

The
Holy Spirit
Applied

by

Wilbur S. Johnson

as directed by the Holy Spirit

Acknowledgments

Jesus and the Holy Spirit for blessed guidance.

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MEET THE AUTHOR



We first met Wilbur and Imalee Johnson back in the winter of 1977. We had been ministering with the Green Mountain Christian Church in Lakewood, Colorado, for three years at the time. Our brother-in-law, Richard Schafer who was ministering in Soldier, Kansas, told us what a powerful series of meetings Wilbur had led for them there. He recommended we schedule Wilbur and Imalee as soon as possible. That we did, and we were not disappointed. The influence of those meetings have remained with us to this day. We learned how to deal with the enemy and how to serve the Lord with a living faith. But on a more personal level I want to say that we found Wilbur and Imalee to be people of genuine spiritual integrity. We were struck by the true humility and servants heart with which they served us. After meetings the fellowship and conversations would run late into the night.

Wilbur and Imalee Johnson, are among the very rare few people I have ever known who genuinely have the gift of faith, and live it out daily, trusting God in every detail of life. I stand in awe of such faith, and hold deep respect for their consistency, even in the face of the greatest of difficulties. These folks live what they teach. It is not just some academic theorem. Everything Wilbur teaches, the Lord has proven in the trenches of their daily living. It is like water that God has forced through solid rock, flowing out of their hearts pure and sweet. I urge you to read with expectation, the writings of this man. They are the fruit of a life of faith, and they will open the eyes of your soul to the heart of our Lord for you.

It is with loving appreciation that I recommend to you Wilbur Johnson, my brother, my mentor, and my friend.

Rodger A. Thompson

An endorsement with words is always important. Rodger and Connie did just that, and went beyond in endorsing Faith Alive Revivals by calling us to labor with them in three revivals during their 18 year ministry in Colorado. And, yet that which warms our hearts forever, is their endorsement of the message out of God's Word with their lives. Thus, several of their testimonies grace the pages of this book.

Rodger is now serving as one of the directors and vice president of our Faith Alive Ministry. His counsel is an invaluable asset.

Gratefully, Wilbur Johnson.



The Holy Spirit Applied

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Purpose of This Study

"That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height, to

know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God." (Ephesians 3:16-19 NKJ)

It is exciting to know that fullness. We are not required to be mystical to have that fullness. It is available as we realize the tremendous love of God, His perfect plan revealing His power through the Holy Spirit, that we experience the deeper things of God.

THIS COURSE CONTAINS:

Some INFORMATION, but that is not the purpose of this study.

Some INSPIRATION, but that is not the purpose of this study.

It contains INFORMATION plus INSPIRATION with much APPLICATION which is the purpose of this study, thus, the title - - **The Holy Spirit APPLIED.**

Billy Graham wrote some challenging words in his book The Holy Spirit:

"If you believe in Jesus Christ, a power is available to you that can change your life, even in such intimate areas as your marriage, your family relationships, and every other relationship. Also, God offers power that can change a tired church into a vital, growing body, power that can revitalize Christendom. As a friend of mine has said, 'I need Jesus Christ for my eternal life and the Holy Spirit of God for my internal life.' Unfortunately, this power has been ignored, misunderstood, and misused. By our ignorance we have short-circuited the power of the Holy Spirit." (Page 14)

THE HOLY SPIRIT APPLIED

Can the Holy Spirit be any other way, than applied? Yes, regretfully, He can be neglected, slighted, ignored, winked at, just studied, done despite to, refused, spurned, denied, and the list goes on which is a sad commentary on what was meant to be a love relationship between Jesus, God, the Holy Spirit and us.

What does the Holy Spirit seek to appropriate to our lives? His power, love for Jesus, and the will of God!

On Monday morning, April 25, 1907, people going to work in London, England, were shocked to see chalked on the front of the famous City Temple the word ICHABOD. The newspapers carried pictures of the unspeakable desecration in their afternoon editions. A week or so later a house painter came forward voluntarily to admit that he had chalked the word there early that Monday morning. Asked in court why he had done such a sacrilegious thing, the painter replied, "Dr. Parker told me to do it!" Dr. Joseph Parker, the former pastor, was long since dead. The puzzled court asked for an explanation. The painter explained that he was a Christian and regular attendee at the City Temple during the days when Dr. Joseph Parker was the preacher. He told how Dr. Parker had said that if ever the false "gospel" of the higher critics was preached in that place, ICHABOD, which means "The glory is departed" (I Samuel 4:21) should be written over the front of the building." I did what Dr Parker asked me to do, sir."

The POWER of the HOLY SPIRIT is often dissipated by church leaders and individuals by knocking the SUPER out of super NATURAL, so "ICHABOD"--the glory has departed may become an epitaph for churches and individuals of the 20th century.

May this be our goal and prayer in this course-- "Help me blessed Holy Spirit to open my mind and heart to You as I study this course, so Jesus will be more and more Lord of my life. In Jesus Name--A-men!"

Prayerfully for You
Wilbur S. Johnson

"So he said to me, 'This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the LORD Almighty.'" (Zechariah 4:6)

EXERCISE 1:

The following exercise will assist us in seeing how the Holy Spirit is often removed from contemporary life. Below are two columns, *natural* and *supernatural* which illustrate the above scripture. Select words phrases from the list on the next page to fill in the *supernatural* column. The first one is completed to provide you an example.

	NATURAL <i>"might and power"</i>	SUPERNATURAL <i>"but by my Spirit"</i>
MEMBERSHIP	People joining church	<i>People being born again into the Kingdom</i>
PRAYER	Saying / reading words	_____
WORKS	Mere social acts	_____
WORSHIP	Ritual void of meaning	_____
WITNESS	Glorifying self and/or institutional church	_____
TEACHING	Just a theological dissertation	_____
PREACHING	Just words (plain or oratory)	_____
MONEY	Laying up treasure on earth	_____
MUSIC	That which glorifies the composition and composer	_____
BUILDINGS	Temples of wood and stone	_____

Words / phrases which suggest SUPERNATURAL acts to be placed in right hand column of Exercise #1.

- * Sharing gifts-ministry in Jesus' Name*
- * Praise directed to God - life changing experience*
- * Word taught - lives changed!*
- * Introducing people to Jesus with Word and invitation*
- * God's Word presented in power of Holy Spirit*
- * Words spoken to God which bless and change lives*
- * Music shared which glorifies Jesus and edifies people*
- * Place of prayer and power*
- * People being born again into the Kingdom*
- * Laying up treasure in heaven*

GROUP-CLASS PROJECT:

Spend some time discussing HOW the "supernatural" gets displaced by the "natural" in your church or life. Mostly consider what can be done to prevent such in the future. Dwell mostly on the positive side of these subjects--*

- * Conversion (are we teaching people prior to and after baptism?)
- * Worship (how can we keep form from displacing Spirit?)
- * Prayer (are we doing all we can to teach people how to pray?)
- * Money (how can we better make giving a spiritual act?)
- * Teaching (how can we make this statement a reality?
"The lesson is not taught until the life is changed.")
- * Works-service (how can we better include Jesus in these?)

THE NATURE OF *SPIRIT*

PURPOSE: So we can learn that---

1. God is *spirit* - *Holy Spirit* is *spirit*,
2. The *spiritual* is true reality,
3. We are surrounded by *spiritual* forces.

"For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him?
In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God."

(I Corinthians 2:11)

1. God is *spirit* - *Holy Spirit* is *spirit*

Here at the end of the twentieth century with much knowledge which of the following concepts can we define?

EXERCISE 2:

Draw a circle around the ones that we can define: LOVE ... TRUTH ... FIRE ... GOD ...
LIGHT ... DEATH ... SLEEP ... ELECTRICITY ... MAGNETISM ... SPIRIT

It seems redundant to say that the nature of the blessed Holy Spirit is *spirit*; but, that is precisely true! It is this lesson about His nature that we must first emphasize and learn if we are to allow Him to apply his plan and purpose to our lives.

Jesus said "God is Spirit." (John 4:24). Now spirit defies an absolute definition. This was emphasized in a conversation I had with a science professor while sharing in a Faith Alive Revival at Valley Center, Kansas. This Christian professor was head of the physics and chemistry department at Wichita State University. I like to ask science-minded people certain questions, so I said; "Professor, may I ask you some scientific questions?" "Yes, but I can't guarantee you all the answers." "I am interested in a definition of fire." She responded: "So am I. What else do you want to know?" "Can you give me a definition of electricity?" She smiled and said, "Now, Preacher, there are a great many hypotheses which have been established about fire and electricity but no absolute definition can be given. Ask me something that I do know." I congratulated the wise professor on possessing true wisdom and told her she was the first among many, in my search, to acknowledge that no absolute definition exists.

Which is more real? An apple which we can SEE, TOUCH, HEAR, SMELL and TASTE or a SPIRIT? Our humanistic materialistic oriented society may cause us to answer the former, an APPLE; but the latter is the only right answer from a Biblical perspective.

ANSWER to the concepts you circled above: all should be circled for none of these concepts can be defined in an absolute sense. We know only limited statements of truth about them-- hypotheses.

I observe for your thinking and consideration that no absolute definition can be established for LOVE, TRUTH, LIFE, DEATH, LIGHT or SPIRIT. The reason may be that the Bible declares-- "God is a FIRE (Hebrews 12:29); LIFE (John 1:4, 14:6; Acts 17:28); LOVE (I John 4:8); LIGHT (John 1:5); SPIRIT (John 4:24). You see, if we could define these words in an absolute, final sense, then we could define God. But the Bible says that God and His ways are past finding out (Romans 11:33). Since God's essential nature is SPIRIT he operates on a plane that cannot be discerned by our senses. Even though spirit is ethereal, yet His work is very real! Jesus compared being born again of the water and spirit to the wind when He said, "The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound but cannot tell where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit" (John 3:8). This matter of the new birth being compared to the wind is a strong indication, much to the consternation of our logical mind set, that the total work of the Holy Spirit cannot be traced like a line on a map, or measured by pounds and ounces. *He is spirit!*

2. The *spiritual* is true reality

One doubt that plagued me for years was the thought, "Spirit isn't real". The Lord led me to see that to the contrary, **s-p-i-r-i-t is r-e-a-l-i-t-y**, and that which we see and touch all around us is NOT reality. I owe this insight to my college science professor at Oklahoma City University (OCU). Dr. Hammer could be rather dramatic in illustrating his teaching. As we started a new semester, he jumped up on his desk and stomped on it. "How many of you think this desk is solid? Is it real?" Everyone raised their hand and he said, "You're wrong. The atoms in this desk are only more dense than those of the air you breathe. Given enough time, many thousands of years, all the atoms that are now flying off this wood desk will leave nothing in its place." He got our attention, and with that, we started our study of atomic science.

What Professor Hammer was teaching was given Christian application by my Bible college professor, Howard Hayes, six blocks down the street at Midwest Christian College in pointing out that this "atom" concept was first stated in Hebrews 11:3 and Colossians 1:16,17. In these verses the truth is established that the unseen atoms, "things which are not seen", are God's

building blocks. Further II Peter 3:10 states that this material earth will in God's time, dissolve, but the real world of the spirit will go on and on. Interesting too is that we were taught at OCU and today that which holds the atom together is dubbed "atomic glue." God gives the atomic glue a name--"He (Jesus) is before all things, and in him all things hold together."
(Colossians 1:17)

Now, we have said all this to impress upon our minds that this area of the "spirit" and in particular the Holy Spirit as related to our spirit is MOST important! Since we are not evolutionists, humanists or materialists, we remind ourselves that the *spirit* and the *unseen virtues of the Spirit* are true reality. Matters of the Spirit---joy, peace, love, mercy, righteousness, etc. will never cease. **"So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal."** (II Corinthians 4:18)

3. We are surrounded by *spiritual* forces.

EXERCISE 3:

As you study this point take time to LISTEN to all the sounds around you, then list them.

1) List the SOUNDS which your ears hear.

2) Now, list all the "silent" sounds traversing the space around you--- those sounds your ears cannot perceive, yet we know exist. Example: tv channel signals

This illustrates that there is a great unseen world all around us; but, our ears and eyes are "holden" (see Luke 24:16 KJ and ASV), and **not** hear these. **Just so the HOLY SPIRIT is *unseen* and *unheard*; yet, His Mighty Presence and Power is all about us, and within us providing we have received Jesus into our hearts. So, "tune in" with desire and prayer!**

"Therefore since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us." (Hebrews 12:1-2)

ANGELS in this world

"Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?"
(Hebrews 1:14)

In the realm of earth life, where we live and serve, servants do more if asked. I concluded that since God's Word declares angels are ministering spirits sent by God to serve the Saints, they might serve more if I talked to God in prayer about the matter. I rejoice in the Lord to report that they are blessed servants of the Saints by God's request. It does make a difference if we ask for special angelic assignments on various occasions.

Lisa, our mentally-challenged daughter, was often gawked and stared at by people. This upset Lisa as it would any human being. I found on such occasions that if I asked the Lord to send angels to detract the gaze of the person or persons, that in seconds they became busy staring at someone else or eating their own food.

EXERCISE 4:

In the following Scriptures underline the words phrases which address the *unseen* forces of God and the devil.

Hebrews 1:13-14

"To which of the angels did God ever say, 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet'? Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?"

Revelation 16:14

"They are spirits of demons performing miraculous signs, and they go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them for the battle on the great day of God Almighty."

Ephesians 6:11-12

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

Ephesians 2:1-2

"As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient."

Ephesians 3:10

"His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms,"

Colossians 1:16-17

"For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together."

Here is one of a few places in the Bible where we get to "see" behind the eternal scene.

1. II Kings 6:8-18: Elisha was singled out by the King of Aram to be eliminated because he knew what the king was going to do, even what the king was saying in his own bedroom (vs. 12). Elisha and his servant stayed in Dothan, and during the night the King of Aram surrounded their house with horses and chariots. The Bible records the next morning: "When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. "Oh, my lord, what shall we do?" the servant asked. "Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them." vss. 15-17. And Elisha prayed, "O LORD, open his eyes so he may see." Then the LORD opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha." With his natural *eyes* the servant could not *see* the *unseen* forces of God ready to do battle. This strange battle matched the SEEN against the UNSEEN, and all of the Arameans were struck blind. For the final strange conclusion read verses 18-23.

Just so, I remind us, we too, are surrounded by *unseen forces* be they called angels, ministering spirits, heavenly forces, cloud of witnesses, heavenly host, army of God, etc.

Over three hundred times in the Bible these *unseen forces* are recorded doing service, battle, or prevailing on behalf of God's people.

EXERCISE 5:

2. Job 1:1-2:10 - Write down a few key words which speak about the "unseen side" of this story. _____

Write down a few impressions of what you have learned from this section *THE NATURE OF SPIRIT*.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper appears to be a standard notebook page.

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THE HOLY SPIRIT HELPS CREATE

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." (Genesis 1:2,26)

Having made ourselves familiar in the previous section with the nature and reality of *the Holy Spirit*, we now press on to learn of His works, fruits, and gifts, and how to be empowered with his presence and power.

The unseen Holy Spirit makes the difference

First century Christians, controlled and empowered by the Holy Spirit and filled with His love, turned the world upside down. As the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit, they received a divine, supernatural power that changed them from fearful men into radiant witnesses for Christ. They were used of God to change the course of history. And that omnipotent power, the power of the Holy Spirit, is available to us, to enable us to live a holy and fruitful life for Jesus Christ. Yet, tragedy of tragedies, there are multitudes of Christians who do not even know who the Holy Spirit is, or, if they do, they do not know how to appropriate His power. Consequently, they go through life without ever experiencing the abundant and fruitful life which Christ promised to all who trust Him

Again and again I am reminded of the great contrast between the church today and His church in the first century. In J. B. Phillips' introduction to the Letters to the Young Churches, he says:

"The great difference between present-day Christianity and that of which we read in these letters (New Testament epistles), is that to us, it is primarily a performance; to them it was a real experience. We are apt to reduce the Christian religion to a code or, at best, a rule of heart and life. To these men it is quite plainly, the invasion of their lives by a new quality of life altogether. They do not hesitate to describe this as Christ living in them."

This same first century power, the power of the risen, living, indwelling Christ made known through the Holy Spirit is still available to us today. Do you know this power in your life? Are you a victorious, fruitful witness for Christ? If not, you can be. For this reason, I believe the most important message that I could give to Christians is the applied material in this study of The Holy Spirit Applied!

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."
(Act 1:8)

EXERCISE 6

We begin this section with an excellent illustration of the *unseen presence* and work of the Holy Spirit as found in **John 15:1-8**. Keep in mind that the Holy Spirit is never named in these verses, yet **23 times** His work is named or alluded to. Many times the work of Jesus and the Holy Spirit are identical, and there are several duplicates. Draw a circle around those 23 words-phrases which speak of His *unseen-silent* work.

John 15:1-8

- 1 "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vine dresser."
- 2 "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit."
- 3 "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you."
- 4 "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me."
- 5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing."
- 6 "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned."

7 "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you."

8 "By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples." (NKJ)

The next seven sections of our study will point out the work of the Holy Spirit.

This life long labor of the Holy Spirit has been compared to a "hound" on the trail of its prey from conception to the crown of glory. Francis Thompson draws such a beautiful picture in his poem.

THE HOUND OF HEAVEN

by Francis Thompson

I fled Him, down the nights and down the days;
I fled Him down the arches of the years;
I fled Him down the labyrinthine ways
 Of my own mind; and in the midst of tears
I hid from Him, and under running laughter.
 Up vistaed hopes I sped;
 And shot; precipitated,
A down Titanic glooms of chasmed fears,
 From those strong Feet that followed, followed after.
 But with unhurrying chase,
 And unperturbed pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
 They beat--and a Voice beat
 More instant than the Feet
All things betray thee, who betrayest Me.

After a long pursuit covering many years, and through a myriad of fears, this Unseen Pursurer-The Holy Spirit-brings his man home. Here are the final words.

Now of that long pursuit
Comes on at hand the bruit;
The Voice is round me like a bursting sea:
 "Save Me, save only Me!"
"All which I took from thee I did but take,
 Not for thy harm,

But Just that thou mightest seek it in My arms.
All of which a child mistakes
As fancies lost. I have stored for thee at home:
Rise, clasp My hand, and come!
We're headin' Home!"

Unseen He is, and yet, **Reality** personified. We need Him! Must have Him! Therefore, He seeks us like this "Hound of Heaven" from the cradle to the crown where His work will be completed when He commits us back to the Father, and we are crowned on that Last Day!

1. The Holy Spirit assists in Creating our LIFE.

EXERCISE 7

Genesis 1:1-2

What was the Holy Spirit doing in the "beginning?" _____

Genesis 1:26

What two pronouns in this verse suggest creation was a joint venture?

John 1:1-3

Name the three who were included in what I dub "God's Creation Crew."

THINK about Adams' creation:

Job 33:4

"The Spirit of God has _____; the breath of the Almighty _____."

Genesis 1:26

"Then God said, "Let us make man in **our image**, in **our likeness**, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

Genesis 1:26-28

"Man was made in **God's image** and after **His likeness**, two words to express the same thing and making each other the more expressive; **image** and **likeness** denote the same image, the nearest resemblance of any of the visible creatures. Man was not made in the likeness of any creature that went before him, but in the **likeness** of His Creator; yet still between God and man there is an infinite distance. Christ only is the express **image** of God's person, (Hebrews 1:3) as the Son of his Father, having the same nature. It is only some of God's honor that is put upon man, who is God's image only as the shadow in the glass, or the king's impress upon the coin. **God's image** upon man consists in His nature and constitution, not those of his body (for God has not a body), but those of His **soul**. This honor indeed God has put upon the **body of man, that the Word was made flesh, (John 1:1-4) the Son of God was clothed with a body like ours and will shortly clothe ours with a glory like that of His. And this we may safely say, That He by whom God made the worlds, not only the great world, but man the little world, formed the human body, at the first, according to the platform He designed for himself in the fullness of time. But it is the soul, the great soul, of man, that does especially bear God's image. The soul is a spirit, an intelligent immortal spirit, an influencing active spirit, herein resembling God, the Father of Spirits, (Hebrews 12:9) and the soul of the world. The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord. The soul of man, considered in its three noble faculties, understanding, will, and active power, is perhaps the brightest clearest looking-glass in nature, wherein to see God. Seed thoughts from Matthew Henry's Commentary, pg. 3**
Great is the mystery of Creation and so well expressed by the Holy Spirit in (Acts 17:24-28)

THINK about OUR creation:

Psalms 139:13-16

"For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be."

EXERCISE 8

Consider the implication of "I am fearfully and wonderfully made":

Doctors, S.A. Lewin and John Gilmore, gynecologists, reveal to us that when a baby is conceived there are 100,000,000 (one hundred million) male sperm (my word is "baby seeds") available. Only one of these will fertilize the female egg to produce a baby. Consider the

mathematics of this:

$$\begin{array}{r} 100,000,000 \text{ sperm} \\ - 1 (\text{_____}) \text{ fill in your name} \\ = 99,999,999 \end{array}$$

Who makes this selection of one out of one hundred million? Scientists say it is "blind biological chance." I assert it is "Divine selection." Any one of the other 99,999,999 sperm would have produced a *different person*. So, we can join our voice of praise with David "I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well." (Psalm 139:14)

And the scientific community further spells out the wonder of our creation!

FACTORIES IN A HUMAN CELL

You may recall that **human cells** are so small that some **30,000** of them would fit inside the letter "o". So you would consider the cell to be small, wouldn't you? Probing a little deeper, we find that there are molecules in the cell, which perform its varied functions. There are as many as **200 trillion molecules** in each cell! Those **molecules** are in turn made of **atoms**, which are composed of a variety of atomic particles. Some **molecules** are simple and small. The water molecule, as we have seen, is made of only three atoms: two of hydrogen and one of oxygen. In contrast, some of the molecules which make up the chromosomes in the nucleus of a human cell -- known as **DNA molecules** -- are composed of **many hundreds of atoms** in long winding chains. They are among the most complex of living substances. Now we are discovering how relative are the words "large" and "small." We have many **large molecules** in a very **small cell**. To show this more clearly, consider that all of the **DNA molecules** in **all of the cells of the human body** could be compressed into a volume of one cubic inch -- about like an ice cube! Yet, if **all of these molecule chains** were **joined end-to-end** they would **stretch a distance** 800 times as far as from the earth to the sun -- **nearly 75 billion miles!** Are they small or are they **large?**

EXERCISE 9

Take time for some moments of meditation, and spoken praise to our Creator!

Enemies of the Holy Spirit's creative work:

"For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are

wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand." (Psalm 139:13-18)

EXERCISE 10

Name two great enemies of the creation of life process. One at the beginning and one at the end.

1. _____

2. _____

CONSIDER ABORTION:

Does aborting a fetus harm a human being? _____

The w-o-r-k of the Holy Spirit begins in the life of a human even before we are born. This was true with me in being an unwanted pregnancy in 1931. It was the days of the Big Depression and one more mouth to feed and person to clothe was not desirable. As my Mother drove down the seventeen miles of dirt road into Medicine Lodge to get an abortion, a voice spoke to her, "Turn back! Turn back!" And she did! I believe it was the Voice of the Spirit speaking. And, Jehovah God breathed into my nostrils the breath (Hebrew for spirit) of life, and I was born on June 4th. (Genesis 2:7)

EXERCISE 11

Is man qualified to choose life or death for a human being, either by abortion or euthanasia? _____

Consider this true example:

Situational ethics is now being taught in many schools. However, one teacher who wanted to illustrate the faultiness of human reasoning gave the following true situation to a class of students.

How would you advise a mother who was pregnant with her fifth child based on the following facts:

"Her husband had syphilis. She had tuberculosis. Their first child was born blind. Their second child died. Their third child was born deaf. Their fourth child had tuberculosis.

"The mother is considering an abortion. Would you advise her to have one?"

In view of these facts, most of the students agreed that she should have an abortion.

The teacher then announced, "If you said 'Yes,' you would have just killed the great composer Ludwig van Beethoven, world-renowned composer.

2. THE HOLY SPIRIT CREATES SPIRITUAL LIFE

We are a *spirit*.

Scripture establishes clearly that we are *spirits*, we have a *soul* and live in a *body*. (II Thessalonians 5:23) Here are succinct words by Dr. Robert Schuller which speak to this truth: "Secular humanism has told us we are human beings only. The truth is we are spiritual beings on a human journey with eternal dimensions." Hour of Power TV, August 9, 1998.

EXERCISE 12

Draw a line under the phrase or sentence in the following verses which speak of the "spirit of man".

Zechariah 12:1

"This is the word of the LORD concerning Israel. The LORD, who stretches out the heavens, who lays the foundation of the earth, and who forms the spirit of man within him,"

I Corinthians 2:11-12

"For who among men knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of the man, which is in him? Even so the things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God. But we received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is from God; that we might know the things that were freely given to us of God."

1 Corinthians 14:14-15

"For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my mind."

Hebrews 12:22-23

"But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the

first-born, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect."

Proverbs 20:27

"The lamp of the LORD searches the spirit of a man; it searches out his inmost being."

Watchman Nee speaks clearly about man's *spirit*:

"The ordinary concept of the constitution of human beings is dualistic--soul and body. According to this concept, soul is the invisible inner spiritual part, while body is the visible outer corporal part...Such an opinion comes from fallen man, not from God; apart from God's revelation, no concept is dependable. That the body is man's outward sheath is undoubtedly correct, but the Bible never confuses spirit and soul as though they are the same. Not only are they different in terms; their very natures differ from each other. The Word of God does not divide man into two parts of soul and body. It treats man, rather, as tripartite spirit, soul and body. (I Thessalonians 5:23) "May the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Is it a matter of any consequence to divide spirit and soul? It is an issue of supreme importance for it affects tremendously the spiritual life of the believer.

According to the teaching of the Bible and the experience of believers, the human spirit can be said to comprise three parts; or, to put it another way, one can say it has three main functions. These are conscience, intuition and communion. The conscience is the discerning organ which distinguishes right from wrong--intuition is the sensing organ of the human spirit, and communion is worshipping God. The organs of the soul are incompetent to worship God. God is not apprehended by our thoughts, feelings or intentions, for He can only be known directly in our spirits. Our worship of God and God's communications with us are directly in the spirit. 'God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.' (John 4:24)" Watchman Nee (1903-1972) The Spiritual Man. (Part 1, pg. 21)

EXERCISE 13

What do the following verses teach us about *spirit*---ours and God's?

Romans 8:15,16_____

I Corinthians 6:17,19,20_____

Our *spirit* and our body.

"While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Acts 7:59

From my e-mail comes a true story which illustrates in a beautiful way both the "body" and "spirit" side of man.

The Birdies

"See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven." Matthew 18:10

Only when we die to self do we hear and see the birdies, and enter into the plan of our designer. Thank you Deborah Fougrousse for sharing this awesome story. This is a true story that occurred in 1994 and was told by Lloyd Glen. Throughout our lives we are blessed with spiritual experiences, some of which are very sacred and confidential, and others, although sacred, are meant to be shared.

Last summer my family had a spiritual experience that had a lasting and profound impact on us, one we feel must be shared. It's a message of love. It's a message of regaining perspective, and restoring proper balance and renewing priorities. In humility, I pray that I might, in relating this story, give you a gift my little son, Brian, gave our family one summer day last year.

On July 22 nd, I was enroute to Washington D.C. for a business trip. It was all so very ordinary, until we landed in Denver for a plane change. As I collected my belongings from the overhead bin, an announcement was made for Mr. Lloyd Glenn to see the United customer service representative immediately. I thought nothing of it until I reached the door to leave the plane and I heard a gentleman asking every male if they were Mr. Glenn. At this point I knew something was wrong and my heart sunk. When I got off the plane a solemn-faced young man came toward me and said, "Mr. Glenn there is an emergency at your home. I do not know what the emergency is, or who is involved, but I will take you to the phone so you can call the hospital.

My heart was now pounding, but the will to be calm took over. Woodenly, I followed this stranger to the distant telephone where I called the number he gave me for the Mission Hospital. My call was put through to the trauma center where I learned that my three-year-old son had been trapped underneath the automatic garage door for several minutes, and that when my wife had found him he was dead. CPR had been performed by a neighbor, who is a doctor, and the paramedics had continued the treatment as Brian was transported to the hospital.

By the time of my call, Brian was revived and they believed he would live, but they did not know how much damage had been done to his brain, nor to his heart. They explained that the door had completely closed on his little sternum right over his heart. He had been severely crushed.

After speaking with the medical staff, my wife sounded worried but not hysterical, and I took comfort in her calmness. The return flight seemed to last forever, but finally I arrived at the hospital six hours after the garage door had come down. When I walked into the intensive care unit, nothing could have prepared me to see my little son laying so still on a great big bed with tubes and monitors everywhere. He was on a respirator. I glanced at my wife who stood and tried to give me a reassuring smile. It all seemed like a terrible dream. I was filled in on the details and given a guarded prognosis. Brian was going to live, and the preliminary tests indicated that his heart was okay--two miracles, in and of themselves. But only time would tell if his brain received any damage. Throughout the seemingly endless hours, my wife was calm. She felt that Brian would eventually be all right. I hung on to her words and faith like a lifeline. All that night and the next day Brian remained unconscious. It seemed like forever since I had left for my business trip the day before. Finally at two o'clock that afternoon, our son regained consciousness and sat up uttering the most beautiful words I have ever heard spoken. He said, "Daddy, hold me," and he reached for me with his little arms. [TEAR BREAK...smile]

By the next day he was pronounced with no neurological or physical deficits, and the story of his miraculous survival spread throughout the hospital. You cannot imagine our gratitude and joy. As we took Brian home we felt a unique reverence for the life and love of our Heavenly Father that comes to those who brush death so closely. In the days that followed there was a special spirit about our home. Our two older children were much closer to their little brother. My wife and I were much closer to each other, and all of us were very close as a whole family. Life took on a less stressful pace. Perspective seemed to be more focused, and balance much easier to gain and maintain. We felt deeply blessed. Our gratitude was truly profound.

[The story is not over] (smile)

Almost a month later to the day of the accident, Brian awoke from his afternoon nap and said, "Sit down mommy. I have something to tell you." At this time in his life, Brian usually spoke in small phrases, so such a large sentence surprised my wife. She sat down with him on his bed and he began his sacred and remarkable story. "Do you remember when I got stuck under the garage door? Well it was so heavy and it hurt really bad. I called to you, but you couldn't hear me. I started to cry, but then it hurt too bad. And then the "birdies" came. "The birdies?" my wife asked puzzled. "Yes," he replied. "The birdies" made a whooshing sound and flew into the garage. They took care of me." "They did?" "Yes", he said. "One of the birdies came and got you. She came to tell you I got stuck under the door." A sweet reverent feeling filled the room. The spirit was so strong and yet lighter than air. My wife realized that a three-year-old had no concept of death and spirits, so he was referring to the beings who came to him from beyond as "birdies" because they were up in the air like birds that fly. "What did the birdies look like?" she asked. Brian answered. "They were so beautiful. They were dressed in white, all white. Some of them had green and white. But some of them had on just white." "Did they say anything?" "Yes," he answered. They told me the baby would be alright." "The baby?" my wife asked confused. And Brian answered. "The baby laying on the garage floor." He went on, "You came out and opened the garage door and ran to the baby. You told the baby to stay and not leave."

My wife nearly collapsed upon hearing this, for she had indeed gone and knelt beside Brian's body and seeing his crushed chest and unrecognizable features, knowing he was already dead, she looked up around her and whispered, "Don't leave us Brian, please stay if you can."

As she listened to Brian telling her the words she had spoken, she realized that the spirit had left his body and was looking down from above on his little lifeless form. "Then what happened?" she asked. "We went on a trip." he said, "far, far away." He grew agitated trying to say the things he didn't seem to have the words for. My wife tried to calm and comfort him, and let him know it would be okay. He struggled with wanting to say something that obviously was very important to him, but finding the words was difficult. "We flew so fast up in the air. They're so pretty Mommy." he added. "And there is lots and lots of "birdies".

My wife was stunned. Into her mind the sweet comforting spirit enveloped her more soundly, but with an urgency she had never before known. Brian went on to tell her that the "birdies" had told him that he had to come back and tell everyone about the "birdies". He said they brought him back to the house and that a big fire truck, and an ambulance were there. A man was bringing the baby out on a white bed and he tried to tell the man the baby would be okay, but the man couldn't hear him. He said the birdies told him he had to go with the ambulance, but they would be near him. He said, "they were so pretty and so peaceful, and he didn't want to come back. And then the bright light came." He said that the light was so bright

and so warm, and he loved the bright light so much. Someone was in the bright light and put their arms around him, and told him, "I love you but you have to go back. You have to play baseball, and tell everyone about the 'birdies'." Then the person in the bright light kissed him and waved bye-bye. Then whoosh, the big sound came and they went into the clouds."

The story went on for about an hour. He taught us that "birdies" were always with us, but we don't see them because we look with our eyes and we don't hear them because we listen with our ears. But they are always there, you can only see them in here (he put his hand over his heart). They whisper things to help us do what is right because they love us so much. Brian continued, stating, "I have a plan, Mommy. You have a plan. Daddy has a plan. Everyone has a plan. We must all live our plan and keep our promises. The birdies help us to do that cause they love us so much."

In the weeks that followed, he often came to us and told all, or part of it again and again. Always the story remained the same. The details were never changed or out of order. A few times he added further bits of information and clarified the message he had already delivered. It never ceased to amaze us how he could tell such detail and speak beyond his ability when he spoke of his "birdies."

Everywhere he went, he told strangers about the "birdies." Surprisingly, no one ever looked at him strangely when he did this. Rather, they always got a softened look on their face and smiled. Needless to say, we have not been the same since that day, and I pray we never will be. Don Waybright -- Tyson Foods, Inc. -- Springdale, Arkansas 72762

EXERCISE 14

Circle the words in the following verses which speak of the eternal essence of a person.

"Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the days of trouble come and the years approach when you will say, 'I find no pleasure in them'-- Remember him before the silver cord is severed, or the golden bowl is broken; before the pitcher is shattered at the spring, or the wheel broken at the well, and the dust returns to the ground it came from, and the *spirit* returns to God who gave it." (Ecclesiastes 12:1-7)

"While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, 'Lord Jesus, receive my *spirit*.' Then he fell on his knees and cried out, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them.' When he had said this, he fell asleep." (Acts 7:59-60)

"Then a man named Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, came and fell at Jesus' feet, pleading with him to come to his house because his only daughter, a girl of about twelve, was dying. As Jesus was on his way, the crowds almost crushed him.

