

Victorious Christian Life



Bible based prayers that draw us closer to Jesus

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The compilers thank God for putting this manual on their hearts and giving them the inspiration and the ability to persevere through many drafts.

They thank Ellet Ministries for inspiring the manual. They also thank God for the lives of the late John and Paula Sandford, the founders of Elijah House, whose pioneering work has provided much inspiration and direction.

BACKGROUND

At the age of 11, I was born again as a Christian. In the first few years I was passionate about Jesus, received baptism in the Holy Spirit, and a gift of healing. Sadly, by the time I left school, my passion for Jesus had waned. I spent the next three decades being backslidden, lukewarm and frustrated by many unresolved problems. Like the Israelites in the desert, my life was spent going round in circles but not entering the promised land. Sometimes I felt concerned by this and at other times avoided thinking about it. When my father died, I had to consider whether there was life after death and on what basis a person would enter heaven. This got me more interested in Jesus again but by this time I was living in sin and didn't know how to get out of it.

A few years later, I married a nominal church-goer. Our marriage was a disaster from the very beginning, but God used it to draw me back to Jesus. I started to get more serious about studying the Bible and praying. At crisis point I went for prayer ministry for my marriage. It was there that I realised that God required me to forgive those people who had hurt me in the past (my parents, my teacher, my husband) and to repent of my own very specific sins.

Over time I learned more about repentance and forgiveness and applied it to my life. Each lesson I applied has brought greater freedom in my own life. I felt different – brighter – and I became passionate about Jesus and the Holy Spirit again. Many years later, soon after my baptism in water, my husband also had the born again experience. Soon after that he also was baptised in the Holy Spirit and in water. Now he too became interested in prayer ministry including inner healing and deliverance. We sought ministry, were discipled by prayer ministers and read many books. Not long after that we were called into full-time ministry. We were very excited by this change of circumstances, and very proud. We left our friends, moved home and thought we were doing well. But we were soon humbled when things didn't turn out the way we expected. Our pride, unforgiveness and other sinful attitudes became very obvious.

We had to go through the ‘refiner’s fire’ in order to deal with these attitudes. Even so, a few months later we were dismissed from our positions. We were then left with no work and no ministry. But we did have a desire to seek the Lord Jesus together and find out what He wanted us to do. We didn’t know what was blocking our hearing from God and our release into ministry so we spent our days in Bible study and prayer. We had a set of ministry prayers¹ and we used them to pray through all that we could remember of our lives – forgiving those who had hurt us and repenting of our sins. As one of us prayed, the other listened. As one listened, that one also (with the help of the Holy Spirit) remembered more issues in their own life that needed to be prayed through. And so it went for weeks and weeks. Finally we had finished. There was nothing more that we could remember that needed prayer. We cried out to God to deliver us from anything else that was keeping us bound. We both heard Him speak to us very clearly “*Now I can use you*” and the words of a long-forgotten song “*Come on and celebrate!*” Within a short time, God spoke to us about our calling and subsequently released us into it. That was the easy part. God is still teaching us to walk with Him.

This manual has been written around the ministry prayers that we used. We have explained the Biblical basis of the prayers so that the reader can understand and then pray from their heart as led by the Holy Spirit.

We believe that this manual is an instrument that God will use to help believers “*throw off what is holding us back*” (**Hebrews 12:2**) and to be free to do the work of the church. It was God’s instrument to free us. God has used it to free those who have typed it, translated it and reviewed it. We believe God will use it to set you free too, if you want; free to live ‘the victorious Christian life’!

¹ Pennant Jones: ‘*Basic Ministry Prayers*’, 1996 (Unpublished), personal notes while Director of Glyndley Manor, Ellet Ministries, UK. With permission.

INTRODUCTION

THE VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN LIFE

God makes every spiritual gift under heaven available to us as believers (*Ephesians 1:3*). It is God's desire that we have "*life in abundance*" (*John 10:10b*). Jesus said we will do even greater things than He did (*John 14:12-14*). Even as believers, life will not always be easy and things will not always go exactly as we want them to. But we should have an inner peace and a gracious response even in the most difficult of circumstances. This is the victorious Christian life. If we are not living in victory, in every area of our lives, then Satan is killing, stealing and destroying what God offers us (*John 10:10a*). This is not what God intends for us.

Inner healing is a huge key to personal, national and global revival.

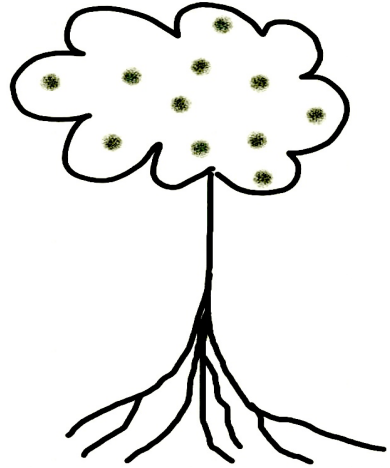
(Robert Fetveit,
Elijah House, 2014)

The purpose of the 'Victorious Christian Life' prayers and teaching is to help draw us closer to Jesus, fully empowered by the Holy Spirit and doing those very miraculous things that Jesus did (*Luke 24:46-49; Acts 3:19-20, 4:29b-30; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 3:10-11*). This ministry is evangelistic and brings inner healing, sanctification and transformation in our lives. It may also result in physical healing and deliverance from oppression by evil spirits (there are separate sections in this manual on physical healing and deliverance).

Speaking to the Pharisees in Matthew 12:33, Jesus said: "*A tree is identified by its fruit. If a tree is good, its fruit will be good. If a tree is bad, its fruit will be bad*". The way to recognise that we are not living in victory is to look at the 'fruit' in our lives. If it is more like Galatians 5:19-21 than Galatians 5:22-23, then we are not 'living in victory' but living as slaves to sin (*John 8:34*). To continue with the agricultural imagery, if the fruit of a tree is not good there may be a problem with the roots – damaged by worms or poor nutrients (*Luke 13:6-9*). If the roots are good, then the fruit also will be good. The Apostle Paul

encouraged us to let our ‘roots’ grow down into Jesus and build our lives on Him (*Colossians 2:7*). In this way we can produce lasting fruit in our lives (*John 15:16*).

When the fruit in our lives is not good, there may be a problem with our spiritual roots. For example, there may be sin in our lives that has never been *fully* repented of. Or, we may not have *truly* forgiven the people who have hurt us, perhaps many years before. We often say that the incident that caused the hurt or harm happened a long time ago and we have forgotten about it. That is not forgiveness, but forgetfulness. Forgiveness is an act of our choosing, *ie* we choose to forgive because ‘... *the Lord forgave you...*’ (*Colossians 3:13*).



Our lives are shaped by our early-life experiences², even our experiences in our mother’s womb (*Psalms 139:13-16; Isaiah 49:1*). We respond and learn through these experiences as we grow-up and develop. What we should learn in childhood for our healthy human development is:

- how to trust people and God (*Psalms 22:9*);
- how to make choices and deal with our emotions in a Godly way (*Ephesians 4:2-3, 6:4*);
- how to be confident in who we are in Christ and who God is (*Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Philippians 4:13*); and
- to know how to discern God’s guidance for ourselves (*Jeremiah 29:11; John 10:27*).

If we do not receive this nurturing in our early years, it may cause us problems in later life.

² John and Paula Sandford; ‘*Restoring the Christian family*’, 2009, Charisma House

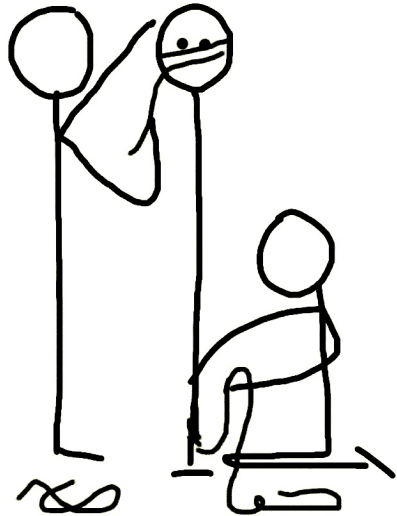
Our ungodly response to the hurts we receive in early life hinders us from becoming what God intended us to be. For example, if we did not learn how to handle anger in a Godly way while we were children (*Ephesians 4:26-27*), we will often behave in childish, ungodly ways when we get angry as adults *eg* aggressive outbursts or sulking, which harm relationships. Many of the problems in our adult lives are because of our sinful response to bad things that happened to us in our childhood.

