **3. What does God's character consist of?**

There is no better source than the words God used to describe himself in Exodus 34:6-7, “I am the Lord, I am the Lord, the merciful and gracious God. I am slow to anger and rich in unfailing love and faithfulness. I show this unfailing love to many thousands by forgiving every kind of sin and rebellion.” and in Isaiah 46:9-10 he says, "For I am God – I alone! I am God and there is no one else like me. Only I can tell you what is going to happen even before it happens. Everything I plan will come to pass, for I do whatever I wish."

### **4. Are there any metaphors in the Bible that would help in knowing God better?**

Yes, there are many. Here are just a few:

God our Creator	Isaiah 40:28
God our Rock	Deuteronomy 32:4
God our Shield and Stronghold	Psalm 18:2
God our Shepherd	Psalm 23:1
God our Light	1 John 1:5
God our Strength	Psalm 28:7
God our Refuge	Psalm 37:39
God our Help	Psalm 115:9
God our Song	Isaiah 12:2
God our Redeemer	Isaiah 41:14
God our Warrior	Isaiah 42:13

"Oh, what a wonderful God we have! How great are His riches and wisdom and knowledge! How impossible it is for us to understand His decisions and His methods! For who can know what the Lord is thinking? Who knows enough to be His counselor? And who could ever give Him so much that He would have to pay it back? For everything comes from Him; everything exists by His power and is intended for His glory. To Him be glory evermore." Romans 11:33-36

### **5. What are the elements of an intimate relationship with God?**

Faith, time, trust, respect, honesty, listening, reverence, and most importantly love. Before we can experience any benefits of a relationship with God, we first need to be participants in God's Gift Exchange program. Being a participant is critical to our spiritual survival in good times, but absolutely essential during times of crisis.

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**“There is absolutely nothing we can do to make God love us more and there isn't anything we could do to make him love us less.”**  
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**6. What makes God the best gift giver?**

- Everything that comes from God is good and everything that is good comes from God.
- His motivation is unconditional love.
- He gives sacrificially.
- He expects nothing in return.
- He never takes back a gift he has given.
- He gives out of grace.

**7. What is grace?**

Unearned gifts freely given by God as an expression of his love and kindness towards us. Grace is also the foundation of God's universal gift exchange program.

**8. What was God's most priceless gift in his gift exchange program?**

It was a bridge. But the material the bridge was made out of was unusual.

What was it? John 3:16&17 says, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish, but have eternal life. God did not send his Son into the world to condemn it, but to save it."

God's only begotten Son is Jesus or Yeshua in Hebrew. Jesus is the only bridge to a relationship with God and God desires for all to come to know Him. "He, God our Savior, wants everyone to be saved and to understand the truth. For there is only one God and one Mediator who can reconcile God and people. He is the man Christ Jesus. He gave his life to purchase freedom for everyone." 1 Timothy 2:4-6

**9. What does the Bible tell us about Jesus?**

He loves all people including His enemies.

He weeps and gets angry.

He mends broken lives.

He is gentle and compassionate

**10. What type of love does Jesus have for us?**

It is totally selfless and you centered. These attributes of Christ's love for us are reflected in the other names of Jesus.

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| The Door:        | John: 10:9    |
| Good Shepherd:   | John 10:14    |
| Master:          | John 1:38     |
| Prince of Peace: | Isaiah 9:6    |
| Branch:          | Zechariah 3:8 |
| Judge:           | Acts 10:42    |
| Word:            | John 1:1      |
- Lamb Of God, Revelation (All of these can be found in this book of the Bible.)  
Lion of the Judah, King of Kings, Morning Star, Faithful Witness, Alpha & Omega,  
Almighty, Son of Man, and Living One.

Jesus' unconditional love is what draws us to him. He proved his love for us through his willingness to die on the cross. He was innocent, but he wasn't a victim. He chose to die for us.

“The Father loves me because I lay down my life that I may have it back again. No one can take my life from me. I lay down my life voluntarily. For I have the right to lay it down when I want to and also the power to take it again. For my Father has given me this command.” John 10:17&18. Why would he choose this? So we wouldn't be eternally separated from God due to our sins. This eternal separation is called Hell.

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**“Some people foolishly believe that hell will be as much fun as the path leading there.”**  
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## 11. What is hell?

It is the eternal place of torment within the universe. Each individual that goes there freely chooses it. God does not send people there. We go there through our own free will choices that we make during our lifetime. In Luke 16:19-31, we are shown a conversation that takes place between a person that through their own choices ended up in hell and a person living in paradise:

“Jesus said, ‘There was a certain rich man who was splendidly clothed and who lived each day in luxury. At his door lay a diseased beggar named Lazarus. As Lazarus lay there longing for scraps from the rich man’s table, the dogs would come and lick his open sores. Finally, the beggar died and was carried by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried, and his soul went to the place of the dead. There, in torment, he saw Lazarus in the far distance with Abraham.

“The rich man shouted, ‘Father Abraham, have some pity! Send Lazarus over here to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in anguish in these flames.’

“But Abraham said to him, ‘Son, remember that during your lifetime you had everything you wanted, and Lazarus had nothing. So now he is here being comforted, and you are in anguish. And besides, there is a great chasm separating us. Anyone who wanted to cross over to you from here is stopped at its edge, and no one there can cross over to us.’

“Then the rich man said, ‘Please, Father Abraham, send him to my father’s home. For I have five brothers, and I want him to warn them about this place of torment so they won’t have to come here when they die.’

“But Abraham said, ‘Moses and the prophets have warned them. Your brothers can read their writings anytime they want to.’ The rich man replied, ‘No, Father Abraham! But if someone is sent to them from the dead, then they will turn from their sins.’ But Abraham said, ‘If they don’t listen to Moses and the prophets, they won’t listen even if someone rises from the dead.’”

Hell is:

- Eternal punishment: “And they will go away into eternal punishment; but the righteous will go into eternal life.” Matthew 25:46
- The Pit: “The fifth angel blew his trumpet, and I saw a star that had fallen to earth from the sky, and he was given the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit. When he opened it, smoke poured out as though from a huge furnace, and the sunlight and air were darkened by the smoke.” Revelation 9:1&2
- Place of darkness: “Will be cast out into outer darkness; where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” Matthew 8:12
- Lifeless: “And all who believe in God’s Son have eternal life. Those who don’t obey the Son will never experience eternal life, but the wrath of God remains upon them.” John 3:36
- Chains and darkness: “For God did not spare even the angels when they sinned; he threw them into hell, in chains of gloom and darkness until the judgment day.” 2 Peter 2:4
- Fiery furnace: “I, the Son of Man, will send My angels, and they will remove from My Kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil, and they will throw them into the furnace and burn them. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” Matthew 13:41&42
- Lake of fire: “Then the Devil, who betrayed them, was thrown into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur, joining the beast and the false prophet. There they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.” Revelation 20:10

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**“For those who ‘accept Jesus’ as their Savior, this world is the closest to thing to ‘hell’ they will ever experience. For those who ‘reject Jesus’ as their Savior, this world is the closest thing to ‘heaven’ they will ever encounter.”**  
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Jesus provided an escape from our horrible destiny of hell through his death on the cross.

**12. What exactly did Jesus experience before his time of crucifixion?**

The specifics help us grasp the incredible price Jesus paid for our sins. First, the Romans whipped Jesus thirty-nine times. The whip had small sharp pieces of animal bone tied to the ends. Each time Jesus was hit with the whip, it tore through his skin into his back muscles. Men rarely survived this type of beating. It was restricted to thirty-nine lashes for forty had proven to kill the majority of those receiving this type of punishment. Death was not the goal of this beating; it was to teach the criminal a lesson and a public display of the consequences of criminal activity.

**13. What did Jesus experience during his crucifixion?**

Before nailing Jesus to the cross, they stripped him naked as a way to further humiliate him. Then they nailed his arms and feet to a rough wooden cross.

"At noon, darkness fell across the whole land until three o'clock. Then, at that time Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, Lama sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Mark 15:33&34

Emotions are very misleading, but very real. Jesus' statement was not indicating that God had abandoned him. It was an expression of Jesus' humanity. Like us, during his time of excruciating physical, emotional, and mental pain, he "felt" alone in his pain. Separated from God. Yet, God the Father "had not" turned his back on his obedient Son. Like Jesus, we sometimes feel that God has abandoned us. When this happens it is simply our "feelings" talking. The fact is God has not and will not ever leave one of his children.

Jesus' face was streaked with blood. His mouth was half open. His throat was dry and on fire. He could no longer swallow. He breathed in a little, but couldn't breathe out. He was starved for air. His eyes were prominent and rolling. He was now close to death.

"Then Jesus uttered another loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain in the Temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. When the Roman officer who stood facing him saw how he died, he exclaimed, "Truly, this was the Son of God!" Mark 15:37-39

Three days later Jesus came back to life, just as he told the disciples he would. Then after spending forty days appearing to the disciples and others, Jesus ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of Father God. Jesus will return to earth again. Only this time he is coming to take the children of God to be with him in heaven.