While Jesus was still speaking, someone came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue ruler. "Your daughter is dead," he said. "Don't bother the teacher any more." Hearing this, Jesus said to Jairus, "Don't be afraid; just believe, and she will be healed." When he arrived at the house of Jairus, he did not let anyone go in with him except Peter, John and James, and the child's father and mother. 2 Meanwhile, all the people were wailing and mourning for her. "Stop wailing," Jesus said. "She is not dead but asleep."

They laughed at him, knowing that she was dead. But he took her by the hand and said, "My child, get up!" Her *spirit* returned, and at once she stood up. Then Jesus told them to give her something to eat. Her parents were astonished, but he ordered them not to tell anyone what had happened." (Luke 8:40-42, 49-56)

"Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my *spirit*." When he had said this, he breathed his last. Now there was a man named Joseph, a member of the Council, a good and upright man, who had not consented to their decision and action. He came from the Judean town of Arimathea and he was waiting for the kingdom of God.

Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body." (Luke 23:46, 50-52)

"See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a *spirit* hath not flesh and bones, as ye behold me having. And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet." (Luke 24:39-40 ASV)

- I THE BEGINNING
- II HE CREATES
- III HE CONVINCES
- IV HE CONVICTS
- V HE CONVERTS
- VI HE CONSECRATES
- VII HE COMFORTS
- VIII HE COMMITS.
- IX THE CHALLENGE

THE HOLY SPIRIT - CONVINCES

"But when the **Helper** comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, **the Spirit of truth** who proceeds from the Father, **He will testify** of Me." (John 15:26 NKJ)

Before I accepted Jesus, **the Holy Spirit was seeking to convince** me about Jesus, prayer, the fruits of the Spirit and revealing the folly of the works of the flesh.

When I was twelve years old I borrowed Mama's hammer and the **Spirit taught** me that God hears and answers specific prayers as I shared in my first book. (Page 102)

But, prior to that when I was eight, the **Spirit convinced** me out of a horrendous dust storm that when the Spirit bids us pray, be very sure that is what we do.

It started out a normal sunny Sunday in June in the mid thirties. The cows were milked, breakfast over, chickens prepared for dinner and we ate at high noon which was our custom. It was about 1 O'clock when dark clouds rolled in creating encroaching darkness. Mother said, "There's a storm coming and we need to do some things: First, get the chickens in." This proved to be a herculean task for besides the 200 baby chicks in a pen, we had six or seven hens with broods of baby chicks roaming the yard freely. The hens and chicks usually found their way to the chicken house when darkness came on gradually as the sun set. But, when darkness came on suddenly the hens simply squatted down where they were, called their chicks in under their body and wings and were ready to sleep. Mother said: "We can't leave them here for they will suffocate from the blowing dirt." So, we gathered them up in bushel peach baskets and basket by basket carried hen and chicks to the chicken house. I asked mother, "Aren't we going to church and Sunday School this afternoon?" Mother said: "No. We must weather this storm. The chickens are in, now close the garage door, get in the house quickly, close the doors and windows, and PRAY!"

The raging dust storm struck suddenly in all its fury creating intense darkness. Our time was consumed with praying and hanging wet towels, gunny sacks and blankets over the windows to catch some of the blowing dust. By midnight the storm blew itself out and we milked the cows and ate the latest supper we had ever eaten. Then, after shaking the dust out of our bed sheets and pillows, all was quiet, and we slept in peace.

The Spirit convinced me that when faced with a crisis and I need to pray, be very sure that I do just that and nothing else for God is in the eye of every storm and rides on the wings of prayer.

So, the Holy Spirit seeks at an early age to convince us of various eternal truths.

EXERCISE 15

Now write some experience from your early life about how the Holy Spirit convinced you about a particular truth.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

The Holy Spirit Seeks to Convince Us that:

- 1. God Loves Us**
- 2. God's Word Is Genuine**
- 3. Jesus Wants To Save Us**
- 4. Unity Is Of The Spirit**

1. The Holy Spirit seeks to convince us that God Loves Us

"And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us." (Romans 5:5)

Dwight L. Moody said--"First and foremost the Holy Spirit imparts **love**."

NOT SO IN THE OLD TESTAMENT--

Adam sins----

- *God rendezvous with Adam asking--*Where have you been? What did you do?*
- *God tells Adam and Eve--*You must pay.*
- *God shows Adam (man) the door (the gate to the Garden)
- *God waves farewell and Adam finds himself on the outside looking in.

BUT, IN THE NEW TESTAMENT--

Man has weathered 4,000 years of sin and its consequence.

- *Now, God meets man singing--*Peace on earth, Good will to you.*
- *Man sees God in human form--- as a Baby!
- *God says--*I love you! Come, let us walk together!*
- *The miracles, parables all say---*Let's talk of a New Day and a New Way!*
- *At Calvary God says---*I love you! You're forgiven! Welcome Home!*
- * At the empty tomb, God says---*Come, clasp My hand, and live forever!*

God's love is far greater than human love. I have tried to cause my *love* to prevail on certain occasions. In 1964 when our youngest daughter, Lisa was almost five years old, and had been diagnosed as having various problems --- *childhood schizophrenia, autism, impaired senses*. Everyone else in our family had gone to Dodge City or somewhere. Lisa and I were home alone in the parsonage at Minneola, Kansas. I sought to make a "deal" with God. Lisa was crying. I took her in my arms rocking her in our orange rocking chair seeking to soothe away the source of irritation. I asked God to let me trade places with Lisa as I was already 32 and had lived an eventful life. I was willing to trade health problems and if Lisa's malady could be licked in me--O.K. and if not--O.K. I received no answer, only silence! For this silence of no answer I did not fault God, but since "all things are possible" with Him, I wanted to try because I *love* my daughters, and sons VERY MUCH!

For many years I have reflected on the story of the Father's love in seeking after His prodigal son of Luke 15. The Lord gave me this poem which tells of the seeking Father.

The Waiting Father

Just two days ago I saw a Father waiting on His porch,
Swinging to and fro in an old porch swing.
Love was reaching down a path where eyes could not see.

Yesterday, I saw Him standing by the yard gate,
Looking longingly down an empty road.
He was hoping---*perhaps today My son will come home.*
Last evening I saw Him standing at the kitchen door.
It was supper time, and a welcome home feast was prepared.
An empty chair was at the table, set for a certain boy.

This morning I saw this Father at the end of the lane.
He spoke of an expected letter as he nailed a sign on the post:
"WELCOME HOME MY SON, COME ON IN!"

Now, it's high noon, and the waiting Father waits no more.
He peers through shadows cast by clouds beneath the noonday sun.
Down the road He runs calling--*"Come home my son! Come on Home!"*

I stand and watch as He crosses the creek,
And seems to disappear down the old country road.
That figure in the far west: Is it an animal, a tree, a person?

Now, thunder rolls, it's quite dark for such an early hour.
The figure is that of a bedraggled boy running towards home.
Love has won! Father and son hug with hope on a distant hill!

EXERCISE 16

Now write an experience in your life of the Holy Spirit working through God's love.

2. The Holy Spirit seeks to convince us that God's Word Is Genuine.

God has spoken. His Words are inspired. (II Peter 1:21I Timothy 3:16)

"Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but **men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.**" (II Peter 1:20,21)

Consider this: "Long ago the Old Testament writers realized the human spirit needed hope. So, they decided to write about hope and we have their **thinking in the Bible.**" by Vernon Richerson, elder of Arkansas City, Kansas Bible Christian Church - 11/29/28 as spoken at Mt. Zion Community Church.

Is the thought in the above quote TRUE___? or ___False?

What Mr. Richerson says is exactly what the writings of the Bible is NOT! Men did not write out of their own thinking but "**spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.**" (II Peter 1:20,21)

EXERCISE 17

Write down other words-phrases used to translate "God breathed" of II Timothy 3:16.

"All Scripture is given by **inspiration of God**, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,..." (II Timothy 3:16 NKJ)

NIV _____

Other _____

Other _____

Greek-- theopneustos, "inspired by God" (Theos, "God," pneo, "to breathe"), is used in II Timothy 3:16, of the Scriptures. (Vine's)

In YOUR OWN words write down what inspiration means to you.

AGE and WRITING of the Bible:

- * 66 books
- * written over a period of 1600 years,

- * by 40 different authors who for the most part did not know each other.
 - * written on three different continents (Asia, Africa, Europe)
- Yet, there is perfect unity from Genesis through Revelation.

HOW does the above data effect "inspiration"?

EXERCISE 18

Write down what the following verses assert about the Word of God.

Proverbs 30:5 _____

Proverbs 30:6 _____

I Thessalonians 2:13 _____

Ephesians 6:17 _____

God has spoken! His words are **TRUTH**.

"But when he, the **Spirit of truth**, comes, he will **guide you into all truth**. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you." (John 16:13,14)

In the beginning the devil promised the human race (Adam and Eve) "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." (Genesis 3:4,5) This promise that Adam and Eve would possess *truth* was short lived for the only *truth* ("good and evil") man ever realized out of his own mind was that he was naked, (Genesis 3:10-13), and it has been pointed out that for the most part even that has been lost today. Since Eden, man has had to rely totally upon the Word of God and the Spirit of God to know *good from evil*, or reach his own conclusion which most often leaves him looking like a fool.

EXERCISE #19

List some moral truth that man has discovered apart from the Holy Spirit in the Bible

List some truths that man's knowing is dependent upon the Holy Spirit in the Bible

It is quite fashionable in some quarters to compare the teachings of the Bible with the teachings of Zoroaster, Buddha, Confucius, Epictetus, Socrates, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, and a number of other heathen authors. The difference between the teachings of the Bible and those of these men is found in three points—

First, the Bible has in it nothing but truth, while all others have truth mixed with error. It is true that Socrates taught how a philosopher ought to die; he also taught how a woman of the town ought to conduct her business. Jewels there are in the teachings of these men, but (as Joseph Cook once said) they are "jewels picked out of the mud."

Second, the Bible contains all truth. There is not a truth to be found anywhere on moral or spiritual subjects that you cannot find in substance within the covers of that old Book. I have often, when speaking upon this subject, asked anyone to bring me a single truth on moral or spiritual subjects, which, upon reflection, I could not find within the covers of this book, and no one has ever been able to do it. I have taken pains to compare some of the better teachings of infidels with those of the Bible. They indeed have jewels of thought, but they are, whether they know it or not, stolen jewels, and stolen from the very book they ridicule.

The third point of superiority is this; the Bible contains more truth than all other books put together. Put together from all literature of ancient and modern times all the beautiful thoughts you can; put away all the rubbish; put all these truths that you have culled from the literature of all ages into one book, and even then you will not have a book that will take the place of this one book.

My vest pocket New Testament, is a very small book, yet there is more of truth than in all the books that man has produced in all the ages of his history. How will you account for it? There is only one rational way. This is not man's book, but God's book.

God has spoken. His Words Are Alive!

"For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart." (Hebrews 4:12)

EXERCISE 20

**List some of the truths you have heard in the past but never put into action:
BE AWARE of what Jesus and Isaiah said:**

"And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: 'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, and seeing you will see and not perceive; For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them.' (Matthew 13:14-15 NKJ)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

The Holy Spirit often convinces us in special ways. Rodger Thompson whose home is Hugoton, Kansas, and now ministers at Wichita shares this meaningful testimony out of his full life.

"The convincing power of the Holy Spirit was first known to me when I was a senior in high school. I had slipped deeper and deeper in sin during my high school years. Because I was a Christian, from a Christian home, and active in church weekly, the Holy Spirit kept me under constant conviction. Those were such years of spiritual struggle that I have very few pleasant memories of high school. Those struggles tended to dominate everything. The battle raged inside of me until I thought I would be pulled apart. As I neared graduation my senior year, I realized that the whole social system I had given myself to was about to come to an end and that of the secular college was even worse. I knew that if I went to a secular college I would not

survive as a Christian. My sister had gone to Manhattan Bible College a couple of years before and I was familiar with that scene. On the other hand I had a couple of football coaches that were encouraging me to go to a Junior college to play football.

As time went by I was under such terrible conviction that I decided to start reading my Bible at bedtime. This was really just an attempt to ease my conscience. One night I was reading in Ecclesiastes and came across 11:9 -- "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee in to judgment."

It was as if God spoke these words in my ears. They struck me with such power that the burden of conviction overcame me. I began to weep almost uncontrollably as the weight of my rebellion settled in on me. I was broken. I can't say everything immediately changed but that was the beginning of change. I truly repented and began to, little by little, yield myself over to God. First I decided to go to Manhattan Bible College because I knew I did not have the spiritual strength to survive anywhere else. One stronghold right after another fell. Some quickly and others are still falling. I quit drinking almost immediately. After about six weeks into Bible college I finally quit smoking. I began to teach a high school Sunday school class in the Christian Church in Westmoreland, Kansas. At second semester I started preaching. I will never forget meeting God in Ecclesiastes 11:9 there in my bedroom that night. I will never be the same." --*Rodger Thompson*--

EXERCISE 21

According to John 14:21 what causes God to r-e-v-e-a-l Himself to us?

The person who has My commands and keeps them is the one who [really] loves Me, and whoever [really] loves Me will be loved by My Father. And I [too] will love him and will **show (reveal, manifest) Myself to him—I will let Myself be clearly seen by him and make Myself real to him.** (John 14:21 Amplified NT.)

EXERCISE #22

Following Jesus Step by Step

"To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps." I Peter 2:21

A staircase diagram consisting of 15 horizontal rectangular boxes. The boxes are arranged in a descending staircase pattern, starting from the top right and moving down to the bottom left. Each box is intended for a line of text, representing a step in a journey.

Please do not omit this exercise. Your stair steps will be different from mine on the next page. Start at the bottom of the stairs with your acceptance of Jesus and trace your journey by truths learned and obeyed. Remember the old chorus -- "*We are Climbing Jacob's ladder. Every round goes higher, higher; Every round goes higher, higher. Soldier of the Cross.*" Just so, keep in mind that Jesus only reveals Himself to us as we act upon what we study-- "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and (manifest myself, show myself, reveal myself, make Myself real) to Him." Amplified , John 14:21 NKJ

My Steps of Obedience to the Lord and His Word

He is convincing me that out of many trials comes maturity! James 1:2-4; I

He convinced me that unity is Jesus in people relating to each other! I John 1:7

He convinced me that His church is not a building or a denomination, but "called out people," Matthew 16:18; Luke 17:21 People and Jesus became my focus!

He convinced me God still leads people, Romans 8:14, acts 8:26. I learned to tune in by His Word

He convinced me about spiritual gifts, Romans 12:5-8

He convinced me that His supernatural is present tense, Acts 4:33 Answered prayer (miracles) became a reality!

He convinced me to fast and pray, Matthew 6:16-ff.

He convinced me from His Word how to deal with the devil in every day life from James 4:7

He convinced me to pray about all things, Philippians 4:6 I still do!

He convinced me to walk and live by faith, Romans 1:17,

He convinced me to praise Him in all things, Ephesians 5:20, I Thess. 5:18

He convinced me that God is love and how to communicate His love with others. I John 4:7-11

He convinced me, that having received the Holy Spirit when I came to Jesus (Acts 2:38), to continue being filled with His Holy Spirit according to His Word, Ephesians 5:18; Acts 4:31; Luke 11:9-13. I asked and He answered!

After 25 years He convinced me from Romans 12:1,2 that "worship" is the "presenting of our bodies as a living sacrifice to God". And the acts of religion (Greek "worship") are taming the tongue caring for orphans and widows, striving to be "unspotted from the

He convinced me to receive Jesus, and then began a long 25 year dry period in my spiritual life during which I was too busy studying the Bible to obey its truths. I was forever studying but not coming to a knowledge of the truth. II Timothy 3: 5,7

EXERCISE 23

List some ways God has revealed Himself to you:

3. The Holy Spirit seeks to convince us that Jesus Wants To Save Us.

"When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the **Spirit of truth** who goes out from the Father, he will testify about **me**." (John 15:26)

After listening to many television and radio preachers, I get the idea that Jesus came to judge man; but, it is NOT so. Jesus said that He came NOT to judge the world but save it. (John 12:47) So, a favorite Bible verse of the ages stands forever:

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."
(John 3:16 NKJ)

EXERCISE 24

The Holy Spirit reveals JESUS in every book of the Bible--*

Beginning with Genesis fill in the missing Bible book name.

- * In _____ Jesus is the "Seed of the Woman."
- * In _____ Jesus is the "Passover Lamb."
- * In _____ Jesus is our "High Priest."
- * In _____ Jesus is "The Pillar of Cloud by Day, the Pillar of Fire by Night."
- * In _____ Jesus is the "Prophet Like unto Moses."
- * In _____ Jesus is the "Captain of Our Salvation."
- * In _____ Jesus is the "Judge and Lawgiver."
- * In _____ Jesus is our "Kinsman--Redeemer."

- * In I and II Samuel Jesus is our "Trusted Prophet."
- * In Kings and Chronicles Jesus is our "Reigning King."
- * In _____ Jesus is our "Faithful Scribe."
- * In _____ Jesus is the "Rebuilder of the Broken Walls" of our broken lives.
- * In _____ Jesus is our "Mordecaia."
- * In _____ Jesus is our "Ever-living Redeemer."
- * In _____ Jesus is the "Lord, Our Shepherd."
- * In Proverbs and Ecclesiastes Jesus is our "Wisdom,"
- * In the _____ of _____ Jesus is the "Lover and Bridegroom,"
- * In _____ Jesus is the Prince of Peace.
- * In _____ Jesus is the "Messenger of Beautiful Feet."
- * In _____ Jesus is our "Avenger."
- * In _____ Jesus is the "Evangelist pleading for Revival."
- * In _____ Jesus is "The Lord Mighty to Save."
- * In _____ Jesus is the "Restorer of the Lost Heritage."
- * In _____ Jesus is the "Fountain Opened in the House of David for Sin."
- * In _____ Jesus is the Sun of Righteousness, risen with healing in His Wings.
- * In _____ Jesus is the "Messiah."
- * In _____ Jesus is the "Wonder-worker."
- * In _____ Jesus is the "Son of Man."
- * In _____ Jesus is the "Son of God."
- * In _____ Jesus is the "Crucified One."
- * In _____ Jesus is the "Justifier."
- * In I and II Corinthians Jesus is the "Sanctifier."
- * In _____ Jesus is our "Redeemer From the Curse of the Law."
- * In _____ Jesus is our "Christ of Unsearchable Riches."
- * In _____ Jesus is our "God Who Supplies All Our Needs."
- * In _____ Jesus is the "Fullness of the Godhead Bodily."
- * In I and II Thessalonians Jesus is our "Soon Coming King."
- * In I and II Timothy Jesus is the "Mediator between God and Man."
- * In _____ Jesus is the "Faithful Pastor."
- * In _____ Jesus is the "Friend of the Oppressed."
- * In _____ Jesus is the "Blood of the Everlasting Covenant."
- * In _____ Jesus is the "Lord who Raises the Sick."

* In I and 11 Peter Jesus is the "Chief Shepherd Who Will Soon Appear."

* In I, II, and III John Jesus is "Love."

* In _____ Jesus is the "Lord Coming with Ten Thousand of His Saints."

* In _____ Jesus is the "Alpha and The Omega - King of Kings and Lord of Lords."

A unknown author penned these words long ago which speak eloquently of Jesus and the effect of His life.

ONE SOLITARY LIFE

"HERE IS a young man who was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in another village. He worked in a carpenter shop until he was 30, and then for three years he was an itinerant preacher. He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never owned a home. He never had a family. He never went to college. He never put his foot inside a big city. He never traveled 200 miles from the place where he was born. He never did one of the things that usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but himself.

While he was still a young man, the tide of public opinion turned against him. His friends ran away. He was turned over to his enemies. He went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a cross between two thieves. While he was dying, his executioners gambled for the only piece of property he had on earth, and that was his coat. When he was dead, he was laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend.

Nineteen wide centuries have come and gone, and today he is the central figure of the human race and the leader of the column of progress.

I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, and all the navies that were ever built, and all the parliaments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth, as has that One Solitary Life."

EXERCISE 25

From the Gospels and/or Book of Acts list some examples of people finding Jesus: _____

EXERCISE 26

Look up the Scripture verse at the end of each sentence and fill in the blank with the appropriate word(s).

WHAT JESUS HAS DONE FOR HIS PEOPLE:

He descended (John 6:38) that we might _____. (John 14:3)

He became poor (II Corinthians 8:9) that we might become _____. (James 2:5)

He was born (John 1:14) that we might be _____. (John 3:2)

He became a servant (Philippians 2:7) that we might be _____. Galatians 4:6,7)

He had no home (Matthew 8:20) that we might have a _____. (John 14:2)

He was hungry (Matthew 4:2) that we might _____. (John 6:50)

He was thirsty (John 19:28) that we might drink of the wells of _____. (Isaiah 12:3)

He was wearied (John 4:6) that we might _____. (Matthew 11:29)

He was stripped (Matthew 27:28) that we might be _____. (II Corinthians 5:4)

He was forsaken (Matthew 27:46) that we might not be _____. (Hebrews 13:5)

He was sad (Isaiah 53:3) that we might be _____. (Philippians 4:4)

He was bound (Matthew 27:2) that we might _____. (John 8:32-36)

He was made sin (II Corinthians 5:21) that we might be _____. (2 Cor. 5:21)

He died (John 19:33) that we might _____. (John 5:24,25)

He will come down (I Thessalonians 4:17) that we might be _____. (I Thessalonians 4:16,17)

Larry Wright and I penned the following poem which speaks of the Good News of Jesus.

GOOD NEWS FOR YOU!

What's the news?

What's the news?

**Friend I have good news to tell!
My Lord has done all things well
and conquered over death and hell!**

**That's the news?
That's the news?
So, follow Jesus and do well,
and conquer over death and hell!
Then you'll have GOOD NEWS to tell.**

**And you can say
"Here's news that rings the bell!
Jesus has conquered over death and hell
and He does all things well!"**

**That's the news?
That's the Good News for Today!**

by Larry Wright and Wilbur Johnson - March, 1996

4. The Holy Spirit is the Author of Unity

"Make every effort to **keep the unity of the Spirit** through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit-- just as you were called to one hope when you were called--one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all." (Ephesians 4:3-6)

Perhaps more than any other two blessings, salvation and unity bear the marks of confusion. Man or the evil one in man, has worked overtime to turn simplicity into complexity. The Holy Spirit's definition of "**unity**" is so simple--

"Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it." (I Corinthians 12:27)

"To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Colossians 1:27)

"You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Galatians 3:26-29)

EXERCISE 27

From each of the following verses write down a descriptive phrase which Jesus said about His Kingdom, the Church.

John 18:36 _____

Luke 17:21 _____

Romans 14:17 _____

Luke 17:21 _____

I Corinthians 4:20 _____

I Corinthians 15:50 _____

John 3:5 _____

Matthew 13:24-30 _____

Luke 17:21 _____

Matthew 13:33; Mark 4:26-29 _____

The New Testament Scriptures address the matter of restoration as the restoring of man to God through the Christ of the Cross. Everything God has ever done for man has been directed toward restoring him to God through salvation and sanctification. Even our Lord said—"For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke 19:10)

But, man has contrived all sorts of divisive devices--peculiar teaching, religious forms, rules and works, buildings, relics, names, titles, organizations, etc.

I had been preaching only six years when my conviction about **unity was put to the test**. Bertha Schul came to my study saying, "We have heard you do Bible things here at the Lawrence (Indiana) Christian Church; is that true?"

Just in my sixth year of preaching, coupled with the fact that I had never seen these folks before, I was a little hesitant to give a wide-open answer to such a general question; but, I breathed a prayer and said, "Yes, we try to follow the Bible. How can we help you?" They filled me in on their background. They were Roman Catholics but in studying the Bible had concluded they needed to be baptized by immersion. We opened the Scriptures and reviewed God's plan. They spoke further of their intention to remain in the Catholic Church. In my own heart I had to answer the age old question—Are there Christians in other groups? How broad is God's foundation? What does it mean to be "in Christ"? I told them that I was only a servant of Jesus and that my commission in Matthew 28:19,20 gave no fine line restrictions. I immersed them and they went on their way rejoicing. The next Sunday they were in our morning assembly and came forward at the invitation and transferred their membership. I rejoiced in having passed the latitude test earlier, recognizing God's foundation is as broad as His Word and obedient hearts who seek Him!

In seeking to build God's people, we need to expand our thinking to realize that on this certain foundation of the apostles and prophets with Jesus as the chief cornerstone, (Ephesians 2:19-22), all Bible believing, Christ honoring people seek to build.

But, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—from which the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint

supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love." (Ephesians 4:15,16)

In this living relationship we are addressed as being parts of Christ's Body with the Lord Himself as the Head. So, like the human body in which most of the functions: thinking, growing, loving and living--are hidden and silent, so the **unity** of Christ's Body is silent and hidden.

EXERCISE 28

UNITY STATEMENTS - "True" or "False" - Discussion questions

- ___ Christian unity is all churches meeting together in one building.
- ___ Christian unity can be accomplished by the World Council of Churches.
- ___ Christian unity is everyone believing the same with no deviation.
- ___ Christian unity can be effected by the National Council of Churches.
- ___ Christian unity is all church people getting together on Sunday with one super "senior minister"?
- ___ Christian unity is everyone else correcting their mistakes.
- ___ Christian unity will be effected by the Restoration Movement of the independent Christian Churches, Churches of Christ or Disciples of Christ.
- ___ When everyone is perfect we will have Christian unity.
- ___ There is no place for opinions in Christian unity.
- ___ Christian unity is CHRIST CENTERED, not church centered.

CONCLUSION:

"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin." (I John 1:7)

Edwin Markham wrote four beautiful lines of poetry that remind us of our opportunity for and the blessing of an enlarged vision upon God's foundation:

"He drew a circle that shut me out—
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout;
But love and I had the wit to win,
we drew a circle that took him in"

EXERCISE #29

Draw some circles so as to illustrate the exclusive and inclusive spirit suggested in the above lines of poetry.

Let us conclude our thinking together with this prayer. (If this is being studied in a group setting, this prayer may be prayed as a UNISON PRAYER.)

"FROM THIS DAY FORWARD, HELP ME GOD TO KNOW I AM ONE WITH YOU THROUGH JESUS, AS IS EVERY OTHER BIBLE BELIEVING AND CHRIST FOLLOWING PERSON ON THIS PLANET. BLESS ME WITH A WIDER VISION TO CELEBRATE YOUR UNITY IN THE PRESENT TENSE THAT JESUS MAY BE LIFTED UP! In His Name, Amen."

1. THE BEGINNING
2. HE CREATES
3. HE CONVINCES
4. **HE CONVICTS**
5. HE CONVERTS
6. HE CONSECRATES
7. HE COMFORTS
8. HE COMMITS
9. THE CHALLENGE

THE HOLY SPIRIT CONVICTS

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; **for** if I go not away, **the Comforter** will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you. And he, when he is come, **will convict** the world in **respect of sin**, and of **righteousness**, and of **judgment**" (John 16:7,8 ASV)

THE HOLY SPIRIT CONVICTS OF SIN

Matthew Henry asserts: "Convicting is the Holy Spirit's work, only He can do it effectually, and none but He. Man may open the cause; but it is the Spirit only that can open the heart. First He lays open the wound, and then applies healing medicines."

EXERCISE 30

Even after we receive Jesus the Holy Spirit continues to seek to *convince* us of our sins for at least three reasons:

1. I John 1:9 "_____, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."
2. James 5:16 "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you _____. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective."
3. Luke 7:47 "Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven-- for she loved much. But _____."

Harold Bell Wright in his book That Printer of Udell's gives a vivid description of the Holy Spirit at work convicting a character named "Dick" of his past sins.

"His own life came before him like a horrid vision just as it had done that morning when he learned of his father's death. He saw his childhood home, smelled the odor of the fragrant pines upon the hills, and heard the murmur of the river running past the cabin. Again he heard his drunken father cursing in his sleep, and caught the whisper of his mother's dying prayer; and again he crept stealthily out of the cabin into the glory of the morning, with a lean hound his only companion.

Slowly and painfully he traced his way along the road of memory, recalling every place where he had advanced; every place where he had fallen; going step by step from the innocence of boyhood to the awful knowledge of the man of the world. He had fought, had fallen, had conquered and risen again; always advancing toward the light, but always bearing on his garment the smell of the fire, and upon his hands the stain of the pitch. And now, it was time to respond to this journey of memory across all of his years. He would change!"

Our *human nature* is not bent towards searching out sin. This is well illustrated by a conversation I had with a friend. She remarked, "I have made no mistakes which I regret in life." With amazement I countered that one of the words which translates *sin* in the New Testament is "*mistake*"--to miss the mark. I pointed out that I HAD SINNED OFTEN, and with regret.

During the night the Lord reminded me from Scripture that Isaiah had contemplated the same proposition, and his response was "Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, (but) my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty." (Isaiah 6:5)

I arose at 5 the next morning after our discussion, and my mind continued working on the above concept --sins-regret. While meditating, I posed the probability that I had committed many regrettable sins, and that I should formulate a "TOP 12 LIST" of my BIGGEST BLUNDER BOOMERS. As my mind traversed the 60+ years of my life, I quickly reached the BIG DOZEN MARK by the time I was six years old, then on to 20, and I saw 30, 40, 50 coming my way. When I began to include sins of omission, I realized the figure would reach into the thousands. I lost count, mostly because I wanted to, and quickly realized without straining my brain, the figure would reach many thousands.

What is the *value* of being aware of our sins? Jesus said there is a relationship between our many sins forgiven and how much we love. "Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven--for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little." (Luke 7:47) Being conscious of my sin(s) has made me seek the Lord's forgiveness, this greatly amplified my prayer walk, which in turn has increased my love for God and provides a climate for accepting others who sin and seek their Lord.

Thus, do not neglect the Holy Spirit when He seeks to convict us of our sins.

EXERCISE 31

From the following Scriptures list the "tools of conviction" which the Holy Spirit uses. After your answer on each line indicate with "YES" or "NO" whether this "tool" is used today.

Jude 1:9 _____
Jude 1:15 _____
John 8:9 _____
James 2:9 _____
I Corinthians 14:24 _____
II Samuel 12:8 _____
Jonah 1:17; 2:1,2 _____
Jonah 4:5,7,8 _____
Isaiah 6:1,8 _____
Hebrews 4:12 _____
Romans 2:15 _____

Spend some time alone. Allow the Spirit to call to your attention your sins which need confessing. Do so and ask forgiveness.

"Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.
Blessed is the man whose sin the LORD does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit. When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. Selah Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the LORD'-- and you forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah" (Psalm 32:1-5)

THE HOLY SPIRIT CONVICTS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you. And he, when he is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (John 16:7,8 ASV)

Jesus interprets the statement about "righteousness" in verse ten-- "*in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer;*" John 16:10

While our Lord was here, man could see righteousness personified in human form, but when Jesus returned to the Father we now must allow the Holy Spirit and God's Word to "*convict*" us of righteousness.

Our blessed Holy Spirit *convicts us concerning righteousness* in unique and usually silent ways. Most often we will know **HE** is working when we start doing righteous deeds. Such is the case of this beautiful testimony by Brother Roger Day of Highmore, South Dakota, as he took Jesus to Russia for the thirteenth time. His trips are *different* in that he does not go to build buildings, but save souls for Jesus and strengthen the faith of the Saints!

EXERCISE 32

As a spiritual exercise I ask you to underline or shade the words-phrases which indicate the Holy Spirit at work. I found 45 such items.

"Well, God was on the move in most wonderful ways from the time I got on the first plane until I got off back at home. I prayed that He would reveal His power and that He would see to it that every moment provided opportunities to bless people. He did it. I could not begin to list

everything...although I did write a 30 page journal for my wife. It is hard to say what was the most important part of the trip, but briefly I will say this. Back in May or June the Lord had assured me that the next trip was going to be something very special. About that same time, I wrote and told a young lady who was helping organize the trip. She wrote back and told me that God had spoken the same thing to her. Well, shortly after that, they began to have some very great moves of God amongst the youth...but the elders did not understand it, so they squashed it....I did not know about this, until after the first meeting while I was there. What happened at that first meeting was absolutely beautiful. I watched as God moved on the people. Now mind you, they do not watch Christian television, or read *Charisma* magazine...or anything like that...but here they were...some laughing, some crying, some falling, some jumping...and all praising the Lord, for His presence. The next day, I met with some folks and they told me what had happened in the youth meetings...well, God was just confirming with the elders that they were not going to stop him and He sent them to me to help them understand that they must go with God. Every meeting the intensity increased. People were delivered from smoking, drinking, fears, (there is a lot of strange fear there), demons left, people were saved. Tumors

were healed. One very large man who always hugs me until it feels like he could break my back came to me, and said his strength was gone...I believe it was heart problems and blood flow...at any rate, before I left, I got the same old hugs...his strength was back. The churches were brought together with a vision for reaching the community...one is an old line Pentecostal ... the other a charismatic...both blessed by the power of God and a new love and desire to work together. There were probably fifty people saved, maybe more...we had young men come in from a dance that was going on in another part of the auditorium...I believe they came to mock, but they got in a prayer line and when God was done...they just sort of sat down in a daze. Grandmas came for prayer and I had to catch them in my arms and lay them on the floor....in the midst of all the struggles that are there now..they were experiencing the joy of the Lord, and they loved it...there were twenty or thirty people who, one night the Lord spoke to them that He wanted to use them in powerful ways, if they would yield themselves...they came forward for prayer, and then they went out into the people and prayed for those who wanted prayer. Mostly I have to say that I was a spectator, watching God work His wonders, and thanking Him for letting me be there to watch. I met with a small group of about 25 young actors and actresses. I spoke to them about the goodness of God and then sang them a song, with my interpreter telling them the words. When I was done I asked how many would like to accept Jesus as their savior and get to know Him personally...only two remained sitting. Praise the Lord. One by-product of this, was that a religious cow died in one of the elders who teaches drama...he thought that people could only get saved by praying a certain prayer or with a certain message..but he watched them get saved by the words of a song. He said that his wife repented in the bathroom and that he was no longer bound by tradition and then we all laughed....God does mess with our theology sometimes. Most people think I don't have a theology...but I do have Jesus. I also watched God restore relationships, and saw people sharing with one another and giving and well, most everything that you would expect to happen in the presence of God happened, along with a lot of things that some folks don't think do, or should happen.