God is the restorer. Only He can restore our damaged lives! This teaching is about how we can recognise bad fruit in our lives and identify the root causes of it. Then we can be made more free by applying the blood of Jesus to the root cause and receive healing from Him through the gifts of repentance and forgiveness.

Sometimes Christians repeatedly fall into the same sin; despite trying hard to break free, they remain trapped. In these circumstances they may benefit from the help of ordinary believers (*Galatians 6:1*).

‘Ordinary’, born again believers have a vital role in building up the Church by helping (and disciplining) other ‘ordinary believers’ in their walk with Jesus (*Ephesians 4:12*).

The role of ‘ordinary people’ can be seen as that of those people standing around Jeshua (*Zechariah 3:4*). They received instructions from the angel to remove his dirty clothes until the Lord made him holy. They are also like the ordinary people watching Lazarus when he was raised from the dead (*John 11:43-44*). They followed the instructions of Jesus to remove Lazarus’ grave clothes enabling him to be free to enjoy the abundant new life he had been given by God.



We may also have habitual or recurring sins that we struggle to deal with. Sometimes they do not originate with us but with our ancestors. We can confess the sins of our ancestors *specifically* and ask God to forgive our family *corporately* and free our family from the tendency to sin in this way (***Nehemiah 9:2***). Dealing with these and ungodly ties, condemning judgements, negative words and money issues enables us to more fully enjoy the benefits and blessings that Jesus won for us on the cross. These will all be considered in later chapters.

Freedom is not the right to do what we want, but the power to do what God wants.

The compilers have used all of these prayers themselves and God has answered in astounding ways. Since then, they have used this material with many other people in different cultural settings and taught it to literate and non-literate people alike. They have been constantly amazed at how God uses ordinary people to help others who are genuinely seeking to be drawn closer to Him. Their hope and prayer is that as you work through this manual, you will draw closer to Jesus, and also be equipped to help others do likewise. Their desire is that everyone everywhere should live victorious Christian lives!

SIN AND SANCTIFICATION

God is holy. This means that God is without sin. God is sanctified or set apart from everyone and everything else. He is heavenly. Glorious. Sin cannot exist in His presence. In order for us to come into His presence, we need to become holy. This is impossible for us but not for God. God does this for us when we are '*born again*' and become '*new creations*' in Christ Jesus. And yet all Christians continue to sin, even when 'saved' and some are still affected by the sins of their past life.

All the 'letters' in the Bible were written to, and for, believers. Often, the believers were being urged to get rid of their sin because this was causing divisions between believers and causing non-believers to stay away from Jesus. This is the same today. The process of getting rid

of our sin to produce a God-like character (sanctification) continues throughout our life on earth. It is the God-like character or ‘fruit’ we develop in our lives that counts for eternity (**Matthew 7:17-23; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Galatians 5:19-26; Revelation 22:14-15**).

“Blessed are those who wash their robes. They will be permitted to enter through the gates of the city and eat the fruit from the tree of life. Outside the city are the dogs – the sorcerers, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idol worshipers, and all who love to live a lie. I, Jesus, have sent My angel to give you this message for the churches.” (Revelation 22:14-16a)

The Bible records that the human race began with Adam and Eve. Humans were created by God for fellowship with Him. Then Adam and Eve sinned and the whole human race was separated from God by sin and death (**Genesis 3**). With one act of disobedience (Adam and Eve’s sin) our holiness was lost. At that time God spoke the first prophetic word in the Bible, to Satan – the word around which the whole of the Bible is based – that Satan’s head would be crushed by woman’s seed (**Genesis 3:15**). This speaks of Jesus, His life, death and resurrection: His total victory over sin and death and the way of reconciliation between God and man.

The Bible is a record of man’s complete ruin in sin and God’s complete remedy in Jesus Christ.

(Charles H Spurgeon)

God did not want us to be separated from Him forever so

He created a way in which we could be reconciled to Him: He sent His only Son, Jesus, to pay the price for our sin by dying on our behalf. Jesus gave up everything He enjoyed in Heaven as God’s Son to become an ordinary human being living on earth. Jesus was like us in every way, subject to the same temptations, except that He did not sin (**Hebrews 4:15, 7:26**). Jesus only said and did what His Father, God, wanted Him to (**John 12:49**). This makes Jesus’ life the perfect model for our lives.

Jesus died a criminal's death on the cross for each one of us. He was the perfect sacrifice that paid for all our sin, for all of time. Jesus never sinned, but He died for sinners to bring us safely home to God (**1 Peter 3:18**). By acknowledging Jesus' sacrifice for us and by deciding to trust in Him to take away our sin, we can have a close relationship with God and enjoy all the benefits that brings, including eternal life with God. Our decision will result in us having a 'changed heart' and a changed way of life. We must change our mind about the way we have been living, then turn around to face God, and say, 'Father God, here I am, tell me what to do and I will do it.' Our decision requires us to change our actions. This is what the Bible calls being '*born again*' (**John 3:3**).

We cannot make ourselves holy; it is an act of God's grace. But when we are born again we become a new creation; the old life has gone and we start afresh. Some of our habits and attitudes instantly change when we accept Jesus as our Lord and Saviour: we are dead to sin and alive to Christ! However, experience tells us that some of those old habits don't disappear automatically. As we mature as Christians, we should become more like Jesus in every way. The Apostle Paul talks about this process being a battle (**Romans 7:14-25**). The answer to winning such battles is always in Jesus Christ our Lord. We need to decide to be obedient to God and keep asking for His help. Our best efforts and striving to be good cannot give us the victory that Jesus won for us. Many Scriptures urge us to fervently seek after the Holy Spirit's help to make us more like Jesus.

The Bible will keep you away from sin or sin will keep you away from the Bible.

(D.L. Moody)

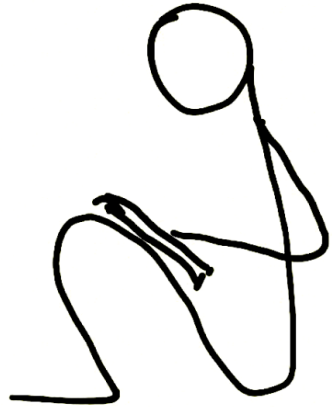
"If, through the power of the Holy Spirit you put to death the deeds of your sinful nature, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God." (Romans 8:13b-14)

"Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honour at God's right hand." (Colossians 3:1)

“Put on your new nature and be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like Him.” (Colossians 3:10)

Spiritual maturity requires us to die to self. We must give our ego, pride, self-sufficiency, self-centredness and disobedience to God so that He can forgive us and change us. ‘Christ’ must replace ‘Self’ in our lives. We will continue to have blind-spots and faults, but victorious Christians have a deep desire to be like Jesus and to know Him intimately.

In some ways, we are like sponges. We soak up the atmosphere around us. We become like those we spend time with. The more time we spend in God’s presence (through prayer and studying the Bible) and the more we allow Jesus and the Holy Spirit to change our hearts, and the more we become like Jesus. Then, when we are ‘squeezed’ by the problems we face in life, the qualities that we express are those of the fruit of the Holy Spirit; love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (*Galatians 5:19-23*).



The Holy Spirit is available to help us all the time. But He has given us free will to choose Him and we will only receive His help if we ask for it and are willing to follow His leading (*Galatians 5:16-17*).

The name ‘Jesus’, in Hebrew ‘Yeshua’, means “Yahweh is Salvation”. When we pray “In Jesus’ name” we are acknowledging that He is the God who saves, heals and delivers. It is His power, His nature and His faith that we use when we pray ‘in Jesus’ Name’. We must be careful to only put Jesus’ name to prayers that Jesus would agree to.