"There is salvation in no one else! There is no other name in all of heaven for people to call on to save them." Acts 4:12

"Nothing in all creation can hide from God. Everything is naked and exposed before his eyes. This is the God to whom we must explain all that we have done." Hebrews 4:13

"If we say we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and refusing to accept the truth. But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from every wrong. If we claim we have not sinned, we are calling God a liar and showing that his word has no place in our hearts. Jesus Christ is the one who pleases God completely. He is the sacrifice for our sins. He takes away not only our sins, but the sins of all the world." 1 John 1:8-10 & 2:2

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**"It's never too early to trust and accept Christ as your savior, but at any moment it could be too late."**  
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- Do you believe that Jesus is the Son of God?
- Do you believe that he died on the cross to give you access into a relationship with God?
- Have you received his gift of eternal life?
- Have you received his love and protection?
- Have you given him your future?

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**"Life with Christ is an endless hope; life without Christ is a hopeless end."**  
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**14. What will you choose?**

The choice is entirely yours. If you acknowledge your sins and want to surrender your life to Jesus, here's a suggested prayer:

"Dear God, I know that I am a sinner. I believe that your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ out of his love for me died to pay for my sins. Please forgive me. I surrender my life into his hands and ask you to live within my heart. I now trust you as my personal Lord and Savior. Amen"

If you said this prayer as a new Christian, your faith in Jesus is very pleasing to God. I welcome you as a new member of God's family! If you are recommitting yourself to Jesus, I welcome you home. You have been missed!

**15. What is faith?**

A belief in, trust in, and loyalty to God. It is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we don't see.

**16. Do we have a responsibility in the gift exchange program in addition to receiving God's love?**

Yes. Jesus says to us, "Freely you have received, freely give." Now, it's our turn to do the giving. We'll discover that God never asks us to do something for others that he has not already done for us.

**17. What do we have to give others?**

Our gifts of compassion. Compassion is simply allowing God's love to flow through our lives to others. Especially when times are tough.

In addition to compassion, Romans 12: 10-16 tells us to:

- Be devoted to others.
- Honor others above yourself.
- Share with God's people that are in need.
- Practice hospitality.
- Live at peace with one another.

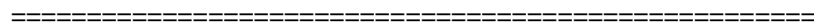
**18. What do we have that is valuable enough to give to Jesus?**

Our gifts of love, obedience, trust, and faithfulness are considered valuable by him.

**19. What does our giving and obedient lifestyle reveal?**

- Shows our faith and trust in God.
- Our love for God is demonstrated by our love for others.
- Follows the example of the Lord Jesus.

Most importantly, as we live this lifestyle, others will be drawn to God.



## **Chapter 2: God's DNA?**

**"To all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. They are reborn! This is not a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, this rebirth comes from God." John 1:12&13**

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How great is the love Father God has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are. Jesus addressed the issue of believers being children of God in Matthew 12:50, "Anyone who does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother." Paul wrote about the same principle in Galatians 4:6&7, "God has sent the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, and now you can call God your dear Father. Now you are God's own child."

### **1. What is God's DNA?**

When we receive the gift of eternal life through our acceptance of Jesus as our Savior, we experience a spiritual birth. At that moment we receive heavenly DNA into our souls in the form of the Holy Spirit. Now, we possess two sets of DNA. One physical set, from our earthly parents, and one spiritual, from our heavenly parent, Father God. "For you have been born again. Your new life did not come from your earthly parents because the life they gave you will end in death. But this new life will last forever because it comes from the eternal, living word of God." 1 Peter 1:23 After our spiritual birth we are linked eternally to God in such a way that no matter what happens in our future, our heavenly genetic link to Him will not be broken. How can this be?

We can never separate ourselves from the DNA of our heavenly Father anymore than we could remove the DNA received from our birth parents. Our salvation, or spiritual DNA, will never be changed or removed. Think about this:

Is it scientifically possible for us to remove our parents DNA from within us? No.

Is it spiritually possible to remove God's DNA from our soul once we are born again? No.

Is it then possible to lose our position as a child of God once we have become a member of God's family? No.

In other words we can't lose our eternal life with God, but we can break our relationship with Him. How could we do that? By turning our back on him in rebellion. Similar to what a son or daughter does when they choose to disown their birth family. They may never see their family again. But whatever they do or where ever they go it will never change the fact that they still have a DNA connection to their biological parents. They are still family members, if only through their shared DNA. So if we ever think we have done something to lose eternal life and our spiritual position as a member of God's family, we need to ask ourselves this question. How can we undo our spiritual DNA or our spiritual birth or our salvation? The answer is: We can't!

### **2. Who is the Holy Spirit?**

He is the promised gift Jesus said he would send after he ascended into heaven. In John 16:7 Jesus told his disciples, "It is actually best for you that I go away., because if I don't the Counselor won't come. If I do go away, he will come because I will send him to you." The Holy Spirit enables our hearts to embrace God as our Heavenly Father.

The Holy Spirit is also:

- Third person in the triune God
- Co-creator of earth.
- One that points to Jesus as the Son of God and our Redeemer.
- Gift that is given to every child of God, which equips and enables us to walk by faith.

The Holy Spirit is the one that empowers us to spiritually survive. Being prepared for spiritual survival isn't something that can be transferred to another person. It's our sole responsibility.

### **3. What will help us know the invisible Spirit of God?**

His names:

Breath of the Almighty:	Job 33:4
Counselor:	John 14:16,26; 15:26
Eternal Spirit:	Hebrews 9:14
Good Spirit:	Psalm 143:10
Power of the Most High:	Luke 1:35

Spirit of Knowledge:	Isaiah 11:2
Spirit of Understanding:	Isaiah 11:2
Spirit of Truth:	John 14:17; 15:26
Spirit of Holiness:	Romans 1:4
Spirit of Glory:	1 Peter 4:14
Spirit of Fire:	Isaiah 4:4
Spirit of Judgment:	Isaiah 4:4; 28:6
Spirit of Revelation:	Ephesians 1:17
Spirit of Counsel:	Isaiah 11:2
Spirit of Christ:	Romans 8:9; 1 Peter 1:11
Spirit of the Father:	Matthew 10:20
Spirit of God:	Genesis 1:2; 1 Corinthians 2:11; Job 33:4
Spirit of the Lord:	Isaiah 11:2; Acts 5:9
Spirit of Wisdom:	Isaiah 11:2; Ephesians 1:17
Spirit of His Son:	Galatians 4:6
Spirit of Son ship:	Romans 8:15
Spirit of Life:	Romans 8:2; Revelation 11:11
Spirit of Prophecy:	Revelation 19:10
Spirit of Grace:	Zechariah 12:10; Hebrews 10:29
Willing Spirit:	Psalms 51:12

#### 4. Are there specific descriptions of the Holy Spirit?

There are references to the Holy Spirit using familiar objects as symbols for him.

Dove:	Peace and reconciliation, Mark 1:10; Matthew 3:16.
Wind:	Power, Acts 2:2; independence, John 3:8.
Oil:	Consecration, Isaiah 61:1; comforting, Isaiah 61:3; Heb. 1:9; illuminating, Matthew 25:3; John 2:20,27; healing, Luke 10:34; James 5:14.
Water:	Fertilization, Psalm 1:3; refreshing, Psalm 46:4; cleansing, Ephesians 5:25-27.
Fire:	Empowerment of believers, Acts 2:1-4.
Rain & Dew:	Blessing, Psalm 133:3.
Voice:	Guidance, John 16:13; warning, Hebrews 3:7-11.
Seal:	Authenticity, John 6:27; 2 Corinthians 1:22; securing, Ephesians 1:13&14.

#### 5. What is the Holy Spirit's role in our lives?

He draws us to God, prepares us to serve God, and empowers us to be spiritually strong. He does this through:

- Convincing us of our sins: "When He comes, He will convince the world of its sin, and of God's righteousness, and of the coming judgment." John 16:8-11
- Comforting us: "I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor, who will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world at large cannot receive him, because it isn't looking for him and doesn't recognize him." John 14:16&17; also see John 15:26; 16:7-14.
- Guiding us: "When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all truth. He will not be presenting his own ideas; he will be telling you what he has heard." John 16:13; also see Romans 8:4&14
- Giving us access to Father God: "Now all of us, both Jew and Gentiles, may come to the Father through the Holy Spirit because of what Christ has done for us." Ephesians 2:18
- Giving us strength: "I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will give you mighty inner strength through his Holy Spirit." Ephesians 3:16

#### 6. Is it possible to break the Holy Spirit's heart?

Yes. Through our choices to sin against God, but the Holy Spirit will never leave us even when he is grieved.

#### 7. What does it mean when the Holy Spirit is grieved?

It's similar to what a parent feels as he or she watches their adult child make choices that they know will bring pain into their life. It breaks the parent's heart, but a loving parent does not withdraw their love from the child nor abandon them. The Holy Spirit loves us and will never leave us.

To avoid grieving the Holy Spirit, it's up to each of us to focus on living in harmony with him. For he is our holy and constant partner in our spiritual survival.

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## **Chapter 3: Heaven's Hotline**

**"I love the Lord because he hears and answers my prayers. Because he bends down and listens, I will pray as long as I have breath!" Psalm 116:1&2**

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Prayer is every Christian's 24 hour, 7 days a week, hotline to God. Each time we pray, we will never receive a busy signal. We can spend all the time we want talking. Why? God is never too busy to speak with us. He always welcomes our calls and we don't need to be concerned about any phone charges, because Jesus has already paid our bill in full.