In the airports I saw the presence of God bring peace to three different screaming babies. They simply took hold of the finger I held out to them, and got quiet...their parents could only look and I could only smile, as we did not speak each other's language....I prayed for more people than I ever have as I was made more aware of how God can touch and minister to all who we will ask Him too. There is so much that I do not know...and the more I am in His presence the more I feel like I know nothing...I just want to know Him more. This is as close as I can come to a report unless God tells me something different. Let me again say, that I was more of a spectator than a facilitator. I was just privileged to be there. To God be the glory. The letters that people gave me as I left perhaps say the most important thing. They each

conveyed the fact that they loved God more, and were more confident of His love for them, and they were certain that this was only a beginning of what God was going to do now, because they would call upon Him with greater faith than ever. What more could we desire?

Also, we were able to share much financial support with other believers who have needs. We also left a considerable fund for the help of widows and orphans. We visited an orphanage, which we hope to help more in the future...now that is really it....God bless you,

Roger Day -- Date: Thursday, 03 Dec 1998

Now, carry out this truth--"Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. "And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:" (John 16:7-8 NKJ)

Write down what He is convicting you about "righteousness." If you have a problem, go back and read this section again.

THE HOLY SPIRIT CONVICTS OF JUDGMENT

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you. And he, when he is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (John 16:7,8 ASV)

"The devil, the prince of this world was discovered to be a great deceiver and destroyer, and as such judgment was entered against him, and execution in part done. He was cast out of the Gentile world when his oracles were silenced and his altars deserted, cast out of the bodies of many in Christ's name, which miraculous power continued long in the church; he was cast out of the souls of people by the grace of God working with the gospel of Christ; he fell as lightning from heaven.

This is a good argument wherewith the Spirit convinces the world of judgment, that is, First, of inherent holiness and sanctification, (Matthew 12:18). By the judgment of the prince of

this world, it appears that Christ is stronger than Satan, and can disarm and dispossess him, and set up his throne upon the ruin of his. Secondly, of a new and better dispensation of things, He shall show that Christ's errand into the world was to set things right in it, and to introduce times of reformation and regeneration; and he proves it by this, that the prince of this world, the great master of misrule, is judged and expelled. All will be well when his power is broken who made the mischief. Thirdly, of the power and dominion of the Lord Jesus, He shall convince the world that all judgment is committed to him, and that he is the Lord of all, which is evident by this, that he has judged the prince of this world, has broken the serpent's head, destroyed him that had the power of death, and spoiled principalities; if Satan be thus subdued by Christ, we may be sure no other power can stand before him. Fourthly, of the final day of judgment; all the obstinate enemies of Christ's gospel and kingdom shall certainly be reckoned with at last, for the devil, their ringleader, is judged." Matthew Henry

Augustine is an earthly example of *judgment*

Augustine (c.604 AD) was unable to calm the inner storm of unrest that raged within him and could no longer ignore it. Finally he threw himself prostrate under a Fig tree, his body wrenching violently and uncontrollably with sobs. Augustine found himself crying out to God, "End my uncleanness O Lord! End my uncleanness!"

Between his praying and weeping, he heard the voice of a child in a nearby house begin to chant, "Take up and read! Take up and read!"

Augustine remembered the Bible he had brought with him. With shaking hands, he opened it to Romans 13:12 in obedience to the voice of the unseen Child. He read: **Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying; but, put you on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh in concupiscence.**

Not in rioting and drunkenness . . . He had partied since the days of his youth.

Not in chambering . . . He had lived a life of fornication and fathered a son outside of marriage.

Not in wantonness . . . His mind was a filthy pit of unclean thoughts.

Not in strife and envying . . . He spent his whole life striving for power and status. He envied everyone in a higher position than he held.

Put on the Lord Jesus Christ . . . He had done nothing but mock and jeer the only one who loved him enough to die for him. *Make not provision for the flesh*. He had cared for nothing or no one, but was concerned only with his own fleshly and self-centered desires.

In concupiscence . . . His whole being was saturated with lust.

His inner core of rottenness was exposed by the light of God's Word. He had never seen himself as he really was. He cringed at the stench of vile filth within him. For the first time in his life, he stood alone, naked in spirit, before the piercing gaze of a holy God, and prayed:

"Oh, my God! End your conviction of me! End my uncleanness, O Lord!"

And God opened a fountain for cleansing sin and uncleanness, the precious blood of his only begotten Son. Augustine became a new creation in Christ.

Light literally blazed into his heart, driving out darkness and all other gods with its presence.

"Oh, my Christ." Augustine prayed in wonder and awe. "Let me live the rest of my life only to please you."

Men stared as Augustine ran from the garden, his face lit from within, his torch held confidently.

"I have no need to ever consult another astrologer," he cried. "Yes, I consulted these impostors, but Christ is and forever more will be my guide!"

All his craving for worldly success was gone. The esteem of men meant nothing to him. Why should he marry an heiress he did not love? He broke his engagement. He resigned his position as professor and retreated to a country villa to write.

Shortly after beginning his new life, his restlessness resumed. He turned to the Scriptures for help, and daily grounded himself in the Word of God. And the restlessness was again replaced with a beautiful peace.

EXERCISE 33

List the "tools of conviction" which the Holy Spirit uses in Augustine's confrontation with God. If you look closely there are at least eight "tools".

The solution for Isaiah is described in these words: "Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. With it he touched my mouth and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for." (Isaiah 6:6,7) It is imperative along with considering our sin(s) that we confess the same to God, (I John 1:7) then forgive ourselves and forget them just as God has done.

Read again David's experience after he had sinned:

"O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge. Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me. Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place. Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity. Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me." (Psalm 51:1b-12)

This searching out our sin process helps to make the grand old hymn a reality in our life, "Lord, to my heart bring back the springtime, Take away the cold and dark of sin; O return to me, sweet Holy Spirit, May I warm and tender be again."

Spend some time alone with the Lord, confess your sins and ask for forgiveness.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives." (I John 1:9,10)

"Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective."
(James 5:16)

1. THE BEGINNING
2. HE CREATES
3. HE CONVINCES
4. HE CONVICTS
5. **HE CONVERTS**
6. HE CONSECRATES
7. HE COMFORTS
8. HE COMMITS
9. THE CHALLENGE

THE HOLY SPIRIT CONVERTS

"Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him." In reply Jesus declared, **"I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again."** "How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!" Jesus answered, **"I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit.** Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' **The wind blows wherever it pleases.** You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit." (John 3:1-8)

The Holy Spirit's work with each of us begins with *creating us*; than *convincing us about Truth (Jesus)*; next *He seeks to convict us about sin* followed by our present consideration-- *conversion*.

WE MUST BE BORN AGAIN - Jesus in John 3:3

"I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again."

WHY must we be born again? Matthew Henry answers wisely:

The necessity of this change. First, Christ here shows that it is necessary in the nature of the thing, for we are not fit to enter into the kingdom of God until we are born again: That which is born of the flesh is flesh, v. 6. Here is our malady, with the causes of it, which are such that it is plain there is no remedy but we must be born again.

1. We are here told what we are: We are flesh, not only corporeal but corrupt, (Genesis 6:3). The soul is still a spiritual substance, but so wedded to the flesh, so captivated by the will of the flesh, so in love with the delights of the flesh, so employed in making provision for the flesh, that it is mostly called flesh; it is carnal. And what communion can there be between God, who is a spirit, and a soul in this condition?

2. How we came to be so; by being born of the flesh. It is a corruption that is bred in the bone with us, and therefore we cannot have a new nature, but we must be born again. The corrupt nature, which is flesh, takes rise from our first birth; and therefore the new nature, which

is spirit, must take rise from a second birth. Nicodemus spoke of entering again into his mother's womb, and being born; but, if he could do so, to what purpose? If he were born of his mother a hundred times, that would not mend the matter, for still that which is born of the flesh is flesh; a clean thing cannot be brought out of an unclean. He must seek for another original, must be born of the Spirit, or he cannot become spiritual. The case, in short, is this: though man is made to consist of body and soul, yet his spiritual part had dominion over his corporeal part that he was denominated a living soul (Genesis 2:7), but by indulging the appetite of the flesh, in eating forbidden fruit, he prostituted the just dominion of the soul to the tyranny of sensual lust, and became no longer a living soul, but flesh. Dust thou art. The living soul became dead and inactive; thus in the day he sinned he surely died, and so he became earthly. In this degenerate state, he begat a son in his own likeness; he transmitted the human nature, which had been entirely deposited in his hands, thus corrupted and depraved; and in the same plight it is still propagated. Corruption and sin are woven into our nature; we are shapen in iniquity, which makes it necessary that the nature be changed. It is not enough to put on a new coat or a new face, but we must put on the new man, we must be new creatures. Secondly, Christ makes it further necessary, by his own word: "Marvel not that I said unto thee, You must be born again,"

v. 7. from Matthew Henry's Commentary, John 3:1-21, Pg 34

EXERCISE 34

In your own words tell why we must be born again

WE MUST BE BORN AGAIN OF WATER AND THE SPIRIT - Jesus in John 3:5

"I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit."

EXERCISE 35

Search out the following Scriptures and write down the word(s) in each verse which refers to birth. On the second line indicate how this addresses being *born again*.

1. James 1:18 _____

2. Ephesians 2:17,18 _____

3. Galatians 4:26_____
4. I Peter 1:23_____
5. I Peter 1:3_____
6. John 1:12,13_____
7. Romans 8:15_____
8. Romans 2 :28,29_____
9. Colossians 2:11,12_____
10. I Peter 2:2_____
11. II Corinthians 5:17_____
12. Galatians 4:4-7_____
13. Galatians 3:26_____
14. I Peter 2:2_____
15. I Peter 2:2 2 Peter 3:18_____
16. Colossians 2:6 Romans 8:1_____
17. John 3:1-18 -- At what point in this conversation did Jesus tell Nicodemus how to be born again?_____

The following new birth testimony shared by Rodger Thompson, minister of the Northwest Christian College of Wichita, Kansas illustrates well the Holy Spirit at work converting.

"I share this with you as a way of praising God! My heart must declare His mighty deeds for He is faithful in all things!

I was invited to speak at Joel Smith's ordination at the Green Mt. Christian Church in Lakewood, Colorado where we had ministered for 18 years. Joel is a young man who grew up under our ministry there and then graduated from Manhattan Christian College where the Lord called him into ministry. It was a true honor to be asked to participate.

We arrived at our host home about 6 Saturday evening. We stepped out of the car and were met at the curb with hugs and warm greetings. Then Jack said, "Before you do anything else, call Randy Cohrs. He wants to be baptized." I was stunned! Randy and his wife Terri started attending Green Mountain Christian Church about 10 years ago. Terri was a long time member of the Christian Church, and Randy was raised Lutheran. He is a trained scientist with a Ph.D in microbiology. Randy works in research with Colorado University Medical Center on a project involving the herpes virus. He is very well educated and very intelligent. Christianity seems to have been a great experiment for Randy, much like one he might perform in his laboratory. He had no qualms about participating fully in church, but true faith was a difficult concept to him. In every other way Randy is a regular guy. We became close friends, talking often about the Scripture and matters of faith. In his heart Randy had always been one of the kindest, most generous and gracious men I had ever known. His lifestyle had been more Christian than that of many Christians. But when I talked to Randy of a personal relationship with Christ, he could only wonder about it, for he had no "experience" to examine or understand.

In the last year Randy passed through some very difficult circumstances. He began to be aware that someone greater than himself was at work on his behalf. While many things were at work to bring Randy to the point where he would meet God, he gave us testimony of this one. Contemplating the fact that he and his wife are, sadly, childless, he would have no one in his old age to be there for him, no child to care for him. Then he heard that unmistakable voice, the voice of God-- **"I will be there with you!"** Randy began to understand what it meant to have a personal relationship with God. In the days that followed He saw God more and more in His life until finally after a dramatic intervention for Randy before an extremely high powered panel of scientists, Randy called his wife and told her he needed to be baptized. He arrived home on the plane the same day we arrived in Denver. He did not want to wait another moment. When I called him on the phone, he wanted to be baptized right then. We went to the church building, where a small group of us listened to his testimony and worshipped and Randy was baptized.

Ten years of prayer and witness. All in God's good time. Even a microbiologist can know the God who created the microbes he studies. **Now Randy's grand experiment is no longer an experiment. He speaks of God in the first person. His faith and knowledge connect and he has gone from observing life to living it. Praise God!**

As for the Sunday morning worship service and the ordination -- suffice it to say that God was there in power. I do not know all that He did and will do in all our hearts who were there, but I know I will never be the same. I never am when God does His thing. I cannot find the words to describe what it was like at the "mountain top." If you've been there you know. I am beginning to understand why God is so careful not to let us see too much of His glory at one time. We literally cannot handle it physically or emotionally. I am greatly strengthened in my spirit but very weak in my flesh.

God be praised! - Rodger - October, 1998

In considering the *process of being born again* we must be ever mindful that God's offering for us to be born again (forgiveness of our sins) is offered *free*.

Several years ago an evangelist in England prepared some large placards and, posted them all over the town, declaring that if any man in that town who was in debt would come to his office before 12 o'clock on a certain day with the proof of indebtedness, he would pay the debt. This news spread all over the town but the people did not believe him.

One man said to his neighbor, "John, do you believe this man will pay our debts?"

"No, of course not, it's only a hoax."

The day came and instead of there being a great rush, nobody came. Now it is no wonder that there is not a great rush of men into the kingdom of God to have their debts paid, when a man can be saved for nothing.

About 10 o'clock a man was walking in front of the office. He looked this way and that to see if anyone was looking, and by and by, satisfied that there was no one looking, he slipped in and said, "I saw a notice about town that if any one would call here at a certain hour you would pay their debts; is there any truth in it?"

"Yes," said the man. "It's quite true. Did you bring the necessary papers with you?"

"Yes."

After the man had paid the debt, he said, "Sit down, I want to talk with you," and he kept him there until 12 o'clock. before 12 o'clock had passed two more came in and had their debts paid. At 12 o'clock he let them all out. Some other men were standing around the door.

"Well, did he pay your debts?"

"Yes," they said, "it was quite true; our debts were all paid."

"Oh, then we'll go in and get ours paid. "

They went, but it was too late. Twelve o'clock had passed. To every one of you who is a bankrupt sinner—and you never saw a sinner in the world that was not a bankrupt sinner, Christ comes and He says: "I will pay your debts." D. L MOODY

EXERCISE #36

Find two or three Scripture verses which declare salvation is *free* and write them below:

Brother Roger Day of Highmore, South Dakota shares these meaningful *new birth* thoughts with us.

"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3) Born again. Do you know what Jesus had in mind and when He said those two words to Nicodemus? He was talking covenant talk. He was telling Nicodemus what it meant to have a covenant with God.

Let me paint the picture I believe was in Jesus' mind. Imagine a baby, a little baby born of an unwed mother. No one knows who its daddy is and no one wants to know. He is a child that

nobody wants. He doesn't belong to anyone. Now picture the best kind of family you can think of. A family that loves God. The man has a good job. They're blessed financially. They're givers and lovers of people and they fall in love with this baby. Before long, they adopt it.

What's happened? That baby was reborn. He got a new set of parents. Through adoption, he has now become an heir. Why? Not because of anything the baby has done. Those parents didn't say, "I want you to look at that baby. I'm so impressed with all that child has done for us. He has certainly earned our love and respect." No, it's a baby. It couldn't have done anything to earn its new life. This man and this woman agreed together out of the love in their hearts and bestowed grace on that child. Now he has access to everything they have. When they offer him a bottle, he doesn't knock the bottle away and say, "I'm so humble and undeserving. Just give me water." Of course not. That baby acts like part of the family--and not just part of the family but the best part of the family. Because in Jesus' day a covenant or adopted child had the same birthright as the first-born son.

That's what Jesus was talking about when He said, "You must be born again." He was talking about grace. He was talking about a new relationship of favor. A new family. A new authority. A new power.

If you feel unworthy to receive the rich blessings God has for you today, think about that. Meditate on it, so instead of worrying about and struggling with the needs in your life, you can just walk boldly into the throne room of your Father and receive help to get those needs met. Discover what it really means to be a blood-bought child of Almighty God with a big brother like Jesus. Discover what it means to be born again!"

Roger Day

OUR BEING BORN AGAIN IS LIKE THE WIND THAT BLOWS

"The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit." (John 3:8)

This matter of the new birth being like the wind is a strong indication, much to the consternation of our logical mind set, that the total work of the Holy Spirit cannot be traced like a line on a map. Let us note that the w-o-r-k of the Holy Spirit begins in the life of a human even before he is born. (Psalm 139:13-16.)

Since God's essential nature is SPIRIT he operates on a plane that cannot be discerned by our senses. Even though spirit is ethereal, yet His work is very real! Jesus compared being born again of the water and spirit to the wind when He said; "The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound but cannot tell where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit." (John 3:8)

"Christ said it, and will never unsay it, so all the world cannot gainsay it, that we must be born again. This *born again* operation by the Spirit is compared to the *mysterious wind*. That which is primarily intended here is to show that the Spirit, in sanctifying a soul, is like the wind which we cannot trace. **"The wind bloweth where it listeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit,** v. 8. The same word (pneuma) signifies both the wind and the Spirit. This comparison is here used to show,

1. That the Spirit, in regeneration, works arbitrarily and as a free agent. The wind bloweth where it listeth for us, and does not attend our order, nor is subject to our command. God directs it; it fulfils his word, (Psalm 148:8).

2. That he works powerfully and with evident effects: Thou hearest the sound thereof; though its causes are hidden, its effects are manifest. When the soul is brought to mourn for sin, to groan under the burden of corruption, to breathe after Christ, to cry Abba-- Father, then we hear the sound of the Spirit, we find He is at work.

3. That he works mysteriously, and in secret hidden ways: Thou canst not tell whence it comes, nor whither it goes. How it gathers and how it spends its strength is a riddle to us; so the manner and methods of the Spirit's working are a mystery. Which way went the Spirit? 1 Kings 22:24. See Ecclesiastes 11:5 and compare it with Psalm 139:14." (from Matthew Henry's Commentary)

EXERCISE 37

Write a paragraph in your own words telling WHY being *born again of the Spirit* is like the wind.

THE WAR IS OVER

"But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation--" (Colossians 1:22)

It was August 11, 1945, and my Dad was plowing the wheat ground on a hot summer Kansas day in the Gyp Hills of Barber County. I ran down across a half mile of wheat stubble with a message of Good News! It was hard to hear above the loud roar of our John Deere D tractor but I hollered out these words--"**The War is Over! The war is over! And we won!**" Dad turned his head away for he had been a soldier in France in World War I, then turned and said--"We had to win, and many died, but now it's over!"

I retreated to a grove of mulberry trees for shade from the blazing sun to think and cool off. The thought that my Dad had been on the battlefields of France, and had seen the ravages and heard the sounds of war, along with his statement, "We had to win, and many died, but now it's over" etched deeply into my heart. I cried as I thought about someone dying on the other side of the world, and little realized that that number was to be calculated in the hundreds of thousands.

At the age of twelve in the spring of that year I, too, had realized I was losing the battle in the War against sin, so I surrendered to the Captain of my Salvation--Jesus!

Now, each of us having surrendered to Jesus can shout above the din of the world--"**The War is Over! The war is over! And we are winning!**"

EXERCISE 38

On the outline chart below check the appropriate lines indicating where the Holy Spirit is working and what he has done in your life.

____ *HE has CREATED ME - body, soul, spirit*

____ *HE has CONVINCED ME about Jesus*

____ *HE has CONVICTED ME of sin*

____ *HE has CONVERTED ME -
I have repented, received Jesus, been baptized*

____ *HE is CONSECRATING ME - making me like Jesus*

____ *HE COMFORTS ME*

____ *HE will COMMIT ME*

After we receive Jesus the Holy Spirit is in us!

Acts 5:29-32

"Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than men!
The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead-- whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel. We are witnesses of these things, **and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.**"

1 Corinthians 12:12-13

"For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. **For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body--** whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free-- **and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.**" (NKJ)

Acts 2:38

"Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. **And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**"

Matthew 28:18-20

"Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, **baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit**, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age".

1 John 3:23-24

"And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. And **this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.**"

Acts 1:8

"But you will **receive power** when the **Holy Spirit comes on you**; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

1. THE BEGINNING
2. HE CREATES
3. HE CONVINCES
4. HE CONVICTS
5. HE CONVERTS
6. HE CONSECRATES
7. HE COMFORTS
8. HE COMMITS
9. THE CHALLENGE

THE HOLY SPIRIT CONSECRATES

"To the church of Corinth, to those who are **consecrated** in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who, wherever they may be, invoke the name of our Lord Jesus Christ," (I Corinthians 1:2)

Goodspeed, also James Moffatt - Published by Harper Brothers 1935

We become sanctified / consecrated when we do as Paul said we *move-operate-walk in the Spirit*. **"If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit."** (Galatians 5:25 NKJ)

Some boys in Denver exploring the wild, found a large egg in a nest. They took it home and placed it in a nest of eggs under a goose. It hatched and was not a gosling, but appeared to be a genetic freak of nature with its toes grown together and a crooked twisted beak. It grew in the barnyard of geese. One day a giant eagle began to circle down, down, down over the barnyard. This freakish looking bird started to run across the barn yard flopping its wings. Soon its wings began to lift it off the ground. It flew up and joined the eagle in the sky.

Sad thing was that all along it had been an eagle living like a goose.

There is a lesson in this for us, we must *walk, live, act in the Spirit*, or we end up being a "goose" when the Lord has designed us to "fly with the eagles."

EXERCISE 39

Sanctify in its various forms is not a good word to translate the Greek word [hagiasmos]. Any word used in a English translation which must be immediately redefined is inadequate.

In the verses below find another word for "sanctify" in another translation .

Good comparison translations include--20th. Century N.T., New English Bible, Taylor, Goodspeed, Amplified.

II Thessalonians 2:13

"But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the *sanctifying* (_____) work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth." (NIV)

I Corinthians 1:2

"To the church of God in Corinth, to those *sanctified* (_____) in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ--their Lord and ours:" (NIV)

I Corinthians 6:11

"And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were *sanctified* (_____) you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God." (NIV)

1 Thessalonians 4:3

"It is God's will that you should be *sanctified* (_____) that you should avoid sexual immorality;" (NIV)

1 Peter 1:2

"(you) have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the *sanctifying* (_____) work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance." (NIV)

1 Peter 3:15

"But *sanctify* (_____) the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;" (NKJ)

CONCLUSION: So, we have discovered that the Holy Spirit desires to *sanctify us*--which in literal Greek is "set apart", consecrate us, makes us pure, Holy, separated, cause us to revere - give honor to Christ in our hearts.

The Holy Spirit Sanctifies by

1. Giving Power to Begin Again

and Power for the Battle with Self and Sin

2. Giving FRUIT as evidence of His Presence

3. Giving us GIFTS to serve Others

The most important thing in the life of any Christian is to be filled with the Holy Spirit! The Lord Jesus said, "Without Me ye can do nothing." Christ is in believers in the person of His Holy Spirit. Therefore, if we are filled with His Spirit, He works fruitfully through us. If we are not filled with the Holy Spirit, we are unproductive.

It is almost impossible to exaggerate how dependent we are on the Holy Spirit. We are dependent on Him for convicting us of sin before and after our salvation, for giving us understanding of the Gospel, causing us to be born again, empowering us to witness, guiding us

in our prayer life--in fact, for everything. It is no wonder that evil spirits have tried to counterfeit the work of the Holy Spirit and confuse His work.

There is probably no subject in the Bible upon which there is more confusion today than that of being filled with the Holy Spirit. There are many fine Christian people who seem to equate the filling of the Holy Spirit with speaking in tongues or some emotionally ecstatic experience. There are other Christians who because of excesses observed or heard of in this direction have all but eliminated the teaching of the filling of the Holy Spirit. They just do not recognize His importance in their lives.

Satan places two obstacles before men: (1) he tries to keep them from receiving Christ as Savior, and (2) if he fails in this, he then tries to keep men from understanding the importance and work of the Holy Spirit. Once a man is converted, Satan seems to have two different approaches. He tries to get men to associate the filling of the Holy Spirit with emotional excesses, or the opposite swing of the pendulum,, to ignore the Holy Spirit altogether.

One of the false impressions gained from people and not from the Word of God is that there is some special "feeling" when one is filled with the Holy Spirit. Before we examine how to be filled with the Holy Spirit, let us find what the Bible teaches we are to expect when filled with the Holy Spirit. PRAYER is a KEY to Holy Spirit power. Keep the KEY well worn!

It is possible to have the Holy Spirit in us, and yet not be possessed by Him. While sharing a revival at Monahans, Texas, I met Leon James, who had worked on the Yates ranch. This true story about Mr. Yates having oil on his large ranch, yet never drilling for it, illustrates the plight of many Christians.

In west Texas, there is a famous oil field known as the Yates Pool. During the Depression, this field was a sheep ranch owned by a man named Yates. Mr. Yates was not able to make enough money on his ranching operation to pay the principal and interest on the mortgage so he was in danger of losing his ranch. With little money for clothes or food, his family like many others had to live on government subsidy. Day after day, as he grazed his sheep over those rolling west Texas hills, he was no doubt greatly troubled about how he would be able to pay his bills. Then a seismographic crew from an oil company came into the area and told Mr. Yates that there might be oil on his land. They asked permission to drill a wildcat well and he signed a lease contract. At 1,115 feet they struck a huge oil reserve. The first well came in at 80,000 barrels a day. Many subsequent wells were more than twice as large. In fact, 30

years after the discovery, a government test of one of the wells showed that it still had the potential flow of 125,000 barrels of oil a day. And Mr. Yates owned it all. The day he purchased the land he received the oil and mineral rights. Yet he was living on relief. A multimillionaire living in poverty. The problem? He did not know the oil was there. He OWNED IT, but he DID NOT POSSESS IT. I do not know of a better illustration of the Christian life than this. The moment we become children of God through faith in Christ, we become heirs of God, and all of His resources are made available to us. Everything we need--including wisdom, love, power-- to be men and women of God, and to be fruitful witnesses for Christ, is available to us."

Just as it was in the New Testament it is certainly possible for the Holy Spirit not to possess us.

EXERCISE 40

In the New Testament many problems were caused by lack of or sinning against the Holy Spirit.

On these lines list the problem and/or the cause of the problem. Then, answer this question--Does this problem ever occur today?

Acts 7:51 _____

Romans 8:5 _____

Romans 8:5-9 _____

Galatians 5:4-18 _____

Romans 8:13-16 _____

I Corinthians 2:9-15 _____

Acts 8:18-23 _____

Jude 1:17-21 _____

Acts 5:3-11_____

Galatians 3:1-5_____

Ephesians 4:21-32_____

Hebrews 6:1-6_____

Hebrews 10:29_____

"Sometimes I wonder about Samson. He was one of the weakest men morally and one of the strongest physically of any man who ever lived. He could sleep with a Philistine harlot or carry off the gates and bars of a Philistine city with the same gusto. The tragedy of his life was his association with the temptress, Delilah. He lied to her as she lied to him until finally she wormed out of him the secret of his strength. He was sleeping with his head upon her knees when she cried out, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson." He awakened and said, half to himself, "I will go out as at other times, and shake myself free." But the Book says, "And he did not know the Lord had left him." He was kind of childish in his powerlessness.

It is then that I am reminded of the people of God whom he has called. After many acts of divine daring they become entangled with the affairs of this life. They are asleep in the lap of the world. Finally summoned from their stupor they try to shake themselves free, as at other times in the past, only to discover that God has withdrawn his power. One of the saddest things ever spoken about is these who will come in the time of stress in the last days who will "Hold the form of religion but deny the power of it." Like an embalmed corpse, the life and energy have fled. Like a petrified tree no fruit is borne. They are called men of corrupt minds and counterfeit faith. They are accused of being lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.

Without being meddlesome or unjustly accusative, I think we can see the condition described prevalent upon every side today. In our preaching we lash out at the symptoms. We treat the infection by picking away at the pimples. But there is a deep inflammation which cannot be administered to on the surface. It is the result of the loss of the power of the Spirit.

Until it is remedied nothing else will avail. What was the course, what always happens? We have identified the faith with the culture. It happened in Rome. It happened in Russia. It happened in England. Now it has happened in the United States."

by the late Carl Ketcherside

EXERCISE 41

Draw a line under the words which speak of *being filled with the Holy Spirit*.

Indicate "*Before*" and "*After*" whether the reference is before or after a person becomes a Christian.

Exodus 35:30-31_____ "Then Moses said to the Israelites, 'See, the LORD has chosen Bezalel, son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, and he has filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts'--"

Micah 3:8_____ "But as for me, I am filled with power, with the Spirit of the LORD, and with justice and might, to declare to Jacob his transgression, to Israel his sin."

Luke 1:67_____ "His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied"

Luke 4:1_____ " Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert"

Luke 1:13-15_____ "But the angel said to him: 'Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to give him the name John. He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from birth.' "

Acts 2:4_____ "All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them."

Acts 4:8_____ "Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: 'Rulers and elders of the people!' "

Acts 4:31_____ "After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly."

Acts 5:3_____ "Then Peter said, 'Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land?' "

Acts 9:17_____ "Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, 'Brother Saul, the Lord-- Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here-- has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.' " (NIV)

Acts 13:9_____ "Then Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked straight at Elymas and said,..."

Acts 13:52_____ "And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit. (NIV)

Luke 4:1_____ "Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert,..."

Acts 6:3_____ "Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them."

Acts 6:5_____ "This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism."

Acts 7:55_____ "But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God."

Acts 11:24_____ "He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord."

Ephesians 5:18_____ "Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit."

Having received the Holy Spirit when Jesus came into our life, we are in need of keeping His presence replenished.

EXERCISE 42

In the Scripture, Luke 11:9-13

1. Who is Jesus speaking to? (Note vs.1)_____

2. What does He say the Father will do if we ask Him? (Note vs. 13)_____

The command of Ephesians 5:18; "Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit." plus the 12 references in exercise 41 indicating people being (re)filled with the Holy Spirit a-f-t-e-r they came to Jesus" establishes a clear example that we too, need to continue being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Brother Roger Day of Highmore, South Dakota, says-- "A person needs to know the Holy Spirit, and not just about the Holy Spirit. A person needs to know how to hear, love and etc. the precious Holy Spirit. Lots of folks think the Holy Spirit is just a name and that they already have all they need, but they need to know what is really involved and what to expect...and if none of what is to be expected is going on in their lives...then the Holy Spirit is not going on in their lives. For instance, the Holy Spirit will empower us to defeat that nasty habit of foul language...if we continue to swear and feel no check in our Spirit, then the Holy Spirit is more than likely not functioning in our lives....we have quenched Him.

We all need to eat a plate full and keep eating...anyone who does not want to eat...can not blame God if they starve to death!!! love ya....Roger"

It would seem obvious that we would know how to continue being filled with the Holy Spirit, but such was not the case with me at least.

1 - The three things that are needful to receiving most of God's blessings are also true of continuing to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Jesus gave us a valuable life principle of *desire* from the "Sermon on the Mount." Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled."

Can we assume that everyone knows they must *desire* a closer walk - to be filled with the power and presence of Jesus through the Holy Spirit?

One person said to me, "The Holy Spirit can fill me if He wants to, I am not going to seek Him." Entertain no illusions, the Holy Spirit will NOT fill those who have no desire. The Holy Spirit only walks through doors that are already open. The door of our heart is our WILL and the latch on that door is *desire*. *Desire* is a door latch to every grace God has to offer: salvation, prayer, guidance, victorious living, strength, our daily needs, etc.

James said it with these words--"Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." (James 4:8)

David encourages us, "O God, You are my God; early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You, My flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water." (Psalm 63:1)

This simple story impressed on me the need for heartfelt DESIRE.

A seeking soul once went to a religious wise man asking how he could know God better. The teacher took the seeker down to the ocean and they waded out into the water. As they approached shoulder deep water the teacher pushed the disciples' head under and held it there. The lad began to thrash around and flail his arms. The teacher continued to hold him under the waves. Finally he allowed the lad to surface. He came up gasping for breath and said "What is the meaning of this?" The wise teacher said, "Lad, what did you want more than anything else when under the water?" "To breathe air" he replied. "Very well," the teacher said, "and when you desire God as much as you wanted air under the water, you shall have Him."

Now the Bible says, (God) "is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and have our being..." (Acts 17:27b, 28a) Yet, it is forever true that we must o-p-e-n the door of our wills with d-e-s-i-r-e if the Holy Spirit is to fill us.

I had MUCH DESIRED over some 20 years for the Holy Spirit to fill me: but there had been a lack of surrender and the habitual sin problem in my life.
from my book Faith Alive in Heart, Home, and Church - pg 60

2 - Surrender - As common as saying "water is wet" and "ice is cold" is the admonition to Christians to continue *surrendering*. It is to Christians that James and Paul speak: "Submit therefore to God." (James 4:7 ASV)

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice." (Romans 12:1a)

Paul's picture of sacrifice is drawn from the daily temple sacrifices. The lamb's legs were tied together, its chin pulled back so the priest could cut the jugular vein to begin the sacrifice. A bonus for us as we offer ourselves to God is that having died to self, we get to go on living while tied-up on God's altar of service.

Surrender begins when we first receive Christ. However men like Carl Ketcherside, who I shared about in Chapter 1, found a new beginning in inviting Jesus into his life. And across the country many people tell me that in their original confession of Christ before being baptized, they simply answered a preacher's question about Jesus with a "Yes" or "No." I suggest they again confess Christ and renew their surrender with a prayer such as the following:

A PRAYER OF SURRENDER

Lord, Jesus I believe You are the Son of God who died for my sins and rose again that I may live forever according to the Scriptures.

"As far as the East is from the West" so remove my sins from me.

I still believe and receive You as my Lord and Savior. Come into my heart and be the Lord of my life.

Use me as You choose through all my days and ways to glorify You!

In Your Name Jesus - Amen!

3 - Ask and receive is the third principle of staying filled with the Holy Spirit.

It was graduation time and Andy asked his father for a new car as a graduation gift. A graduation party was held and Andy was invited into his father's office. He handed him a nicely wrapped box. Andy opened it to find a Bible with his name inscribed in gold. In anger he blurted out, "I asked for a car and you give me a Bible!" He threw it down on the desk and stomped out. Years of separation followed. Andy moved to a distant state and began a career.

After many years, knowing his father was growing old, he decided to visit him. Before he could begin his trip a telegram came announcing that his father had died. He hastened home as the only child to settle affairs of the estate. When he walked into his father's office, there was the desk and the Bible he had been given on graduation. He picked it up and it fell open to a marked place with this verse underlined:

"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." (Luke 11:9),

He reads the verse and notes a lump in the back of the Bible. Turning there he discovers a car key and a note--"Son, I love you and here is the new car you asked for."