This prayer can be prayed out loud as a declaration of Jesus' Lordship over us:

Lordship Prayer



“Lord Jesus, I acknowledge my need of You and accept You as my Lord, my Saviour and my Deliverer. I invite You now to be Lord of the whole of my life ...

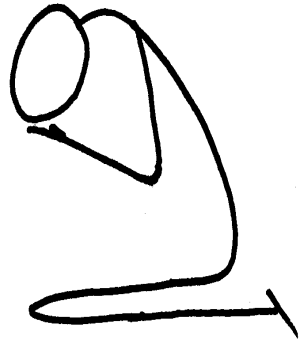
Lord of my spirit and all of my worship,
Lord of my mind and all my attitudes and thinking,
Lord of my emotions and all my feelings,
Lord of my will and all my decisions,
Lord of my body and my physical health,
Lord of the manner and timing of my death,
Lord of my sexuality and its expression,
Lord of my family and all my relationships,
Lord of my work and my service for You,
Lord of my material goods and needs,
Lord of my finances.

Thank You Jesus that Your blood was shed that I might be free.
In Jesus' name. Amen.”

REPENTANCE

“The Kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe the Good News.” (Jesus’ words in **Mark 1:15**)

This was the key message that Jesus proclaimed at the beginning of His ministry and it is vital to living a victorious Christian life. In fact, repentance is so important for us that Jesus talked about it throughout His ministry on earth (**Matthew 4:17; Mark 1:15; Luke 15:1-32, 24:47**), and also after He had ascended into heaven (**Revelation 2:5, 2:22, 3:3**). In most of these Scriptures, Jesus is talking to believers about their need to repent.



The Apostle Paul, in his preaching and teaching ministry, also emphasised the need for us to repent *eg* Acts 26:20 and 2 Corinthians 7:8-10. In Romans 2:4 he said that God’s kindness was intended to turn us from our sin, *ie* repent. The Apostle Peter also stated that God wanted every one of us to repent (**Act 2:38; 2 Peter 3:9**).

Repentance is often misunderstood. Some people think that talking about repentance causes us to keep thinking about our past sin. However, the memory of a sin we did and the guilt we feel about it will go away the instant we **truly** repent of it. Repentance is a gift from God, a blessing. Repentance results in eternal life, forgiveness, joy and freedom and brings us into relationship with God. This is the grace of God.

TESTIMONY

My First Real Experience With Jesus

“I’m a young man who did not have assurance of salvation and was trying to claim it ‘by faith’. As soon as I repented of the things that I had done that were troubling me, I immediately felt peace and heard God speak these words into my heart ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’”

REPENTING

To repent means deciding to leave our sin and turn to God. Repentance is a decision followed by an action. It means that we decide to leave our wrongdoings and wrong thinking behind and be drawn closer to God. If we do not make the decision to repent – we have made a decision not to repent! To repent is not the same as remorse or even saying ‘sorry’. We might feel guilty and regret doing something that we know was wrong. We may even cry with bitter tears; but we need to admit our fault to God and ask Him to forgive us. For example, Peter was remorseful (**Luke 22:62**) but repented (**Luke 22:32**), and was forgiven and restored (**John 21:15-19**). Judas was remorseful but did not repent (**Matthew 27:3**). We need to understand that when we sin we grieve God. We need to decide to change so that we stop sinning, and for this we require God’s help.

Many Christians have repented enough to get into the Kingdom of God but not repented enough to experience the POWER of the Kingdom of God in their lives.

(Attributed to Bill Johnson)

Repentance is something that every Christian must do at least once in their lives but in order to live in greater victory, we need to repent frequently. Sin that has not been confessed and repented of provides a ‘foothold’ to the devil for oppressing us (**Ephesians 4:26-27**).

God can see all the flaws in us: *“Nothing in all creation is hidden from God. Everything is naked and exposed before His eyes and He is the One to whom we are accountable.”* (**Hebrews 4:13**). God knows everything that we have done - even our secret sins and motives. The Psalmist says to God in Psalm 90:8 *“You spread out our sins before You - our secret sins - and You see them all.”* It is as if God has His record book open and is waiting for us to repent of our sins and ask to be forgiven. When we do, He takes His pen dipped in the blood of Jesus and removes the record of our sin.

“Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sin is put out of sight! Yes, what joy for those whose record the LORD has cleared of guilt, whose lives are lived in complete honesty!” (Psalm 32:1-2 and Romans 4:7-8)

“Seek the Lord while you can find Him. Call on Him now while He is near. Let the wicked change their ways and banish the very thought of doing wrong. Let them turn to the Lord that He may have mercy on them. Yes, turn to our God, for He will forgive generously.” (Isaiah 55:6-7)

“I will never again remember their sins and lawless deeds.” (Hebrews 10:17)

“But if we confess our sins to God He is faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.” (1 John 1:9)

From this Scripture in 1 John 1:9, we can know that God only promises to forgive those sins that we have confessed to Him.

BELIEVING

When we repent we need to believe in who Jesus is and what He has done for us.

These three historical facts of the Gospel are what Jesus is asking us to believe:

1. Jesus is the Son of God, the anointed Christ or ‘Messiah’
2. Jesus died for our sins and was buried
3. Jesus was raised from the dead on the third day.

These facts are found in many places in the Bible but listed together in 1 Corinthians 15:1-6. In addition to these facts, the resurrected Jesus was seen by over 500 witnesses and all who belong to Jesus Christ will be resurrected when He comes back (**1 Corinthians 15:23**). If we believe these facts, we have faith! Because Jesus died for our sins, we exercise our faith by giving Jesus specific sins to take away. The steps are:- recognising our sin, confessing it, repenting, asking Jesus to forgive us, changing and making amends.

RECOGNISING OUR SIN

The first step of repentance is recognising our sin. To sin means falling short of God's standard. Every time we realise that our thoughts, words, attitudes and actions are not line up with those

of Jesus, we need to repent. Often cultural norms disagree with what the Bible says is sinful. In the Annex there are repentance lists from the New Testament and a range of issue-based references from the Old and New Testament. Looking at Exodus 20 and the Scriptures from those repentance lists, you can ask God to show you any sinful attitudes or behaviour in you.

Every time our thoughts and actions do not align with God's Word, we need to repent.

(Bill Johnson, Bethel Church)

Many of us put other things before God (*1 John 5:21*). We may worship other gods. We may idolise another person such as a family member, a sports star or our pastor more than Jesus. We may have loved money or possessions more than Jesus. We may have lusted after someone in our hearts or viewed pornography. We may use physical exercises or healing methods that involve power from the kingdom of darkness instead of asking Jesus to bring peace, healing and well-being. We may have unforgiveness towards someone who has hurt us or we may be judging and criticising others with our mouths or in our hearts. We may have been very angry with our family members; beaten our wife or husband or children. We may have gossiped! Sin can even be doing 'good' things that God has not asked us to do (the Bible calls these "*evil deeds*" (or "*dead works*") in Hebrews 6:1). Remember that every sin is sin. The good news is that no sin is

TESTIMONY

Jesus Healed My Marriage In An Instant

"I married a man who was not a born again Christian, although I was. Our marriage was very bad for many years. After 15 years I repented of marrying an unbeliever. God did a work in my husband and convicted him of his sin. He then repented and was gloriously born again. In an instant, God healed our marriage."

too bad, or too frequently done, for God to refuse to forgive us when we confess it and ask His forgiveness.

“For from within, out of a person’s heart come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, wickedness, deceit, lustful desires, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness. All these vile things come from within, they are what defile you.” (Jesus’ words in **Mark 7:20-23**)

“When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarrelling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God. But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!” (**Galatians 5:19-23**)

[There is an ‘unforgivable sin’ (**Matthew 12:32; 1 John 5:16**) but if we desire to be drawn closer to God, we have not committed it.]

God hates our sin and wants us to hate it too. Only when we recognise our sin and hate our sinful attitudes and behaviours will we be willing to stop doing them.

Easy Rule for Discernment:
Does it originate in the
Kingdom of Light or in the
kingdom of darkness?

(Victor D'Monte, Adonai)

You can ask God right now to show you those things that you have done that have offended, or continue to offend Him; those sins that separate you from God and that He would like you to repent of.