### **1. What is prayer?**

It is one of the most important instruments in our spiritual survival arsenal. More specifically prayer is:

- Our S.O.S. signal to God in times of crisis.
- The key that unlocks the miraculous.
- Talking to God with a trusting heart.
- Something that can never be stolen from us.
- The way to understand God's plan for our lives.
- Asking God for what we need.
- Listening for God's voice. Isn't listening one of the qualities we look for in others? Someone that is more intent on hearing us than telling us about themselves. This is the same in our relationship with God. He is looking for people that will not only talk to him, but care enough to spend time listening to him.

### **2. Can we really hear God's voice?**

Jesus teaches us we can in John 10:1-10,

"I assure you, anyone who sneaks over the wall of a sheepfold, rather than going through the gate, must surely be a thief and a robber! For a shepherd, enters through the gate. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice and come to him. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. After he has gathered his own flock, he walks ahead of them, and they follow him because they recognize his voice. They won't follow a stranger; they will run from him because they don't recognize his voice."

"Those who heard Jesus use this illustration didn't understand what he meant, so he explained it to them. 'I assure you, I am the gate for the sheep,' he said. 'All others who came before me were thieves and robbers. But the true sheep did not listen to them. Yes, I am the gate. Those who come in through me will be saved. Wherever they go, they will find green pastures. The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give life in all its fullness.'"

God's voice is rarely audible. His voice usually comes as sweet whisper within our thoughts or insight as we are reading scripture. In discerning what is of God and what is not, we need to ask ourselves:

Does it agree or contradict scripture?

Does it bring us peace or disturb us?

Does it build us up or tear us down?

Does it come as a loving voice or one that is judgmental and punishing?

All of these questions are important in learning to distinguish between God's voice and our own thoughts.

### **3. Is there an example of prayer?**

The perfect model of prayer is found when the disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray. Jesus answered them by praying what has been labeled as the Lord's Prayer, Matthew 6:9-13. This prayer has six elements:

- Focusing on God: "Our Father in heaven, may your name be honored. May your kingdom come soon."
- Asking for God's will to be done in our lives and in others: "May your will be done here on earth, just as it is in heaven."
- Asking God to meet our needs: "Give us our food for today."
- Asking God to cleanse us from sin: "And forgive us our sins, just as we have forgiven those who have sinned against us. And don't let us yield to temptation."
- Asking for God's protection: "But deliver us from the evil one."
- Focus on God again: "For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen."
- Listen to God: Give him a chance to respond to your prayer.

God will always respond to our prayers with an answer of yes, no, or the timing isn't right for it's fulfillment. Whichever option he answers us with, our response is to simply trust him to unfold it.

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**“Life is fragile, handle with prayer.”**

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#### **4. What are the ingredients for effective prayers?**

Clean hands, a pure heart, and perseverance.

"Who may climb the mountain of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place? Only those whose hands and hearts are pure, who do not worship idols and don't tell lies. They will receive the Lord's blessing and have right standing with God their savior. They alone may enter God's presence and worship the God of Israel." Psalms 24:3-6

We purify our hands and hearts by:

- Asking the Holy Spirit to search our hearts for any sin or other obstacle.
- Accepting God's forgiveness and cleansing through the blood of our Savior Jesus Christ.
- Asking him to fill us with the Holy Spirit.
- Praise and thank God for doing all the above.

"The eyes of the Lord watch over those who do right, and His ears are open to their prayers." 1 Peter 3:12

Jesus encourages us to be persistent: "Keep on asking, and you will be given what you ask for. Keep on looking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened. For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, find. And the door is opened to everyone who knocks. You parents, if your children ask for a loaf of bread, do you give them a stone instead? Or if they ask for a fish, do you give them a snake? Of course not! If you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask him." Matthew 7:7-11

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**“For it's hard to tune in on heaven's message, if our lives are full of earthly static.”**

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#### **5. Where is the best place to pray?**

It can be any place where we can shut out distractions. For some of us being outdoors draws us to Jesus. Others are more comfortable in our homes, in a church, and for the busiest of us in our cars. Whatever works the best, that's where we need to go.

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**“Seven days without prayer makes one weak.”**

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#### **6. What happens when we don't pray?**

Doubt, weariness, discouragement, and disillusionment creep in. Ultimately, it brings our spiritual disaster.

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**“The person who can't pray when the sun is shining will not know how to pray when the clouds come.”**

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#### **7. What are the benefits of praying?**

Our faith is bolstered. We are strengthened, encouraged, receive spiritual vision, optimism, and blessings. God divinely intervenes in response to our prayers.

#### **8. Why pray God's scriptural promises?**

God's promises don't return to him empty. They accomplish what he desires. First, search the Bible for the scripture promise that is the antidote to our problem and then pray it.

Here are some scriptures to help you get started:

When all looks hopeless: "With God all things are possible." Matthew 19:26

When feeling trapped with no way out: "The Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, he gives freedom." 2 Corinthians 3:17

When grieving: Matthew 5:4

When in sorrow: John 14

When men fail you: Psalm 27

If you want to be fruitful: John 15

When you have sinned: Psalm 51

When you worry: Matthew 6:19-34

When you are in danger: Psalm 91

When God seems far away: Psalm 139

When your faith needs stirring: Hebrews 11

When you are lonely and fearful: Psalm 23

When you grow bitter and critical: I Corinthians 13

For Paul's secret to happiness: Colossians 3:12-17

For understanding of Christianity: II Corinthians 5:15-19

When you feel down and out: Romans 8:31

When you want peace and rest: Matthew 11:25-30

When you leave home: Psalm 121

When your prayers grow selfish: Psalm 67

For a great opportunity: Isaiah 55

When you want courage: Joshua 1

If you are depressed: Psalm 27

If your wallet is empty: Psalm 37

If you are discouraged: Psalm 126

For dealing with fear: Psalm 34:7

For security: Psalm 121:3

For reassurance: Psalm 145:18

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"Anything that is big enough to worry about is big enough to pray about."  
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### **9. Why is prayer so important?**

'Nothing' is accomplished for the kingdom of God without it first being realized in prayer.

Our final step in prayer is to stand by faith as we wait patiently for the answer God will give us. The key word here is patiently. Spiritual survivors are those that have learned to be patient people.

## **Chapter 4: Champion Survivors**

**"Since Christ suffered physical pain, you must arm yourselves with the same attitude he had, and be ready to suffer, too. For if you are willing to suffer for Christ, you have decided to stop sinning. And you won't spend the rest of your life chasing after evil desires, but you will be anxious to do the will of God." 1 Peter 4:1&2**

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### **1. What is a champion survivor?**

It is a disciple of Jesus who trusts God with the process and outcome of every situation they have or will ever encounter.

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**"Every disciple is a believer in Jesus, but not every believer is a disciple of his."**

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### **2. What are the differences between a believer and a disciple?**

A believer's life is:

- Not necessarily known by others as a Christian, selfishly holds onto his or her life, and a shallow relationship with God.

A disciple's life has:

- Jesus as their number one priority, has a reputation of being a committed Christian, actions reflect the character of Christ, and an intimate relationship with God.

### **3. What are the costs of being a disciple of Christ's?**

- You might be rejected and ridiculed by others
- Asked to do things for others, whether they deserve it or not.
- Follow God's lead no matter what the personal cost involves.
- Carry your cross. Jesus said in Matthew 16:24, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must put aside your selfish ambitions, shoulder your cross, and follow me."

### **4. What does it mean to shoulder our cross?**

- Be willing to put aside our desires, plans, and goals in exchange for God's.
- Live a life of obedience to God. Obedience is our cross. Each cross is custom made to fulfill God's purpose in our lives.

There are many believers that go through the actions and behaviors of serving Jesus, but they have never embraced their cross. Each time Jesus presents it, they reject it. Yet, Jesus said in Matthew 10:38, "If you refuse to take up your cross and follow me, you are not worthy of being mine. If you cling to your life, you will lose it; but if you give it up for me you will find it." So rejecting our cross is really rejecting the opportunity and the process of becoming his disciple. This rejection does not jeopardize our position as children of God. It only prevents the rate at which the character of Christ is developed within us.

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**"Great disciples, like diamonds, are products of great pressure."**

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### **5. What is a disciple's SBA diploma?**

A spiritual degree that disciples can earn in the school of faith. To earn this diploma requires:

- Studying God's Word daily.
- Believing the Word studied. "The grass withers, and the flowers fade, but the Word of our God stands forever." Isaiah 40:8
- Acting on what we believe.

When we do these we receive the benefits that are attached to earning this diploma.

### **6. What are this diploma's benefits?**

- Wealth and riches will be in your house, not necessarily material wealth.
- When dark circumstances surround you, God's light will be there for you.
- What was meant for evil in your life will be transformed into good.

- You will never be shaken from the foundation of your faith.
- God's divine protection on you and your family.

**7. What is one of the most important activities of a survivor's life?**

Worship! It's absolutely critical to our spiritual survival.

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**“It’s not what we have in our pockets that makes us thankful, but what we have in our hearts.”**  
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**8. What does it mean to worship?**

In John 4:23&24, Jesus explains it to his disciples, "True worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for anyone who will worship him that way. For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth."