Jesus continues his teaching in the above reference as He says:

"For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. 'Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will **your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!**'" (Luke 11:10-13)

How we might pray is contained in the following words:

Dear Father, I love You, Praise You and Seek You!

Thank You for Jesus and His power and presence through the Holy Spirit.

Please forgive me for those times when I have acted as boss of my life.

Jesus, I now invite you to take your place on the throne of my heart.

Fill me with your Holy Spirit as you have promised in your Word.

And, now as an act of faith, I thank You for directing my life and filling me with the Holy Spirit. In Jesus' Name - Amen

And, how often shall we ask?

I respond to this posed question by asking a question--What size is your "fuel tank"? For many years I drove a four cylinder Opel station wagon. It had a ten gallon gas tank and when full would take me 300 miles. Now I drive an eight cylinder 454 engine Suburban with a thirty gallon tank and if the terrain and weather are favorable I can go 210 miles on a full tank. I suggest we human beings vary as much or more than automobiles. Because I made a dry run for so many years in NOT knowing to ASK for the Holy Spirit to fill me, I now ask every morning before getting out of bed. Other times during the day when I am weak in body, lack strength in my spirit, need wisdom, etc. I instantly pray--"God, fill me with Your Holy Spirit and thank You in Jesus' Name."

Three signs of being filled with the Holy Spirit

How can we know that the Holy Spirit is filling us? Being full-filled with the Spirit was a matter of simplicity in the first century; however, today we often complicate the matter. Yet, I suggest three simple signs out of many.

1. Spirit filled people are known by their *talk*.

"Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John replied, "Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God. For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard." (Acts 4:18-20)

When the Holy Spirit fills us, **Jesus** is on the "throne of our heart" and His Name becomes foremost in our life. The following story indicates the place and purpose of Jesus in our talk.

This is a true story of something that happened just a few years ago at USC. There was a professor of philosophy there who was a deeply committed atheist. His primary goal for one required class was to spend the entire semester attempting to prove that God couldn't exist. His students were always afraid to argue with him because of his impeccable logic. For twenty years, he had taught this class and no one had ever had the courage to go against him. Sure, some had argued in class at times, but no one had ever 'really gone against him' (you'll see what I mean later). Nobody would go against him because he had a reputation.

At the end of every semester, on the last day, he would say to his class of 300 students, "If there is anyone here who still believes in Jesus, stand up!" In twenty years, no one had ever stood up. They knew what he was going to do next. He would say, "because anyone who does believe in God is a fool. If God existed, he could stop this piece of chalk from hitting the ground and breaking. Such a simple task to prove that he is God, and yet he can't do it." and every year, he would drop the chalk onto the tile floor of the classroom and it would shatter into a hundred pieces. All of the students could do nothing but stop and stare. Most of the students were convinced that God couldn't exist. Certainly, a number of Christians had slipped through, but for 20 years, they had been too afraid to stand up.

Well, a few years ago there was a freshman who was enrolled in the class. He was a Christian, and had heard the stories about this professor. He had to take the class because it was one of the required classes for his major and he was afraid. But for three months that semester, he prayed every morning that he would have the courage to stand up no matter what the professor said or what the class thought. Nothing they said or did could ever shatter his faith, he hoped.

Finally the day came. The professor said, "If there is anyone here who still believes in God, stand up!" The professor and the class of 300 people looked at him shocked, as he stood up at the back of the classroom. The professor shouted, "YOU FOOL!! If God existed, he could keep this piece of chalk from breaking when it hit the ground!" He proceeded to drop the chalk, but as he did, it slipped out of his fingers, off his shirt cuff, onto the pleats of his pants, down his leg and off his shoe. As it hit the ground, it simply rolled away, unbroken. The professor's jaw dropped as he stared at the chalk. He looked up at the young man and then ran out of the lecture hall.

The young man who had dared to stand and speak up proceeded to the front of the room and shared his faith in Jesus for the next half hour. Three hundred students stayed and listened as he told of God's love for them and of his power through Jesus. "Yet to all who received HIM, to those who believed in HIS name, HE gave the right to become children of God--children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of GOD." (John 1:12)

EXERCISE 43

How can you and I better include Jesus in our **talk**? Think and write a line by each phrase. Be prepared to discuss this if you are in a study group using this course.

1. Weather_____
2. Government_____
3. My life_____
4. Church where I serve _____
5. Politics_____
6. My strength/weakness_____

7. Money - salary, bills_____
8. Our church leaders_____
9. My school grades/subjects_____
10. My health/sickness_____
11. My Sunday school class_____
12. Our ball games which we win/lose_____
13. Our church services_____
14. Gifts I give_____
15. My girl/boy friend_____

When His Spirit fills us we are able to see Jesus in most things.

2. Spirit filled people are known by their *walk*.

"....then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is **by the name of Jesus** Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. He is 'the stone you builders rejected, which has become the capstone.' Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved." When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they **took note that these men had been with Jesus.**" (Acts 4:10-13)

Such is the case with Joshua Day, a high school senior, in Highmore, South Dakota. Josh tries to walk with Jesus in every situation. When his dad left for Missionary Trip #13 in 1998, he agreed to update me for our e-line prayer line. Here is the way it started.

From: Joshua Allen R. Day" <glowworm@jarday.com>
To: Wilburjohnson@juno.com
Date: Tue, 17 Nov 1998 06:18:10 -0600
Subject: Dad in Russia

"Hey Wilbur... I'd be glad to keep you informed. Allow me, to start off, sharing what I know from God's own heart... To start, I thought this to be just another routine trip - it's not. For about a week and a half, or two weeks before Monday (his departure date) I began to get flashes of dad - pictures, and terrible gut feelings pertaining to him. I believe the Lord has given me an intercessory spirit, or perhaps prophetic, or both... all I know is, as long as I can remember - my little flashes and whatnaught have never been wrong... and I could feel something wrong about this trip. On Sunday, the day before he left, he was asking for a lot of prayer, more than he's ever asked for before - and then I knew, I wasn't the only one seeing this trip as more than routine. I don't know if he was not telling us to protect us or what, I mean the family... I can understand that - my sisters are afraid of him being on those planes as it is... in any case, I know his life is in danger... grave danger - and he needs our support. Sunday, the Lord told me my next meal with dad was going to be Thanksgiving dinner... dad gets back that day... the Lord wants me to fast for Him, then... I tested the spirit, and have since Sunday had that message confirmed over and again... last night he told me the loudest - that's when I decided I **must** be hearing from God.

Last night, my mother, Jordan, and I went to a Rod Parsley meeting, after dropping dad off at the airport. On the way home, at a quarter past ten last night, the Lord put dad on all three of our hearts. Mother was thinking about him, and how he was up in the air flying... Jordan was thinking about him, and about to ask mom if he was in the air or on the ground, and me... out of nowhere, all of a sudden the Lord put upon my heart to tell mom to stop the vehicle and pray for dad. Perhaps, I should learn to heed the sword before my side is pricked... but, anyway - again, I tested the spirit on that - I just prayed in my spirit, for dad. Then, my heart began to burn and swell - like I've **never** felt it do before... I've been in His presence, I've felt the tingling burning in my chest... but never like that... I blurted out for mom to stop the vehicle and pray for dad... then tears came, I began to mourn and pray in the spirit... we all prayed for a few minutes til God gave me the all clear, and we parted... I heard the voice of my dad say "thank you, son" ... I believe it was his spirit thanking me/mine for my obedience... In any case, God clearly has huge plans for my dad's trip to Russia. There is so much resistance to it, you can only imagine what God must have in store. If ever he needed prayer support, it's now... I'll let you know when I hear anything, keep praying for him - heaven knows he needs it."

God bless,
joshua allen r. day

While preaching a revival at Blanford, Indiana, Imalee and I and Doug Davis, the preacher, went to eat pizza. The bus boy was a fine young man. After observing him for a few moments, I said, "When did you become a Christian?" Startled, he looked up and said, "How do you know I'm a Christian?" I said, "I can tell by your actions, your attitude and your speech." He responded, "Well, it's true I am a Christian." He went on to share when he found Jesus and how as a senior in high school he was trying to live for Jesus. This opened a door for Doug to invite him to come and share his witness and worship with the State Line Christian Church.

EXERCISE 44

Check the words which indicate your *walk with Jesus*.

"but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart."
(II Timothy 2:22 NKJ)

Check the items below in which others can see Jesus in your *walk*.

- ☐ My daily attitude
- ☐ My joy
- ☐ My love for others
- ☐ My language
- ☐ My treatment of others
- ☐ The things I gaze at
- ☐ The magazines-books I read
- ☐ The movies-videos I listen to
- ☐ The way I drive
- ☐ My prayer life
- ☐ How I spend my money
- ☐ How I use my time
- ☐ My hope/ joy
- ☐ What I do on Sunday
- ☐ My honesty on tests / taxes
- ☐ That which makes me happy
- ☐ My respect for my parents
- ☐ My willingness to stand for the right
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Our *life long walk* is well illustrated in this life story letter from Brother Chuck Thomas of Tulsa, Oklahoma.

"From my first encounter with the presence of the Holy Spirit in my life, out in southwest Kansas, I can now retrace His work in my life. I am not sure that I was aware at the time, that He had gifted me with teaching, encouragement and mercy. I was aware that my daily schedule became full of appointments to counsel. The counseling continued to increase when we moved to Stillwater, OK, and eventually began to take most of my time. I felt a real need to pursue more education in the field of counseling and the Lord opened the door for me to earn a master degree in counseling at Oklahoma State University. We then moved to Cushing, Oklahoma and the Lord lead me to Valley Hope, where I became a part time chaplain, working with alcohol and drug addicts. The Holy Spirit opened my eyes to the vast field that was white, waiting to be harvested. I soon became aware that He was allowing me to touch more lives in the alcohol and drug rehabilitation program than I had ever experienced in the past. In the first year at Valley Hope I had the opportunity to touch almost 1,000 families. In my preaching experience in the past, I had possibly touched 200 to 300 families. During my work with chemically dependent people I have touched the lives of more than 5,000 families. I believe that He simply expanded my ministry opportunities. He is still in direct control of my life today and I am still touching more and more lives. Since we moved from Cushing to Tulsa, we have been given the opportunity to become part of the Highland Park Christian Church, where our oldest son, Steve is Family Minister. He arranged for anyone who wished to take a test to determine what spiritual gifts he may have. I scored very high in teaching, encouragement and mercy. I believe that is confirmation of the gifts the Holy Spirit gave me and I began to develop, many years ago. I praise the Lord for his Hand in my life and the lives of my family." Chuck

3. Spirit filled people are known by their *gawk*.

Give me credit for the fact that *gawk* rhymes with *walk* and *talk*; but beyond this it means to *stare, to gaze at intently*. What is it that catches and holds our attention?

"The lamp of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be *single*, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is the darkness!" (Matthew 6:22,23 ASV)

"But I say to you that whoever *looks* at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. "If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell."

(Matthew 5:28,29 NKJ)

The late Elton Trueblood was a Godly man, a penetrating thinker and writer of many books. In one of his books he said--"Acts 3:4-8 is not true today. Yes it was true in the first century, but if religious life today were described in this text, it would have to say: (words in *script* are the changed words, thoughts)

"When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, "Look at us!" (*gaze / gawk at us and call us Reverend or Doctor*). So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them. Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, *Silver and gold we have. How much do you need?* but what I have I give you. *Stay right here while I call the prayer chain and the benevolence chairman. And, the following seldom ever happens--* "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong. He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God." (Acts 3:3-8 NIV)

The late Gary Spencer, minister at Valley Falls, Kansas, was a brother who kept his eyes fixed on Jesus. In one revival we talked about Jesus' statement, "My house will be called a house of prayer." (Mark 11:17) A couple of years later I returned for another revival and tacked above the entrance to the auditorium was a giant sign which read--**THIS IS A HOUSE OF PRAYER.** And with Gary it was far more than a sign. He was a man of prayer and led the Christian church people upward and onward in that order.

EXERCISE 45

Write in your appropriate words which you focus your attention on.

"Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart." 2 Timothy 2:22

10 things I focus my attention on are

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

"Let us acknowledge the LORD; let us press on to acknowledge him. As surely as the sun rises, he will appear; he will come to us like the winter rains, like the spring rains that water the earth." (Hosea 6:3)

So, we need to keep on talking, walking and gawking for Jesus just as Michael does in the testimony below as shared by Norma Wilson of Harrison, Arkansas.

Like any good mother, when Karen found out that another baby was on the way, she did what she could to help her three year-old son Michael, prepare for a new sibling. They find out that the new baby was going to be a girl, and day after day, night after night, Michael sang to his sister in his Mommy's tummy.

The pregnancy progressed normally for Karen, an active member of the Panther Creek United Methodist Church in Morristown, Tennessee. Then the labor pains came. Every five minutes ... every minute. But complications arose during delivery. Hours of labor. Would a C-section be required?

Finally, Michael's little sister was born. But she was in serious condition. With sirens howling in the night, the ambulance rushed the infant to the neonatal intensive care unit at St. Mary's Hospital in Knoxville. The days inch by. The little girl gets worse. The pediatric specialist tells the parents, "There is very little hope. Be prepared for the worst." Karen and her husband contact a local cemetery about a burial plot. They had fixed a special room in their home for the new baby - now they plan a funeral. Michael keeps begging his parents to let him see his sister, "I want to sing to her," he says. Week two in intensive care. It looks as if a funeral will come before the week is over. Michael keeps nagging about singing to his sister, but kids are never allowed in intensive care. But Karen makes up her mind. She will take Michael whether they like it or not. If he doesn't see his sister now he may never see her alive. She dresses him in an oversized scrub suit and marches him into the ICU. He looks like a walking laundry basket but the head nurse recognizes him as a child and bellows, "Get that kid out of here now! No children are allowed." The mother rises up strong in Karen, and the usually mild-mannered lady glares steel-eyed into the head nurse's face, her lips a firm line. "He is not leaving until he sings to his sister!" Karen tows Michael to his sister's bedside. He gazes at the tiny infant losing the battle to live. And he begins to sing. In the pure hearted voice of a three year-old, Michael sings: "You are my sunshine, my only sunshine, you make me happy when skies are gray --- " Instantly the baby girl responds. The pulse rate becomes calm and steady. Keep on singing, Michael. "You never know, dear, how much I love you, Please don't take my sunshine away---" The ragged, strained breathing becomes as smooth as a kitten's purr. Keep on singing, Michael. "The other night, dear, as I lay sleeping, I dreamed I held you in my arms..." Michael's little sister relaxes as rest, healing rest, seems to sweep over her. "Keep on singing Michael." Tears conquer the face of the bossy head nurse. Karen glows, "You are my sunshine, my only sunshine. Please don't, take my sunshine away." Funeral plans are scrapped. The next day, the very next day, the little girl is well enough to go home! *Woman's Day* magazine called it "the miracle of a brother's song." The medical staff just called it a miracle. Karen called it a miracle of God's love!

The Holy Spirit Sanctifies by

- 1. Giving Power to Begin Again
and Power to win in the Battle with Self and Sin**
- 2. Giving FRUIT as evidence of His Presence**
- 3. Giving us GIFTS to serve Others**

1. Sanctifying POWER for our Battle with Self and Sin

"But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the **sanctifying work of the Spirit** and through **belief in the truth.**" (II Thessalonians 2:13)

"Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. **His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness** through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that **through them** you may **participate in the divine nature** and **escape the corruption in the world** caused by evil desires." (II Peter 1:2-4)

Rees Howells, a Welsh coal miner, has a vivid testimony of how the Holy Ghost sanctified him. "Nothing is more real to me than the process the Holy Ghost used to sanctify me. The Holy Spirit went on dealing with me, exposing the **root of my nature** which was **self**, and you can only get out of a thing what is in its root. Sin was canceled, and it wasn't sin He was dealing with, it was **self** that thing which came from the Fall. It was not going to take any superficial surrender. He put His finger on each part of my self-life, and I had to decide in cold blood. He could never take a thing away until I gave my consent. Then the moment I gave it, some purging took place (Isaiah 6: 5-7), and I could never touch that thing again. It was not saying I was purged and the thing still having a hold on me: no, it was a breaking, and the Holy Ghost taking control. Day by day the dealing went on. He was seeking to make Jesus the Lord of my life."

Every servant of God has to learn to keep their body in submission, as he goes through necessary disciplines in the early days of his training.

God began to deal with a simple appetite in Rees Howells, the love of food. The Lord called him to a day of prayer and fasting, which was something new to him. He was used to a comfortable home and four good meals a day, and it came as a shock to realize that it meant no dinner and he was agitating about it. And would it only happen once? Supposing God asked him to do it every day!

When midday came he was on his knees in his bedroom, but there was no prayer that next hour. "I didn't know such a lust was in me," he said afterwards. "My agitation was the proof of the grip it had on me. If the thing had no power over me, why did I argue about it?"

At one o'clock his mother called him, and he told her he wasn't taking lunch. But she called again, as a mother would, and urged, "It won't take you long to have it." The goodly aroma from downstairs was too much for him and down he came. But after the meal, when he returned to his room, he couldn't get back into the presence of God. He came face to face with disobedience to the Holy Ghost. "I felt like the man in the garden of Eden," he said. "I went up the mountain and walked miles cursing that 'old man' within me. I felt that if God were to take lunch from me to the end of my days, He would be justified in doing so. To some people this might seem as nothing, but once you are God's channel on no account can you disobey Him, or bring in your own ideas. I wept many tears and it almost seemed as if He would never allow me to come back into His presence, until He said, 'I will forgive you, but you are not to go unpunished. You hold up your hands while you pray from 6 to 9 o'clock.'" (Exodus 17: 11, 12; I Timothy 2: 8.) The closer a person is to God, the more terrible is the least sin seen to be.

He didn't take dinner for many days after that, but spent the hour with God. As he said later "The moment I got victory in it, it wasn't a very big thing to do, it was merely a steppingstone to His next call to me. It is while you still want a thing that you can't get your mind off it. When you have risen above it, He may give it back to YOU, but then you are out of it.

In all these experiences the Lord's purpose was the transformation of His servant. The Holy Ghost took me through grade after grade. The process of changing one's nature (replacing self nature by the Divine nature) is very slow. It was a daily dying and showing forth the life of Christ." from Intecessor For God by Rees Howell (1879-1950) pages 40,41, 100

The areas the Holy Spirit will seek to discipline us in will be as different as the individual. With Rees Howell the disciplines included love of money, ambition, reputation and pride.

"Then he said to them all: 'If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.' " (Luke 9:23)

EXERCISE 46

Check the following disciplines the Lord has used in developing your life.

<input type="checkbox"/> Discipline of Danger	<input type="checkbox"/> Discipline of Daring	<input type="checkbox"/> Discipline of Decision
<input type="checkbox"/> Discipline of Darkness	<input type="checkbox"/> Discipline of Decision	<input type="checkbox"/> Discipline of Defense

___Discipline of Defamation	___Discipline of Declining days	___Discipline of Delay
___Discipline of Deformity	___Discipline of Delight	___Discipline of Desire
___Discipline of Dependability	___Discipline of Desolation	___Discipline of Detail
___Discipline of Desolation	___Discipline of Desperation	___Discipline of Difficulty
___Discipline of Determination	___Discipline of Disappointment	___Discipline of Disability
___Discipline of Discernment	___Discipline of Discontentment	___Discipline of Disdain
___Discipline of Disease	___Discipline of Disillusionment	___Discipline of Doubt
___Discipline of Distinction	___Discipline of Diversion	___Discipline of Duty
___Discipline of Domination	___Discipline of Durability	

Discipline words above are chapter titles from V. Raymond Edman's Book, The Disciplines of Life

One of our great needs in overcoming *self* and the various *subterfuges* of the flesh is that of appetite. I have often said when sharing a revival that I like all kinds of *good food*; but I do not care for sauerkraut since it's spoiled cabbage. Within the next day or two I usually am served a side dish of sauerkraut. At any rate we end up *eating* that which our fleshly appetite dictates.

This simple story illustrates what appetite can do. A young lady stopped by the public library on her way home from work. She quickly checked out a book which had an interesting title. Before her blind date that evening she read a few pages and determined to return the book the next day because she found it *uninteresting, dry material*. As the foursome were eating an evening meal one of them posed the question, "What are you reading?" When it came her turn she volunteered the name of the newly-checked out book. Her date was very interested being a college professor and the author of her book. She volunteered a few glib statements about the title and that she had not really read much of the book. Later in her testimony she said, "I went home that night, picked up the book, and read every word and hung on every line because I had *fallen in love* with the author of the book." That made the *difference*! So it is with us. The business of the Holy Spirit is to assist us in falling in love with the Author of the Bible. And when I allowed the blessed Holy Spirit to fill me, I too, *fell in love* with the Author and reading the Bible, praying, fasting, praising, just living for Jesus became matters of high exhilaration!

"Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires." (Romans 8:5)

EXERCISE 46-A

Draw a circle around the number which represents your spiritual appetite *before* you met Jesus and *now*.

BEFORE I ACCEPTED JESUS

AS OF NOW

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	APPETITE FOR SPIRITUAL THINGS	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	SET APART FROM WORLD	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	ABLE TO DEAL WITH THE DEVIL	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	VICTORY OVER HABITUAL SINS	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	HUNGER FOR GOD'S WORD	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	DESIRE TO FOLLOW GOD'S WORD	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Total before I accepted Jesus_____ POSSIBLE 60 TOTAL my life as of NOW_____

Sanctification is *progressive* in our lives. Hopefully the above figure which represents your former life, and "as of now" is higher than before you met Jesus and the Holy Spirit convicted you of sin and convinced you to accept Him.

The Apostle Paul said of his own self--"Brethren, I could not myself yet to have laid hold: but one thing (I do), forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:13-14)

Our Blessed Holy Spirit assists us in overcoming habitual - besetting sins. "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, **let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin** that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us." Hebrews 12:1

When I was six years old the devil attacked my flesh by tempting me to steal. Another besetting sin came a few years later. I tried by my own efforts of self-determination, commitment, and prayer to overcome these sins. Victory was short realized and my life became like a roller coaster --up and down, down, then up. But, praise God when the Holy Spirit filled

me. He did somethings I had never been capable of doing--HE REMOVED THE APPETITE FOR THOSE FLESHLY DESIRES.

"Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world-- the **lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life**-- is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever." (I John 2:15-17 NKJ)

Satan tempts us in the same three areas where Adam and Eve, and Jesus were tempted as indicated in the chart below:

AREAS WHERE SATAN TEMPTS

Satan tempts us I John 2:16	Eve and Adam were tempted Genesis 3:1-ff	Jesus was tempted Luke 4:2-ff
<i>BODY - "Lust of the flesh"</i>	<i>"Good for food"</i>	<i>"Turn stones to bread"</i>
<i>SOUL - "Lust of the eyes"</i>	<i>"pleasant to the eyes"</i>	<i>"Worship me....give you kingdoms of the world"</i>
<i>SPIRIT --"Pride of life"</i>	<i>"to make one wise"</i>	<i>"Cast self down from pinnacle of temple"</i>

from "DEALING WITH DEVIL" seminar by Wilbur Johnson

SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR GAINING FREEDOM FROM BESETTING - HABITUAL SINS

1. DETERMINE TO CHANGE (REPENT) With the help of God and His Holy Spirit, the individual must make a conscious, deliberate effort to change. This step would include God's teaching on REPENTANCE. Repentance from dead works times past being sufficient for all ungodly deeds, etc., etc. I see repentance as involving 1) Sorrow for past problem sin;

2) purging my life from influences that would draw one astray. Burn, destroy, get rid of all magazines, videos, pictures, or objects that draw one into this activity. Jesus put it this way, "If your right hand offends you, CUT IT OFF." (Matthew 5:30) This also would include avoiding movie houses, video stores, magazine racks, topless bars or private clubs, etc, that may cause one to be tempted. Even when it seems that you are winning the battle, you need to continue to avoid even driving past such business establishments and those parts of town where you might be tempted. If and when you travel, avoid motels that have "dirty movies" as even an option. Much like an alcoholic who recognizes that he/she is an alcoholic and consequently must never touch liquor again lest they fall back into their old ways, so a person beset by lust must avoid all things that draws one's eye. Even the second look at a lovely lady must be avoided if one is really serious about purging this sin from his life. Romans 13:14 says, "But put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lust there of." (See also verse 13). You may recall my message--"How To Be Filled With The Holy Spirit" in the first series. It is contained in my video and on page 34 of my book "Faith Alive in Heart, Home, and Church"--that talks about knowing a Christian by his/her TALK, by his/her WALK, and by his/her GAWK.

2. PRAY TO BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT (Ephesians 5:18; Acts 4:31)

The first, most important and essential thing is to ask God to fill you daily with His Spirit. This request, regularly and sincerely, may indeed be the easiest step, but it surely is the most essential. Without the Holy Spirits working (URGING & PURGING) we do not have the DESIRE to say no. That is why I include this as the second step. If a person were not a Christian, then the first step would be to put on the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. FASTING CAN BE HELPFUL. It must be emphasized, that, as I understand fasting, it is not just refraining from eating food, but must include using that time to speak to God in prayer and to let Him speak to you through His word.

***4. CONFESSION NEEDED.** I believe confession and accountability must be included as a third step. YES, confession to GOD--(I John 1:9); but, also confession to a fellow Christian such as we have shared. (James 5:16) And agree with the other person to ask-- *How the battle is going?* Ask and expect to be asked pointedly, expecting an honest response how the brother is doing in this battle. We recognize that God knows all and sees all, but we need, as the little girl told her mother, "I want to see God with some skin and bones." We need each other to challenge, inspire, encourage and discipline us. One of my little known favorite passages of scripture is Proverbs 27:17, "As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another."

5. CLAIM THE BLOOD OF JESUS AS A COVERING and cleansing for our sin. (Revelation 12:11) Remind Satan that Jesus has forgiven you and that Satan no longer has any right to you or any part of you, body, soul or spirit. (Romans 6:1-6; Ephesians 2:1-7; and 1 Peter 4:1-3). As Jesus said to the woman, so let His statement be our **GOAL**, "Go and sin no more." Finally, always **be strong and of good courage!**"

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. herefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand." (Ephesians 6:10-13)

(*) ACCOUNTABILITY---If you have no one near you whom you can *lean on* in confessing your faults, and to pray with you, then I am willing to serve Jesus and you in this manner. Get in touch preferably by e-mail--wsjfaith@hit.net or Box 875. Ark. City, Kansas 67005

REMEMBER THREE THINGS:

1. ACCEPT YOURSELF AS CLEANSED AND FORGIVEN with the knowledge that "Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world," (1 John 4:4), and that we have the inner strength available to resist. See)Philippians 4:13) and (1 Corinthians 10:13).

2. GOD NEVER GIVES UP ON US. Fellow human beings sometimes will, but NOT GOD. HE IS ALWAYS with us, desiring HIS BEST for us but often having to settle for something less. VERY IMPORTANT IS the fact that we NOT GIVE UP ON OURSELVES.

3. GOD LOVES YOU/ME (.) period. NOT when we sin no more, and NOT as we will be tomorrow, or NOT when we are perfect. BUT, HE LOVES us as WE ARE RIGHT NOW, even when we fail, and YES when we win the VICTORY. HALLELUJAH FOR HIM and HIS LOVE! JESUS LOVES YOU and we do too!-- by the Grace of God---we PRAY FOR YOU.

Matthew Henry makes these excellent comments about the victory of *overcoming* in I John 5:4 "And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith, v. 4. Faith is the cause of victory, the means, the instrument, the spiritual armor and artillery by which we overcome.

1. In and by faith we cleave to Christ, in contempt of, and opposition to, the world.
2. Faith works in and by love to God and Christ, and so withdraws us from the love of the world.
3. Faith sanctifies the heart, and purifies it from those sensual lusts by which the world obtains such sway and dominion over souls.
4. It receives and derives strength from the object of it, the Son of God, for conquering the frowns and flatteries of the world.
5. It obtains by gospel promise a right to the indwelling Spirit of grace, that is greater than he who dwells in the world.
6. It sees an invisible world at hand, with which this world is not worthy to be compared, and into which it tells the soul in which it resides it must be continually prepared to enter; and thereupon,

The apostle concludes that it is the real Christian who are the true conqueror of the world: Who is he then that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? v. 5. It is the world that lies in our way to heaven, and is the great impediment to our entrance there. But he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God believes therein that Jesus Came from God to be the Savior of the world, and powerfully to conduct us from the world to heaven, and to God, who is fully to be enjoyed there. And he who so believes must needs by this faith overcome the world." from Matthew Henry's Commentary

EXERCISE 47

Now, without looking back, write down four suggested rules for overcoming habitual sins.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Meditate on your victory of overcoming certain sins and if you are willing, share one of your victories with your class, group, leader.

The Holy Spirit Sanctifies by

1. Giving Power to Begin Again
and Power to win in the Battle with Self and Sin
2. Giving **FRUIT** as evidence of His Presence
3. Giving us GIFTS to serve Others

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." (Galatians 5:22-25 NKJ)

EXERCISE 48

List all the growth factors that produces an apple on a tree _____

Any fruit is the wonderful result of several factors. Your list surely included--God, seed, planting, sprout, tree or bush, bud, bloom and finally the fruit. We have little or nothing to do with this whole process. Just so, our spiritual fruit, passes through a like process.

EXERCISE 49

Draw a circle around the number which represents your spiritual status quo *before you met Jesus* and *now*.

BEFORE I ACCEPTED JESUS

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

LOVE
JOY
PEACE
GOODNESS
FAITH
LONG SUFFERING
MEEKNESS
GENTLENESS
TEMPERANCE

AS OF NOW

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Total before I accepted Jesus _____ POSSIBLE 90 TOTAL my life as of NOW _____

Our title above asserts that *fruit is the evidence of His presence*. Matthew records Jesus' message about the importance of *fruit*.

"Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. **By their *fruit* you will recognize them.** Do people pick grapes from thorn bushes or figs from thistles? Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad *fruit*. A good tree cannot bear bad *fruit*, and a bad tree cannot bear good *fruit*. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, **by their *fruit* you will recognize them.** "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!' Thus, by their *fruit* you will recognize them." (Matthew 7:15-23)

Fruit is a valid test to determine the genuineness of faith. *Works* are not trustworthy. In Jesus' example, a wolf (false prophet) can produce *works*; but good trees, vines, people are known by *good fruit*.

Here is a good rule to go by-- we must prove all things. (I Thessalonians 5:21)

EXERCISE 49

Write out the following verses:

1 Thessalonians 5:21 _____

1 John 4:1 _____

"Observe the illustration of this comparison, of the fruit being the discovery of the tree. You cannot always distinguish them by their bark and leaves, nor by the spreading of their boughs, but by their fruits ye shall know them. The fruit is according to the tree. Men may in their professions put a force upon their nature, and contradict their inward principles, but the

stream and bent of their practices will agree with them. Christ insists upon this, the agreeableness between the fruit and the tree, which is such as that. If you know what the tree is, you may know what fruit to expect. Never look to gather grapes from thorns, nor figs from thistles; it is not in their nature to produce such fruits. An apple may be stuck, or a bunch of grapes may hang, upon a thorn; so may a good truth, a good word or action, be found in a bad man, but you may be sure it never grew there." (from Matthew Henry's Commentary)

NOTE again what Jesus said: "Thus, **by their fruit you will recognize them.**" "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!' **Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.'**" (Matthew 7:20-23)

EXERCISE 50

Write down three things from Matthew 7:20-23 which Jesus said many will say they did:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Are the above three items *fruits* or *works*? _____

The answer is--they are *works*, and herein lies a great danger! The following insight is from the late J. Russell Morse, a missionary to Tibet. "Just as there are certain laws of physics that everyone shares in and must live by such as the *Law of gravity*, *Law of force* and the *Law of thermodynamics*; just so, there are *spiritual laws* that we all share in automatically, too. We all have the *gift of life* from God and He sustains that life. It is also true that there are certain laws of power we can "plug into." Out in Tibet we preached *tithing* and some of the pagans began to practice it. They were blessed just as Malachi 3:10 promises. Although not Christians, they were richly blessed because they *plugged into God's power source*. Pharoah's "Magic men" did the same thing with the first three of the Ten Plagues in Exodus 7. In Matthew 7:22 these people *plugged into God's power* and did *many good works*, yet Jesus in verse 23 said "I never knew you, Away from me, you evildoers." *Fruits* come from the Holy Spirit, but *works* can be counterfeited. So, do NOT follow men because of their *works*, rather observe their *fruits*."

One final word of caution,

EXERCISE 51

Write "YES" or "NO" after each fruit named in Galatians 5:22-25 which CAN be counterfeited.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is

love-

joy-

peace-

longsuffering-

kindness-

goodness-

faithfulness,

gentleness-

self-control-

Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." (NKJ)

Those who have studied the Scripture and the Mind of the Lord assert that **LOVE** is the only fruit which cannot be counterfeited. This may be well be the reason Jesus had so much to say about **LOVE**. 62 times Jesus talks about *love* in the Gospels, and taking their cue from Him the writers of the 23 other New Testament books speak of *love* 168 times.

EXERCISE 52

Write down I Corinthians 13:13

I attended a New Year's "Watch Party" at which we were asked to write down a resolution for the New Year. One young man announced--"I resolve to love everybody this year even if it kills me." We smile but what he resolved is impossible. Love or any of the fruits are not arrived at through self determination but are produced as *fruit* of the Spirit. We receive them by *abiding in the Vine* as Jesus said:

EXERCISE 53

Underline the word abide in the following verses.

"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love." (John 15:1-9 NKJ)

EXERCISE 54

Let us close this section on the Holy Spirit Consecrating (setting us apart) with this meaningful meditation. Spend some time alone reading this meditation and praying about your daily walk with Jesus.

As the Lord sifts our soul through the vicissitudes the Holy Spirit is sanctifying/consecrating us for this life and that Life yet to be with eternal dimensions.

"Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus. He called out to them, "Friends, haven't you any fish? No, they answered.

He said, Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some. When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish. Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, It is the Lord! As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, It is the Lord, he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken it off) and jumped into the water. The other disciples followed in the boat, towing the net full of fish, for they were not far from shore, about a hundred yards.

When they landed, they saw a fire of burning coals there with fish on it, and some bread.

Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you have just caught."

Simon Peter climbed aboard and dragged the net ashore. It was full of large fish, 153, but even with so many the net was not torn.

Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." None of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord.

Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish.

This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead.

When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you truly love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."

Again Jesus said, "Simon, son of John, do you truly love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep."

The third time he said to him, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep." (John 21:4-21)

*** A LOVE STORY ***

One day, I woke early in the morning to watch the sunrise.

Ah, the beauty of God's creation is beyond description.

As I watched, I praised God for His beautiful work.

As I sat there, I felt the Lord's presence with me.

He asked me, "Do you love me?"

I answered, "Of course, God! You are my Lord and Saviour!"

Then He asked,

"If you were physically handicapped, would you still love me?"

I was perplexed. I looked down upon my arms, legs and the rest of my body and wondered how many things I wouldn't be able to do, the things that I took for granted.

And I answered, "It would be tough Lord, but I would still love You."

Then the Lord said,
"If you were blind, would you still love my creation?"
How could I love something without being able to see it?
Then I thought of all the blind people in the world and how many of them still loved God and His creation.

So I answered, "Its hard to think of it, but I would still love you."

The Lord then asked me,
If you were deaf, would you still listen to my word?"
How could I listen to anything being deaf?
Then I understood. Listening to God's Word is not merely using our ears, but our hearts.
I answered, "It would be tough, but I would still listen to Your word."

The Lord then asked,
If you were mute, would you still praise My Name?"
How could I praise without a voice?
Then it occurred to me: God wants us to sing from our very heart and soul. It never matters what we sound like. And praising God is not always with a song, but when we are persecuted, we give God praise with our words of thanks.

So I answered, "Though I could not physically sing, I would still praise Your Name."

And the Lord asked, "Do you really love Me?"
With courage and a strong conviction, I answered boldly,
"Yes Lord! I love You because You are the One and true God!"

I thought I had answered well, but God asked,
THEN WHY DO YOU SIN?"

I answered, "Because I am only human. I am not perfect."
"THEN WHY IN TIMES OF PEACE DO YOU STRAY THE FURTHEST?
WHY ONLY IN TIMES OF TROUBLE DO YOU PRAY EARNESTLY?"

No answers. Only tears.

The Lord continued; "Why only sing at fellowships and retreats? Why seek Me only in times of worship? Why ask things so selfishly? Why ask things so unfaithfully?"

The tears continued to roll down my cheeks.

Why are you ashamed of Me? Why are you not spreading the good news? Why in times of persecution, you cry to others when I offer My shoulder to cry on? Why make excuses when I give you opportunities to serve in My Name?"

I tried to answer, but there was no answer to give.

You are blessed with life. I made you not to throw this gift away. I have blessed you with talents to serve Me, but you continue to turn away. I have revealed My Word to you, but you do not gain in knowledge. I have spoken to you but your ears were closed. I have shown My blessings to you, but your eyes were turned away. I have sent you servants, but you sat idly by as they were pushed away. I have heard your prayers and I have answered them all."

"DO YOU TRULY LOVE ME?"

I could not answer. How could I? I was embarrassed beyond belief. I had no excuse. What could I say to this? When my heart had cried out and the tears had flowed, I said, "Please forgive me Lord. I am unworthy to be Your child."

The Lord answered, "That is My Grace, My child."

I asked, " Then why do you continue to forgive me? Why do You love me so?"

The Lord answered,

Because you are My creation. You are my child.

I will never abandon you.

When you cry, I will have compassion and cry with you.

When you shout with joy, I will laugh with you.

When you are down, I will encourage you.

When you fall, I will raise you up.

When you are tired, I will carry you.

I will be with you till the end of days, and I will love you forever."

Never had I cried so hard before. How could I have been so cold? How could I have hurt God as I had done?

I asked God, "How much do You love me?"
The Lord stretched out His arms, and I saw His
nail-pierced hands. I bowed down at the feet of Christ,
my Saviour. And love overflowed my heart, I truly prayed.

Author Unknown.

Shared by Mrs. Philip (Deb) Messer, Goddard, Kansas

The Holy Spirit Sanctifies by

1. Giving Power to Begin Again
and Power to win in the Battle with Self and Sin
2. Giving FRUIT as evidence of His Presence
3. Giving us GIFTS to serve Others

EXERCISE 55

This exercise illustrates the matter of "blind spots" in our vision. Sometimes we have "blind spots" in relation to our spiritual gifts. We may mistake "talents" for "gifts" or simply fail to realize what our gifts are.

Read this sentence: FINISHED FILES ARE THE RESULT OF YEARS OF SCIENTIFIC STUDY COMBINED WITH THE EXPERIENCE OF YEARS.

Now count aloud the F's in the sentence. Count them ONLY ONCE: do not go back and count them again. See below...

ANSWER:

There are six F's in the sentence. One of average intelligence finds three of them. If you spotted four, you're above average. If you got five, you can rejoice. If you caught six, you are a genius.

There is no catch. Many people forget the "OF'S." The human brain tends to see them as Vs and not Fs.

GIFTS DEFINED and HAZARDS

Biggest Hazard for any of the gifts is "Gift Projection." This means our giftedness makes our motivations and abilities seem so important to us and so natural that we tend to think others should feel the same way we do and be able to do the same things we do.

EXERCISE 56

After each gift definition and the listing of hazards, please list a Bible example and a contemporary example from your own life, church or the brotherhood.

GIFTS for SERVING

GIFT OF SHOWING MERCY: The ability to manifest practical, compassionate, cheerful love toward suffering members of the body of Christ. To identify with the feelings of those in distress and the ability to meet their needs.

Hazards -- *

- * Pride in ability to empathize and resenting those who are not sensitive to people.
- * Failure to be firm with those who have been hurt. Build up sense of self pity in people.
- * Being guided by emotion rather than logic.
- * Overlooking grave spiritual failures and mistaking indulgence for love. The opposite end from the prophet. The mercy makes excuses and tends to condone the sin.
- * Tends to be prepared to accept peace at any price.
- * Tends to conflict with other gifted people more than others because they see almost everything in shades of gray and really doesn't care that the suffering may be caused by sin. All they know is that there is a hurting person in need of love and ministry, not judgment. Gifted people need each other to balance each other, and if they fail to understand that and recognize the lubricating nature of love, I Corinthians 13, they will be in constant conflict.

Author and lecturer Leo Buscaglia once talked about a contest he was asked to judge. The purpose of the contest was to find the most caring child. The winner was a four-year-old child whose next door neighbor was an elderly gentleman who had recently lost his wife. Upon seeing the man cry, the little boy went into the old gentlemen's yard, climbed onto his lap, and

just sat there. When his mother asked him what he had said to the neighbor, the little boy said, "Nothing, I just helped him cry."

#1) NAME of the gift the child exercised _____

EXAMPLE of this gift in the Bible _____

EXAMPLE of this gift from your life or church _____

GIFT OF GIVING: Motivation to entrust assets to others for the furtherance of the ministry.

The God-given ability, perhaps to earn, certainly to give money for the progress of God's work with such care and cheer that the recipients are fortified.

Hazards -- *

- * Pride
- * Danger of measuring spiritual success by material assets.
- * Overlooking long range spiritual goals in order to meet immediate material needs (is tempted to give without looking into situation carefully enough)
- * Temptation to buy influence (threaten to withdraw support). Temptation to use money as a weapon or a means of manipulation.

EXAMPLE of this gift in the Bible _____

EXAMPLE of this gift from your life or church _____

GIFT OF HELPS: This is the Spirit-given ability to serve the church in any supporting role, usually temporal, though sometimes spiritual. The gift enables one to serve joyfully and diligently wherever and whenever required. It is not for helping the poor, sick, aged, orphans and widows (which is really the gift of showing mercy), but for lending a hand wherever it will release other workers in their primary spiritual Ministries, and to do it in such a way that it strengthens and heartens.

Hazards -- *

- * Neglecting home responsibilities.
- * Pride in good works.

A unique example of this gift is told in the following true story.

She is a woman of the Kansas prairie, working long and hard beside her husband, "Preach" tilling the soil, and raising a fine family of two sons and one daughter.

I came to know her best when she arrived at our end of the State for a thirty day stay to house sit, tend garden and ride herd on two dogs and two cats. The month of June stretched into August, then September and October. The philosophy of the Lady of the Prairie is simply said "I live by the side of the road of life and people's needs are my concern."

The immediate need in Winfield was dictated by her daughter-in-law who fell while rafting in the Grand Canyon. She broke her back in two places causing paralysis from the upper waist down. This faithful mother-in-law full of mercy, love and help stayed on. The planned one month turned into two, three, four, five, six. Simply she said, "I stay as long as there is a need."

Late Spring had turned to Summer, then when Fall was leaning toward Winter, and her daughter-in-law had learned to live in a wheel chair and drive a hand controlled van. This wonderful lady returned to her home on the Kansas prairie near Hugoton.

I salute this Lady of the Prairie as a "Queen of Helps to Souls in Need." I know both of them well for the daughter-in-law is my daughter, Dr. Teresa Johnson and the "Queen of Helps, Mercy and Love" is the dedicated **June Flummerfelt**.

#2) NAME of the gift June Flummerfelt exercised _____
EXAMPLE of this gift from your life or church _____

GIFT OF GIVING: Motivation to demonstrate love by meeting practical needs. Carrying out the spirit of love by serving others in Jesus' Name.

Hazards -- *

- * Neglecting home responsibilities.
- * Pride in good works.
- * Danger of being pushy...of anticipating a person's need before the person is aware of it.
- * May become bitter because sufficient appreciation has not been shown for his gifts.
- * Emphasis on practical things to the exclusion of spiritual things.
- * Sometimes impatient with "spiritual people." (note: Mary & Martha)
- * Sometimes more concerned with meeting material needs than spiritual needs.

EXAMPLE of this gift in the Bible _____
EXAMPLE of this gift from your life or church _____

GIFT OF HOSPITALITY: That supernatural ability to open ones' house with a warm welcome to strangers or friends in need of food and lodging.

Hazards -- *

- * Neglecting home responsibilities.
- * Pride in good works.

Rees Howells (1879-1950), the Welsh coal miner, tells of a meaningful ministry among the needy. He describes it, "Not long after this, and only a few months after he had started the ministry in the village, the Lord gave him a further commission, He laid on him the burden of the tramps. The many men who were to be found in that district wandering homeless and jobless from place to place. They were to give a chance to every tramp that came to the mission. It was to be a practical lesson of what divine love is towards an undeserving sinner. The Spirit made plain what they were to do: to give each man a new suit of work clothes, find him lodgings and work, and pay his board until he drew his first pay. "We were called to put Isaiah 58 into practice," said Mr. Howells. "Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter-- when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard." (Isaiah 58:7,8)

"When we first started to help them:" Rees said, "we were afraid too many would come in the same fortnight, and that we could not provide for them; and while there was fear, there was inward struggle. We soon found out that we could not provide and that was just the place the Lord wanted us to come. Then we had to find out that God would provide if we would trust Him. The Holy Ghost allowed us to be failures once or twice, so we quit struggling and trying to do it ourselves. We clung to God's promises, pleading with Him to come to our rescue, and He never failed us." from Rees Howells' Intercessor, pgs 58-65

In our ministry of many years at Minneola, Kansas, we experienced similar lessons in a faith walk of helping people. The "tramps" began to come one by one and sometimes by the carload. We helped them one by one in Jesus' Name according to their needs. My wife, Imalee, was a key person in this whole scenario, always with a open heart to set one more place at the meal table or make room for overnight guests. A tuned in 'Kitchen Committee' of Marie Moody, Irene Deniston, Katy Johnson and Carmalee Beebe were most willing to help. This attitude of help the helpless spread throughout the church and youth leaders Sharon Kennedy, Lillie Houser, Irene Grimmatt and Juanita Morain enlisted their youth groups to assist in ministering to

the needs within the town and church in a variety of ways. Morris Kennedy enlisted the men to take tons of food to the Kiamichi Mountain Missionaries of Oklahoma for many years. Some funds were available through the elders and deacons but the needs exceeded the funds available. We began to present these impossible needs to the Lord. When a need was present, but most often just prior, cash in an unmarked envelope arrived in the mail. Sometimes a twenty dollar bill or two and once a hundred. The need dictated the amount. Not until many years later as I was visiting the Postmaster Elwood Marshall, a lady came in and dropped an envelope in the mail slot. Postmaster Marshall reached over, picked up the letter, postmarked it and said, "Preacher here is a 'special delivery' letter for you." I opened the unmarked letter and a twenty dollar bill fell out. The mystery saint was Irene Grimmett. Strangely after ten years the "highway-tramps" ceased to come our way, and we moved on to the Faith Alive traveling revival ministry.

#3)NAME of the gift Rees Howells exercised_____

EXAMPLE of this gift in the Bible_____

EXAMPLE of this gift from your life or church_____

GIFTS for TEACHING

GIFT OF TEACHING: To search out and to validate already existing truth. This is the supernatural ability to explain clearly and apply effectively the truth of the Word of God. Every believer is to be a teacher in his own quiet, confined way, even if he doesn't possess the gift to teach in formal situations.

Hazards -- *

- * Pride of knowledge
- * More interested in the research than in the student.
- * To be so concerned about details that a person misses the broad spectrum of the picture.
- * Danger of believing that spiritual truth can be discerned by the intellect.
- * Becoming so involved in study that the gaining of knowledge becomes an end of itself instead of the impartation being the end.
- * Tends to be intolerant of those who do not dig deep enough in study and therefore often sees shallowness in other's presentations.

From lectures and the threads of everyday life, Professor Howard Hayes of Midwest Christian College of Oklahoma City and now of Tennessee imparted academic lessons and life to me--->

>He taught me the discipline of study!

>The discipline of thinking/reasoning was so evident in Bro. Hayes that I picked it up!

>Studying Scripture in its context was passed along!

> Observing Brother Hayes taught me the importance of the discipline of listening!

>The disciplines which are needful for a good revival was shared by Brother Hayes in a revival he preached for me at the Ripley, Oklahoma Christian Church in 1952.

>The disciplines of planning and prayer in a revival meeting plus having adequate publicity for a revival has blessed me much!

>The importance of public school assemblies during a revival and how to do it was a BIG blessing. I still remember a rope trick with spiritual application by Brother Hayes used at the school. I begged him to show me how to do it, and have used it hundreds of times in VBS, camps, youth meetings, Sunday School classes, revivals, etc. across the past 46 years.

>The importance of Bible messages with contemporary tied in. I still remember the message he spoke at the school--"The Danger of Flying Too Low", about an airplane incident in New York City in which a plane had nicked the corner of the Empire State Building. The problem was diagnosed as --plane flying at too low an elevation. Scripture he used was from Romans.

>The life discipline of living adequately but frugally which Howard and Florence conveyed to all who observed their lives. The discipline of love (sometimes tough love) they practiced! I bless them for their discipline of forgiveness and kindness which has stuck with me.

>All of the above coupled with their attitude of "MAKE DO! DEAL WITH THE WORST -- HOPE FOR THE BEST" has enriched me MUCH!

#4) NAME of the gift Bro. Hayes exercised_____

EXAMPLE of this gift in the Bible_____

EXAMPLE of this gift from your life or church_____

GIFT of WORD OF KNOWLEDGE: To have available important information needed for any specific situation, especially scriptural information.

Knowledge differs from wisdom. Knowledge is information; wisdom is the proper use of information to achieve proper ends. The gift of knowledge is the ability to search, systematize

and summarize the teachings of the Word of God, a supernatural ability to acquire deep insight into divine truth that is not discoverable by human reason. The gift of wisdom is the ability to relate those insights to the needs and problems of life.

A Word of Knowledge blessed my soul when our daughter, Lisa, who was 18 years of age at the time. She had an appointment with Dr. Menninger of the famed "Menninger Clinic" of Topeka, Kansas.

After walking into Dr. Menninger's office, and introduction he asked her to be seated in a chair close to his desk. She immediately sensed that he had a genuine interest in her and she looked directly at him with a smile. He handed her a lead writing pencil. Lisa reached out and took hold of the pencil placing it between her three fingers and thumb as any of us would do. Dr. Menninger smiled, and at that point began a long dissertation by saying, *"Lisa, you have told me a book full by the way you took my pencil. You're not on an animal level. A monkey would have clutched the pencil, but you received it like an intelligent human being, which you are."* He continued to talk for many minutes and my spirit assured me his words were a Word of Knowledge. His words encouraged Lisa and us, and warmed our hearts across the years when other doctors and psychiatrists floundered in their diagnoses.

Hazards -- *

- * Pride in knowledge.
- * Impatient with less knowledge.
- * May mistake knowledge for wisdom.
- * May seek after knowledge as an end in itself and overlook the needs to which it should be applied.

Here is a life story which illustrates this Gift of the Word of Knowledge.

Something happened near Christmas that was a word of knowledge to my soul. A pickup pulled up in front of the house and a man got out carrying a poinsettia. Imalee and I started guessing as to who? A lady got out which confused our guessing even more. They rang the door bell and Imalee said to the man, "Come in Cliff." She was right! It was Cliff and Virginia Johnson from Wichita who we had met 22 years earlier in Guthrie, Oklahoma, at a revival there. They have sent gifts three or four times every year. We chatted and I offered to take them out to supper. But they had come down to visit a cousin and had a supper appointment with reservations at a local motel. They left the poinsettia with a Christmas card and a fifty dollar check. I insisted they see the house but being our age they were not given to climbing stairs unless it was an absolute necessity. They toured the downstairs and Imalee and Virginia came

back into the living room. Cliff and I walked straight on through to the vestibule. Then, out of the clear blue sky Cliff said, "You know something has been bothering me for many months. I dream about it and wake up thinking, *"Who will take care of Virginia if I go first? But, recently the answer came to me and it was this--GOD HAS TAKEN CARE OF US ALL THESE YEARS AND BEEN VERY GOOD TO US. IF I GO FIRST HE WILL TAKE CARE OF VIRGINIA AND IF SHE GOES FIRST, HE'S GOT ME IN HIS HANDS, TOO!"* I told Cliff that strangely I, too, been wrestling with the same proposition for some time. He responded-- *"WELL, GOD WILL TAKE CARE OF US!"* That warmed my heart very, very good, like a wood fire in a fireplace on a cold winter day. I'll remember that the rest of my days.

#5) NAME of the gift Bro. Cliff Johnson exercised _____
EXAMPLE of this gift in the Bible _____
EXAMPLE of this gift from your life or church _____

GIFT OF EXHORTATION - ENCOURAGEMENT: Motivation to stimulate the faith of others to specific action in spiritual development (either groups or individuals).

Whenever I'm disappointed with my spot in my life, I stop and think about little Jamie Scott. Jamie was trying out for a part in a school play. His mother told me that he'd set his heart on being in it, though she feared he would not be chosen. On the day the parts were awarded, I went with her to collect him after school. "Guess what Mom," he shouted, and then he said these words that will remain a lesson to me: "I've been chosen to clap and cheer."

Hazards -- *

- * Pride of results.
- * Easily discouraged and depressed.
- * Tends to manipulate others for personal gain.
- * Tends to spend too much time personally with people who do not want lasting results.
- * Tendency to be indiscreet in sharing results, it becomes an exhibition of spiritual pride.

My phone rang on a cloudy winter afternoon just after Christmas and I waited for Imalee to take the call. Doyle Terry of Zephyrhills, Florida, was calling to say: *"The Bible says to encourage one another and we're calling to say God loves You! We love you and rejoice that even though you are now tied down a bit, yet you are being used by God across this Nation. Your Lamplighter with the 23rd Psalm meditation came today, and as we meditated upon all the*

trials you have been through, and yet you are able to write this 23rd Psalm meditation of acceptance, we wept and thanked God for you and His Word. You'll remember we first met in a revival over 16 years ago at Harper, Kansas, and you shared from I Thessalonians 5:18

16 Be joyful always;

17 pray continually;

18 give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

We believed it and now we practice it! I've been in excruciating pain when it was time for a service to start and we were to sing and preach, and simply appealed to the Lord with--'Thank you Lord for this pain, and it went away!'"

The Singing Terrys are a team for Jesus who traverse the country singing and speaking for the Lord.

#6) NAME of the gift Dr. Menninger exercised_____

NAME of the gift Bro. Terry exercised_____

EXAMPLE of this gift in the Bible_____

EXAMPLE of this gift from your life or church_____

Gifts for LEADING

GIFT OF ADMINISTRATION / RULING: The Spirit-given ability to preside, govern, plan, organize and administer with wisdom, fairness, example, humility, service, confidence, ease and efficiency.

Hazards -- *

- * Pride in power and authority.
- * Using people to achieve his needs instead of meeting their needs.
- * Danger in overlooking major character weaknesses in people who are useful to meeting his goals.
- * Cannot tolerate fools gladly.
- * Can develop a power complex.

#7)EXAMPLE of this gift in the Bible_____

EXAMPLE of this gift from your life or church_____

GIFT OF DISCERNING: To discern between the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

Though every believer is responsible for discerning the spirits, some have a particular power to do so—a special ability to distinguish between the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. A person with the gift of discernment can discriminate between that which is raised up by God and that which pretends to be. He can spot a phony, unmask Satan's trickery, detect erroneous teachings and ferret out false teachers.

Hazards -- *

- * May mistake lack of faith for spiritual discernment of error.

- * Pride in ability to point out falseness.

Discernment of demons from a summer youth conference as reported by a director of Faith Alive days ministry.

"Brother Wilbur:

Simply AMAZING !!!!! That would summarize the youth conference and the whole week. Each evening after the Praise and Preaching time, the church groups gathered to go over the days' events. (Bill) started earlier in the week with each person sharing their testimony. We had kids who shared they had been taking drugs, including smoking marijuana. One girl shared of a night when she and some friends sneaked out of her house met some boys, got drunk and ended up losing her virginity which she said was the most dreadful experience that she had ever had and that she was greatly sorry she had ever done it. Another boy said that his sister was the target of a gang and that they had people driving by and shooting into their house. One boy said that he had been involved with the occult and satan worship and that he was trying to get out. Each story brought a flow of tears and a separate prayer time. I hope that the confessions will be accompanied by true repentance. Friday night the boy that had been in the occult was baptized before our small group time. That is when a startling thing happened. We were discussing the decisions that were made. The young man had his shirt off because it was wet from the baptism and we were on couches and chairs inside. As the discussions continued, stripe-like scars started to appear on his chest and stomach and he began to scream out in pain. (Bill) took the medical approach and asked if he was allergic to something or ever experienced hives. Several commented that the stripes had not been there when we sat down. We discerned that there were evil spirits involved, so we gathered and prayed and pleaded for the blood of Jesus to cover us and that the evil spirits would depart in Jesus' name. The stripes lightened, but did not totally disappear. The screaming in pain dissipated to an occasional cringe. Afterwards, the adult sponsors discussed what had happened with a bit of scepticism, but we could not explain the

marks. (Bill) felt convicted that the incident was for real and spent time directly with the young man in Bible study and prayer. (Fred) told him that he had been told that if any one tried to get out of the Occult group, that the "demons" would burrow under the skin and try to seal themselves in. I had never heard that part before, but the incident did match a lot of what I had heard about demon possession. Oh, I failed to mention, that (Bill) had the young man repeat phrases after him which included naming the name of JESUS and claiming victory through the blood of Jesus. (Fred) was reluctant at first to say the name of Jesus, but with much persuasion was able to say Jesus. I came home with (James), but I was told there were further incidents on the bus ride home. (Bill) had the kids fast and pray. I guess there was a reappearance of the "stripes/scars" and that (Fred) actually passed out and collapsed on the bus.

Wilbur, I believe this is a real occurrence and I am not sure what else we could/should have done. (Fred) had never told his parents that he was in the occult group and I'm sure that they will question the event. (Bill) was going to go back and discuss the events with them, but I don't know how they responded. I believe that (Fred) must stand by his decision, destroy any items that he may still have that were any way involved with the occult worship and find support to help him through this. I would be interested in any other comments or suggestions that you might have. (Names in parenthesis are substituted names.)

By for now, and may God bless.

In Christian Love,"

Larry Wright

REPLY by Wilbur Johnson

This "demon" case is most significant. NO, I have never heard of demons "hiding out under skin burrows-welts or whatever; but, most anything is possible when the devil is involved. Sounds to me like you all did what you could and what you should.

On that same Friday I got a phone call from a young man (c.30 years of age) to come to his house as he needed help. I have known him several years as he cuts meat at Country Mart and had been to his house about a year ago. Last Friday when I visited him he complained of a "demon of paranoia." I discerned that there was demonic activity in his life and I spent about two hours praying with him, confessing Scripture and he confessed many sins and prayed which brought relief. He is an avid (fetish) jogger believing God has called him to run and pray. He attends Calvary Chapel, reads his Bible and prays. Strange case to say the least.

#8) NAME of the gifts Youth Leaders exercised_____

EXAMPLE of this gift in the Bible_____

EXAMPLE of this gift from your life or church_____

GIFT OF WORD OF WISDOM: To apply knowledge or insights to situations in a practical way.

Hazards -- *

- * Cannot tolerate fools gladly.
- * Pride in his ability to perceive answers to complex problems.
- * Easily offended when advice not followed.
- * May be tempted to use the gift to get his own way or withhold wisdom as punishment.

Uncertain of what "door" to walk through in serving the Lord, I needed wisdom from on High. At the time, we had ministered at Minneola, Kansas, for nine years and were considering if it was time to move. The pulpit of the Central Christian Church in Dodge City, Kansas, was open and I was contemplating the Lord's Will for us in relation to that. So, the night before, on my prayer walk, I asked the Lord this question-"HOW LONG SHOULD WE STAY IN ONE PLACE?" No one else knew of my prayer query.

The next day was the Fourth of July. We went to the Wright Park at Dodge City for an outing. When we arrived at 11:30 a.m. there was a group of "Jesus People" having a rally. You may remember these were common in the sixties and seventies as a facet of "The Jesus Movement." I walked over to the informal gathering of young people and they were seeking someone to lead in a closing prayer. Two guys volunteered and prayed the closing prayer. Just as they finished, the leader announced he had a message from the Lord for someone in the group. This is what he said "Someone here wants to know how long they should minister in one place?" The answer is--"*Sometimes you must stay in one place for ten years or more to accomplish in one day what I want done.*" The leader said the person the message was for could acknowledge it or remain silent. Much startled and amazed I chose the silent response and sat down to ponder this answer. The answer was right! We stayed and the tenth year after that plus three more were days of high victory. --by Wilbur Johnson--

#9) NAME of the GIFT the unknown brother exercised_____

EXAMPLE of this gift in the Bible_____

EXAMPLE of this gift from your life or church_____

GIFT of PROPHECY: Motivation to reveal unrighteous motives by proclaiming God's truth. Not foretelling, but forth telling. Since God's revelation has been finished, and the Bible is our all-sufficient guide today, the gift of prophecy is now identified with proclamation based on God's Word. The gift of prophecy does not involve new revelation but a clearer understanding or

amplification of already-given truth. Prophecy applies the Scripture to the present scene. So we might define the gift of prophecy as the Spirit given ability to proclaim the written Word of God with clarity and to apply it to a particular situation with a view to correction or edification.

Hazards:

- * Spiritual Pride. May consider himself more righteous than others.
- * Tends to depend on his own ability in his presentation.
- * Tends to be judgmental, identifying sin with the individual.
- * Tends to have a sharp tongue without love.
- * Knows the right thing to say, but chooses the wrong time to say it.

#10) EXAMPLE of this gift in the Bible _____

EXAMPLE of this gift from your life or church _____

THE APOSTOLIC GIFT: Officially, the apostolic ended with the apostles; unofficially, the apostolic gift persists to our day as the missionary gift. The word "missionary" covers a broad meaning, sometimes losing significance by including almost anyone in Christian service or with Christian concern. More accurately from the Greek, though, a missionary can be defined as "one sent to minister transculturally with church-planting goals."

The missionary is sent from, as opposed to being called to, a particular church. Rather than being invited to a certain area, he is ordered (commissioned) out of his original homeland.

Ability to serve in another culture is part of the missionary gift.

The missionary must minister with evangelistic goals. Full-orbed evangelism includes conversion, baptism, growth and the organized fellowship; in other words, church planting.

#11) EXAMPLE of this gift in the Bible _____

EXAMPLE of this gift from your life or church _____

GIFT OF SHEPHERDING: Like the shepherd who guides, grazes and guards his flock, this gift involves guiding young believers into paths of righteousness, steering them toward spiritual nourishment, and protecting them from hostile influences. If more Christians would guide, feed and guard fellow believers, not so much counseling would have to be done by church staff. This not only eliminates much wear and tear on the official pastor, but also meets needs that otherwise might be ignored.

Hazards:

- * Pride in power and authority.
- * Resentment when the sheep do not follow, respect or appreciate them.
- * Using people to achieve his needs instead of meeting their needs.
- * Danger in overlooking major character weaknesses in people who are useful to him in meeting his goals.
- * Tendency to get caught up in 'Churchanity' and neglect the sheep.
- * Easy for shepherd to gossip, breach confidentiality.
- * Cannot tolerate fools gladly.
- * Can develop a power complex. Abuse of power.

#12) EXAMPLE of this gift in the Bible _____

EXAMPLE of this gift from your life or church _____

GIFT OF EVANGELISM: Though all believers are to witness, the gift of evangelism is a special ability to proclaim the Good News of salvation effectively so that people respond to the claims of Christ in conversion and in discipleship.

Hazards -- *

- * Temptation to draw followers after themselves,
- * Use of influence for personal gain.
- * Temptation to not see that new converts are properly disciplined which is a part of the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19,20.
- * Pride
- * Gift projection (See introduction at beginning of gift section).

Was Sam Walton, owner of the Wal-Mart stores a Christian? Is Mr. Wall of the giant "WALL DRUG STORE" in the Black Hills of South Dakota saved? When I met these two men the Spirit impressed me to find out.

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation." II Corinthians 5:17-19

While preaching a revival at Blanford, Indiana, Imalee and I, and preacher Doug Davis, went to eat pizza. The bus boy was a fine young man. After observing his speech and actions for a few moments, I said to him, "When did you become a Christian?" Startled, he looked up and said, "How do you know I'm a Christian?" I said, "I can tell by your actions, your attitude and your speech." He responded, "Well, it's true I am a Christian." He went on to share when he found Jesus and how as a senior in high school he was trying to live for Jesus. This opened a door for Doug Davis to interject an invitation for him to come and share his witness and worship with the State Line Christian Church.

Wherever there are people, there are opportunities to encourage souls on the road of life.

#13) NAME OF GIFT exercised in the above examples _____

EXAMPLE of this gift in the Bible _____

EXAMPLE of this gift from your life or church _____

Be prepared to share with your class/group what method YOU use in winning souls.

GIFT OF FAITH: Unlike saving faith, which every believer must have, the gift of mountain-moving faith is a Spirit given ability to have a vision of what needs to be done and firm conviction that God will do it even though it looks impossible. Indications that the gift is genuine is when others follow the Spirit in you.

Hazard -- *

- * Impatient with the weaker faith and pragmatic.
- * May become careless and mistake his will for God's.
- * May conflict with the one possessing the gift of wisdom, knowledge, discerning of spirits, or gifts of leadership.
- * Pride in faith.

The late J. Russel and Gertrude Morse family, our missionaries to Tibet tell of many beautiful stories how the Holy Spirit led others through them.

Son, Eugene Morse, records in the February, 1974 Reader's Digest one of those stories titled--"Home to Hidden Valley." Simply he said---The Communists were coming into the area to harass and capture the Christians. Bro. J. Russell Morse challenged the people:

"But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him."

II Corinthians 2:14

The people responded and at midnight after prayer, five thousand of them started an impossible journey of many miles out of Tibet, around India and into Burma. Brother Morse supposed some would be lost along the way. The perilous path took them through lion country, deadly snakes, and much of the mountain trail required sliding sideways single file. There were many children and mothers with small babies plus elderly folk. They pushed on through wind, rain and mud and after many days arrived safely without the loss of one, high in the Himalayan Mountains in a place called "Hidden Valley."

#14) NAME OF THE GIFT Brother Morse exercised in leading the people_____

EXAMPLE of this gift in the Bible_____

GIVE SOME EXAMPLES all of us are called upon to exercise this gift daily

GIFTS for CONFIRMING

GIFT OF MIRACLES: The ability to perform supernatural works for the Purpose of confirming the authority or the Word or the messenger; or expedite God's plan. A miracle must be an act which sets aside God's everyday acts such as the water turned to wine, Jesus walking on the water, healing of the man born blind, etc.

Hazards -- *

- * Pride in power.
- * Tendency to seek personal glory (Moses and the rock)
- * Danger of designating ordinary acts of God as miracles.

Rodger Thompson, minister in Wichita, Kansas, visited India in 1998 and following is a part of his report:

"Another woman in this village of Bangalapudur in the Periyar region in southern India was near death. The pastor prayed for her and then returned home. That night he was awakened by the Holy Spirit, and told to go pray for this lady. When he arrived at her home, he was told she had died and her body had been removed. He told them he was told to come pray for her so he went to where her body was and prayed. God raised her back from the dead! Shortly afterward (a week or two) she was bitten by a poisonous snake. Victims die from this bite almost immediately. Before she slipped into a coma she asked to be moved to the church building, as she wanted to die there. The members of the church did that, but the pastor and some of the members fasted and prayed for her there for five or ten days (I'm not sure which). At the end of that time the lady said she saw a great light and then woke up, healed!"

#15) NAME OF ABOVE GIFT _____

EXAMPLE of this gift in the Bible _____

EXAMPLE of this gift from your life or church _____

GIFT OF HEALING: The power to be used of God to bring healing at every level: emotional spiritual and physical. It is especially related to physical healing.

Hazards -- *

- * Pride in power.
- * Tendency to seek personal glory.
- * Tendency to use for personal profit.
- * Tendency to gather a personal following.

"Here is a case of a clear life changing "Word from the Lord" that I had to obey! This incident took place while I was a youth minister at the Fortville Christian Church in Fortville, Indiana. God was awakening me to the fact that the devil is real, spiritual gifts are for the church today and He still does miracles. Many stories could be told about what led up to this event, but suffice it to say it was another of those times when God was speaking into my world with such growing intensity that I was unable to ignore Him. One Sunday afternoon I got a call from the Dengers. Don was an elder in the church and their young son Joe, elementary school age, had wrecked his bike and the handle bar had gouged his eye. They took him to the doctor and the eye was hemorrhaging. It was bad enough that the doctor wanted to do surgery but they couldn't until the hemorrhaging stopped. Joe was to lie perfectly still or he could lose the eye.