“Search me, O God, and know my heart, test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends You, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.” (**Psalms 139:23-24**)

This prayer may be helpful:

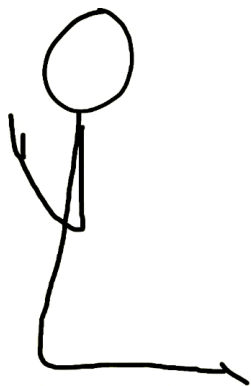
“Heavenly Father, please show me those specific sins that I have done which You want to remove from me now. In Jesus’ name. Amen.”



[Then wait for thoughts, feelings or impressions to come from God.]

CONFESSING OUR SIN

Having recognised a sinful attitude or behaviour, we then need to confess that specific sin and decide to turn from it. If there are sins that keep coming back to our recollection we need to keep on asking God to help us repent of them, turn away from them and separate us from them.



It is important that we are specific and detailed, that is, one by one, when we confess our sins. The Bible tells of many incidents detailing people’s specific sins, *eg* King David – sinning against God through adultery, deceit and mass murder (**2 Samuel 11 and 12**). Just as God told Nathan exactly what wrongs David had done (**2 Samuel 12:9-10**), God knows exactly what sins we have done. Nothing is hidden from God, He knows our hearts, our minds and He sees what we do and think. We need to be absolutely honest before our Holy God who knows everything about us and wants us to take responsibility for our own sins (**Revelation 2:23b**).

Each sin affects the sinner, other people and God. One sin may lead to more sins being committed, such as lying to cover up the first one. The whole web of related sins may need to be identified and confessed in order for the person to get free from them. Then they can experience the grace of God that forgives sin, and sorts out the consequences.

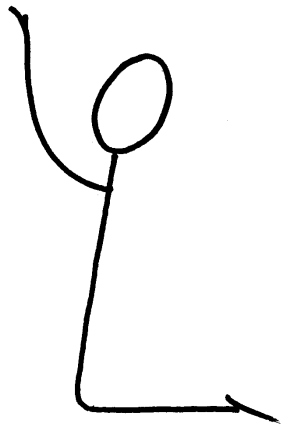
When we confess our sin, we are agreeing with God and openly admitting to Him that we have sinned. Confession means to speak out loud. Nowhere in the Bible does it imply that confession is done silently. We confess with our mouth: *"If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord..." (Romans 10:9-10)*. Once we have confessed, God can do the impossible and forgive those sins.

God does not promise to forgive those sins that we do not confess to Him ... *"But IF we confess our sins to Him, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all wickedness."* (1 John 1:9 emphasis added, and **Proverbs 28:13**)

"So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive His mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most." (**Hebrews 4:16**)

ASKING GOD TO FORGIVE US AND CHANGE US

Having confessed our sins we can then ask God to forgive us. We can ask God to cleanse us and anyone that we have defiled by our actions (1 John 1:9) and show us how we can put things right by making restitution towards them. We need to forgive anyone who has hurt us or ask God to help us forgive them. We need to tell God that we want to change and ask Him to help us to become more like Jesus. Then we need to invite Jesus to come into our heart more deeply and ask His Holy Spirit to come and fill us completely.



Prayer guide if you know you have sinned:

- Confess and repent of what you have done wrong (be very specific)
- Sincerely ask God to forgive you, cleanse you and the other person(s), and to change you
- Ask God to show you how to put things right
- Invite Jesus to come into your heart (again) and fill you completely with the Holy Spirit

Here is a sample prayer of repentance that you can pray to help you be drawn closer to God. It is best to use your own words when you pray because the prayer will come from your heart.

Prayer of repentance



“Heavenly Father, I confess that I have done wrong. I have ... *(now confess your specific sins, aloud, to God. Be really honest as you mention each incident, in detail, to Him)*. I renounce this as sin. I was wrong. I choose to turn away from this sin and turn to You.

“Please forgive me and cleanse me in the blood of Jesus. I want to change, please change me and give me a new heart. Please stop the consequences of my sin affecting me or anyone else. Lord Jesus, please come into my heart (again) and fill me completely with Your Holy Spirit.

“I bless the people I have hurt. Please bless them too Father. Show me how to put things right. Please lead me away from temptation and deliver me from evil. Thank You. In Jesus’ name. Amen.”

After praying a prayer of repentance, it is helpful to declare the following scripture as a prayer.

Assurance of God's forgiveness



Declare aloud (from **1 John 1:8-10**).

“Thank You Lord God that Your word says that when I confess my sin You are faithful and just and will forgive me my sin, and cleanse me from all unrighteousness. Therefore, I am forgiven! Thank You for Your forgiveness. In Jesus’ name. Amen.”

In forgiving us, God removes that sin from our hearts. After this there is space in our hearts for more of Jesus and the Holy Spirit to fill. Jesus and the Holy Spirit will only fill us if we invite Him to (***Revelation 3:20***). It is as if the door of our hearts only has a handle on the inside – so it is only ourselves who can open the door of our own hearts! The more we invite Jesus and the Holy Spirit into our hearts, the more He dwells in us (***Colossians 1:27***), the more we become like Him and the more fruit of the Spirit will be produced in our lives (***Galatians 5:22***). This is like ‘Spiritual breathing’. As we are emptied of sin and self, we can ask to be filled more fully with Christ Jesus, the Holy Spirit and with God’s love (***Romans 5:5b***).

Remember that it is not by our own efforts that we change – we cannot! It is God that changes us when we invite Him to.

TESTIMONY

Healed By Jesus After Repenting

“I was praying for a man with back-pain. I commanded his back to be healed and for every bone to be aligned and I told the pain to go. Within a few minutes his back pain was almost gone but he still had some pain in his shoulder. I focused my prayers on his shoulder, commanding it to be healed and telling the pain to go. I asked the man, ‘Is there anyone who has hurt you that you need to forgive?’ “No” he said, “but it could be sin.” “What sin?” I asked. The man openly confessed some very specific sins (one being adultery). I was able to help him to repent of them, ask God to forgive him and ask Jesus into his heart. He did this and immediately he felt free inside and his shoulder was healed.”

PRAYING WITH ONE ANOTHER

If a prayer of repentance has previously been prayed but there is still no victory over the sin, then perhaps the underlying cause or ‘root’ of the sin has not been found and therefore not *truly* repented of. The issue should be prayed through again, but this time in the company of a trusted fellow Christian so that they can help find the root. The person can then repent of the sin (or forgive someone for any hurt they may have caused). The ‘prayer minister’ can then agree in prayer and be a witness to what God has done (**Matthew 18:19-20**) and to reassure the person that they are forgiven. Usually, the person will know they are forgiven as they will feel free and have a lightness deep in their hearts.

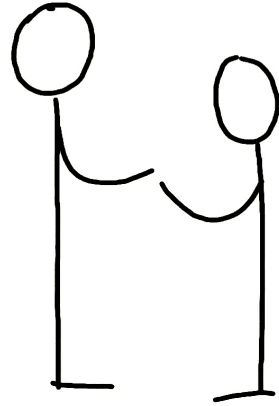
When ministering to someone it is good to remind them that God promises not to remember the sin; “... *I will forgive their wickedness, and I will never again remember their sins*” (**Jeremiah 31:34b; Hebrews 8:12; Hebrews 10:17**). When we have truly repented, these old sins will no longer come to our minds and make us feel guilty. We will know that we are forgiven (**Colossians 1:21-23a; 1 John 1:8-10, 5:15**).

DEMONSTRATING OUR REPENTANCE

After confessing and repenting of sin we need to keep on demonstrating it. That means that we must: “*Prove by the way you live that you have repented of your sins and turned to God.*” (**Matthew 3:8**). That means turning away from the sin every time we feel tempted by it again. We need to decide to stop yielding to sin and ask God to help us do so. It may be a sinful thought, word or action. We must resist when we are tempted, choose to turn away from it and turn to Jesus. We cannot do this in our own strength but must ask Jesus to help us turn away from sin. Remember that God’s promises are “*yes and amen*” (**2 Corinthians 1:20**) and that He will always forgive us when we turn to Him with a repentant heart no matter how often we sin.