To worship in spirit means to love, admire, be thankful, and revere God. It must involve our hearts, minds, and souls. Worship can include singing, praying, loving actions towards others, and simply being quiet in God's presence. When we do these, it results in:

- Delighting the Lord.
- Developing our fellowship with God.
- Defeating the Devil.
- Declaring our faith to others and ourselves.

**9. What are the attitudes of a disciple?**

They are listed in Matthew 5:1-11:

- Depends on God, not on self-sufficiency.
- Repents and weeps over sin's impact.
- Possess a spiritual appetite for Christ's character.
- Priorities congruent with God's principles.
- Bringing others into reconciliation to God and others.
- Suffers for Christ with rejoicing.

Did you notice that none of these attributes include great learning, genius, earthly wisdom, etc. Why? God doesn't need these in order to produce champion survivors. He chooses to use the weak things, the foolish things, the base things, the despised things in order to bring glory to himself.

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**“Life is comprised of a chain of beautiful opportunities masterfully disguised as impossible situations.”**  
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**10. If being weak is acceptable to God, why does he encourage us to go beyond our obstacles?**

Because God loves to stretch us giving us an opportunity to develop new spiritual survivor skills. These opportunities begin on the day we receive Jesus as our Savior and the process is ongoing until we are with him in heaven.

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**“A mind once stretched by a great idea, can never return to it’s original dimensions.”**  
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"Mold me into your servant O God,  
 That I might serve you and continue to trod.  
 Down the path you've set before me.  
 That clearly shows the way  
 And leads directly to you.  
 Forever will I stay.  
 Praising you for being beside me,  
 All the way!"

Kathleen Palker 1974

## **Chapter 5: Action Agenda**

**"You are the light of the world, like a city on a mountain, glowing in the night for all to see. Don't hide your light under a basket! Instead, put it on a stand and let it shine for all. In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father." Matthew 5:14-16**

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As we do good deeds, we need to acquire the three A's of action.

### **1. What are the three A's of action?**

They are found in James 1:22-25, "Be doers of the Word (Accurate Information), and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks (Awareness) into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer (Abundant Participation) of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does."

Accurate information: Biblical truths.

Awareness of our responsibility: Our eyes are now open to the truth.

Abundant participation: putting action to the truth we now have.

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**"Listen with your heart and respond with your hands."**

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### **2. What would stop us from putting these into action?**

Fear. Fear can be a lack of faith and trust in God's ability to work in and through our lives successfully. A good exercise in getting a handle on our fears is to list them and decide if they are realistic or even probable. Then confess these fears to God, ask Him to take them and replace them with his peace.

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**"The Christian that pleases God best is the one who trusts him most."**

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Here's a story of breaking free from fear's hold. "There once was a lush green field covered with beautiful bushes that produced delicious fruit. In the middle of the field, stood a huge ominous scarecrow. But on the scarecrow's arms were perched a few wise and fearless birds.

The foolish birds were frightened by the scarecrow and flew away. But the wise birds knew that all the very best strawberries, blueberries, and raspberries, went uneaten and grew close to a scarecrow. So whenever these wise birds saw a scarecrow they flew straight to the scarecrow to eat the very best fruit of the field."

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**"Feed your faith and your doubts will starve to death."**

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### **3. What's the moral of this story?**

· The truth sets us free from our fears and worries about our daily provision. This truth is found in Luke 12: 22-26, Jesus was speaking to the disciples, "I tell you, don't worry about everyday life, whether you have enough food to eat or clothes to wear. For life consists of far more than food and clothing. Look at the ravens. They don't need to plant or harvest or put food in barns because God feeds them. And you are far more valuable to him than any birds! Can all your worries add a single moment to your life? Of course not! And if worry can't do little things like that, what's the use of worrying over bigger things?"

· The scarecrows in our lives are only the devil's attempts to keep us from asking and receiving from God, and taking action as we look to God to lead us.

· God will replace our fears with his peace and spiritual boldness.

### **4. What are the characteristics of spiritual boldness?**

Courage: to encounter difficulties with firmness.

Meekness: inner power without distraction.

Confidence: faith in God put into action.

These attributes not only belong to spiritual survivors, but they can be found in all successful marathon runners. For example, the runners in the New York marathon. This race is one of the most famous marathons in the world. It is a grueling 26 miles long. Throughout the course of the race, many runners fall by the wayside as they collapse from exhaustion, injuries, dehydration, and heat stroke. These incidences could of been avoided if the runners had trained properly and developed marathon stamina. Likewise, as Christians, we need to develop spiritual survival stamina and prepare ourselves for our spiritual marathons.

**5. Does every Christian have a spiritual marathon to participate in?**

Yes. At the moment we receive Jesus as our Savior, our marathon begins. Then our first steps of faith start us on our race and it doesn't end until we leave earth to be with the Lord.

**6. What does condition training consist of for Christians?**

In order to be in top spiritual marathon condition, we need a balanced lifestyle. Keep in mind; it's far better to run our spiritual race at a slower speed than to burst into high gear only to burn out before we ever reach the finish line.

We can avoid burning out by living a balanced lifestyle. It involves these three areas:

Our Spirit Realm:

1. Prayer.
2. Praise and worship.
3. Fellowship with other Christians.

Our Soul Realm:

1. Studying God's Word.
2. Loving actions towards others.

Our Physical Realm:

1. Healthy foods.
2. Physical exercise.

**7. What does our racecourse's terrain consist of?**

It is a very narrow path and well defined with all of its boundaries set by God for our own good.

**8. What helps us know that we are on God's path for our lives?**

Studying the Bible, times of prayer, our surrounding circumstances, godly counsel from others, being patient, and remaining in an attitude of submission to God.

**9. Can we have an impact on our course's terrain?**

We make our paths level through our obedience to God or we can create a rough bumpy path through our compromises and sin. Proverbs 4: 25-27 reveals the qualities of a person that doesn't compromise, "Look straight ahead, and fix your eyes on what lies before you. Mark out a straight path for your feet; then stick to the path and stay safe. Don't get sidetracked; keep your feet from following evil."

**10. What is the key to finishing our marathons?**

Perseverance. Pushing through in spite of any obstacles. Obstacles can be anything that weighs us down making the race harder than it needs to be. We can throw off these burdens of trials, testings, and tribulations by going through them as we lean heavily on God's promise of giving us strength when we become tired. "He gives power to those who are tired and worn out; he offers strength to the weak. Even youths will become exhausted, and young men will give up. But those who wait on the Lord will find new strength. They will fly high on wings like eagles. The will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint." Isaiah 40:28-31

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"You can't break God's promises by leaning on them."  
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**11. What is to be our motivation in running our marathons?**

Hebrews 12:10, "...that we share in God's holiness." This doesn't mean that we will become divine like God, but that the Holy Spirit will dwell in us more and more as we run our races.

**12. What are spiritual marathon winning strategies?**

- a. Live for God by making his kingdom interests and principles our priority. "God will give you all you need from day to day if you live for him and make the Kingdom of God your primary concern." Matthew 6:33
- b. Be alert, uncompromising, brave, and loving towards others. "Be on guard. Stand true to what you believe. Be courageous. Be strong. And everything you do must be done with love." 1 Corinthians 16:13&14 and "May God, who gives us patience and encouragement, help you live in complete harmony with each other, each with the attitude of Christ Jesus toward the other. Then all of you can join together with one voice, giving praise and glory to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Romans 15:5&6
- c. Be bold in telling others about Jesus. "For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self discipline. So you must never be ashamed to tell others about our Lord." 2 Timothy 1:7&8
- d. Give all your worries and cares to God. "Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about what happens to you." 1 Peter 5:7
- e. Do all things in humility. "So humble yourselves under the mighty power of God, and in his good time he will honor you." 1 Peter 5:6

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**“Victory consists of getting up just one time more than you’ve fallen down.”**

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**13. How is God's discipline our friend?**

It educates, corrects, instructs, and nurtures us through our hardships, sufferings, and persecutions. Additionally, without God’s discipline and left to ourselves, we will choose the path of least resistance. This path eventually leads to our spiritual demise.

**14. What is the best response to the discipline of the Lord?**

According to Hebrews 12, we are to:

- Take God's discipline seriously.
- Get rid of sins.
- Focus on Jesus.
- Lean on God for our strength.
- Submit to God.
- Have upright conduct.
- Continue to be thankful and worship God.

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**“The world crowns success, but God crowns faithfulness.”**

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**15. Is there a scripture of guidance and promise to encourage us as we run our races?**

Proverbs 4:11-15, "I will teach you wisdom’s ways and lead you in straight paths. If you live a life guided by wisdom, you won’t limp or stumble as you run. Carry out my instructions; don’t forsake them. Guard them, for they will lead you to a fulfilled life. Do not do as the wicked do or follow the path of evildoers. Avoid their haunts. Turn away and go somewhere else.”

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## **Chapter 6: Successful Strategies**

**"We are human, but we don't wage war with human plans and methods. We use God's mighty weapons, not mere worldly weapons, to knock down the Devil's strongholds. With these weapons we break down every proud argument that keeps people from knowing God." 1 Corinthians 10:3-5**

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The Devil is the number one enemy to our spiritual survival. His first goal is to keep us from a relationship with God. If the Devil has not succeeded in keeping us from surrendering our lives to Jesus, then the Devil's secondary goal is to separate us from a powerful and intimate relationship with God. If the Devil succeeds in accomplishing this goal, we become vulnerable to his devices.