They had Joe propped up in a recliner when my wife and I arrived. I don't remember when it started, on the way over there or after we walked in. I just remember knowing in my spirit that God wanted me to pray for Joe's healing. I was intimidated. I did everything I could to ignore this conviction. The longer I ignored it the louder it became until it was practically an audible voice in my mind. Like a fool I said "no." I remember thinking, "no, I will not pray for his healing, I will just pray a nice pastoral prayer in which I would ask for healing," but my prayer would not in any way create any expectation on the part of Joe or his family that he would be miraculously healed. So I prayed, visited, and squirmed the whole time.

We went home, and as the evening wore on the Holy Spirit kept telling me to pray for Joe to be healed. By now it was such a vivid struggle that I was nearly responding out loud. I remember being in our bedroom when I finally yielded. I think I spoke out loud and said, "OK Lord, I give up. It is too late to go back over there now, but I will pray now and then call Joe's mother in the morning and tell her what I have done. I prayed for Joe to be healed and peace settled over me.

The next morning I called Peg, Joe's mother, and told her what I had done and that I fully expected that when Joe went to the doctor the next Friday he would be healed. She shocked me when she said matter-of-factly, "Oh I know he will! I too have prayed for his healing and I know he will be healed!" I was really amazed.

As the week went by I got involved in ministry stuff and forgot about Joe's doctor's appointment. Friday afternoon Peg and Joe came walking into my office and told me that they had just come from the doctor. He had examined Joe's eye, backed up, examined it again, backed up and in amazement told them that there was no evidence of injury anywhere in the eye. He said he could go home and return to school and do whatever he wanted. There might be some blurriness for awhile from being covered so long but there was no injury there.

Again I have never been the same. Our God is a sovereign God and He will not stay in the boxes we assign Him to." (Rodger Thompson-Wichita, Kansas)

#16) NAME OF ABOVE GIFT EXERCISED _____

EXAMPLE of this gift in the Bible _____

EXAMPLE of this gift from your life or church _____

GIFT OF GLOSSA (unlearned languages-tongues) Speaking in an unlearned language as a sign to unbelievers or for personal edification.

Hazards -- *

- * Pride in power to speak in tongues and tendency to assess oneself more spiritual.
- * May exhibit a spirit of judgment or criticism.
- * Tendency to seek personal glory and gather a following.

The late Brother Don Dewelt of Joplin, Missouri, told me he had two students in his class at Ozark Bible College who praised God with glossa (unlearned language-Vine). "I'm sure not going to fault these young people who get 'charged up' by glossa and are out winning souls to Jesus ever day, which is doing far more than most of my students."

#17) EXAMPLE of this gift in the Bible _____
Do you know of a modern example? _____

GIFT OF INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES (unlearned language): A companion manifestation that may be exhibited in the tongues speaker or in another person present at the time of the speaking. It is the ability to interpret an unlearned language for the edification of the congregation.

Hazards -- *

- * Primarily, pride.

In his fine book Twix Twelve and Twenty, Pat Boone tells of an occasion when he was waiting for a plane in a New York City airport. A lady recognized him and introduced herself saying, "I need your help. I have just met a Hebrew lady from Israel who needs to know about Jesus. The lady speaks Hebrew and understands very little English. Pat introduced himself to the lady and began to tell her about Jesus and what she needed to do to be saved. She accepted Jesus and commented, "Thank you, seldom do I hear anyone speak such clear Hebrew." Pat Boone commented later, I certainly do not speak Hebrew but the Holy Spirit became the translator. Isn't that what occurred on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2:6-11?

18) EXAMPLE of this gift in the Bible _____
Do you know of a modern example? _____

SUGGESTED ANSWERS FOR ABOVE GIFTS

#1 - Mercy #2 - Helps, mercy, giving #3 - Hospitality, mercy #4 - Teaching
#5 - Word of Knowledge #6 - Encouragement #7 - Word of Knowledge #8 - Mercy,
Discernment #9 - Word of Knowledge #10 - Leadership #11 - Apostolic gift #12 -
Shepherding #13 - Evangelism #14 - Faith #15 - Miracles, healing #16 - Healing
#17 - Speaking in unlearned language #18 - Interpretation of unlearned language.

EXERCISE 56

OPEN BOOK TEST. See how well you have learned the "Gifts of the Spirit" by identifying the GIFTS of the HOLY SPIRIT from a mission trip to INDIA - February, 1999

There are 20 Gifts of the Spirit referenced in this report. Write the name of each on the blank lines provided.

"The people of India were among the most beautiful people I have ever seen. Their dark skin and fine facial features set off by brightly colored clothing (among the women) makes for a very attractive people. The sari that the women wear (all casts and in all situations) is one of the most feminine and graceful garments I know of. The men dressed more plainly but they were still very handsome.

The first thing that comes to mind is the absolute sense of peace and security I had the whole time we were there. I knew we were in a country where persecution is on the rise and in fact an Australian missionary and his two sons were burned to death by militant Hindus the first week we were there. Yet I was so secure that I didn't even realize it until it was almost over. When I finally realized how secure I felt I knew it was because of all the prayers that were holding us up before the Lord. The only times I was ever a little nervous was when we were traveling. Of course I always prayed the planes up and down, but the travel by auto was a truly harrowing experience. I had experienced something like it several years ago in the Philippines but I still found myself bracing for collision more than once. They drive on the left side of the road when they absolutely have to avoid collision. Otherwise it is a free-for-all. More than once we would pull out to pass a truck or bus, and have two vehicles coming at us with one or more bicycles, motorcycles, and ox carts and pedestrians on the side all trying to use the same two lanes. Somehow they know how to sort it all out. No one gets mad and there are relatively few wrecks. The main problem I had with the travel was the suffocating diesel and smoke fumes combined with the constant bouncing, starting, stopping, and swerving. I used a whole bottle of motion sickness pills. The smoke fumes come from the omnipresent rubbish fires. Everywhere was the smell of burning garbage and open sewers.

Example of a spiritual gift from the above paragraphs.

#14) Gift of martyrdom See I Corinthians 13:3

India is a land of great contrast. In many ways they still have very primitive lives, and yet in the middle of it all will be a television or other modern things. There is great beauty everywhere, and yet there is great ugliness also. The people are very particular to keep their personal space clean and neat, and yet they will throw trash on the ground and since there is no effective sanitation system, it just piles up in the ditches, vacant lots, and in little piles everywhere. The people set them on fire to get rid of them. With so many people they couldn't build a landfill big enough to hold it all anyway.

India Gospel League (IGL) has ministries all over India. They are not in every state but they are in most of them and constantly expanding. The ministry goes beyond just the proclamation of the Gospel and the planting of churches. #15) GIFT OF _____.

They believe (as I tried to say in my sermon notes that some of you received) that you cannot separate the love of God and the Gospel commission from the love of human beings and the need to minister to the whole person. Consequently they have children's homes, vocational training centers, leper colonies and feedings, hospital and medical ministries,

#16) GIFT OF _____, day care for mothers who work the fields,

#17) GIFT OF _____, schools, a seminary,

#18) GIFT OF _____, ministries to the blind and handicapped, they even work with local governments and civic organizations to improve villages. For example in one village, they helped put in a trench system to carry sewage. In another, they worked to help set up a lighting system. Low caste or otherwise destitute people are trained in a variety of vocations. Typing, sewing, weaving, steel fabrication, carpentry, auto mechanics, nursing, are a few of the vocations taught.

India is still a very rural country with agriculture being the primary industry. Of course crops vary across the country but we saw rice, tumeric, sugar cane, tapioca, tomatoes, peanuts, coconuts, castor beans, and many others. Of course almost everything is done by manual labor or with animal labor. Even road building crews and major concrete and block sewer trench construction (most of it is just open sewers running in little streams) we saw were all done manually. I did see a few pieces of heavy equipment and some tractors, but they were rare. Even buried telephone cable was installed manually.

One village which we were in had a population of 54,000 people. Salem, a city of one million had just been upgraded from town to city. There were none of the modern buildings of industry there. People everywhere!

Samuel Stephens, the president of India Gospel League has a vision of uniting all the small independent churches all over India to work together to saturate India with the Gospel. An organization called the National Association of Independent Churches was formed to serve as a networking agency for the churches. They divide up the country into regions and each region selects its own leader. #19) GIFTED MAN_____.

They set goals and work together to reach them. They meet in regional pastor conferences once a month, and the IGL staff provides equipping for the pastors and gives them equipment to use in planting churches. I was involved in speaking at four of these conferences. In 1992 there was a meeting of 200 pastors and they set the goal of planting 1,000 churches by the year 2000. The next year when they got together the number of pastors had increased dramatically and about 800 churches had already been planted (a church is twenty baptized believers). #20) GIFTED MEN_____. They revised to 2,000 and again found that they had almost reached it. They increased it to 5,000, and then 10,000, and now it is at 12,500. At one of the conferences I saw the pastors commit themselves to plant two churches each this year. Most pastors serve four to six churches. As you can see there is a great need to raise up leaders, and God is doing it. #21) LEADERSHIP GIFT OF_____.

At one new little house church we were in, I had the privilege of preaching. #22) GIFT OF_____. They were meeting in a rented two-room house. They were started when IGL decided to try and experiment. They took a visiting team (much like ours) and let them be a part of the showing of the Jesus film in this village. Then they went back, and followed up on those who responded to the invitation twice. A church was born. This congregation existed in a village of 54,000 people, the only Gospel witness there. I couldn't help but think about how many churches we have in a town of 3,000. These people had outgrown their house and had been searching for a long time for a place to meet, but no one wanted to rent to them because they were Christians. Finally the Lord provided this two room house. We sat with the men in the front room and the women were in the back room with a doorway in between. This was their first meeting in the house. They were very excited. They were concerned about the increasing persecution but committed to reach their village. They even broadcast the service over a PA system into the neighborhood.

As you may know our church sent \$5,000 to help build a church building in Bangalapudur in the Periyar region. #23) GIFT OF_____. It is also in southern India. We were privileged to be there to dedicate the building. #24) GIFT OF_____. This church has an amazing story. The pastor was trying to start a church there but was having little response. There was a woman in the village that was in her mid 30s and totally crippled. Doctors and shamans had tried to heal her to no avail. She was possessed by an evil spirit. The pastor went and prayed for her. She was delivered from the evil spirit and

totally healed. As a result everyone in the region heard about God's movement and many have come to Christ. GIFTS OF #25) Exorcism and #26)_____.

Another woman in this village was near death. The pastor prayed for her and then returned home. That night he was awakened by the Holy Spirit, and told to go pray for this lady. When he arrived at her home, he was told she had died, and her body had been removed. He told them, he had been told to come pray for her so he went to where her body was and prayed. God raised her back from the dead! Shortly afterward (a week or two) she was bitten by a poisonous snake. Victims die from this bite almost immediately. Before she slipped into a coma she asked to be moved to the church building, as she wanted to die there. The members of the church did that, but the pastor and some of the members fasted and prayed for her there for five or ten days (I'm not sure which). At the end of that time the lady said she saw a great light and then woke up healed! GIFTS OF #27) _____ and #28)_____.

There is in the church, which is about a year old, about 40 members, although there were about 200 there for the dedication. They had a regional pastor's conference, ladies conference, and youth conference at the same time. LIST THREE GIFTS #29) _____; #30)_____; and #31)_____.

There was an older lady there at the dedication whose husband had left her, and her family had rejected her when she became a believer. She was illiterate, but has a good memory of Scripture, and can quote huge sections of the Bible from memory. #32) GIFT OF_____. She had become an itinerate church planter, and along with another lady goes full time witnessing and praying for people. She has planted five churches. She goes to an area where she feels the Holy Spirit is leading her. When she gets there, she asks about the needs of the people and learns who is sick. She spends time in prayer, and then goes to pray for people around the village. God often works through her and heals those she prays for. THREE GIFTS #33)_____ #34)_____; and #35)_____.

by Rodger Thompson, Northwest Christian Church, Wichita, Kansas

SUGGESTED ANSWERS FOR ABOVE INDIA REPORT GIFTS

- #14 - Martyrdom -
- #15 - Government, administration
- #16 - Mercy, helps, teaching, healing
- #17 - Helps
- #18 - Teaching
- #19 - Evangelism, faith, administration, exhortation

- #20 - Missionary, evangelism, shepherding
- #21 -Shepherding, faith, government
- #22 - Exhortation (prophecy)
- #23 - Giving
- #24 - Exhortation
- #25 - Exorcism
- #26 - Healing
- #27 - Faith, healing
- #28 - Word of Knowledge
- #29 - Evangelism
- #30 - Teaching
- #31 - Exhortation
- #32 - Word of Knowledge
- #33 - Evangelism
- #34 - Healing
- #35 - Shepherding.

Identifying and Using OUR Gifts

"Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms." (I Peter 4:10)

As we begin to look towards our o-w-n personal "Gift(s) of the Spirit" here is a meaningful poem:

BUILDERS

Isn't it strange that princes and kings,
 And clowns that caper in sawdust rings,
 And common folk like you and me
 Are builders of eternity?
 To each is given a bag of tools,
 A shapeless mass, and a book of rules:
 And each must make, ere life is flown,
 A stumbling block or a stepping stone.

Author Unknown

UNWRAPPING YOUR GIFT

"There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good." (I Corinthians 12:4-7)

God would have taken us to heaven immediately at conversion had He no purpose for us here. Among other purposes, "we are saved to serve." To equip for service, God gives one or more spiritual gifts to every child of His. He does not want "dead wood" in His church.

On our way from Monahans, Texas, to Denver, Colorado, to share another revival, we parked at a state park west of Walsenburg. It was a place of beautiful landscape with mountains in the distance. After visiting with Stan and Susan Stockton, we retired to our trailer for the night. In this prairie park it was very quiet and with the setting of the sun the birds ceased to sing and in the distance a coyote howled. Imalee, Lisa and I slept like babies, and got up at sunrise to begin the final journey in Denver with Rodger and Connie Thompson.

When we opened our trailer door, we were pleasantly surprised to see eight inches of snow covering everything. We dug our way through and pulled out slowly heading for the mile high city.

When the Holy Spirit filled me, making Jesus the Lord of my life, it was like the coming of the snow--quietly with no immediate observable effects. However, a door was opened into a whole new world, and the flower and fruits of my gifts began to bud and bloom. Later when I took the 100 statement quiz in this chapter it indicated the Lord had, out of 20 Gifts of the Spirit listed in the Scripture, blessed me with 17 of those gifts. Perhaps most evident was a desire to *Praise the Lord, discernment of spirits, faith to walk, knowledge* to hear God speaking, and on goes the list. Many of these are discussed in detail in my first book Faith Alive in Heart, Home and Church (1989).

HOW TO DETERMINE YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFT

Below are 100 statements which may help you discover your spiritual gift or gifts. Please rate yourself with the following scale by writing the appropriate number in the corresponding number square on the "score sheet" at the end of these 100 statements.

The truth of this statement has been experienced in my life:

much 3 some 2 little 1 not at all 0

1. I have proclaimed the truth in a God-inspired and enthusiastic Way.
2. I have been responsible for the growth of a group of Christians.
3. I have enabled persons to learn Biblical truths in detail.
4. I have applied truth effectively in my life.
5. I have the ability to discover truth for myself.
6. I have encouraged verbally the wavering, troubled, etc.
7. I can see the difference between truth and error.
8. I manage money well in order to give liberally to the Lord.
9. I assist key leaders to relieve them for their essential job.
10. I work joyfully with persons ignored by the majority.
11. I can adapt well in a different culture in order to evangelize.
12. I can lead others to a salvation decision for Christ.
13. I can provide food/lodging graciously to those in need.
14. I believe God will keep His promises in spite of circumstances.
15. I can persuade others to move towards achieving Biblical objectives.
16. As a key church leader I delegate responsibility to others.
17. In the name of the Lord I can pray effecting miraculously changing circumstances.
18. In the name of the Lord my prayers cure diseases.
19. I have spoken in unlearned languages (tongues).
20. I can interpret unlearned languages (tongues) to avoid confusion in the church.
21. God uses me to reveal the future but shows no details.
22. I sacrificially give myself for infant or straying Christians.
23. I can explain books of the New Testament well to others.
24. I make what appears to be correct decisions for my life.
25. Insights of truth bring conviction to my mind and heart.
26. I am an instrument of dislodging the complacent and redirecting the wayward.
27. I judge well between the poor and good (or evil and good).
28. I give things or money liberally for the Lord.
29. I enjoy ushering or cleaning at a church related facility.
30. I rejoice to aid the undeserving.
31. I would like to learn another language well to help start a church.
32. I share joyfully what Christ has done for me.

33. My heart and home are open to provide a gracious haven for guests.
34. I have the conviction of the reality of an active God in the daily affairs of my local church.
35. I know where I'm going with Christian followers.
36. I am able to organize ideas, people, things, and time for more effective ministry
37. In the name of the Lord I can expel demons.
38. In the name of the Lord, I can heal the emotionally ill.
39. I have had tongues spoken by myself interpreted by another.
40. I have a motive for edifying the church when interpreting tongues.
41. God uses me to communicate great truths of God in a gripping compelling clear fashion
clearly spoken from the Lord.
42. I am well known by those I serve and guide.
43. I can make difficult Biblical truths understandable to people.
44. I can choose from options an alternative which usually works.
45. I can acquire and master facts and principles of Bible truth.
46. God uses me to verbally challenge the spiritually apathetic.
47. I have insights to tell what is wrong with a Biblical message.
48. I cheerfully give so that God's work will be extended and helped.
49. I enjoy typing, filing or recording figures or minutes for the Lord.
50. I am blessed by visiting in hospitals or homes for the elderly.
51. I am able to begin new churches with a different language and culture.
52. I can explain the meaning well that Jesus is the Christ.
53. I have a knack of making strangers feel at home.
54. I enjoy trusting in the presence and power of God for the impossible.
55. I can influence others towards Biblical goals while serving with them.
56. I am able to plan with others goals of ministry for action.
57. God has intervened to do impossible things in my life.
58. In the name of the Lord I can treat successfully those who are spiritually sick.
59. I do not forbid others to speak in tongues.
60. I pray that I may interpret if speaking in tongues occurs.
61. I preach effectively for people to respond to God's Word.
62. I can feed followers by guiding them to selected portions of the Bible.
63. I communicate Biblical truths to others enabling changes in knowledge, attitudes,
values or conduct.
64. My nomination of others for positions prove to be good selections.
65. I easily learn Biblical truths.
66. I am able to counsel effectively the perplexed, guilty or addicted.

67. I am able to identify that which is not true to the Bible.
68. I am able to earn much money for giving to the Lord's work.
69. I distribute church literature or papers in my community.
70. I enjoy taking shut-ins out for a drive or assisting them tangibly otherwise.
71. I enjoy soul-winning in a foreign country.
72. I rejoice to speak a message which is primarily the Gospel.
73. I have a genuine graciousness and appreciation of each guest in my home.
74. I let God be God in answering prayer for other Christians.
75. I can steer others through difficulties in a church related task.
76. I am able to lead a committee in making decisions together.
77. I am an instrument of God's supernatural change in lives.
78. I pray for others so that healing occurs.
79. I do not speak in tongues if there is no interpreter.
80. I can interpret tongues in a way that is orderly and not divisive.
81. I can give messages of doom or judgment where there is no repentance.
82. I am able to restore persons who have wandered away from their Christian community.
83. I train Christians to be obedient disciples of Christ.
84. I fear God in all personal decision-making.
85. I am able to recognize key and important facts of Scripture.
86. I can comfort a Christian in his/her affliction or suffering.
87. I can see through a phony before his phoniness is clearly evident.
88. I enjoy giving things freely with delight and love.
89. I am able to be a teacher's aid in Bible class.
90. I can talk cheerfully with those in prison or the lonely shut-in person.
91. I have the ability to learn a foreign language.
92. I continually go where unbelievers are in order to win them.
93. I am not forgetful to entertain strangers.
94. I trust in the reliability of Jesus as God.
95. Others follow me because I have an expert knowledge of some type which
contributes to the building up of my church.
96. I am able to recruit Christians to exercise their spiritual gifts.
97. In the Name of the Lord I am able to recover sight for the blind.
98. I can help effectively those who are feeble-minded
99. I believe that unlearned languages (tongues) I speak are a sign for unbelievers.
100. I desire an audience of some unbelievers when I interpret tongues.

ANSWER SHEET for Spiritual Gift Quiz

						TOTAL	GIFT
Row A	1	21	41	61	81		
Row B	2	22	42	62	82		
Row C	3	23	43	63	83		
Row D	4	24	44	64	84		
Row E	5	25	45	65	85		
Row F	6	26	46	66	86		
Row G	7	27	47	67	87		
Row H	8	28	48	68	88		
Row I	9	29	49	69	89		
Row J	10	30	50	70	90		
Row K	11	31	51	71	91		
Row L	12	32	52	72	92		
Row M	13	33	53	73	93		
Row N	14	34	54	74	94		
Row O	15	35	55	75	95		
Row P	16	36	56	76	96		
Row Q	17	37	57	77	97		
Row R	18	38	58	78	98		
Row S	19	39	59	79	99		
Row T	20	40	60	80	100		

Total up your points for each gift from left to right, here is the interpretation:

10-15 total points = You have the gift! Use it meekly and wisely.

5-10 total points = Humbly try out your aptitude in this area.

0- 5 total points = Probably no gift for you in this area.

After you have completed the test by rating yourself for each of the 100 statements, add the scores in each horizontal row (Row A: Statements 1, 21, 41, 61, 81; Row B: Statements 2, 22, 42, 62, 82, etc.). Record that number in the Total column. Your total score for each row indicates your level of interest and ability in the area of each particular gift. **Write in the names of the gifts from the list below.** Write the name of the appropriate gift for each row on the lines provided. The highest scores show you which spiritual gifts are most evident in your life.

Row A prophecy
Row B shepherding (pastoring)
Row C teaching
Row D wisdom
Row E knowledge
Row F exhortation
Row G discernment
Row H giving
Row I helps
Row J mercy
Row K apostleship
Row L evangelizing
Row M hospitality
Row N faith
Row O leading
Row P administration
Row Q miracles
Row R healing
Row S tongues
Row T interpreting tongues

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Paul urges us to uncover and utilize our gifts. He exhorts every believer "not to think of himself more highly than ought to think; but to think soberly." (Romans 12:3) A sensible estimate of our abilities is a spiritual necessity. But how do we go about discovering our spiritual capacities? Here are seven suggestions.

1) List the Gifts

A jeweler who recognizes diamonds must become acquainted with all kinds of gems. Similarly, the Christian must be informed about the many, multiformed New Testament gifts if he would hope to recognize his own.

2) Go to Work

We ought to expose ourselves to various kinds of Christian service, likely first in the area of natural abilities. Perhaps we should try teaching a Sunday school class, attend teacher training, visit door-to-door, join a nursing home team, or take in a Lay Institute for Evangelism.

Willingness to try something new may uncover a gift. Or urging by fellow believers to some different Christian service may suggest a hitherto hidden spiritual ability. When Paul encouraged Timothy to do the work of an evangelist (II Timothy 4:5) was he hinting that such activity might bring out the gift of evangelism?

3) Note your Inclinations

Desire for a gift may well point up its existence (though it does not guarantee it). A gift will often be preceded by desire and followed by opportunity to use it.

4) Dedication

Ever notice the location of Paul's discussion of gifts in Romans? It comes at the very beginning of the practical section that deals with godly living -- right after he asks for dedication of the believer's body. Is he trying to tell us that after an act of general dedication the first specific area that needs dedication is our gifts? How fitting to consciously place such gifts in the Lord's service, expressing willingness to obey Him with our spiritual capacities.

5) Development

The existence of a gift is a call to exercise it. Development of a gift may involve one in formal study, at home, by correspondence, in Sunday school, or in evening Bible school. Our gifts may be sharpened through the ministry of the gifts of fellow Christians. One reason Paul wished to travel to Rome was to bestow the benefit of his spiritual gifts, the overflow of which would contribute to the edification of believers (Romans 1:11).

6) Delight

Christians should take delight in discovering and using their gifts. The "delight" criterion in discovering one's gifts seems equivalent to the "peace of God" principle in ascertaining God's will. The inner joy a person experiences in exercising a gift may indicate that this is indeed that

person's gift. The delight a person finds in ministering his gift is subconsciously communicated to the recipients of his ministry. The overflow of delight reinforces the exercise of a gift.

7) Discernment by Others

The crowning confirmation that we possess a gift is recognition of this gift by others. In fact, others may see a gift in us long before we ourselves are aware of it. Thus, a vital duty of Christians is to encourage fellow believers when they observe a gift. Because the gift of encouragement was clearly evident, the apostles gave a disciple named Joseph a new name, "Son of Encouragement" or "Barnabas" (Acts 4:36). Frank discussion with fellow believers may help identify our gifts. Because self-estimate may be colored by deception, our character and abilities are often best evaluated by others. One professor said, "It's so strange to meet someone who claims to have the gift of preaching when no one has the gift of listening." However, earthly fellowships sometimes do not recognize gifted men at first. Campbell Morgan was rejected as a candidate for the ministry at age twenty-five. In later years, he won world-wide recognition as pastor, author, college president and Bible teacher. It is possible for believers to live many years unconscious of their wealth of spiritual gifts. Unused gifts squander the grace of God.

Some believers who used their gifts in bygone days may have allowed these gifts to cool almost to ashes. To such comes the reminder of Paul, "Stir up the gift of God which is in thee" (II Timothy 1:6). The verb "stir" means to rekindle slumbering ashes into a flame. Remember, once God gives a gift, He does not take it back. "The gifts ... of God are without repentance" (Romans 11:29)

C O N C L U S I O N

"By the grace of God I am what I am and His grace . . . was not in vain." (I Corinthians 15:10)

A few years before John Newton died, a friend was having breakfast with him. Their custom was to read from the Bible after the meal.

That day the selection was from I Corinthians 15. When the words "by the grace of God I am what I am" were read, Newton was silent for several minutes. Then he said, "I am not what I ought to be. How imperfect and deficient I am! I am not what I wish to be, although I abhor that which is evil and would cleave to what is good. I am not what I hope to be, but soon I shall put off mortality, and with it all sin.... Though I am not what I ought to be, nor what I wish to be, nor yet what I hope to be, I can truly say I am not what I once was; a slave to sin and Satan. I can heartily join with the apostle and acknowledge that by the grace of God I am what I am!"

Newton's words apply to every Christian. Because of God's goodness, we are spared the bad that we deserve and are given more good that we do not deserve. Every good thing comes from His hand.

Humble gratitude ought to characterize our lives. Even though none of us is what we want to be, I trust each of us is becoming what God wants us to be.

THE HOLY SPIRIT COMFORTS

1. THE BEGINNING

2. HE CREATES

3. HE CONVINCES

4. HE CONVICTS

5. HE CONVERTS

6. HE CONSECRATES

7. HE COMFORTS

8. HE COMMITS

9. THE CHALLENGE

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the **Comforter** will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you." John 16:7 (ASV)

Of the some 34 translated titles the Holy Spirit is given in the Bible, the greek "Parakletos" is a special one; also translated "Helper," "Advocate," "Counselor," "Expert Aide." This Greek term was used in a court of justice to denote a legal assistant, counsel for the defense, an advocate; generally, one who pleads another's cause.

There is a dimension of our being which requires comfort, thus our benevolent Creator has provided "comfort" in various forms to fill in the gap between what might or should have been and what is. When life deals us what we perceive to be a "bad hand," comfort awaits us. This understanding is put forth in Genesis 5:27-29.

Our Lord has designed our journey so that no man needs to travel Life's Road *alone*. "When Lamech had lived 182 years, he had a son. He named him Noah and said, "He will comfort us in the labor and painful toil of our hands caused by the ground the LORD has cursed." This was well illustrated as we traveled from Jerusalem to Egypt where there was much to see. After 200 miles we arrived at the border of Egypt with a long wait before us. After we cleared customs our new guides from Cairo greeted us. Minutes grew into hours and finally I went to our new Egyptian guides, Aynab and Adly Khattab, and asked why we could not begin the 700 mile trip to Cairo. They made a statement which I shall remember all my earthly days--"*No one crosses the desert alone.*" And I asked, "Why?" They said, "*There are bandits in the desert, lions and cobras, which often attack individual travelers or single buses and cars, but, we'll be safe in a caravan.*" So, after this long wait six tourist buses and three tourist cars were assembled with a security car in front and back--lights flashing and sirens blaring, we swept across the Border and out onto the great Sahara Desert at 120 kilometers per hour (75 MPH). There would be only one stop at the Suez Canal, and after this our guide pointed to the north and said, "*Most Bible scholars believe that is Goshen where Israel lived and worked for Pharaoh.*" Keep in mind that Bible historians conclude this nation after 430 years in Goshen of Egypt had a population numbering in the tens of thousands, possibly a million. Now, all we saw was the shifting, whispering sands of the desert--dunes and hills now reigned supreme where once perhaps a million people lived.

When they left Goshen after eating the first Passover (Exodus 12) they would never see those houses again, but there was comfort in knowing they would not travel *alone* on their desert

journey which turned into a 40 year trek before they arrived at the Jordan River and went into the Promised Land (Palestine). They too were accompanied by other travelers and *tight security*. There was the Pillar of Cloud by Day and a Pillar of Fire by Night, manna and quail, sweet water out of bitter and cures for the serpent attack in the desert.

We too, do not journey *alone*. In the front of our *caravan* is Jesus and behind us is the Blessed Holy Spirit while Angels minister to us and the comfort of God's Presence is all around us.

EXERCISE 57

List some Bible examples where people needed and found comfort. These examples do not need to contain the word "comfort"; but, comfort was provided.

Example: *Adam and Eve (Genesis 4:1)* _____

List some places on our journey where you already have or will need *comfort / help*.

God desires to help us in every way.

Karl Barth, theologian and philosopher, was asked, "What was the greatest idea you ever contemplated? He answered, "The one I learned at my mother's knee that Jesus loves me this I know for the Bible tells me so.

"Well, Mr. Barth what would you say is the *bottom line* of all your theological works? He said, "That God is for us. He is not out to get us but loves us and seeks that which is best for us."

Just so, the entire Bible is a book of helps for man, and is well expressed in the following scripture and poem.

"For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways." (Psalm 91:11)

Working Angel

Last night I had a dream;
It had a tale to tell.

I dreamed I saw an angel;
he wasn't feeling well.

His body bruised and battered
His wings were ripped and torn -

This angel could hardly walk,
He looked so tired and worn.

I walked right up to him to ask;
"Angel? How can this be?"

He turned around and paused a bit,
Then spoke these words to me:

"I'm your Guardian Angel,
A great task as you can see.

You've run amok most all your life:
Look what it's done to me.

These bruises are from shielding you
In times both dire and ill.

Those sins you've committed;
I've often paid the bill

You see my wings are ripped and torn;
A noble badge I wear;

How often they have lifted you
From evils unaware.

Each mark is it's own story
Of deadly wounds destroyed.

You made me wish - more than once -
That I was unemployed.

Oh, don't you fret or worry -
But remember - I'm getting old and frail."

I could hardly believe all I had heard,
Let alone how much he cared.

I wept upon his shoulder,
And praised God for my Guardian Angel!
May - 1999

"Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?"
(Hebrews 1:14)

Our Blessed Holy Spirit ministers help and comfort to us in many ways.

1. He Comforts us with Assured Forgiveness
2. He Comforts us with Answered Prayer
3. He Comforts us with Awesome Peace
4. He Comforts us with Alleluia Praise answers!

1. He Comforts Us with Assured Forgiveness

Even though we conclude forgiveness of sin did not arrive until Jesus' death on the cross; yet, the Old Testament is replete with forward looking promises to that day.

EXERCISE 58

Write down God's promise to forgive sin from the following verses:

Isaiah 1:18 _____

Isaiah 43:25 _____

Psalms 103:12 _____

Jeremiah 31:34 _____

Was the above statement from Jeremiah 31:31-34 future for them? _____ When was it consummated? _____

Isaiah 40:1,2 - "Comfort, comfort my people, says your God."

What were the words of comfort in the above reference--Isaiah 40:1,2?

Now, read Ephesians 1:1-8 from your Bible.

While the Living Bible may not be a good translation, at times it is an excellent commentary providing rich spiritual insights. In that light, read Ephesians 1:1-8 below:

"Dear Christian Friends at Ephesus, ever loyal to the Lord: This is Paul writing to you, chosen by God to be Jesus Christ's messenger. 2 May his blessings and peace be yours, sent to you from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord. ' How we praise God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every blessing in heaven because we belong to Christ.

Long ago, even before he made the world, God chose us to be his very own, through what Christ would do for us, he decided then to make us holy in his eyes, without a single fault who stand before him covered with his love.' His unchanging plan has always been to adopt us into his own family by sending Jesus Christ to die for us. And He did this because he wanted to.

Now all praise to God for his wonderful kindness to us and his favor that he has poured out upon us, because we belong to his dearly loved Son. So overflowing is his kindness towards us that he took away all our sins through the blood of his Son,

by whom we are saved; and he has showered down upon us the richness of his grace for how well he understands us and knows what is best for us at all times."
(Ephesians 1:1-8 LB)

EXERCISE 59

From the above Living Bible text, Ephesians 1:1-8, please answer the following questions:

1. He has "blessed us with every blessing in heaven...."

Why? _____

2. When did "God chose us to be His very own?" _____

3. When did God decide to "make us holy in His eyes, without a single fault..."

4. What has His "unchanging plan" always been?

5. WHY did God do all of this? _____

6. "Now all praise to God for His wonderful kindness..."

WHY? See last paragraph of Ephesians 1:1-8 above.

EXERCISE 60

Please give your honest heartfelt (not just religious) answers to these questions:

1. Are you certain God has chosen **you** to be His very own? _____

2. When did God choose **you**? _____

3. How many unforgiven sins / faults do **you** now have? _____

4. Have **you** been adopted into God's family? _____

5. Why did God do all of this for **you**? _____

6. How many of **your sins** has God taken away? _____

EXERCISE 61

Privately in the prayer closet of your own heart thank God for the above six blessings!

EXERCISE 62

When we will not believe our sins are forgiven and we are heaven bound, what does it diminish and/or delete in our lives? Put "D" for diminish by the ones so affected.

___ Our faith ___ Our witness ___ Our giving ___ Our hope ___ Our love
___ Our fervency ___ Our joy ___ Our peace ___ Our mercy
___ Our goodness ___ Our praise ___ Our prayers ___ Our worship
___ Our winning of souls ___ Our happiness
___ Our effectiveness as a counselor

ASSURED FORGIVENESS

The hope which filled the heart of Paul concerning the Corinthian brethren was full of comfort to those who trembled as to their future. But why was it that he believed that the brethren would be confirmed unto the end?