RESTITUTION (MAKING AMENDS)

When a sin has been committed there are always consequences of that sin. For example, we may have hurt someone and although we have been forgiven, they may still be very hurt. Sometimes God requires us to make amends for what we have done (**Numbers 5:6-8a**). If we have stolen, we may need to confess to the person we stole from and pay back what is owed, perhaps with interest (eg Zacchaeus in Luke 19:8). If we were unkind to someone, we need to be kind to them from now on. We may need to confess our sin to them, ask for their forgiveness and seek reconciliation with them.



If the sin is against the law of the country we should pray and commit the process to God, then go to the appropriate authorities, confess our actions and let the law take its course (**Romans 13:1-7**).

TESTIMONY

Jesus Dealt With My Financial Sin

"I had repented of financial sin against my employer but had not made restitution. I became convicted of this when some political leaders were jailed for the same type of crime. When praying with my husband about whether to pay this money back (like Zachaeus), my husband heard the Lord speak these words into his heart: "Pay back what I owe." We were confused about what this meant, but later I realised that Jesus had literally taken my sin on Himself. He was now asking me to make restitution on His behalf by paying the money back. I wrote a letter to my employer confessing what I had done, asking forgiveness and with it I sent a money order covering what I had stolen, with interest. They wrote back saying 'Thank you for being honest, if a little late.'"

FORGIVENESS

*“If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.”
(Matthew 6:14-15)*

God offers us His gracious gift of forgiveness as the way to get our hearts right with Him (**Romans 5:15-16**). The Gospel is a message of forgiveness. Forgiveness and mercy are part of God’s character. If we confess our sins to God, He forgives us and cleanses us from our sin (**1 John 1:8-10**). This then takes us up to a new, higher level that we don’t deserve; a place where we are made right with God – the ‘grace’ level³.

TESTIMONY

Jesus Helped Me To Forgive From My Heart

“I had been betrayed to the police by a friend and was jailed. My friend’s betrayal cost me everything I had worked for - my marriage, my relationship with my children, my job, my reputation - everything. I hated my ex-friend and was full of bitterness towards him. After I was released from jail I met some Christians who were telling me that I should forgive him. I tried and tried; many times I tried. Then one day I asked Jesus to help me forgive. Within minutes I was able to say out loud ‘I forgive him’ and in an instant I knew I had forgiven him from my heart. I felt different immediately. Soon after that I had a dream about visiting my daughter. And so I did visit her and we have been in regular contact since then.”

³ John and Carol Arnott: *Grace and Forgiveness*, 2009, New Wine Ministries. With permission.

FORGIVING OTHERS

To stay at this ‘grace’ level, we must forgive those who hurt us. Jesus is our model. Jesus even forgave his murderers while they crucified Him (**Luke 23:34**). Jesus did not wait for them to stop hurting Him nor did they ask Him to forgive them. Instead, while they were in the very act of humiliating Him and killing Him, He forgave them. And so, we need to be like Jesus and **forgive our enemies**.

When we don’t forgive from our heart, we come down from the ‘grace’ level to the ‘justice’ level where we get what we deserve for our sin.

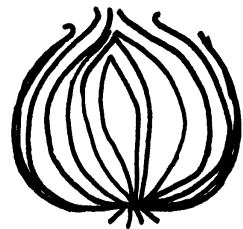
We may lose some of the benefits of God’s grace when we do not forgive. For example, prayers may not be answered (**1 Peter 3:7**) or healing may be withheld (**James 5:16**). It may have even more serious consequences (**Matthew 6:15**). The ‘justice’ level is where we get what we deserve and we may come under God’s discipline (**John 3:36**). God may even turn us over to tormenters (evil spirits - see the parable of the unforgiving servant in Matthew 18:23-35). We can live at the ‘grace’ level all the time if we continue to forgive those who hurt us. We receive grace when we are gracious to others *eg* Cornelius in Acts 10. This is the positive side of the law of reaping what we sow (**Luke 6:37-38**).

TESTIMONY

Jesus Freed Me!

“I’ve been able to forgive people and let go of a grudge I’ve been holding against someone though he won’t talk to me. I feel relieved and free.”

In order to forgive those who have hurt us, we have to make the decision to do so. God then enables us to forgive. It is His power that enables us to totally forgive; but we have to want to forgive others. We might not be able to forgive completely the first time we pray about it. Deep hurts often require us to forgive the person many times for what they have done to us, to others and to God. It is a process, a little bit like peeling layers off an onion, one layer at a time until it has gone.



Eventually we realise that we really have forgiven them. The hurt becomes less painful and we no longer feel our hearts race with anxiety when we think about the person or meet them. We are back up on the ‘grace’ level again!

“Then Peter came to Him (Jesus) and asked, ‘Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?’ ‘No, not seven times,’ Jesus replied, ‘but seventy times seven!’” (Matthew 18:21-22)

This is the standard God has given us because it is His standard. No matter how many times we carry out the same sin and repent of it from our hearts – God will forgive us when we ask Him to. Similarly, when someone sins against us we must also forgive them **from our heart**, no matter how often we have to do it.

When someone hurts us we often sin in response to the hurt. For example, we may have judged the person as being stupid or been angry in response to their hurtful ways. These are sinful reactions and we need to confess and repent

of them. We need to let go of these hurts even though we might not see this as fair and just; we need to accept that God is the only One able to determine what should be done. When we say ‘that’s not fair!’ or want to ‘take revenge’, we bring ourselves down to the level of being subject to God’s justice rather than living in God’s grace. A test of whether we have forgiven is when we are able to lovingly bless them from our hearts and are happy to know that they are being blessed. Jesus said *“Bless those who curse you.” (Luke 6:28).*

It is generally unwise for us to tell someone that we have forgiven them: to say you forgive someone implies, firstly, that they are in error, which they won’t like and secondly, that you are a wonderful Christian, which they won’t like either! There are ways of letting them know that if you had any dislike it has turned into liking, you don’t have to say so.

(Agnes Sanford, Creation Waits, 1977, Bridge Logos Publishing)

Totally forgiving someone does not mean that we must trust the person that hurt us or have a relationship with them. In time, that may happen. However, God tells us to trust Him and not people. Psalm 118:8 says *"It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in people."* Even Jesus didn't trust everyone (**John 2:24-25**). However, He did command us to love everyone, including our enemies (**Matthew 5:44-46**).

Jesus often explained forgiveness using financial terms of debts and debts being cancelled (**Matthew 18:23-35**). When Jesus died on the cross He said *"It is finished!"* (**John 19:30**). This was a term used at that time to say that an outstanding financial debt had been paid in full. In other words, Jesus was saying that He had paid the price for our debts (sins) in full; He took the punishment that we deserved. When we really understand what Jesus has done for us we can start to appreciate why it is essential for us to forgive those who sin against us.

TESTIMONY

Jesus Healed My Business

"I was in a desperate situation because my clients were not paying me for work I had done. Things were very difficult for me and my family financially; there was nothing left that we could pawn. The pastor helped me see my need to forgive my clients - even letting them off from giving me the money they owed me! It was a struggle, it didn't seem fair. And yet, I did forgive them. A short while after that I was connected with good clients who paid me on time."

Sometimes people may feel that if the sins or hurts committed against them are very serious, they do not have to forgive the person. These hurts could include the stealing of land or sexual abuse, including rape. While the victim's response is understandable, the Bible is absolutely clear that no matter how serious the hurt against us, we still have to forgive (**Matthew 6:14-15; Ephesians 4:31-32; 1 Corinthians 6:7**).

It is not easy to forgive in these situations; only God can help us to forgive, even if it takes some time to do so completely. Also, we do not have to be friends with those who have hurt us but we do have to forgive them from our hearts.

It may help to prayerfully and thoughtfully detail all the harm each person has done to you and what they owe you. Then you can count the cost of forgiving them (eg money, deceit, pain, reputation...), and then forgive them for each item. Cancel the debt they owe you.

You may desire to spend a little time now to invite the Holy Spirit to show you if there is anyone you still need to forgive for sins they have committed against you. You may also consider asking God to forgive you for wrong ways you responded to the hurts you have received.