The information contained in this chapter is very powerful, but without practical application it will remain only information.

### **1. Who is the Devil?**

In John 8:44, Jesus explains, "He was a murderer from the beginning and has always hated the truth. There is no truth in him. When he lies, it is consistent with his character; for he is a liar and the father of lies." At one time, Satan was a holy angel named Lucifer meaning morning star, but he had desire to take God's place and be worshipped. This desire led to Satan rebelling against God. In response to Satan's rebellion, God expelled him from heaven along with one third of the angels that joined him in his rebellion. These angels are now demons. They are Satan's soldiers. On Lucifer's expulsion from heaven, he experienced a name change. Now, his name is:

- Satan - adversary
- Dragon - rebellious
- Old Serpent - seductive
- Devil - slanders and accuses

Thief - "The thief, Satan, does not come 'except' to steal, and to kill, and to destroy." John 10:10

Satan carries out his character qualities through his attacks on every Christian's life.

### **2. What is a satanic attack?**

It is a deliberate assault by Satan with the intent to ultimately destroy or at least to cause us harm spiritually, physically, mentally, materially, and emotionally. Satan's focus is to stop us from fulfilling God's purpose and plan for our lives.

### **3. Where are our spiritual battlefields?**

Within our thoughts. This is where we either win or lose every battle. In order to be on our guard against the enemy's tactics, our minds need to be submitted to the Holy Spirit where they are empowered to resist temptation.

The apostle Paul instructed the Christians in Ephesus how to engage in spiritual warfare. He taught them to, "Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies and tricks of the Devil. For we are not fighting against people made of flesh and blood, but against the evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against those mighty powers of darkness who rule this world, and against wicked spirits in the heavenly realms." Ephesians 6:11&12

### **4. What does it mean to stand firm?**

From Philippians 3:12-20 & 4:1

- focus on future goals, not on past failures.
- practice the spiritual truths we possess, don't become complacent.
- discipline our thoughts on heavenly things, avoid the distractions of earthly things.
- anticipate Christ's return at any moment, resist becoming apathetic regarding the Lord's return.
- remember our citizenship is in heaven not on earth.

### **5. What does our survival gear or spiritual armor consist of?**

Ephesians 6:14-17 describes each piece of our armor:

- Belt of truth: It keeps us whole, complete, undivided and leads us in the right direction.
- Breastplate of righteousness: This righteousness is not our own, but of our Lord Jesus Christ. It silences Satan's accusations of others and ourselves.
- Shoes of peace: These keep our balance as we fight against Satan. They bring stability, balance, mobility, and opportunities to share the Gospel with others.

- Shield of faith: It protects us from Satan's arrows of fear, doubt, and confusion. Faith is vital for our spiritual lives, as the other parts of the armor don't function well if the shield of Faith is not used properly.
  - Helmet of salvation: It protects our minds from being divided, deceived, doubtful, and discouraged.
  - Sword of the Spirit: God's Word is our sword. Resist Satan by quoting scripture and he must flee from us.
- These weapons are only powerful when anointed by the Holy Spirit. The anointing comes when we lean heavily upon God through our prayers and by living a holy lifestyle.

### **6. How does the devil attempt to prevent us from reaching God's goals for our lives?**

Through the temptations he presents. Some of his temptations include:

- Destroying our hopes, leaving behind our crushed dreams.
- Stealing our ability to know right from wrong.
- Ravaging our faith in God and His Word.
- Bringing unforgiveness, which isolates us from God and others.

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**“To have an unforgiving spirit is to burn a bridge over which you may some day want to travel.”**

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- By snuffing out our lives through suicide.
- By twisting God's truth to deceive us.

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**“If a thing is wrong it does not become right by just having more people doing it.”**

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- By destroying families through divorce, abuse, etc.
- By shattering our potential through our own compromises.
- By bringing addictions to drugs, alcohol, sex, or pornography.

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**“Alcohol and drugs kill the living and preserve the dead.”**

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### **7. What if we have fallen into Satan's traps?**

Turn to God by repenting and asking him to forgive us as we are instructed to in James 4: 7&8, "Humble yourselves before God. Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you. Draw close to God, and God will draw close to you."

“Keep me safe, o God, for I have come to you for refuge. I said to the Lord, ‘You are my Master! All the good things I have are from you.’ ...Lord, you alone are my inheritance, my cup of blessing. You guard all that is mine. ...I will bless the Lord who guides me; even at night my heart instructs me. I know the Lord is always with me. I will not be shaken, for he is right beside me. ...No wonder my heart is filled with joy, and my mouth shouts his praises! My body rests in safety.” Psalm 16:1,5,7-9

We must not allow guilt or shame to prevent us from receiving the freedom and healing God has for us. Additionally, there may be times when we need counseling from our pastor and/or a Christian therapist in order to fully escape the satanic trap and receive the healing we need.

### **8. What is essential in obtaining victory in our spiritual battles?**

- To know beyond any doubt that: "Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth." Psalm 124:8 The name of Jesus or Yeshua, in Hebrew, makes demons flee. There is awesome spiritual power in the name and blood of Jesus. When we speak the name of Jesus in the authority that he has given us and apply the blood that he shed on the cross for our sins, Satan must leave!
- Be aware of our responsibilities. To “Think clearly and exercise self-control.” 1 Peter 1:13 How do we accomplish this? By knowing Satan's tactics and motivations; using our spiritual armor; depending on God for our empowering.

### **9. What are the signs of a spiritual attack on our life?**

- One heavy circumstance after another: Matthew 4:1-11.
- Accusations: Revelation 12:7.

- Ongoing thoughts of what we don't have, rather than focusing on God's blessings.
- Continual temptations at the same point of our weakness: Matthew 4:2.
- Attempts to engage us in debate.
- Fear based on lies. Expose the lie. 2 Corinthians 7:5.
- Doubts about the truthfulness and goodness of God.
- General sense of heaviness and depression: 2 Corinthians 1:8.
- Deception.
- Division in our relationships.

If you see all ten of these, you have uncovered a major attack on your life. How are we to respond to these? By understanding our enemy's tactics and taking action against him. "Be careful! Watch out for attacks from the Devil, your great enemy. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for some victim to devour. Take a firm stand against him, and be strong in your faith." 1 Peter 5: 8&9

**10. What are some of Satan's Tactics?**

Tactic 1: Satan prods us to compare ourselves against others in our accomplishments and spiritual maturity. If we succumb, we become prideful. We can respond to this attack with true humility. Matthew 18:1-4, "The disciples came to Jesus and asked, 'Who is the greatest in the kingdom of God?' Jesus called a small child over to him and put the child among them. Then he said, 'I assure you, unless you turn from your sins and become as little children, you will never get into the Kingdom of Heaven. Therefore, anyone who becomes as humbles as this little child is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven.'"

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**"If you want to please the devil, begin to admire yourself."**  
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Tactic 2: Satan attempts to keep us in denial regarding our weaknesses. For our weaknesses are what he uses to tempt us to sin. We can close the door on this tactic by asking the Holy Spirit to show us our weaknesses. After they are revealed, use wisdom and ask God to turn our weaknesses into strengths.

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**"The most deadly sins do not leap on us, they creep up on us."**  
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Tactic 3: Satan wants us to believe that those of us who have wandered away from God, at some point in our Christian walk and then returned, are inferior to those of us who have never wandered. This is one of his attempts to cause us to be hypocritical or to rob us of God's mercy, grace, and unconditional love.

Matthew 18:12&13 tells the truth about those us who have wandered from God, "If a shepherd has one hundred sheep, and one wanders away and is lost, what will he do? Won't he leave the ninety-nine others and go out into the hills to search for the lost one? And if he finds it, he will surely rejoice over it more than over the ninety-nine that didn't wander away!" We are to forgive and accept those who have returned, just as God has accepted us, unconditionally!

Tactic 4: Satan attempts to keep us in a state of unforgiveness, which will harden our hearts towards others and God. Matthew 18:21&22, "Then Peter came to him and asked, 'Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?' 'No!' Jesus replied, 'seventy times seven!'. Why does Jesus ask this of us? Because God doesn't keep score on any of us and we are to emulate our heavenly Father.

"I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. Whatever you lock on earth will be locked in heaven, and whatever you open on earth will be opened in heaven." Matthew 16:19 This is not referring to binding and loosening demons. Jesus is our example of only rebuking demons, never binding them. Jesus used this illustration of keys in reference to unforgiveness locking up and forgiveness freeing up.

Face future battles armed with this truth: "With God's help we will do mighty things, for he will trample down our foes." Psalm 108:13

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## **Chapter 7: Transform Obstacles Into Opportunities**

**"We have a great High Priest who has gone to heaven, Jesus the Son of God. Let us cling to him and never stop trusting him. This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same temptations we do, yet he did not sin. So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it." Hebrews 4:14-16**

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Conquering our obstacles and transforming them into opportunities is a result of our partnership with God. Through our choice for transformation to take place and then relying on God to perform the supernatural aspect of this process, our most overwhelming obstacle will become our most promising opportunity.