I want you to notice that he gives his reasons. Here they are: "**God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ**" (I Corinthians 1:9).

The apostle does not say, "You are faithful." Alas! The faithfulness of man is a very unreliable affair; it is mere vanity. He does not say, "You have faithful ministers to lead and guide you, and therefore I trust you will be safe." Oh, no! If we are kept by men we shall be but ill kept. He puts it, "**God is faithful.**" If we are found faithful, it will be because God is faithful. On the faithfulness of our covenant God the whole burden of our salvation must rest. On this glorious attribute of God the matter hinges.

We are variable as the wind, frail as a spider's web, weak as water. No dependence can be placed upon our natural qualities or our spiritual attainments; but **God abides faithful. He** is faithful in His love; **He** knows no variableness, neither shadow of turning. **He** is faithful to His

purpose; **He** does not begin a work and then leave it undone. **He** is faithful to His relationships; as a Father **He** will not renounce His children, as a friend **He** will not deny His people, as a Creator **He** will not forsake the work of His own hands. **He** is faithful to His promises and will never allow one of them to fail to a single believer. **He** is faithful to His covenant, which He has made with us in Christ Jesus and ratified with the blood of His sacrifice. **He** is faithful to His Son and will not allow His precious blood to be spilt in vain. **He** is faithful to His people to whom **He** has promised eternal life and from whom He will not turn away.

This faithfulness of God is the foundation and cornerstone of our hope of final perseverance. The saints shall persevere in holiness, because God perseveres in grace. He perseveres to bless, and therefore believers persevere in being blessed. He continues to keep His people, and therefore they continue to keep His commandments. Seed thoughts from Charles Spurgeon.

NOTE: In the previous "delete-diminish" Exercise 62, it is my studied and experienced conclusion that all should be checked.

Some may suppose that my accepting God's forgiveness of sin is subjective. Knowing that I am forgiven of all my sin and on my way to heaven is based on two factors:

1. Objectively, I must believe the Word of God which in multiplied places including the above Scriptures, declares I am saved; and, 2. Subjectively by faith I receive this truth into my own heart / life.

EXERCISE 63

Now write down at least three New Testament verses which promise forgiveness of our sin and/or declares that we are saved:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Ask What Great Thing I Know?

You ask what great thing I know

That delights and stirs me so?

What high reward I will win?

Whose Name I glory in?

'Tis Jesus Christ, the Crucified!

What is faith's foundation strong?

What awakes my lips to song?

Who bore my sinful load?

Purchased for me peace with God?

'Tis Jesus Christ, the Crucified!

Who is He that makes me wise

To discern where duty lies?

Who is He that makes me true,

When I am tempted not to do?

'Tis Jesus Christ, the Crucified!

Who defeats my fiercest foes?

Who consoles my saddest woes?

Who revives my fainting heart,

Healing all its hidden smart?

'Tis Jesus Christ, the Crucified!

Who is Life in life to me?

Who my hope in death will be?

Who will place me on His right,

With the countless hosts of light?

'Tis Jesus Christ, the Crucified!

This is that great thing I know!

The One who delights and stirs me so!

Faith in Him who died to save,

The One who triumphs o'er the grave,

'Tis Jesus Christ, the Crucified!

--Benjamin Hall Kennedy--(edit by wsj)

1. He Comforts us with Assured Forgiveness
- 2. He Comforts us with Answered Prayer**
3. He Comforts us with Awesome Peace
4. He Comforts us with Alleluia Praise answers!

2. The Holy Spirit Comforts Us with Answered Prayer!

"In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will."

(Romans 8:26,27)

Ask - Seek - Knock

The winsome voice of a father speaks to his child saying:

"Do you need comfort? then ASK!"

"Are you sick? then ASK!"

"Are you weary? then ASK!"

"Is your faith weak? then ASK!"

"What does God promise? then ASK!"

Too, simplistic? Read what Jesus said:

"Then he said to them, 'Suppose one of you has a friend, and he goes to him at midnight and says, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, because a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have nothing to set before him.' 'Then the one inside answers, 'Don't bother me. The door is already locked, and my children are with me in bed. I can't get up and give you anything.'

I tell you, though he will not get up and give him the bread because he is his friend, yet because of the man's boldness he will get up and give him as much as he needs. "So I say to you: **Ask** and it will be given to you; **seek** and you will find; **knock** and the door will be opened to you.

For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened." (Luke 11:5-10)

Here God hands His children a "blank check" so to speak, and simply says "*ask*"; but in the above Luke passage that is what He does. Above all else our Lord is teaching us persistence in praying; also, He offers us three levels of praying in this passage-- "**ask--seek--knock**." Do not mistake these words as being repetitious. They are not, but each designates an increased level of seeking the comfort and help of God in the midst of our problems.

1. ASK -- In the Greek language "ASK" signifies "a simple use of the voice in making a petition."

There are mysteries about praying and God's answering; but, one thing is sure---God answers many-most of my instant prayers when I simply **ask**. I do not keep a record of all the simple "asking prayers" which I pray; but, at five prayers per day across 60 years the total is 109,500. God has answered all of them with either "Yes-No-or-Wait," and the vast majority have been "Yes!"

Following are a few examples--*

* When I was 10 years old I lost my Mother's hammer. A simple prayer--"God please help me find that hammer!" Instantly I found it on the other side of the creek lying in the middle of an animal path. As recorded in my first book Faith Alive In Heart Home and Church, pg 102,103

* I fell on a blue Milk of Magnesia bottle, which slashed my throat. With blood gushing out of my throat, this frightened eight year old boy prayed, "God, please don't let me die." He answered instantly. We were 17 miles from any doctor or ER, so bandages and tape was the first aid applied. Today I have only a hair line scar and a stronger faith!

* Our dog named "Puppy" chased a rabbit in front of our Binder. The sickle mower severed his left back leg leaving it attached by one strand of nerve and muscle. First suggestion was, "End his misery, put the dog down." Then, I prayed, "God, please save my dog." A rush trip to the Veterinarian in town saved Puppy and my three-legged dog lived another 30 years.

* At 8 on a Sunday morning traveling to my student preaching point at Ripley. I stopped at Guthrie praying I could get a doughnut for ten cents. I asked the waitress if they had doughnuts and the price? She said, "Yes, and they are 10 each plus tax." I explained that I only had one dime. She said, "Well, they are a dime plus tax, but I can sell you 1/2 doughnut for a

nickel, and later the other half for a nickel. We did business and I drove on filled with gratitude to God and one whole doughnut.

* "Lord, we need a pianist here at Ripley Christian Church. Please send us one." God sent me a pianist, a lifelong friend, a wife! Her name was / is Imalee.

* "Jesus be in charge!" Imalee prayed out loud. That simple prayer brought the Suburban and trailer which was sliding on ice to an instant halt and prevented a collision. Page 197, *ibid*

* I pray about everything, and Jesus helps me repair machinery, raise cattle and catch coyotes," said the Circleville, Kansas, farmer to me.

* Russ Johnson of Newkirk, Oklahoma, checked into Snyder Clinic in Winfield, Kansas, for a set of tests. The tests went well except his CAT scan showed a spot on the left kidney. The doctors suspected the spot was malignant. He came by our house on his way to St. Francis Hospital in Wichita, Kansas, on January 22. We prayed as did scores of others. They did a biopsy. On Wednesday Bro. Russ called from home. The biopsy and another CAT scan was done and the Wichita doctors could find nothing to biopsy. He said, "whatever was there is gone!" He ran a Sonogram just to be sure. Nothing there. **WOW!** He attributes this happening **TO THE LORD through ANSWERED PRAYER!** It's now one-and-one-half years later and all is well! *It still is no secret what God can do!*

* "Jesus, in Your Name chase away the devil in these weird happenings," I prayed. He did and high school senior, Kurt, of Galva, Illinois became a Christian. Page 198, *ibid*

EXERCISE 64

List a few simple "asking" prayers which God has answered for you.

But, sometimes we "ASK" and no answer comes, thus Jesus suggests we step up to level two in our praying--"SEEK".

2. SEEK

"So I say to you: **Ask** and it will be given to you; **seek** and you will find; **knock** and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; **he who seeks finds**; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened." (Luke 11:9,10)

The Greek word "ζητεω" declares this word in relation to praying means--"**to seek by thinking, to seek how to do something or what to obtain.**" Vine's

Sometimes we need to pray about what we're going to pray about to establish in our own mind the "what" and "how" of our prayers.

Many years ago Marge Hoskins of West Lebanon, Indiana, came to my Study saying, "Wilbur, God is mocking me. I have been praying for patience and He sends me trouble." Having just read Romans 5:3, I said, "Marge, God is answering your prayers for "Tribulation worketh patience." We have laughed about that many times since, but Marge learned an important lesson about what to pray for and the answer to expect.

Consider these examples of God answering prayers in unexpected ways:

1. I asked God to take away my pride.

God said "No!

It is not for me to take away, but for you to give it up."

2. I asked God to make my handicapped child whole.

God said "No!

Her spirit was whole, her body was only temporary."

3. I asked God to grant me patience.

God said "No!

Patience is a by-product of tribulations; it isn't granted, it is earned."

4. I asked God to give me happiness.

God said "No!

I give you blessings, happiness is up to you."

5. I asked God to spare me pain.

God said "No.

Suffering draws you apart from worldly cares and brings you closer to me."

6. I asked God to make my spirit grow.

God said "No!

You must grow on your own, but I will prune you to make you fruitful."

7. I asked for all things that I might enjoy life.

God said "No!

I will give you life so that you may enjoy all things."

I Thessalonians 5:16-19

16 Rejoice always,

17 pray without ceasing,

18 in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

19 Do not quench the Spirit." (NKJ)

EXERCISE 65

List a few of your unanswered prayers which may have been due to not understanding how God answers when we seek Him.

GOD'S SPECIAL CHANNELS OF BLESSING

Our purpose in living is not to find ways to get blessings from God, but to give ourselves back to God. Yet, God has established channels through which He wants to bless and guide us. It is some of those channels/tools which we now explore.

EXERCISE 66

Name the following *tools-channels* with which God comforts us.

1. _____ with _____ ... Mark 11:24; James 5:15; Matthew 6:6; Mark 9:19-23
2. _____ ... Ephesians 5:20; I Thessalonians 5:16-18
3. _____ and _____ ... Matthew 6:16; Luke 5:32-35; Mark 9:29
4. SPEAK TO THE " _____ " ... Matthew 17:20; Mark 11:12-14, 20-24
5. BIBLE PROMISES CONFESSED TOWARDS PROBLEM ...
Wait upon the Lord....renew strength -- (Isaiah 40:31 NKJ)
Shall supply all your needs -- (Philippians 4:19)
Trust in the Lord....He will direct our path -- (Proverbs 3:5,6)
Cast your burdens.....He gives rest -- (Matthew 11:28)
6. COME AGAINST _____ IN JESUS' NAME ... James 4:7; I Peter 2:21;
Matthew 17:14-20; Matthew 16:18;
7. ASK OTHERS TO _____ ... I Thessalonians 5:25; I Timothy 2:1;
II Corinthians 1:8-11; Philemon 1:4; Revelation 8:3,4
8. BE _____ (Visualize what you desire) --
"For as a man thinks in his heart, so is he." Proverbs 23:7a(NKJ)
"Keep thy heart with all diligence; For out of it are the issues of life."
(Proverbs 4:23 ASV)

"Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. (Mark 11:24 NIV)

9. _____ be _____ ... Matthew 6:10; 26:42; Luke 11:2

This "top line" is also the "bottom line" as Hudson Taylor said, "GOD ALWAYS GIVES THE BEST TO THOSE WHO LEAVE THE CHOICE WITH HIM.

10. Call _____ to ANOINT WITH _____ AND _____.. James 5:14-16

EXERCISE 67

Out of considerable Bible study, and 60+ years of observing life, sickness, injury and chastisement within and without, I have reached some conclusions which I want you to consider in the following exercise.

1. What is Jesus/God's primary purpose in this world? (Luke 9:10) _____

2. The word "sickness" first appears in the Bible in Genesis 28:1. About how long after the creation of Adam and Eve was this? _____

Adam & Eve Created 4000 B.C. / Flood 2500 B.C. / Abraham 2000 B.C. / Moses 1500 B.C. / Solomon 1,000 B.C.

3. When does death of an individual first occur in the Bible? _____

Who? _____

4. Has God ever visited anyone with disease? See Leviticus 26:24,25; Deuteronomy 28:27,35; II Chronicles 21:13-19; Psalm 106:13-15; Isaiah 10:16) If so, name the affliction / disease _____

5. Is illness/injury ever used by God to teach certain lessons of life?

II Corinthians 12:2-10 _____

Hebrews 12:5-13 _____

James 1:2-4_____

I Thessalonians 3:2,3_____

6. What is the one thing the Lord has taught us people who are sick to do? (James 5:14-16)_____

7. Why do people often not want to practice James 5:14-16?

8. Does Matthew 6:10; 26:42 or Luke 11:2 (NKJ) have anything to do with sickness and healing?_____

9. What does I Thessalonians 5:16-18 NKJ-- "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." have to do with our experience of affliction, chastisement, sickness, injury, etc?

3. KNOCK

"So I say to you: **Ask** and it will be given to you; **seek** and you will find; **knock** and the door will be opened to you. So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; **seek and you will find**; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened." (Luke 11:9,10)

Vine in his Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words says the Greek indicates the word for "knock" means "to strike, knock," is used in the New Testament of importunity (persistent, urgent) in dealing with God.

When I studied Greek we learned what was called the "linear tense," (present imperative), and in this passage is a present participle meaning that which continues on and on. The Amplified New Testament is precisely correct with its translation--

"So I say to you, Ask and keep on asking, and it shall be given you; seek and keep on seeking, and you shall find; knock and keep on knocking, and the door shall be opened to you. For every one who asks and keeps on asking receives, and he who seeks and keeps on seeking finds, and to him who knocks and keeps on knocking the door shall be opened." (Luke 11:9,10)

Matthew Henry comments on Luke 11:1-13.

"We ought to continue instant in prayer, and watch in the same with all perseverance to encourage us in prayer. If importunity (persistent and urgent) could prevail thus with a man who was angry at it, much more with a God who is infinitely more kind and ready to do good to us than we are to one another, and is not angry at our importunity, but accepts it, especially when it is for spiritual mercies that we are importunate. If he do not answer our prayers presently, yet he will in due time, if we continue to pray.

We have it from Christ's own mouth, who knows his Father's mind, and in whom all promises are yea and amen. We must not only ask, but we must seek, in the use of means, must second our prayers with our endeavors; and, in asking and seeking, we must continue pressing, still knocking at the same door, and we shall at length prevail, not only by our prayers in concert, but by our particular prayers. Every one that asketh receiveth, even the meanest saint that asks in faith. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, (Psalm 34:6). When we ask of God those things which Christ has here directed us to ask, that his name may be sanctified, that his kingdom may come, and his will be done, in these requests we must be importunate." (persistent and urgent) (from Matthew Henry's Commentary, Luke 11:1-13 PP 27,29)

Sometimes God leads us in ways we would not choose, therefore we must pray as "knocking on God's door," knowing always that through life's hills and valleys--GOD IS IN CHARGE!

"KNOCK" persistently and urgently

George Muller (1805-1898) of Bristol, fed some 10,000 orphans, 2,000 at a time, during his lifetime. He used faith and persistent prayer to bring in the food and clothing. He also had a large interest in the lost which the following testimony tells us.

In his intercession for others Muller had tremendous tenacity. In 1844 he began praying for the conversion of five persons.

"I prayed every day for them without one single intermission, whether sick or well, on land or sea, whatever the pressure of my engagements might be. Eighteen months passed before the first of the five was converted. I thanked God and prayed on for the others. Five years elapsed, and then the second converted. I thanked God for the second and prayed on for the other three. Six more months passed before the third was converted. I thanked God for three and went on praying for the other two. These two remain unconverted alter nearly thirty six years. But I hope in God, I pray on, and look yet for the answer."

Actually the fourth became a Christian just before Muller's death in 1898, and the fifth accepted the Lord a few years afterward. from *Guideposts*, March, 1987

"Rejoice always, **pray without ceasing**," (I Thessalonians 5:16,17 NKJ)

In our trials and challenges of over 60 years, **persistent praying** has brought God's answers except when He gave us no time to pray. I have marveled that of the tens of thousands of prayers I have prayed and God answered, there have been two times when God gave us no opportunity to pray. The first was when our first born son at the age of eighteen was involved in a car accident on a lonely country road. By the time I arrived at the scene the doctor had pronounced him dead, and I had only the opportunity to kneel in the wheat stubble, kiss him and say "God loves you and so do I." Then, 26 years later at 6:30 on a Saturday morning the phone rang and the hospital said, "Come quickly! Your daughter, Lisa, has had a heart attack." We went and just as quickly she flew away to God's eternal day. I have postulated that perhaps He knew our "track record" of persistent prayer from many people and that if home going was to be effected, it must be quickly before Heaven would be bombarded with a multitude of prayers.

There have been at least three times when persistent urgent prayers have brought large dividends. First, when Imalee sustained a stroke. Various "prayer tools" were used but the long lasting persistent prayers of several thousand people praying produced a glory healing! Secondly, when I was diagnosed with Viral Hepatitis, and again people came and prayed and anointed me and hundreds of others prayed. I conclude it was the persistent *without ceasing* prayers which raised us up! Thirdly, in 1997 I was poked with a stroke on my right side. While I used all the "10 Prayer Tools," there was no instantaneous healing but again the prayers of many multitudes of Christians have produced amazing results. Typical of those prayers is one from Brother Rodger Thompson of Wichita, Kansas, sent to me via e-mail:

From: rodgerthompson@juno.com
To: wsjfaith@hit.net
Date: Wed, 8 Apr 1998 15:59:57 -0500
Subject: MY PRAYER FOR YOU

"Thanks for the update. In the flesh, Wilbur and Imalee, my heart breaks for you. You have been called upon to bear much grief. I rejoice in the knowledge of the promise that you will also bear much joy in the morning.

I shall agree with you in both the giving of thanks and the asking for a wake up call to those parts of your body that have been stricken with numbness. If I look at circumstances they confuse me. The knowledge of the love and the goodness of God are my focus. He is able and He loves you. I shall rejoice in the Lord and make my petitions known to him with thanksgiving according to Philippians 4:6,7, and receive His peace on your behalf.

Heavenly Father I send you this e-mail prayer on behalf of my dear brother Wilbur and sister Imalee. You know their hearts and their sorrow. You know their love for you and their needs. I know you take no pleasure in their suffering. I dig up the roof of your house and lower Wilbur to you in the midst of whatever you are doing. I interrupt you like those men of old who brought their friend to Jesus. Jesus touch Him with your healing touch. Awaken those parts of his body that are numb. Restore his health by the power of Your resurrection. I give you thanks and I rejoice in you and the precious promises. Jesus overcame the gates of hell at calvary and the empty tomb stands in testimony to that fact. In the name of Jesus and by the power of the shed blood and the resurrection, the Lord rebuke you demons of infirmity. Jesus lives and by His stripes we are healed!"

In Jesus Name! God be praised! Amen!"

Rodger

"KNOCK" with an attitude of "Thy Will Be Done".

"I am thinking "OUT LOUD" as I respond to the question about God's Will. First of all, is everything that happens on earth, "God's will?" I perceive not. One passage that would support this is the one that says, "God does not will that any should perish, but that all should come to eternal life." Yet we know that people perish without God, by their own choice. The reason that this simple question is so complicated is because of the big doctrinal issue, "FREE WILL", and the affect of sin in/on the world. What of the school killings? Was that God's will? I think not. Many bad things happen to good people, are they God's will? Whole books have been written on this one subject. Where is God When It Hurts, and When

God Doesn't Make Sense are two more recent releases. I say that to point out how shallow anything that I might say will be when compared to the big picture of the question. God's particular "will" for each person must be answered by each individual. The person going through a struggle must search their heart and the mind of God, and out of this comes their answer. In looking at Job, we would have to say that God understands even our doubts. As we consider Job, when Job finally cries out to God, God doesn't condemn him, but just reminds him of who He (God) is and how small Job is in comparison and that God knows all things and has the power to do all things. Yet He (God) allows certain things to happen so that:

1. We can be tested, (Job);
2. Our faith can grow, (James 1);
3. We can rely more totally on God's Grace, (Paul asking for the thorn to be removed was told by God, "My grace is sufficient, for my power is made strong in weakness," II Corinthians 12;

4. We can receive our heavenly reward, (Sickness unto death)

It is easy for others not going through struggles to have opinions. Again consider Job's friends. They all had an opinion on how well Job was doing in his relationship with God, and they were all wrong!!!!

As you and I have discussed in relationship to your daughter, Lisa, and our minister friend, Gary Spencer, and others, God always answers, it is just that sometimes His answer is "NO". At other times He says "YES", but yes in a way that we do not anticipate. Healing, for example, some times healing takes place in Heaven. Who could say that Britta Thompson or Hugoton, Kansas, or Lisa, or Gary or my mom and dad, Lee and Mildred Wright, were not healed, (James 5:15,16) and yet they died, or did they? Jesus said, "He who liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." We understand that is "Spiritual Life." That a person's "spiritual self", who we truly are, never dies. So why can't God provide "Spiritual" answers to prayers for healing?

Again, does He not answer? Could it be He says "NO", or perhaps He heals in ways that we do not expect, (Spiritually in Heaven)? Remember, the great apostle Paul did not receive physical healing on earth. If God answered with physical healing each and every time a Christian asks/prays for healing, would we ever see Heaven? Does God answer in ways beyond our understanding? These are difficult questions and I don't know that any of us has all the answers. However, we know from Jonah's experience that human action/response does move the heart of God and change (at least for a short time) the outcome of history. Nineveh was spared, (for a time, Jonah 3). I believe that prayer does touch the heart of God, and that He does intervene, but not always. I do not know why He provides physical healing on earth on some occasions, and spiritual healing in heaven on others, but we must yield to God's will, which is

where this discussion started. Can you imagine what a mess we would be in if God had said yes to His own Son's request to "Let this cup pass from me" and Jesus would not have physically died for our sins? I am grateful that on occasion, God says "NO", even to His own son.

Sincerely in Christ,

Larry Wright

Brother Joe Ragsdale prayed this simple "Thy will be done" prayer for me five days after I was poked by a stroke.

from: Ragsmopp@aol.com

To: willjohnson / wsjfaith@hit.net

Date: Wed, 8 Apr 1998 22:48:35 EDT

Subject: OUR PRAYER for HIS WILL

Hello young man and young lady.

I will continue to pray for your healing.

This is always the hardest part as my mind says, Lord heal Wilbur completely, but my heart says Lord I pray for Your will to be done in this illness so that through this you may be glorified.

We love you both and God loves you both.

Joe & Joy Ragsdale, Fort Smith, Arkansas

HERE AND NOW

Here in the heart of this world,
Here in the noise and the din,
Here where our spirits are hurled
To battle with sorrow and sin,
This is the place and the spot,
For knowledge of infinite things;
This is the kingdom where prayer
Can conquer the minds of kings.
Wait for no heavenly life,
Seek for no temple alone;
Here in the midst of strife
Know what the sages have known.
See what the Perfect One saw,
God in the depths of each soul;
God as the Light and the Law,
God as the beginning and goal.

Stand not aloof or apart,
Pray in the thick of the fight;
There in the street and the mart,
That is the place to do right.
Not in some cloister or cave,
Not in some kingdom above;
Here on this side of the grave,
Here should we pray and love.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox

1. He Comforts us with Assured Forgiveness
2. He Comforts us with Answered Prayer
3. **He Comforts us with Awesome Peace**
Peace in the Valleys of Life
Peace in our Sorrow and Grief
Peace in our Trials and Troubles

3. He comforts us with Awesome Peace

"But the Comforter, (even) the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you. **Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you:** not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be fearful."
(John 14:26-27 - ASV)

When the Communist movement was in vogue, they touted this definition of *peace*--peace is the absence of all class conflict. That is, they believed to have *peace*, all people who disagreed with them must be removed. Even today, many Christians believe that *Christian peace* is the removal of all conflict, tribulations, etc. Not so! The Greek word picture of *peace* is that of a little bird in a nest built upon a limb of a giant tree with a storm raging all about while the bird, its nest and tree are held safely in the palm of a giant hand.

EXERCISE 67

Give some examples from the Bible of individuals at *peace* in the midst of a storm, either literal from without or internal from within.

Consider the list in Hebrews, chapter 11

Peace in the Valleys of Life

"The man of God came up and told the king of Israel, This is what the LORD says: 'Because the Arameans think the LORD is a god of the hills and not a god of the valleys, I will deliver this vast army into your hands, and you will know that I am the LORD.'" (I Kings 20:28 NIV)

People like to read the glory stories in *Guidepost*, *Reader's Digest* and our own books which record many answered prayers, healings, God's deliverance by faith, and results of praise; but, do not want to be a prayer partner when the "pain and strain of suffering" which brings forth those stories is taking place. It's okay when the pastures are green and the waters are still; but, some want to be removed from the presence of the "winds of adversity" and "raging waters" which lap at the top of our "dikes" in life. It is important to note that God has not promised to *keep us out* of the "valleys of life" but He has promised to *go with us through the* "valleys."

The Lord's awesome peace is available to all of God's children and dependent upon our response to the trials which come our way. The 23rd Psalm is the world's most loved psalm; yet the "still waters and green pastures" are preceded by the agony of Psalm 22.

Surely Psalm 22 is both a foretelling of Christ's suffering, but also David writes in the present tense of his own life. Bible scholar, Matthew Henry suggests, "Psalm 22 is a sad complaint of God's withdrawing. (v. 1, 2.)

1. It may be applied to David, or any other child of God, in the want of the tokens of his favor, pressed with the burden of his displeasure, roaring under it, as one overwhelmed with grief and terror, crying earnestly for relief, and, in this case, apprehending himself forsaken of God, unhelped, unheard, yet calling him, again and again, "My God," and continuing to cry day and night to him and earnestly desiring his gracious returns.

2. Spiritual desertions are the saints' sorest afflictions; when their evidences are clouded, divine consolations suspended, their communion with God interrupted, and the terrors of God set in array against them, how sad are their spirits, and how sapless all their comforts!

3. Even their complaint of these burdens is a good sign of spiritual life and spiritual senses exercised. To cry out, "My God, why am I sick? Why am I poor?" would give cause to suspect discontent and worldliness. But, Why has Thou forsaken me? is the language of a heart binding up its happiness in God's favor" Psalms 22:1-10 PP 2 from Matthew Henry's Commentary

EXERCISE 68

Under line the words/phrases in the following psalm which reveal discouragement.

- 1 My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from the words of my groaning?
- 2 O my God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer, by night, and am not silent.
- 3 Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One; you are the praise of Israel.
- 4 In you our fathers put their trust; they trusted and you delivered them.
- 5 They cried to you and were saved; in you they trusted and were not disappointed.
- 6 But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by men and despised by the people.
- 7 All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads:
- 8 "He trusts in the LORD; let the LORD rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him."
- 9 Yet you brought me out of the womb; you made me trust in you even at my mother's breast.
- 10 From birth I was cast upon you; from my mother's womb you have been my God.
- 11 Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help.
- 12 Many bulls surround me; strong bulls of Bashan encircle me.
- 13 Roaring lions tearing their prey open their mouths wide against me.
- 14 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart has turned to wax; it has melted away within me.
- 15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in the dust of death.
- 16 Dogs have surrounded me; a band of evil men has encircled me, they have pierced my hands and my feet.
- 17 I can count all my bones; people stare and gloat over me.
- 18 They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing.

- 19 But you, O LORD, be not far off; O my Strength, come quickly to help me.
20 Deliver my life from the sword, my precious life from the power of the dogs.
21 Rescue me from the mouth of the lions; save me from the horns of the wild oxen.
(Psalm 22:1-22)

Jesus said, "the peace I give is of such a nature that the smiles of the world cannot give it, nor the frowns of the world take it away." The peace which Christ gives is infinitely more valuable than that which the world gives. The world's peace begins in ignorance, full of sin, and ends in endless troubles; Christ's peace begins in grace, consists with sin conquered, such is the difference between Christ's peace and the world's.

What use do we make of Jesus promise of peace? -- *Let not your heart be troubled*, for any evils past or present, *neither let it be afraid* of any evil to come. Those that are interested in the covenant of grace, and entitled to the peace which Christ gives, ought not to yield to overwhelming griefs and fears. The conclusion of the whole matter; He had said (v. 1), *Let not your heart be troubled*, and here he repeats it as that for which he had now given sufficient reason.

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." (Romans 15:13)

During a siege of many trials including our daughter, Lisa's death; and Imalee's concussion from her fall on the ice; my stroke(s); our daughter, Teresa's accident in the Grand Canyon; our two-month-old granddaughter, Hannah Johnson's infantile botulism; our daughter, Rebecca's divorce; Imalee's mother's strokes; and my brother-in-law breaking his hip, the Holy Spirit moved in my spirit prompting me to write a meditation of acceptance based on Psalm 23.

After passing through the above trials, someone said to me, "How do you stand it?" I said, "I don't and I can't, but HE can and HE does!" So, out of that and after a night of wrestling with God about many of the inequities of life which others must endure, He awakened me in the very early morning with this heartfelt response to the vicissitudes of life.

(Psalm 23 by David in bold. My words of response are in non bold)

1 The LORD is my shepherd also my Savior, Lord, Guide, Keeper, Hope, Cornerstone, and Sustainer; **I shall not want--** I may question, but will not doubt His ways all of my days. **2 He makes me to lie down in green pastures** even brown pastures, and I do not always lie still, but after squirming around, I rest in His beautiful peace; **he leads me**

beside the still waters-- sometimes troubled waters, but He is there, **3 He restores my soul--** after I have created a little havoc when passing over raging waterfalls and stormy seas, always there comes the harbor where the waters grow still and my soul is restored; **he leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake--**after He washes my eyes with tears and cradles my wounded heart in His arms of love, then I begin to see that He has led me down His path of rightness. **4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,** and when that day comes as I pass over, I'll see death, hell and the grave in the valley below and shout with victory! **I will fear no evil for You are with me--**because You have been through the same Valley and made it out safe, and are waiting on the Other Side; **your rod and Your staff, they comfort me--**"Lord, sometimes Your rod and staff hurts before they help me, but always after the mourning comes the morning!" **5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies--** "It bothers me, Lord, that I don't have more enemies like David, but whatever the situation, You have always spread a banquet table for me in the wilderness of every negative situation"; **you anoint my head with oil--** "and Your oil runs all over the crooked stick of my life, and Your Spirit renews my whole being"; **my cup runs over--** "pardon my tears, Lord, but my cup is full beyond any proper desserts, so that I cannot contain all Your blessings, and my full heart bursts with love and joy!" **6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life--**it's happening already, and I accept happy days the rest of the way, too; **and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever. WOW!** "My Great Shepherd, You have let me stand on the threshold of the door of Your House, and I long to see beyond into every room, but most of all when I've finished this race, just to see Your Face, will have made it all worthwhile! -- Hallelujah!

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." (Romans 15:13)

EXERCISE 69

Write a paragraph of your acceptance of an adverse trial (situation) out of your life.

Mentioned above is our daughter, Teresa, who spent nine years in medical schools becoming a general surgeon. Our doctor daughter took up practice in Winfield, Kansas, at Snyder Clinic and ministered to hundreds of patients over a period of 10 years. Then, in 1998, while on a rafting trip in the Grand Canyon, she and others were taking a short hike up the side of the canyon. Although I have hiked with her many miles in the Rocky Mountain National Park and she has hiked and climbed mountain trails extensively, yet on the way down she stumbled and fell. She fell 40 feet, striking rocks and breaking her back in three places. It took a helicopter and medical crew some six hours to get her out of the canyon to Flagstaff, Arizona, for emergency medical treatment. From there she was taken to Phoenix for surgery. Now a year later she can not walk because she is paralyzed from the waist down. Now she drives her own vehicle, has a stand up wheel chair, stair lift chair and manages amazingly well in living by herself. In reply to my question "Has this incident changed your life?" she said "I am a totally different person."

Several months later I wrote a poem for her, which speaks to all our hurts and hopes.

Dedicated to my daughter - Teresa Johnson - as she struggles to recapture life after falling and breaking her back in the Grand Canyon in June of 1998.

On Goes His Song

His song goes on!

When my life is a piece of cake

Or when my heart aches,

On goes His song!

His song goes on!

When my life seems shattered

And hopes are scattered

On goes His song!

His song goes on!

Through days of wrong

When my nights have no song,

Still, on goes His song!

His song goes on!
When my life is bright and sunny
And at times, a bit funny;
On goes His song!

His song goes on!
When my heart wounds are deep
Made by loved ones leaving we cannot keep;
On goes that song!

His song goes on!
When my health pales
And strength fails,
Then, so clearly, on goes His song!

Through times of wrong:
My ears strain to hear His voice,
Then, I make His will my choice!
He sings the "I am with you always" song!

On goes His song!
Even when my way is bleak
And faith is weak,
I hear His assurance song!

So, on goes His Song!
Until we hear the trumpet sound!
Then, we'll be Glory bound!
And see the One who sings the song!

by Wilbur S. Johnson

Aug. 9, 1998 - c.4 a.m. when my sleep was wide awake

"I thought about the former days, the years of long ago; I remembered my songs in the night. My heart mused and my spirit inquired:" (Psalm 77:5,6)

But, if we will wait in patience, then in the morning we shall see His glory!
"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

(II Corinthians 4:17-18 - NKJ)

Peace for our Sorrow and Grief

Death cannot be denied, grief is normal; thus comfort is needful.

C.S. Lewis in the Chronicles of Narnia has Aslan, the Lion saying:

"There was a real railway accident," said Aslan softly. "Your father and mother and all of you are-- as you used to call it in the Shadow-Lands-- dead. The term is over: the holidays have begun. The dream is ended: this is the morning!"

And as He spoke He no longer looked to them like a lion; but the things that began to happen after that were so great and beautiful that I cannot write them. And for us this is the end of all the stories, and we can most truly say that they all lived happily ever after But for them it was only the beginning of the real story."

from The Chronicles of Narnia, The Last Battle, by C.S. Lewis, chap. 16, pp. 183-184.