Prayer guide if you are forgiving someone:

- Tell God how they have hurt you (be very specific)
- Decide to forgive them (if you are not able to, ask God to help you forgive them)
- Confess any wrong thoughts or actions you have done as a result of the hurt they did to you
- Bless the person(s) who hurt you and ask God to bless them
- Invite Jesus to come into your heart (again) and fill you completely with the Holy Spirit

When you are ready, you can pray a prayer like this, aloud.

Prayer of forgiveness of others



“Dear Heavenly Father, please help me to forgive from my heart those who have sinned against me.

“I choose to forgive (*name the person you are forgiving*) for the bad things they have done to me (*state the specific things you are forgiving them for, eg abuse, neglect, criticism*). I release (*name of person*) from the debt they owe me, even the debt of saying sorry to me.

“I confess, Father God, that I have sinned in response to their sins against me (*specifically confess your sinful responses, eg anger, resentment, condemnation*). I want to stop having sinful responses, please change me. Please forgive me, cleanse me and give me a clean heart. Please release me from the consequences of these sins right now. Renew me. Lord Jesus, please come into my heart (again) and fill me completely with Your Holy Spirit. Thank You.

“Now that I have forgiven them, I choose to bless them (*name the people you are blessing*). I ask You Father to bless them too. In Jesus’ name. Amen.”

Continue praying, in your own words, until you have forgiven all the people you can think of at this time, who have hurt you.

FORGIVING OURSELVES

It is possible that we also need to forgive ourselves for things we have done in the past that we are ashamed of. Some of us have done terrible things including hurting other people. Having repented specifically, we need to learn to forgive ourselves just as God forgives us. We may have blamed ourselves for getting into a situation where we dishonoured God, got hurt or looked foolish.

You can invite the Holy Spirit to show you if there is anything you need to forgive yourself for. [Sit quietly as you think about this.]

When you are ready, you can pray a prayer like this, aloud.

Prayer of forgiveness of oneself



“Dear Heavenly Father, thank You that You forgive me. Help me to forgive myself for the things I have done wrong ... (***state the specific things you are forgiving yourself for***). I forgive myself. I choose not to condemn myself any more. I want to change, please change me. I choose to bless myself, please bless me too. Thank You. In Jesus’ name. Amen.”

Continue praying in your own words until you have prayed through everything the Lord has shown you at this time.

WHEN WE HAVE BLAMED GOD

“People ruin their lives by their own foolishness and then are angry at the LORD.” (Proverbs 19:3)

“And remember, when you are being tempted, do not say, ‘God is tempting me.’ God is never tempted to do wrong, and He never tempts anyone. Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away. These desires give birth to sinful actions. And when sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death.” (James 1:13-15)

Sometimes we may blame God when bad things happen to us. God **never** does anything wrong and He is **never** responsible for our sin. God is good, His loving-kindness is ever lasting (**James 1:17**). For example, we may be angry with God when something that we do not like happens to us, a relative or to a friend. In that case, we need to release God from our blame and ask Him to forgive us for blaming Him.

You can ask the Holy Spirit to show you if you have blamed God for anything. [Sit quietly as you think about this.]

When you are ready, you can pray a prayer like this, aloud.

Prayer of repentance for blaming God



“Lord God, I have wrongly blamed You for bad things that have happened to me, and for the circumstances of my life ... (***tell God about specific instances where you have blamed Him***). Father, forgive me. I no longer blame You. I accept that You know what is best for us all. Please change me, renew me. Thank You. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen”

Continue praying in your own words until you have covered in prayer everything you need to deal with at this time.

DEEPER REPENTANCE AND FORGIVENESS

There are many ways in which we fall into sin. One of them is ignorance (*Hosea 4:6*). This is why it is important to read our Bibles every day and apply it to our lives. There are lists of repentance issues in the Annex of this manual. In the next five sections we examine some common bondages in our lives that can only be removed through repentance and forgiveness. We need to prayerfully consider whether these bondages are affecting our own lives. They may be preventing us from living the victorious Christian life.

TESTIMONY

Jesus Helped Me Become A True Friend

“My best friend and I had a very close relationship and spent a lot of time together. I wanted us to spend more time together and kept calling her to come away from her home. She kept telling me that I didn’t understand her situation and that it was difficult at home for her and she could not leave. When I received the teaching on ungodly ties I realised that I had been trying to control and manipulate my friend. I had put her before Jesus. I repented of my sin, cut the ungodly ties and Jesus set us both free. We now have a good relationship, free from ungodly ties.”

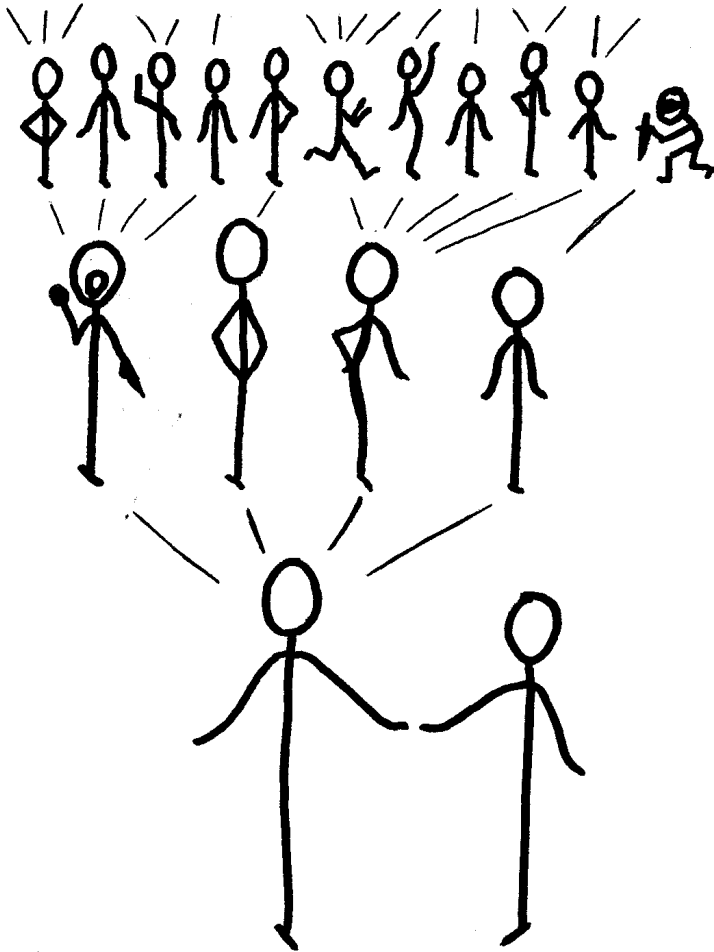
TESTIMONY

Badminton Was My Idol

“I was very keen on sport. I played badminton 6 nights each week and on my days off work. I neglected church and rarely prayed or read my Bible. I wanted to take water baptism but my pastor refused to baptise me. He told me that he would not baptise me unless I put Jesus first in my life. Later I understood that badminton was my god and my idol. I repented, reduced the time I spent playing badminton and made Jesus my priority.”

RELEASE FROM UNGODLY TIES

"And the two shall become one flesh." (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5)



When two people are in a relationship with each other, invisible ties or bonds are formed which connect them together in body, soul and spirit (*1 Samuel 18:1, 3; 1 Thessalonians 5:23*). These ties are strengthened because our brains take a 'photograph' of the person, situation or circumstance we are in, that enables us to keep them in our memories for a long time, even for life.

These memories are designed to be good for us and to help create ties that hold us together in Godly relationships including monogamous loving marriages. However, when we have wrong or sinful relationships, such as romances and sexual relationships outside marriage, or sexual fantasies, the ungodly ties that are formed will be used by the enemy to influence us in an ungodly way (**Matthew 5:27-28; 2 Timothy 2:22, 26; 2 Peter 2:18-19; Jude 8**).

Similarly, where there has been fear, manipulation or ungodly control in a relationship, ungodly ties will have been formed. The devil can use these ungodly ties to influence us in an ungodly way; he uses them to oppress and control people. This type of ungodly relationship can often be seen in families, as well as in relationships with other people.