Sometimes obstacles come in the form of a temptation. Resisting temptation requires knowing what our weaknesses are and then applying the appropriate remedy.

### **1. What is temptation?**

Something that creates a thought, which appeals to our destructive appetites and desires. God is never the source of our temptation, James 1:13-15, "Remember, no one who wants to do wrong should ever say, 'God is tempting me.' God is never tempted to do wrong, and he never tempts anyone else either. Temptation comes from the lure of our own evil desires. These evil desires lead to evil actions, and evil actions lead to death. "

Satan will use a seemingly good thing to tempt us, but behind the facade waits the damaging consequences. If the devil used a bad thing, we would reject it without even thinking, but when it appears to be good temptation is waiting there for us.

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**"Temptation is the balance where our character is weighed."**

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Here are a few of Satan's temptation strategies and his goals:

- Experience pleasure through inappropriate actions! Engage in promiscuous sex.  
Satan's goal: to bring venereal disease, out of wedlock pregnancy with the option of abortion or at least an illegitimate birth, and/or a wedge in experiencing true intimacy with your future spouse.
- Have fun! Drink alcohol in excess leading to a higher percentage of being involved in a car accident. "My child, listen and be wise. Keep your heart on the right course. Do not carouse with drunkards..." Proverbs 23:19&20  
Satan's goal: to kill or at least maim you or someone else.
- Have a good time! Gamble, but you lose all your money.  
Satan's goal: to add unnecessary guilt and stress into your life.
- Leave your troubles behind! Numb your emotional or physical pain through the abuse of drugs or alcohol.  
Satan's goal: create a life long bondage of addiction and keep you from receiving God's healing.
- Get rich quick! Through criminal involvement.  
Satan's goal: to steal God's purpose for your life through imprisonment or at least to damage and steal your creditability.
- Be entertained! Watch movies that stretch your moral boundaries.  
Satan's goal: to leave negative images imprinted in your mind that will haunt you in the future at very inappropriate times, especially during times of worship, prayer, daily devotions, or intimate moments with your spouse.
- Accept your dream job! But it requires you to compromise your Christian values.  
Satan's goal: steal your integrity, testimony, and corrupt your faith.
- Forget your worries! Shop until you drop.  
Satan's goal: your credit card balance to soar beyond your ability to pay it off; possible bankruptcy or at the very least to bring division in your family through the worries of money.
- Quench your curiosity! Get a cheap thrill by looking at pornographic magazines, books, or surfing the pornographic sites on the internet.  
Satan's goal: lead you into sexual addiction or at least to have pornographic images invade your thoughts diverting you away from the pure thoughts of God.

1 John 2:15-17 clearly defines some of Satan's traps, "Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world - the cravings of sinful man, the lust

of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does - comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever."

## **2. What is obedience?**

It is the instrument in overcoming the barriers to spiritual survival.

It is our self-imposed discipline in response to Christ's love.

It is our uncompromising actions that fulfill God's instructions.

## **3. Why is obedience so important?**

It is the evidence of reverence, love, and respect for God.

It keeps spiritual health in balance.

It is the process of becoming like Jesus.

It will eventually become a reflex action.

## **4. What does being obedient involve?**

It requires:

A 24 hours a day commitment.

A daily close relationship with God.

Self sacrifice and loving others.

## **5. How do we accomplish this?**

Through God's strength not our own.

Trusting in God to provide all that we need.

Leaning on God to enable us to obey in every thought, word, and deed.

Receiving inspiration from the Holy Spirit to fulfill God's will, not our own.

"The ones who win this battle against the world are the ones who believe that Jesus is the Son of God. 1 John 5:5

## **6. What is involved in resisting temptation and being obedient?**

1. Remember God is in charge of everything.

2. Remember you are a vessel of God's love.

3. Remember how your choices impact others. "Don't let evil get the best of you, but conquer evil by doing good." Romans 12:21

4. Remember your obedience pleases God and your sin breaks His heart.

5. Remember to rely on and use wisdom as a way to escape temptation.

## **7. What is wisdom?**

Wisdom involves:

· Knowing God's Paths: "Show me the path where I should walk, O Lord, point out the right road for me to follow. Lead me by your truth and teach me, for you are the God who saves me. All day long I put my hope in you." Psalm 25:4&5

· Transforming: "The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul. The decrees of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple." Psalm 19:7

· Knowing God's Character: "The wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and good deeds. It shows no partiality and is always sincere." James 3:17

· Respecting God: "Reverence for the Lord is the foundation of true wisdom. The rewards of wisdom come to all who obey him." Psalm 111:10

· Being Humble: "If you are wise and understand God's ways. Live a life of steady goodness so that only good deeds will pour forth. And if you don't brag about the good you do, then you will be truly wise! But if you are bitterly jealous and there is selfish ambition in your hearts, don't brag about being wise. This is the worst kind of lie. For jealousy and selfishness are not God's kind of wisdom. Such things are earthly, unspiritual, and motivated by the Devil. For wherever there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there you will find disorder and every kind of evil." James 3:13-16

A person's wisdom is revealed through actions accomplished in a humble attitude.

"If you need wisdom, if you want to know what God wants you to do, ask him, and he will gladly tell you. He will not resent your asking." James 1:5

With temptations being only within our thought processes, then sin is the thought put into our actions.

### **8. What is sin?**

Disobedient actions, which reveal the portions of our thoughts and attitudes that are rebellious towards God.

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**"Pollution of the heart is man's greatest ecological problem."**  
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### **9. What are the consequences of sin?**

End up listening to the wrong voices.  
Pride and arrogance.  
Ongoing decisions that appeal to our lusts.  
Make excuses by blaming others.  
Others suffer.  
Miss God's best for our lives.

One of the most influential components to our spiritual survival is our choices! We are molded by the choices we make. We take on the shape of whatever we allow to enter our lives.

There's a child's clay called Play Dough that can be molded into any shape the child chooses. In a way, we are like Play Dough. We are molded into either what the devil has in mind for us or the image God has ordained for us.

The devil wants to conform us into the ugly shape of the world's materialism, fame, influential power, and sensual desires. These will slowly erode our faith. They pollute our bodies, souls, and minds. The opposite of this is God's mold for us. It consists of the image of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our thoughts are the determining factor of which shape we become. "Only simpletons believe everything they are told! The prudent carefully consider their steps. The wise are cautious and avoid danger, fools plunge ahead with great confidence." Proverbs 14:15

### **10. When making choices, we need to use prudence and discretion. What is prudence?**

Using restraint with tact and diplomacy in any situation.

### **11. What is discretion?**

Discretion is the ability to avoid words, actions, attitudes, and influences, which could ultimately result in undesirable consequences.

### **12. What are acceptable choices?**

Our choices will fall into two categories. They either please or grieve the Holy Spirit. The following scriptures outline what choices are pleasing to God:

"I will refuse to look at anything vile and vulgar." Psalm 101:3

"Your eye is a lamp for your body. A pure eye lets sunshine into your soul. But an evil eye shuts out the light and plunges you into darkness." Matthew 6:22

Spiritually, the eye represents our perspective. The eye is the organ through which our personality is guided. Our perspective determines our outcome. If we focus on what the world calls success and desirable possessions, our spiritual vision will be distorted and God's light will be blocked out. Our whole personality will be darkened and our wills affected.

### **13. What are we to choose?**

Things that won't harden our hearts towards God. How do we do this? By setting guidelines for our choices that are based on scripture. Choices that involve the following Christ like traits:

Kindness and Compassion. Wise words & actions. Forgiveness and goodness. Speaking the truth. Living a life of love. Being filled with the Holy Spirit. Giving thanks. Singing psalms, hymns and songs. Righteous actions. Submitting to God.

Science has proven that our minds are never in a state of neutral. Every moment of every day, we are being influenced by the principles of the world or the principles of God's kingdom.

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**"Sow a thought and reap an act. Sow an act and reap a habit. Sow a habit, and reap character. Sow a character and reap a destiny."**  
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Control our thoughts and control the direction of our lives. 1 Peter 1:13-16 says, "Think clearly and exercise self-control. Look forward to the special blessings that will come to you at the return of Jesus Christ. Obey God because you are his children. Don't slip back into your old ways for doing evil; you didn't know any better then. But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God, who choose you to be his children is holy. For he himself has said, 'You must be holy because I am holy.'"

"Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will know what God wants you to do, and you will know how good and pleasing and perfect his will really is." Romans 12:2

#### **14. What are we to avoid?**

Coarse joking, foolish talk, rage, malice, impurity, bitterness, brawling, slander, obscenity, sexual immorality, greed, and drunkenness.

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**"All television is educational. The question is: What is it teaching us?"**  
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#### **15. Is the food you are feeding your soul nourishing or is it junk food?**

Secular TV and other media forms are like junk food for our souls. If we indulge in a steady diet of these, we end up lacking the solid nutrients that are essential for our spiritual survival. Junk Food for the Soul consists of these unhealthy ingredients:

- Get all we can for ourselves without regard of the impact on others.
- Promote ourselves to increase our ego and pride.
- Lusts are the motivations for our choices and action.
- Security lies in our possessions and financial portfolio.
- Avoid others that aren't essential to our elevation.
- Be self-directed, not God directed.
- Tight fist with our money, time, and possessions.
- Forget about being charitable. All our energies go into producing pleasures for ourselves.
- Attain all the power, authority, and notoriety for ourselves.
- Accomplish in order to receive acclaim from men.