Sorrow produced by the departure of our loved ones is partly due to our misunderstanding. This is well probed by C.S. Lewis when he speaks of the death of Lazarus:

"We are not high-minded, and we follow One who stood and wept at the grave of Lazarus not surely, because He was grieved that Mary and Martha wept, and sorrowed for their lack of faith (though some thus, interpret) but because death, the punishment of sin, is even more horrible in His eyes than in ours. The nature which He had created as God, the nature which He had assumed as Man, lay there before Him in its ignominy; a foul smell, food for worms. Though He was to revive it a moment later, He wept at the shame; if I may here quote a writer of my own communion, "I am not so much afraid of death as ashamed of it." And that brings us again to the paradox. Of all men, we hope most of death; yet nothing will reconcile us to— well, its unnaturalness. We know that we were not made for it; we know how it crept into our destiny as an intruder, and we know Who has defeated it. Because Our Lord is risen we know that on one level it is an enemy already disarmed; but because we know on the natural level that it is

God's creation, we cannot cease to fight against the death which mars it."

God in the Dock by C.S. Lewis, "Some Thoughts" (1948), page 7, pp. 149-150.

EXERCISE 70

C.S. Lewis says Jesus wept at the tomb of Lazarus because of "the shame of death."

1. Is this a new thought to you? _____
2. Lewis uses the phrase "shame of death." What other words or phrases come to your mind which describe death? _____

3. Name some other reasons people grieve? _____

My nephew, Scott, and his wife, Christy, bid their baby daughter, Abby, farewell. With Scott's permission, here are some of his special thoughts.

"People are very uncomfortable discussing death. Moreover, we in the Christian community have developed the twisted notion that grief, after more than a month or so, somehow indicates a weakness of faith on our part. I certainly don't see it that way. No matter how much we know (believe) that we will see our loved ones in the resurrection, there is the real and very present sense of loss in the here and now. Acknowledging that pain is not a sign of spiritual weakness, but rather an acknowledgment of the reality we face. Faith comes in helping us to understand that the pain will someday turn to joy. Faith keeps us from sinking into despair.

There is such a need in the Christian community for education about helping people deal with grief. One woman in our church (a very well-meaning Christian lady I might add) sent us the most offensive card right after Abby died. The card included some ridiculous story about having seen a "vision" of heaven with lots of children parading around. All of the children had candles and were singing and enjoying themselves except for one little girl who sat down and was crying. When asked why she wasn't joining in the parade, she answered that she couldn't, that her mommy's tears kept putting her candle out. Can you believe it? The message of the card was that our tears (only weeks after Abby's death) were causing her pain in heaven!

I did a seminar for a local clergy group last year, the topic of which was dealing with grief. I was trying to get them to understand that there are "good" and "bad" things to say to people. Would you believe that one of these clergy told me that that was all fine and good, but that grieving people just need to "get over it" and have thicker skins and not be offended by all the little slights?!" Scott Prough, attorney and professor of law at OCU, Oklahoma City.

Expressing Comfort to the Grieving

EXERCISE 71

Mark the following either "T" for true or "F" for false.

- ____ I Thessalonians 4:13 says Christians should not grieve.
- ____ Paul was a super Christian and had no sorrow. See Philippians 2:27.
- ____ Laughter is far better than sorrow. See Ecclesiastes 7:3.
- ____ Sorrow has no place in our life. See Psalm 90:10
- ____ Crying and sorrow will go on forever. See Revelation 21:4; Isaiah 51:11
- ____ The expression "God needed another flower" is appropriate upon the death of a child.
- ____ Ignoring the name and life of a loved one is a good expression of sympathy.
- ____ God keeps no record of our tears. See Psalm 56:8
- ____ "Get over it" spoken by a clergyman to sorrowing parents is appropriate.

Having bid my father, son, mother, father-in-law, son-in-law, brother and daughter farewell, I am convinced that it is the Holy Spirit who is in charge of ministering true comfort. I have learned out of a thousand sweet experiences and too many sad ones, that it is futile to place total confidence in humans.

Brother Scott Prough continues with his heart thoughts:

"This discussion is bringing back a lot of old memories. I remember that after Abby died, Christy and I went camping. Neither of us wanted to return to our house and all of its painful memories. Finally we had to return home, and I remember that for the 12-hour drive home I was praying that God would find a way to make it easier for Christy. Imagine my surprise when we pulled into the driveway and saw a strange car out front. It turned out that an old high school friend of Christy's, a girl she hadn't spoken to in years, had heard of Abby's death and dropped by "unexpectedly". The amazing thing was that she knew just what to do. She sat down with Christy and asked to see Abby's baby book and pictures. She spent hours looking at the pictures, commenting on them, and asking the typical "motherly" questions. This was just what the doctor ordered!! Another mother was acknowledging Christy's motherhood, and remembering Abby!! That will forever be one of my strongest proofs of God's ability to answer prayer.

The sad thing is that is it just that type of comfort people need. There's no magical thing they can say to take away the pain. But simply acknowledging the grief does wonders. And they need to acknowledge that the deceased lived on this earth and touched people. For us the saddest thing of people's silence is their implicit (and certainly unintentional) denial of our daughter's existence. Abby lived--albeit if only for a few months. She didn't have a big impact on this earth, but she touched us and taught us a few things about life (as I'm sure Lisa did for you and others who knew her). Acknowledging her existence, going to the cemetery is such a small thing to do, yet it ministers to people so deeply."

Well, I'm out of time and crying--not a thing to do at work--so I'll let you go for now. Have a blessed day in the Lord." *ibid* Scott Prough

EXERCISE 72

Write down a meaningful experience in which you received/extended comfort in a time of grief.

Good Grief Release

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted." Matthew 5:4

"I sometimes hold it half a sin
To put in words the grief I feel;
For words, like nature, half reveal
And half conceal my soul within."

Arthur Henry Hallam, 1833

Shortly after the death of our daughter, Lisa Kaye Johnson, a well meaning person said; "What's wrong with your faith? Don't you know where Lisa is?" I responded, "Yes, we know where Lisa is, and we also know where she isn't." She is with Jesus, but, she is not with us. There is an empty place at mealtime, an empty bed where she used to sleep, an empty chair where she sat as I explained to her the weather and "The Waltons" on TV and dozens of other subjects I talked with her about from day to day. And of course an empty place in our hearts reserved for our love for her and getting to wait upon her.

The above question and my answer brings into focus the all important spirit/flesh tug-of-war that exists at the time of grief. Grief is a natural human response when we sustain a loss which is beyond our control. The Bible makes clear from Genesis to Revelation that man is a triune human being-- body, soul, spirit. (I Thessalonians 5:23) We are not of the Christian Science religion, which teaches mind over matter; therefore the flesh has its day as we labor beneath the sun on the trail of reality. Please know, our present problem is not one of weak faith or lack of hope. In fact our FAITH is made stronger and our HOPE more alert by Lisa's going home. We experienced the same spirit/flesh battle when our son Lynn was taken. The depth of one's grief seems to depend on how involved we are with an individual on a daily basis.

The longer I live the more convinced I am of the need for what we called "common horse sense" out on the farm. So, we have been comforted on the occasions of our loved ones graduating to glory by hundreds of praying people, those who shared Scripture, scores of cards, memorial gifts, flowers, food and hugs of hope.

However, on both occasions we have also been devastated by a minority who came after the funeral was over and lacked common horse sense/wisdom. A minority who came violated every common sense written or unwritten rule of sensitivity. In hopes of helping all of us express empathy, I suggest the following positive 'tools':

EXERCISE 73

Check the ones you have used in expressing sympathy.

- ____ 1. DO talk about the departed person. DON'T give the departed person the silent treatment as though they had died of leprosy or never existed. Find at least one positive thing you can say about the departed and say it.
- ____ 2. DO express understanding but do NOT say, "I understand" unless you have bid farewell to a person of like relationship, a son, daughter, husband, wife, etc. One can say, "I don't understand completely, not having lost a _____, but I came to share your sorrow by just being here.
- ____ 3. DO remind the remaining family member(s) that---"God loves you and so do I."
- ____ 4. DO NOT brag about a family member of yours who may have the same health problem/disease, etc. and is still living. This cuts to the quick and is in very poor taste.
- ____ 5. DO ask about the funeral memorial service. If you were there find one positive note about the service and say it.
- ____ 6. DO ask to go to the cemetery if the place of burial is nearby.
- ____ 7. DO share some Scripture--either read some or have it written down and hand to the family.
- ____ 8. DO ask to pray or if we might join together in a prayer circle.
- ____ 9. DON'T stay away just because you don't know what to say. GO and shake the bereaved hand, hug their neck, and perhaps just set in silence. If words are needed, God will direct, but your love and concern, seen in your presence, speaks louder than words at times.
- ____ 10. DO read excellent articles like "An Etiquette for Grief" in the March, 1998 Reader's Digest, which came out just after I wrote my treatise.

A 'bottom line' for our hurts and hopes is expressed in this Scripture.

"When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them on the road through the Philistine country, though that was shorter. For God said, 'If they face war, they might change their minds and return to Egypt.' So God led the people around by the desert road toward the Red Sea. The Israelites went up out of Egypt armed for battle. (Exodus 13:17-18 NIV)

The concept that the *Promised Land* is always near, yet on the other hand, God leads us around by the desert road, has surfaced often across the years when my life seemed to proffer so much of the dry desert, and long winding roads along with a few dead end ones. Yet, as Israel journeyed, and I have found it so, the Way is *paved* with many an *oasis--a crossing place through the Red Seas of life, quail and manna* when needed, *water from the rocks*, seen and unseen angels assisting, His guiding presence in a *pillar of fire by night* and a *cloud by day* to point the Way, and always knowing that just over the next *sand hill, deep valley* or *high mountain* there will be the sight of the 'ole *Jordan River*, and when I get there, Joshua (Jesus) will lead the procession *down to the waters and we will cross over on dry land* to that beautiful land of milk and honey. Then, the trumpets will sound and we will shout with all the saints of the ages that the walls have all fallen down forever and forever.

A 'bottom line' for the inequities of life is we can learn from them, and try to help others be a bit more helpful towards our fellow man. So, in spite of the many vicissitudes on our trail, God's goodness is far greater than the gore of men, His Grace is sufficient for all our days and ways, and always we are overshadowed by His everlasting love which lifts us up and takes us on.

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God." (II Corinthians 1:3,4)

Peace in our Trials and Troubles

"Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we

also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us." (Romans 5:1-5 NKJ)

EXERCISE 74

List some of your trials/tribulations. If you have/are experiencing victory in them, write the word "VICTORY!" after those.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

In a TV series called "The Waltons," the mother in the family, Olivia, has polio. Neighbors referred to as "the Baldwin sisters" come to visit. They leave this message with Olivia--"God's ways seem dark, but sooner or later they touch the shining hills of day and we see the sunrise." So, it is with each of us! Robert Schuller of the Hour of Power phrases it this way--"We can turn our hurts into halos, our scars into stars."

"I cry to you, O LORD; I say, "You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living." Listen to my cry, for I am in desperate need; rescue me from those who pursue me, for they are too strong for me. Set me free from my prison, that I may praise your name. Then the righteous will gather about me because of your goodness to me." (Psalm 142:5-7)

EXERCISE 75

Make a guess: what will set David "free from prison"? _____

Praising God in an adverse situation is a matter of faith in the providence of God.

"At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship and said: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised." In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing." (Job 1:20-22)

As the 25th anniversary year of our Faith Alive Days ministry approached we began laying plans for a proper celebration? The Board of Directors of Larry Wright, Rose Foster, Rodger Thompson, Gary Spencer, and Tammy Vanderpool coupled with Imalee and myself appointed a special "Anniversary Committee" to lay plans. The proffered plans included--rallies, printed Bible markers, a video, speaking engagements, perhaps a camp out and if possible publish book #5. As the weeks passed by it became evident that JESUS WOULD CELEBRATE THIS ANNIVERSARY HIS WAY! Tribulations paved our path including--

Faith Alive Ministry Director, Gary Spencer was diagnosed with leukemia
Our Holy Land Trip with the Spencers was canceled
Our daughter, Lisa's death in November
Imalee's concussion from a fall on the ice
Close preacher friend, Gary Spencer died
Imalee's mother, Ina Barrick, sustains strokes
My stroke in April
Our daughter, Rebecca's divorce
CCDS-SRS litigation
Our doctor daughter, Teresa, breaks her back in Grand Canyon on June 13th
My brother-in-law, Red Smith, breaks leg/hip
Our two-month-old granddaughter, Hannah Johnson's bout with botulism.
My brother-in-law, Hap Prough, involved in a car wreck while delivering mail

Our plans were laid aside and we bowed low. It wasn't strange, for after 25 years of the Lord being in charge doing things in His own unique way, i.e., no pledged support, no contrived revival invitations, needs supplied day to day, guidance in amazing ways and always His

Presence along the way---I should have known He would commemorate the anniversary in HIS WAY! HE did that very thing by using the events of the year like *tinsel and bells* hung on a Christmas tree with His star at the top. The *tree* so-to-speak were the great Bible truths we had preached and sought to practice for 25 years 'hung' with the 'tinsel and bells' of the events of the last year. So, we made an intentional choice to rejoice/accept with joy the Lord's plans for us and Faith Alive Days by practicing those Truths of His Word listed as follows:

EXERCISE 76

Write down a phrase which depicts the meaning of each verse, and check the ones which you have been blessed in using.

- * Colossians 1:27 -
- * Proverbs 3:5,6 -
- * Zechariah 4:6 -
- * Isaiah 30:18 - *"God works for those who wait for Him" (ASV-1901).*
- * Philippians 4:19 -
- * I Corinthians 15:31 -
- * Psalm 44:4 - *"command deliverance...O God my King (KJ or NKJ)*
- * Isaiah 40:31 -
- * Isaiah 65:24 - *"before you call - I will*
- * Matthew 7:7 -
- * Matthew 21:21 - *"Speak to the*
- * Luke 18:1 --
- * Philippians 4:6 -
- * James 5:14 - *sick: call for elders; prayer + oil = healing!*
- * Romans 8:28 -
- * II Thessalonians 5:18 -
- * Hebrews 12:2 -
- * James 1:2 - .
- * Proverbs 15:22 -
- * Job 33:31; James 1:19 -
- * Romans 8:35-39 -
- * I Corinthians 10:13 -
- * Ephesians 3:7 - *My gift of ministry is through His grace (ASV)*
- * Exodus 14:14 -
- * Philippians 1:21 -

- * II Tim. 1:7 - "*no fear..but power, love, sound mind*"
- * Hebrews 1:14 -
- * James 4:7 -
- * I Peter 5:7 -

James encourages us with these words: "My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials," (James 1:2 - NKJ)

Thanking God in an adverse situation brings Peace to Life's Pieces

While visiting in Bay City, Texas, I went for a bicycle ride on Saturday, May 13, 1995 in a special park west of town. Many shade trees lined the paved drives. I paused to use the open air (no roof) rest room. A young black man was using the urinal so I used the stool. He came up behind and shoved me causing me to lose my balance. In the same instant he grabbed my billfold and fled towards his car. I collected myself and ran after him noting his license tag number.

The Spirit prompted me to--"*In everything give thanks,*" I Thessalonians 5:17, which I did! There were many matters to be thankful for--he took my billfold not my life, stole my credit cards, but not my credit, took my driver's license but not my car, absconded with my social security card but touched not my heavenly security, ran away with my family pictures but not my family, removed old momentos from my billfold but not from my memory. WOW! PRAISE THE LORD? YES!

I reported the matter to the police and they promised to begin an investigation on Monday. On Monday I declined to pursue the matter as it would require me to drive 600 miles back to Bay City for a hearing and return again for a trial.

In the afternoon of the day I was robbed the Lord inspired me to write this poem.

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU GET A TIGER BY THE TAIL

While cycling down a park road.
Just movin' along with no big load.
A robber man crossed my path.
He shoved me when I was in the bath.

Now, this man was the robber of my treasure,
He took my billfold for his pleasure.
I thought: "Must I love him without measure?
He has taken away my money for his leisure."

I thought: "I'm bound for a dead man's jail.
They'll send my pieces home by mail."
I got up slowly as that robber began to sail.
And for me this robbery became a 'tiger tail.'

Now, my 'tiger tail' seemed as big as a whale.
Yet I couldn't turn back, though I was a bit pale.
I kept on movin,' not too hearty, not too hale.
Really, my movin' was like a snail.

I kept on believin' thru the thunder and the hail.
Lifted my bucket up high. HE filled my pail,
And I praised the Lord for HE never fails!
Soon, I was wamping that 'tiger' with its tail.

So, next time you get a 'tiger by the tail',
Don't give up and don't turn pale.
You can win the tiger tug, and be happy and hale!
Just *PRAISE THE LORD without fail.

Wilbur S. Johnson 5/13/95

* (I Thessalonians 5:18; Ephesians 5:20)

This aptly illustrates that we need to PRAISE THE LORD FIRST, not ask "WHY." The devil always has a bag full of "reasons" as to why we should not praise the Lord in a negative situation---doesn't make sense, not logical, most people don't, etc. We need to do just what the Word says--"In everything give thanks," then leave it up to God to work all things together for his glory and our good out of the situation. (Romans 8:28)

EXERCISE 77

List some of your life's negative experiences for which you have praised-thanked the Lord and the results.

EXERCISE 78

Write down the name of these Bible persons who thanked God in the midst of adversity; also, a phrase which describes the adversity.

1. II Chronicles 20:15-22_____

2. Job 1:20-22_____

3. Daniel 6:10_____

4. Hebrews 12:2_____

5. II Corinthians 12:9,10_____

6. James 1:1,2_____

7. I Peter 4:16_____

8. I Thessalonians 5:18_____

9. Romans 5:3_____

We have found a "bottom line" for all our trials in these Scriptures and poem:

For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his tabernacle and set me high upon a rock." (Psalm 27:5)

Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place."
(II Corinthians 2:14 NKJ)

DREAM ON

I've dreamed many a dream that never came true
And I've seen them vanish at dawn,
Oh! but enough of my dreams have come true
To make me keep dreaming on.

I've prayed many a prayer and no answer ever came,
Though I've waited patient and long,
But enough answers have come through
To make me keep praying on.

I've sown many a seed that fell by the wayside
For the birds to feed upon,
But I've held enough golden sheaves in my hand,
To keep me sowing on.

Now I've tasted the cup of sorrow and pain,
And sometimes gone without a song,
But I've sipped enough nectar from the roses of life,
To make me want to live on.

I don't regret a mile I've traveled for the Lord,
I don't regret the time I've trusted in His Word,
I've seen the years go by and sometimes the days were long,
But I'll keep on serving Him until I finish the race.

Words by Howard Goodman

as adapted by Wilbur Johnson and shared with me by Bob & Marge Hoskins

1. THE BEGINNING
2. HE CREATES
3. HE CONVINCES
4. HE CONVICTS
5. HE CONVERTS
6. HE CONSECRATES
7. HE COMFORTS
8. HE COMMITS
9. THE CHALLENGE

THE HOLY SPIRIT COMMITS

The Apostle Paul was ready to be committed back to the Father.

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day-- and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing." (II Timothy 4:7,8)

We started this study calling attention to the fact that the work of the Holy Spirit is much like Francis Thompson's poem "The Hound of Heaven." I cite his beginning and closing verses as follows:

"I fled Him, down the nights and down the days;
 I fled Him down the arches of the years;
 I fled Him down the labyrinthine ways
 Of my own mind; and in the midst of tears
 I hid from Him, and under running laughter.
 Up vistaed hopes I sped;
 And shot; precipitated,
 Adown Titanic glooms of chasmed fears,
 From those strong Feet that followed, followed after.
 But with unhurrying chase,
 And unperturbed pace,
 Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
 They beat--and a Voice beat
 More instant than the Feet
 All things betray thee, who betrayest Me.

After a long pursuit covering many years, and through a myriad of fears, this Unseen Pursurer-The Holy Spirit-brings his man home. Here are the final words.

Now of that long pursuit
 Comes on at hand the bruit;
 The Voice is round me like a bursting sea:
 "Save Me, save only Me!"

"All which I took from thee I did but take,
Not for thy harm,
But just that thou mightest seek it in My arms.
All of which a child mistakes
As fancies lost. I have stored for thee at home:
Rise, clasp My hand, and come!
We' re (almost) Home!"

Following is a true story of a young man who was ready to have the Holy Spirit commit him back to his heavenly Father.

Here's a letter from Sebastian, a 24-year-old Christian from Singapore, to his family, relatives and friends.

"Hello. By the time you read this I will have been with Jesus for a few hours already. I want to thank all of you for your kindness, your love, your generosity. I'm proud to be a member of this family. All of you know, I could have escaped the day of my arrest. If time could turn back, I would still choose to stay.

I love you all very, very much. I can't thank God enough for what He's done for me. My calmness comes so naturally to me these last few days. I assure all of you that not once has there been any fear or regrets. The Lord has kept me humorous, joyous and peaceful. It is an indescribable feeling. I can't ask for more at this time.

I'm sure the Lord will lead all of you through difficulties if your trust in Him one hundred percent. Because of my trust and belief in the Lord, I'm able to look forward to be reunited with all of you in the Lord's kingdom. It may be years before all of us will be together in heaven, but for me it will be like the twinkling of an eye.

My hope is that Kent, Ricky and Rocky will receive the Lord too. May the rest of you grow in the Lord's gentleness, kindness and love. I'll ask the Lord to let me be your guardian angel, if that is possible.

I know the funeral will be wonderful. The Lord's presence will insure a pleasant and comforting event. Enjoy it. I love you all. Bye. See you all later." *Sebastian*

Sebastian, was arrested on a possession of marijuana. In Singapore such a charge carries an automatic death sentence.

His brother's letter tells about Sebastian's execution.

"On Monday, August 24, the designated day came for us to visit Sebastian. He had already sensed in his spirit that he would be called home soon. When he confirmed with us that the president's clemency was denied, he told us what to expect. He even knew that he would be executed at dawn on Friday. He began giving instructions to me, telling me what to expect and what I ought to do. And he wanted to donate his organs after his death, so he sought mothers' agreement.

As you can see, Sebastian was ready to go, settling his earthly duties. From Tuesday to Thursday, the family was allowed to visit once in the morning and once in the afternoon for periods of two hours each, three visitors at a time.

For the next three days Sebastian did nothing but encourage the family, speaking with full confidence of following God personally. He was reminding us to trust in God totally. Not sixty percent nor eighty percent but one hundred percent--he kept saying--one hundred percent.

His mother was so comforted by his faith and trust in God that there were no tears but an unbelievable peace. Sebastian prayed for our family members who had not accepted Christ yet and hoped for their acceptance. For those in our family who are Christians, he prayed that we would grow in the Lord. During the last half hour, the warden allowed six of us to see Sebastian together. My eldest brother Isaac, myself, and two younger brothers, Ken and Jeremiah, my mother, and Sebastian's fiancée, Grace, were with him.

With God's strength and grace we were able to sing 'Amazing Grace how sweet the sound that saved a soul like me.' In Christ we became one family. There were tears but great comfort. That was how we parted from Sebastian. It was the last time we saw him alive.

The prison chaplain told us later that as Sebastian walked to the gallows he sang 'Amazing Grace' over and over again. When his body dropped he was singing Amazing Grace how sweet the sound, that saves a wretch like me. When I've been there 10,000 years, Bright shining as the sun, I've no less days to sing God's praise, then when I first began."

That's living with hope. Sebastian made a decision to become a Christian. Exactly how and when I don't know. But that decision was a decision to live by hope. Not by doubt! Not by distrust!" *happy sabastian was my brother!*

I asked a man: "Are your bags all packed? Are you ready to go?" He blessed me by saying, "Yes, I'm ready to go! My bags are all packed, and I'm just waiting for my boarding pass."

EXERCISE 79

Now write your own statement of readiness to have the Holy Spirit commit you back to the Father. You may use a verse of Scripture if you like.

A dear saint of God shared this special poem with be verbally and in writing. She was ready to be committed back to the Father.

I'LL COME RUNNING HOME

by Yvonne V. Durnberger, Valley Falls, Kansas

I often feel I'd love to hear
My Father say, "Come home,
Abide with me in Heaven, Dear,
Here you'll never have to roam."

His Word tells plainly of the home
He's prepared for you and me,
But we must search His Word to know
How beautiful Heaven must be.

In Revelation He revealed
That the streets are paved with gold,
The water there is crystal clear,
And no one will e're grow old.

Life's river there flows on and on
Through the Garden of Love so fair.
The air which we'll breathe, so pure and sweet
Is by far beyond compare.

The Angels sing the sweetest songs
And millions in one accord
Harmonize with harps of gold
As they serenade our Lord.

But when I wish to hear Him call
To come up there and live;
I think how great the debt I owe,
And how little I've had to give.

Oh, how little I have had to give
On transportation fare,
And reservation for a place to dine
At His table laid up there.

We thank you Father, for Thy Son,
Who paid the price that we
Might inherit this eternal home.
And come and live with Thee.

Give me Dear Father, a few more days,
That I may lead some one
To make their reservations,
To meet Thee and Thy Son.

Dear God, while here; I'll work and wait,
Until the day shall come,
When you are ready and think it's time,
Then I'll come running home.

Permission to use by Yvonne, March, 1995

EXERCISE 80

On our study outline below, check the areas where the Holy Spirit has/is working in your life.

____ *HE has CREATED ME - body, soul, spirit*

____ *HE has CONVINCED ME about Jesus*

____ *HE has CONVICTED ME of sin*

____ *HE has CONVERTED ME*

____ *HE IS CONSECRATING ME - making me like Jesus*

____ *HE is COMFORTING ME*

____ *HE will COMMIT ME*

"And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you." (Romans 8:11)

THE CHALLENGE

1. THE BEGINNING

2. HE CREATES

3. HE CONVINCES

4. HE CONVICTS

5. HE CONVERTS

6. HE CONSECRATES

7. HE COMFORTS

8. HE COMMITS

9. THE CHALLENGE

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then,

with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints."

(Ephesians 6:10-18)

At the University of Chicago Divinity School each year they have what is called "Baptist Day." It is a day when all the Baptists in the area are invited to the school because they wanted the Baptist dollars to keep coming in.

On this day each one is to bring a lunch to be eaten outdoors in a grassy picnic area. Every "Baptist Day" the school would invite one of the greatest minds to lecture in the theological education center. One year they invited Dr. Paul Tillich. Dr. Tillich spoke for two and one-half hours proving that the resurrection of Jesus was false. He quoted scholar after scholar and book after book. He concluded that since there was no such thing as the historical resurrection, the religious tradition of the church was groundless, emotional mumbo-jumbo, because it was based on a relationship with a risen Jesus, who, in fact, never rose from the dead in any literal sense. He then asked if there were any questions.

After about 30 seconds, an old, dark skinned preacher with a head of short-cropped, woolly white hair stood up in the back of the auditorium.

"Docta Tillich, I got one question," he said as all eyes turned toward him. He reached into his sack lunch and pulled out an apple and began eating it.

"Docta Tillich..., " CRUNCH, MUNCH... "My question is a simple question," CRUNCH, MUNCH.... "Now, I ain't never read them books you read..." CRUNCH, MUNCH... "and I can't recite the Scriptures in the original Greek..." CRUNCH, MUNCH.... "I don't know nothin' about Niebuhr and Heidegger..." CRUNCH, MUNCH... He finished the apple. "All I wanna know is: This apple I just ate,-----was it bitter or sweet?"

Dr. Tillich paused for a moment and answered in exemplary scholarly fashion: "I cannot possibly answer that question, for I haven't tasted your apple."

The white-haired preacher dropped the core of his apple into his crumpled paper bag, looked up at Dr. Tillich and said calmly, "Neither have you tasted my Jesus."

The 1,000 plus in attendance could not contain themselves. The auditorium erupted with applause and cheers. Dr. Tillich thanked his audience and promptly left the platform.

We have "tasted" of the Lord and His blessed Holy Spirit. (I Peter 2:3) We can be like five frogs sitting on a log. Four decided to jump off. How many are left?

Answer: Five.

Why? Because there's a difference between deciding and doing.

So, what will we do? I pray this has not been just one more study course, but by application we will produce much fruit.

EXERCISE 81

Fill in the blanks from the American Standard translation:

"But ye are not in the flesh but __ _ __ _ __, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. But if any man has not the Spirit of Christ, __ _ __ _ __ _ __ _ __ _ __."
(Romans 8:9 ASV)

The most important thing in the life of any Christian is to be filled with the Holy Spirit! The Lord Jesus said, "Without Me ye can do nothing." Christ is in believers in the person of His Holy Spirit. Therefore, if we are filled with His Spirit, He works fruitfully through us. If we are not filled with the Holy Spirit, we are unproductive.

It is almost impossible to exaggerate how dependent we are on the Holy Spirit. We are dependent on Him for convicting us of sin before and after our salvation, for giving us understanding of the Gospel, causing us to be born again, empowering us to witness, guiding us in our prayer life--in fact, for everything. It is no wonder that evil spirits have tried to counterfeit the work of the Holy Spirit and confuse His work.

There is probably no subject in the Bible upon which there is more confusion today than that of being filled with the Holy Spirit. There are many fine Christian people who seem to equate the filling of the Holy Spirit with speaking in tongues or some emotionally ecstatic experience. There are other Christians who because of excesses observed or heard of in this direction have all but eliminated the teaching of the filling of the Holy Spirit. They just do not recognize His importance in their lives.

Satan places two obstacles before men: (1) he tries to keep them from receiving Christ as Savior, and (2) if he fails in this, he then tries to keep men from understanding the importance and work of the Holy Spirit. Once a man is converted, Satan seems to have two different approaches. He tries to get men to associate the filling of the Holy Spirit with emotional excesses, or the opposite swing of the pendulum, to ignore the Holy Spirit altogether.

STAND

Lord help me to stand on the truth of your word.
Let me not stumble from the lies of this world
but let me know the truth so the truth can set me free.

Help me to stand on my knees and bow down to You and only You.
Let me give prayer, praise, and thanksgiving to You in all things
and let me hear your word, ask and receive,
seek and find, knock and have the door opened.

Help me to stand in the gap of an unbelieving world.
Let me not give up or give in
but let me stand firm with the full armor of You, God.

Help me to stand at any cost for You.
Let me never fall down,
but let me take up my cross daily for you and endure all hardships.

Help me to stand in all ways in all circumstances.
Let me not forget my reasons for standing or Who I'm standing for,
but let me always give all the glory to You who gives me strength.

By **John E. Wright** of Perry, Kansas
Written July, 1996 while attending CIY Conference
Now a graduate of Perry High School

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you."
(Deuteronomy 31:6)

Sir Winston Churchill took three years to get through eighth grade because he had trouble learning English. It seems ironic that years later Oxford University asked him to address its commencement exercises. He arrived with his usual props. A cigar, a cane and a top hat accompanied Churchill wherever he went. As Churchill approached the podium, the crowd rose in appreciative applause. With unmatched dignity, he settled the crowd and stood confident before his admirers. Removing the cigar and carefully placing the top hat on the podium, Churchill gazed at his waiting audience. Authority rang in Churchill's voice as he shouted, "**Never give up!**" Several seconds passed before he rose to his toes and repeated: "**Never, never, never give up!**" His words thundered in their ears. Once more with tears in his eyes and a rock firm voice he shouted, "**Never, never, ever give up!**" There was a deafening silence as Churchill reached for his hat and cigar, steadied himself with his cane and left the platform. His commencement address was finished. So short, yet never to be forgotten!

"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." (Galatians 6:9)

=====



**These Saints of the Lord let the
dove of God's Spirit bear fruit
through their life by praying,
encouraging, and giving during the
long days this book was wrestled
out of the furnace of life and the
Mind of the Spirit.**



**Lorraine Abernathy, Highmore, SD
Albert Pike Christian Church, Fort Smith, AR
Louise Amerise, Fort Smith, AR
Millie Amherst, Las Vegas, NV
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 Tim & Cathi Newton, Bohemia, NY
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Wilroads Gardens Christian Church,
Dodge City, KS
Skip & LaVeda Woolfolk, Protection, KS
Wayne & Marlene Woolfolk, Protection, KS
John Wright, Perry, KS
Larry & Jeanette Wright, Perry, KS
Leonard & Thelma Wymore, Johnson City, TN

FRIENDS TO THE END

"Thank you Jesus, for my friends,
Who made me strong, this *battle to win!*"

Many sent words right up to Heaven
Fusing my feeble seed with His leaven.

Some shared their sacrifice of gold,
For daily bread and to keep out the cold.

Some sent their heart wrapped up in hope,
Telling me, "rest in Jesus, don't grope!"

Some loaned their ears
To listen to my faith and fears.

Some shared a hand to *play in the band*
To cheer me on *across the land*.

I Praise God for this team!
Who made me strong to reach the end!

"Now Holy Spirit, more and more fill their
life,
As they help others in the strife."

FOR BY HIS GRACE WE WILL BE,
BROTHERS and SISTERS FOREVER!
FRIENDS TO THE END!

Written on Monday, August 9, 1999 as I reflected
on all the assistance I've received while writing this
book.

Grateful - Prayerful for you!
Wilbur S. Johnson
Wilbur S. Johnson

WILBUR & IMALEE JOHNSON

Box 146 / 605 S. Chestnut

Ashland KS 67831

I REMEMBER

I remember, I remember

The house where I was born,
The little window where the sun
Came peeping in at morn:

.....

I remember, I remember,

Where I used to swing;
And knew the air must rush as free
To swallows on the wing:
My spirit flew in feathers then,

I remember, I remember,

The cottonwood trees dark and high;
I used to think their fleecy tops
Were close against the sky:
It was a childish ignorance,
But now 'tis (high joy
To know, God's Spirit was with me,
All the days I was a boy.)

Adapted from a poem by Thomas Hood

When the Holy Spirit began to make Jesus the Lord of my life--He made a *difference!* Six months later I started teaching Sunday School, followed by preaching in country churches and youth rallies, followed by a three month interim ministry at the Cherryvale, Kansas, Christian Church. Then on to Midwest Christian College in Oklahoma City and my first every Sunday church at Ripley, Oklahoma. In 1974, after 25 years in the located ministry, He called me to our Faith Alive revival ministry.

The pictures at the bottom are a visual account of my sojourn-- at age seven, the house where I was born and lived for 14 years, and age forty seven. All my years leads me to conclude that the blessed Holy Spirit has been working all the time. Even before I was born, He was arranging circumstances for my birth. Beyond birth, sometimes on the outside, much of the time on the inside of my heart, His silent mighty work progressed.

The principles contained in this study were first lived out in the heart and home of myself and others.