Ungodly ties remain intact even when a relationship is over, or if the other person has since died.

"An evil man is kept captive by his own sins; they are ropes that catch and hold him." (Proverbs 5:22)



TESTIMONY

Jesus Freed Me From Ungodly Control

"I was raised in a home where my mother cared for us very well. Some years ago I decided to leave my home and go to work in another place. My mother was against my decision and tried many different ways to make me change my mind. I realised that she was trying to control and manipulate me. She was forcing her will on me instead of allowing me to make my own decision. In desperation, she said that if I left, she would kill herself. Later on I realised that her ungodly control over my life was witchcraft. I was able to forgive her, cut the ungodly ties and immediately felt different as Jesus set me free."

We can repent of romances, pornography and sexual sin and forgive those who have hurt us, frightened us or controlled us. Then we can break the ungodly ties between ourselves and the other person(s) in Jesus' name. We can ask God to set us free from others, from the sin that binds us together, from evil influences and from the memories involved. This should be done systematically by repenting of them one-by-one. Some people may sense freedom as these ties are cut, and the emotions may also be deeply touched.

"But the LORD is good, He has cut me free from the ropes of the ungodly." **(Psalm 129:4)**

"This dear woman has been held in bondage by Satan for 18 years ..." **(Luke 13:16)**

"The word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow." **(Hebrews 4:12)**

Breaking ungodly ties with family members and other loved ones, does not mean that we cease to love them and pray for them. It does mean that the power of the enemy over us been broken.

In Exodus 20:3-6 the Bible states that it is forbidden for us to have any other gods, or worship anything or anyone (an idol) other than God Himself. The terrible consequences of doing so are clearly mentioned. Also, Scripture frequently refers to idolatry as (spiritual) adultery. As Israel worshipped many different foreign gods, or idols, Israel is often described as being a 'prostitute' **(Jeremiah chapter 3; Hosea 1:2 and chapter 2)**.

If we are joined with a prostitute in sex, it means that we become 'one flesh' with that person. This is an abuse of our body, which the Bible says is the *"temple of the Holy Spirit"* **(1 Corinthians 6:13-20)**. So, in the same way that an ungodly tie is formed when we connect sexually with a prostitute, an ungodly tie is also formed if we worship an idol of any kind **(Ephesians 5:5; 1 John 5:21)**.

Idolatry can be described as the surrender of ourselves to anyone or anything that separates us from the true worship of God, through Jesus Christ⁴. It can be material objects

What do you think about most? If that is not Jesus, it may be an idol in your life!

(possessions, alcohol) people (such as family members, pastors or teachers), resources (such as wealth, status), activities (including work, education, sport, leisure) and involvement with anything that has its origins in the 'kingdom of darkness' including non-Biblical spiritual healing and martial arts.

An ungodly tie is formed when we engage in idolatry of any kind. Every idol in our lives has an evil spirit behind it (*1 Corinthians 10:20-21*). Through the ungodly tie, evil spirits have access to us and will have a harmful influence over our lives.

If we have been involved in idolatry and anything related to the kingdom of darkness, we should repent and ask God to forgive us. Then, we can cut ourselves off from those things and the evil spirits behind them, in the name of Jesus. Then we can ask God to set us free and wash away all the effects and consequences with the blood of Jesus.

Prayer guide if you have an ungodly tie:

- Forgive those who have sinned against you (be specific)
- Confess and repent of your own sin and sinful responses (be specific)
- In Jesus' name cut the ungodly tie(s), asking God to separate you completely from the other person (or thing(s)) and to deliver you from evil
- Ask God to wash you clean in the blood of Jesus and to change you
- Bless the person
- Invite Jesus to come into your heart (again) and fill you completely with the Holy Spirit

⁴ David Cross, *Soul Ties*, 2006, Sovereign World Ltd.

A prayer like this one should be prayed out loud and from the heart.

Prayer to break ungodly ties



“Dear Heavenly Father, I repent of my involvement with people and/or things that have led to an ungodly tie being formed between me and them (*name the specific people and/or things ...*). Please forgive me. I forgive (*name the person*) for the bad things they have done to me (*state the specific things you are forgiving them for ...*). I release (*name of person ...*) from the debt they owe me. I confess, that I have sinned in response to their sins against me (*confess your specific sinful responses ...*). I repent of this and ask You to forgive me.

“In the authority of the name of Jesus I break every ungodly tie between myself and ... (*name the person and/or thing*). Father, please set me free and wash away the effects with the blood of Jesus and deliver me from evil. I bless the people involved (*name the person(s)*). Please come into my heart and fill me completely with the Holy Spirit. Change me and make me holy. Amen.”

TESTIMONY

Jesus Taught Young Women About Their Relationships

“We were asked by two young female Bible students, ‘Is it OK for us to have boyfriends?’ When we prayed with them, one of them had a vision of Jesus in all His glory smiling at her. The other one heard the Scripture ‘Song of Songs 2:7’: “Young women, ... do not awaken love until the time is right”. The two young women were then very eager to repent of their romances and pray to break the ungodly ties between them and their boyfriends.”

TESTIMONY

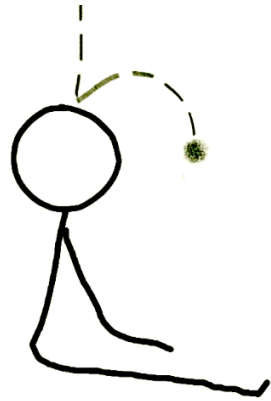
Jesus Answered My Prayers

“I found the Victorious Christian Life material on the internet. I printed it out and am working through bits of it – how powerful it is. I have prayed through the ‘Ungodly ties’ section and I am seeing immediate results!”

RESCUE FROM CONDEMNING JUDGEMENTS⁵

“... Watch out that no poisonous root of bitterness grows up to trouble you, defiling many.” (Hebrews 12:14-15)

God created the universe and has put it all in order (**Genesis 1:3ff**). He established the physical laws of nature, such as gravity, which hold the universe together. The Bible describes the universal spiritual laws He put in place to help us live Godly lives. As with the law of gravity, spiritual laws always work and do not change. They work whether we know about them or not. We need to live with an understanding of how these spiritual laws can affect our lives. Four of these laws are:-



Honour your parents:

“Honour your father and mother. Then you will live a long, full life in the land the LORD your God is giving you.” (Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:16; Ephesians 6:2-3)

This law determines that in the areas of our lives in which we honour our parents, our lives will go well and be fulfilled. That is a promise for us. However, the opposite may also be true that in those areas of our lives in which we have dishonoured our parents, things will not go well for us.

You reap what you sow:

“Don’t be misled – you cannot mock the justice of God. You will always harvest what you plant.” [or “You will always reap what you sow.”] (Galatians 6:7ff)

⁵John and Paula Sandford, ‘Bitter-root judgement and expectancy’ (teaching material), Elijah House, USA: www.elijahhouse.org Also on YouTube.

This law determines that we receive the same kind of things that we give away. If we give good things away, we will get good things back; if we give bad things away, we will get bad things back.

“If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.”
(Matthew 6:14-15)

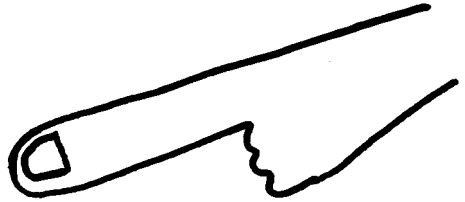
“Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you.” **(Matthew 7:12a)**

“As you have done (to Israel), so it shall be done to you. All your evil deeds will fall back on your own heads.” **(Obadiah 15b)**

These scriptures describe the same spiritual law of ‘you reap what you sow’.

Do not judge:

“Do not judge others, and you will not be judged. For you will be treated as you treat others. The standard you use in judging is the standard by which you will be judged.” **(Matthew 7:1-2ff)**



“You may think that you can condemn such people, but you are just as bad, and you have no excuse! When you say ‘they are wicked and should be punished’ you are condemning yourself, for you who judge others do these very same things.”
(Romans 2:1)

This law determines that we will do the same things that we condemn or judge other people for doing. We must not judge people (eg by saying: ‘they are sinners’) but we can judge their behaviour or actions (eg by saying: ‘what they **did** was sinful’).