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**"Delay never stops God's purpose, it only polishes us his instruments."**  
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#### **16. How do we prepare ourselves?**

Take daily actions of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Remain spiritually alert.

Live our lives in such a way that it will withstand onslaught from the enemy.

Put the words of the Lord Jesus Christ into practice.

Suggested Prayer: "Jesus, teach me to make wise choices. Give me understanding and help me to obey you with all my heart. Direct me on the path you have for me, for your path will bring me joy. Turn my heart toward you and not toward selfish gain. Help me not look at worthless things. Keep me from being polluted by the world. Amen."

## **Chapter 8: Tools for Crisis Times**

**"Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. Instead, be very glad, because these trials will make you partners with Christ in his suffering, and afterward you will have the wonderful joy of sharing his glory when it is displayed to all the world."**                   **1 Peter 4:12& 13**

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Christians are not exempt from pain. Times of crisis and fiery trials happen to the most faithful and trusting of us. These times in our lives are not punishment from God. They are times that may be very painful, but God will redeem and transform them into something good, if we ask him.

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**"Life is like a grindstone, whether it grinds us down or polishes us up depends on what we are made of."**

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### **1. What defines a crisis or a trial?**

When we are facing challenges beyond our control or simply desperate!

### **2. What does it mean to be desperate?**

We believe there is no help for us.  
We have nothing more to lose.  
We have tried everything else.  
We can't help ourselves!

### **3. Is there any hope for us when we are desperate?**

Yes! The truth is that God's deliverance and healing are for the desperate. When we reach the point of desperation, hopefully we realize that Jesus is our only hope and solution. We then can call on him through a simple prayer of "Help me Lord!" In response to our plea for help, Jesus will either calm the storm in our life or he will calm our hearts and allow the storm to continue. Whichever he chooses to do, we can trust his decision.

"Why am I discouraged? Why so sad? I will put my hope in God!" Psalm 43:5

When we are faced with the storms of life, Psalm 27:1-3,5,&14 encourages us to trust God, "The Lord is my light and my salvation, so why should I be afraid? The Lord protects me from danger, so why should I tremble? When evil people come to destroy me, when my enemies and foes attack me, they will stumble and fall. Though a mighty army surround me, my heart will know no fear. Even if they attack me, I remain confident. For he will conceal me there when troubles come; he will hide me in his sanctuary. He will place me out of reach on a high rock. Then I will hold my head high, above my enemies who surround me. Wait patiently for the Lord. Be brave and courageous. Yes, wait patiently for the Lord."

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**"God whispers to us in our pleasures, he speaks to us in our conscience, but he shouts to us in our pain."**

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### **4. Why does God allow pain?**

When painful times come God wants these times to be used for our spiritual growth. As we experience pain, we need to remind ourselves that God is not the one who brought the pain to us. He only allowed it.

Painful experiences are windows of opportunity for God's character to be formed in us. It's usually through pain that our hearts crack open. When this happens it's our choice to either harden our heart or allow God's compassion to flow out to others. If we choose compassion, we are taking our focus off ourselves and redirecting it toward the good of others. When we do this our pain will have a meaningful purpose. Our pain is now transformed into someone else's gain.

"All praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the source of every mercy and the God who comforts us. He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When others are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us." 2 Corinthians 1:3

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"God does not comfort us to make us comfortable, but to make us comforters."  
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**5. What do we gain from our pain?**

Freedom and healing.

Understanding new spiritual principles.

Compassion.

Refined and increased faith.

Closer relationship with God.

The only way pain becomes senseless is through our rejecting the opportunity for God to transform our pain.

**6. Are there any spiritual remedies for our pain?**

Yes. When we give God our pain, he gradually and sometimes instantly replaces it with his peace, love, and strength. The Apostle Paul knew this spiritual key when he wrote to the Corinthians, "For our present troubles are quite small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us an immeasurably great glory that will last forever! So we don't look at the troubles we can see right now; rather, we look forward to what we have not yet seen. For the troubles we see will soon be over, but the joys to come will last forever." 2 Corinthians 4:17&18

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"God can take anything that's broken and make it whole, but we have to give Him the pieces."  
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**7. In addition to giving our pain to God, is there anything else we can do?**

Yes, be patient for the results. "...if we look forward to something we don't have yet, we must wait patiently and confidently." Romans 8:25

**8. What does it mean to be patient?**

To accept a difficult situation from God without giving Him a deadline to remove it.

**9. What can we do as we patiently go through this process?**

- Read God's Word consistently and frequently to nourish our spirit.
- Get rid of unimportant things in our daily schedules.
- Fast and seek God's face.
- Declare our faith to others through our speech and actions.
- Take care of our bodies through a balanced diet and regular exercise.
- Talk with Jesus frequently throughout the day.
- Meditate on God's scriptural promises.
- Listen expectantly for God's voice.
- Listen to praise music. It's like medicine for your spirit.
- Stay in contact with other believers. Our relationships with other Christians are a vital part of our spiritual survival support network.

**10. What are the rewards of Christian relationships?**

Peace, unity, encouragement, joy, and companionship. But in order to reap these benefits, we need to invest our time, energy, and emotions. Without these, all that we give and receive will be superficial.

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"Love demands a loving deed, when you see someone in need. Don't just say you love him true, prove it by the deeds you do."  
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**11. What might stop us from building relationships?**

Fear of pain.

Fear of rejection.

Fear of being real.

Fear of the unknown.

For a lot of us, investing in others is entering into new emotional territory that's outside our comfort zones. But if we are willing to be stretched into these new areas, God will empower us to be successful.

### **12. What are the ingredients of healthy relationships?**

Trust, Time, and Transparency.

### **13. What are the conditions that promote healthy relationships?**

Gentleness: showing concern by meeting the needs of others. 1 Thessalonians 2:7

Hospitality: cheerfully sharing food and shelter. Hebrews 13:2

Availability: adjusting personal responsibilities around the needs of others. Philippians 2:20&21

Forgiveness: clear the record of those who have wronged us and ask God to love them through us. Ephesians 4:32

Attentiveness: give undivided attention to his words and emotions. Hebrews 2:1

Tolerance: viewing every person as a valuable individual. Philippians 2:2

Deference: limiting my speech and actions in order not to offend others. Romans 14:21

Sensitivity: knowing by the prompting of God's Spirit what words and actions will benefit the lives of others. Romans 12:15

Vulnerability: being transparent with each other by sharing our weaknesses and joys.

Active listening: Stop whatever you are doing. Give the other person your undivided attention. Look into the eyes of the other person as they speak and keep your thoughts on what is being said.

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**“God in his wisdom has made our mouths to close and our ears to remain open.”**  
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### **15. What are the elements that destroy relationships?**

Envy: a resentful awareness of an advantage enjoyed by another accompanied with a desire to possess the same advantage.

Boasting: puffing up one's self image to others.

Pride: displaying excessive self-esteem.

Rudeness: offensive in manner or action.

Self-seeking: selfishly advancing one's own interests.

Keeping records of wrongs: a mental list of painful acts done against you.

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**“Those who deserve love the least need it the most.”**  
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When it's our time to leave earth, the only things we will be taking to heaven with us are the Christian relationships we have made. Outside of God, they are the only eternal valuables we possess from our life on earth. Everything else, including our spiritual gifts and faith are no longer needed in heaven and will be left behind.

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**A Poem:  
The Dash!**

I read of a man who stood to speak  
At the funeral of a friend.  
He referred to the dates on her tombstone  
From the beginning to the end.

He noted that first came the date of her birth  
And spoke of the following date with tears.  
But he said what mattered most of all  
Was the dash between those years.

For that dash represents all the time  
That she spent alive on earth.

And now only those who loved her  
Know what that little line is worth.

For it matters not, how much we own;  
The cars... the house... the cash.  
What matters is how we live and love  
And how we spend our dash.

So think about this long and hard.  
Are there things you'd like to change?  
For you never know how much time is left.  
You could be at dash mid range.

If we could just slow down enough  
To consider what's true and real,  
And always try to understand  
The way other people feel.

And be less quick to anger,  
And show appreciation more  
And love the people in our lives  
Like we've never loved before.

If we treat each other with respect,  
And more often wear a smile.  
Remembering that this special dash  
Might only last a little while.

So, when your eulogy's being read  
With your life's actions to rehash.  
Would you be proud of the things they say  
About how you spent your dash?  
Author Unknown

Suggested Prayer:

"Lord, I will not just live my life. I will not just spend my life. With your help I will invest my life by developing loving relationships. Amen."

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## **Chapter 9: The Promise**

**“There are many rooms in my Father’s home, and I am going to prepare a place for you. If this were not so, I would tell you plainly. When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am.” John 14:2&3**

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Jesus promised to return to earth. To take us to heaven to be with Him forever. And Jesus doesn’t lie!

### **1. What are some of the biblical facts regarding Jesus' return?**

Only Father God knows the exact time.

Our daily activities will be going about as usual.

Jesus will come when we least expect it.

“When the Son of Man returns, it will be like it was in Noah’s day. In those days, before the Flood, the people were enjoying banquets and parties and weddings right up to the time Noah entered his boat. People didn’t realize what was going to happen until the Flood came and swept them all away. That is the way it will be when the Son of Man comes. Two men will be working together in the field; one will be taken, the other left. Two women will be grinding flour at the mill; one will be taken, the other left. So be prepared, because you don’t know what day your Lord is coming.” Matthew 24:37-42

### **2. What does a person that is prepared to meet Jesus face to face possess?**

A lifestyle of prayer and a heart of flesh. What's a heart of flesh? It's a heart that is pliable in God's hands.

It contains:

- Purity: Matthew 5:8
- Forgiveness: Matthew 18:35
- Love: Matthew 22:37
- Nobility & goodness: Luke 8:15
- Unity: Acts 4:32
- Sincerity: Ephesians 6:5
- Understanding: Acts 28:27
- Peacefulness: Colossians 3:15
- Gratefulness to God: Colossians 3:16
- Brokenness: Psalms 51:17
- Wisdom: Psalms 90:12
- Trust in God: Proverbs 3:5
- Happiness: Proverbs 15:13

### **3. What prevents our hearts from possessing these attributes?**

A compromised lifestyle. “Watch out! Don’t let me find you living in careless ease and drunkenness, and filled with the worries of this life. Don’t let that day catch you unaware, as in a trap. For that day will come upon everyone living on the earth. Keep a constant watch. And pray that, if possible, you may escape these horrors and stand before the Son of Man.” Luke 21:34-36

### **4. What are some of the signs of Jesus' return?**

Do you see any of these in the world today?

- People will be: lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying its power.
- False christs will arise and deceive many.
- Wars and rumors of wars.
- Famines and earthquakes.
- Christians persecuted and put to death.
- Many will turn away from the faith.
- Betrayal and hatred.
- False prophets will deceive many through great signs and miracles.
- Increased wickedness.
- Many Christians’ love for Jesus will grow cold.

## 5. What will Jesus look like when He returns?

In Revelation 1: 13-16, the disciple John records what he saw when Jesus appeared to him:

“He was wearing a long robe with a gold sash across his chest. His head and his hair were white like wool, as white as snow. And his eyes were bright like flames of fire. His feet were as bright as bronze refined in a furnace, and his voice thundered like mighty ocean waves. His face was as bright as the sun in all its brilliance.”

In Revelation 19:11&12, John continues with his description of Jesus:

“Then I saw heaven opened, and a white horse was standing there. And the one sitting on the horse was named Faithful and True. For he judges fairly and then goes to war. His eyes were bright like flames of fire, and on his head were many crowns. A name was written on him, and only he knew what it meant. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and his title was the Word of God.”

In Revelation 19:14-16, John describes the rest of his vision:

“The armies of heaven, dressed in pure white linen, followed him on white horses. From his mouth came a sharp sword, and with it he struck down the nations. He ruled them with an iron rod, and he trod the winepress of the fierce wrath of almighty God. On his robe and thigh was written this title: King of kings and Lord of lords.”

## 6. What will heaven be like?

"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him..."  
1 Corinthians 2:9

“Now, we see things imperfectly as in a poor mirror, but then we will see everything with perfect clarity.”  
1 Corinthians 13:12

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**A little girl was walking with her father one night under the starry sky. Looking up, she said, "Daddy, I've been thinking. If the wrong side of heaven is so beautiful, what will the right side be like?"**

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John records for us what the right side of heaven looks like:

"At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it. And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian. A rainbow, resembling an emerald, encircled the throne. From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder. Also before the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal. The voice of many angels sang: ‘Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!’”

“I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Now the dwelling of God is with men, and He will live with them. They will be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.’ He who was seated on the throne said, ‘I am making everything new! He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.’”

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**“Remember, the best is yet to come!”**

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## 7. What is the rapture?

It is the gathering up of Christians and taking them to heaven to be with Jesus forever.

“Everyone will see the Son of man arrive on the clouds with great power and glory. And he will send forth his angels to gather together his chosen ones from all over the world – from the farthest ends of the earth and heaven.”

Mark 13:26&27

"For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore, comfort one another with these words." 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18

“The coming of the Son of Man can be compared with that of a man who left home to go on a trip. He gave each of his employees instructions about the work they were to do, and he told the gatekeeper to watch for his return. So keep a sharp lookout! For you do not know when the homeowner will return – at evening, midnight, early dawn, or late daybreak. Don’t let him find you sleeping when he arrives without warning. What I say to you I say to everyone: Watch for his return!”  
Mark 13:34-37

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**“If you can’t be thankful for what you receive, then at least be thankful for what you escape.”**  
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"Because you have kept My Word to persevere, I will also keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world; to test those who dwell upon the earth." Revelation 3:10

Don't be left behind! Watch, pray, and live each day being led by the Holy Spirit! Be prepared for Jesus to come for you at any moment.

Suggested Prayer:

"Jesus, help me be a spiritual survivor every day of my life. Draw me closer and closer to yourself until I am finally home with you on the right side of heaven! Amen."

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## **Glossary:**

~ ANGEL - a messenger spirit from God with supernatural powers; it carries out the missions God assigned to it. As important a role as angels play in our lives, Jesus, not angels are the focus of Christian faith.

~ ANOINTING - the supernatural manifestation of the presence of the Holy Spirit in a believer's life, as seen through the operation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit; wisdom, miracles, casting out demons, etc.

~ BACKSLIDING - the state of a Christian that feels a sense of alienation from God. Backslidders can find restoration and peace through confession and trusting in the mercy of God.

~ BODY OF CHRIST- it is a living organism, composed not of cells but of human beings. Christ is the head of this living organism, and each believer is linked to Him and to one another forming the body of Christ, the Church.

~ CARNAL - does not imply active and conscious sin, but is opposed to spiritual. It describes the dominance of the negative side of human nature apart from God's work in a life.

~ COMPASSION - investing whatever is necessary to heal the hurts of others. See 1 John 3:17

~ COURAGE - quality of mind which enables us to encounter danger or difficulty with firmness and without fear.

~ DEMON - a living being with malignant spiritual powers used to trouble humanity; it is an angel that fell with Satan in the rebellion in heaven.

~ DEPENDABILITY - fulfilling what was consented to do even if it means unexpected sacrifice.

~ DISCERNMENT - the God given ability to understand why things happen to others and self. See 1 Samuel 16:7

~ DETERMINATION - choosing to accomplish God's goals in God's time regardless of the opposition. 2 Tim. 4:7&8 - "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."

~ DILIGENCE - seeing each task as a special assignment from the Lord and using all energies to accomplish it. Colossians 3:23 - "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men."

~ DISCIPLE - a believer and pupil of Jesus; trusts God and obeys what Jesus has commanded.

~ DISCIPLINE – a balanced lifestyle. Not lazy in thought, word, or deed.

~ ENDURANCE - the inward strength to withstand stress to accomplish God's best.

~ ETERNAL - not limited by time; without a beginning or an end.

~ FAITH - being sure of what is hoped for and certain of what is not seen; to lean heavily on God's Word without doubting.

~ FASTING - abstaining from food for a fixed period of time; there is no merit in fasting alone. It is the heart attitude and focus of attention on God through prayer that makes fasting powerful.

~ FELLOWSHIP - interacting with other believers and God in spiritual intimacy.

~ FLESH - human nature deprived of the Spirit of God and dominated by sin. See Colossians 2:13; 1 John 2:16

~ FLEXIBILITY – being pliable by not setting affections on ideas or plans, which could be changed by God or others.

~ GRATEFULNESS - making it known to God and others in what ways they have are a benefit to you. See 1 Corinthians 4:7

~ HUMILITY - freedom from pride; seeing the contrast between God's holiness and sinfulness. See James 4:6 Pride

is an attitude of independence from God. The by products of humility include availability to God, dependence on God, obedience to God, and submission to God.

~ INTEGRITY - sincere in promise, faithful in discharge of duty, upright in finances, loyal in service, and honest in speech.

~ JOY - not dependent upon circumstances, but the focus of a heart. It's not to be confused with being happy. Happiness is not joyfulness. Happiness is dependent on pleasant circumstances, joy supersedes an undesirable environment.

~ LOVE - giving to others' basic needs without having personal reward as a motive. See 1 Corinthians 13:3

~ REPENT - acknowledging sins and asking God for forgiveness; a determination not to repeat sinful actions in the future.

~ RESPONSIBILITY - knowing and doing what we have chosen to be accountable to God and others for. See Romans 14:12

~ REVERANCE - awareness of how God is working through the people and events in a life to produce the character of Christ. See Proverbs 23:17&18

~ SINCERITY - transparency of character; an unconscious quality that is self revealing.

~ SLANDER - a malicious utterance designed to hurt or defame the person about whom it is spoken of. Slander tears others down and causes the speaker to feel powerful.

~ THE TRINITY - God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, are three persons of the Godhead yet "one God".

~ VIRTUE - the influence God is having on others through a life regardless of it's past failures. See 2 Peter 1:3

~ VISION - faith, insight, foresight, optimism and hope. The optimist "sees" an opportunity in every difficulty.

~ WISDOM - the appropriate use and application of received and learned knowledge.

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