“Then Jesus told this story to some who had great confidence in their own righteousness and scorned everyone else: “Two men went to the Temple to pray. One was a Pharisee ‘...I am not a sinner like that tax collector...’”” (Luke 18:9-14)

The Pharisee judged the tax collector to be a sinner but Jesus showed that the Pharisee remained an unforgiven sinner while the tax collector received forgiveness.

Increase:

“Give and you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full – pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, running over, and poured into your lap. The amount you give will determine the amount you get back.” (Luke 6:38)

This law determines that we will receive back those things that we give, in greater measure. If we give good things away, we will get more of those good things back; if we give bad things away, we will get more of those bad things back. This law is often applied to money, and yet it applies to everything else too, *eg* anger, bitterness, honour and dishonour, trust and distrust.

These four laws work together:

These four spiritual laws work together and are so strong that they can influence the behaviour of other people around us. They can even cause them to act in ways that are uncharacteristic of them. Our sinful response to being sinned against (*eg* our bitterness and resentment towards people) will defile other people around us, causing them to respond in hurtful ways towards us. Those ways may be uncharacteristic of that person but familiar to us (drawing out harmful behaviour from people around us) (*Hebrews 12:14-15*).

We may have long forgotten the condemning judgements we made of other people, but the ‘bad fruit’ of the condemning judgement may be apparent in our lives. Very often we have made condemning judgements in our **childhood**, particularly towards our parents.

Although we may have forgotten that we judged them, we can still reap the consequences as adults.

Fault finding and subsequent condemning judgements made against a parent are particularly harmful to us. If we have dishonoured our own father by making a condemning judgement against him, we may have similar problems in our relationships with other men and people in authority over us - *in greater measure*.

TESTIMONY

Jesus Changed My Brother After I Repented

“My brother used to be addicted to alcohol. I used to say ‘My brother is a drunkard’. I repented of my judgemental attitude towards him and said of him ‘My brother will come out of this’. Within a few months, my brother had stopped drinking alcohol.”

The same thing happens if we dishonour our mother in some way. For example, if a man’s mother was very controlling towards him when he was growing up, he may have resented her for this. He may then have made a judgement in his heart towards her, such as, ‘she’s horrible and never lets me do what I want’. On becoming an adult, he may find that his wife and women colleagues are also being controlling towards him. The judgement he made against his mother causes him to defile the other women around him, causing them to behave in exactly the same way towards him that his mother did, but in greater measure.

When we see a repeat pattern of bad fruit occurring in our lives, or something not going well for us, it may be because we have judged someone for doing that same thing. We can invite the Holy Spirit to reveal these condemning judgements to us so that we can be free from their effects.

Once we recognise the repeat pattern and know what we did, we need to confess and repent of the condemning judgements we have made, and ask God to cleanse us and others from the defilements our condemning judgements have brought. We can forgive the person(s) and repent of any bitterness or dishonour towards them. God does not want us to endorse ungodly behaviour in others; He wants us to

honour each person for who they are. For example, even if our parents have treated us badly or abandoned us, we can forgive them and honour them because God used them to give us life. We can honour our fellow Christians because every born-again Christian has Jesus Christ dwelling in them and all human beings are made in the image of God.

Often when we make a condemning judgement we also make a vow that strengthens the effect of that judgement. One example might be: 'My father beat me (**fact**); he is a harsh and bad man (**condemning judgement**); when I grow up, I will never be harsh or beat my children (**vow**).' On growing up and having children himself, the man finds that he is unable to stop himself from beating his own children. The condemning judgement he made against his father is working and causing him to do the same thing he condemned his father for doing and vowed he would never do. Vows can have severe consequences; they limit our choices and can be disastrous (*Judges 11:29-35; Matthew 14:9*).

When we say 'I would never do that', we find that very soon we do what we said we would never do. When we look at the

TESTIMONY

Jesus Forgives A Wife For Condemning Her Father And Sets Her Husband Free

"We met a young woman whose father had died when she was 5 years old. Her father was an alcoholic; he would get drunk, fall in the street and need to be carried home. One night when he was returning home drunk, he fell in the street and drowned in a ditch. She had married a good man with a good job. They had a child, but after three years, her husband became an alcoholic; he would get drunk, fall in the street and need to be carried home. We asked her, 'Did you judge your father for his drunkenness?' "Oh yes!" she said, "I judged him to be worthless and said I would never marry anyone like that." She repented of judging her father, renounced her vow and asked God to forgive her. Her husband was so drunk that he needed to be carried home that night but this time she said nothing against him. The next day he was convicted of his drinking and asked her and God to forgive him."

matter closely, we can find that our vow ('I would never do that') is based on a condemning judgement ('I am better than the person who does that'). An example is Peter's denial of Jesus in (*Mark 14:29-31 then Mark 14:66-72*). He and the other disciples were often comparing themselves to find out which one of them was the greatest (*Luke 9:46, 22:24*).

We are all different, yet, in God's eyes we are all equally precious. We are told not to judge. We are to love our neighbours as much as we love ourselves. The Bible tells us to have 'no partiality'; God wants us to value everyone equally, just as He does (*James 2:1-9*). Jesus tells us: "*Do not make any vows!*" (*Matthew 5:33-34a*).

Condemning judgements and vows are very common sins which we may not even realise we have done. We may think that the condemning judgements we've made are small things of little importance: but they have great spiritual significance and will have serious consequences in our lives. We can repent of the condemning judgements and vows we have made (good as well as bad), renounce and cancel them and ask God to stop them from affecting us.

Spend a little time now to ask the Holy Spirit to show you if you have made condemning judgements or vows.

Prayer guide if you have made a condemning judgement against someone:

- Repent of the way(s) in which you have dishonoured or judged the person(s)
- Forgive the person(s) for what they did wrong
- In Jesus' name, renounce and break all the condemning judgements
- Ask God to cancel all negative effects of these condemning judgements
- Repent of any vow(s) you have made; renounce and cancel them in Jesus' name
- Ask God to cancel all negative effects of these vows
- Bless the person(s)
- Invite Jesus to come into your heart (again) and fill you completely with the Holy Spirit

Here is a prayer that can be used as a guide to pray aloud.

Prayer to break condemning judgements



“Heavenly Father, I confess that I have done wrong by dishonouring and making condemning judgements against people (*name the person(s)*). I confess that I have ... (*now confess the specific condemning judgements and vows you have made aloud, to God. Be really honest as you mention each one, in detail, to Him*). I renounce this as sin and I repent. I forgive them for (*confess the specific thing(s) they did wrong ...*). I choose to turn away from this sin and turn to You. Please forgive me.

“In the authority of the name of Jesus, I cancel and break these condemning judgements (*name them*) and the vows I have made (*name them*). Please stop the consequences of my condemning judgements and vows from affecting me or anyone else from now on. Heavenly Father, please forgive me. Please wash me clean with the blood of Jesus and deliver me from evil. Lord Jesus, please come into my heart and fill me completely with the Holy Spirit. Change me and make me holy.

“I bless (*name the person*). In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.”

FREEDOM FROM NEGATIVE WORDS

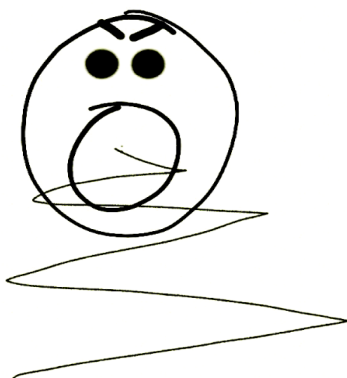
“Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the bones.” (Proverbs 16:24)

“The tongue can bring death or life; those who love to talk will reap the consequences.” (Proverbs 18:21)

“The words you say will either acquit you or condemn you.” (Matthew 12:37)

“You (Jesus) have the words that give eternal life.” (John 6:68b)

“Sometimes it (the tongue) praises God the Father, and sometimes it curses those who have been made in the image of God.” (James 3:9)



Words are powerful. God spoke: “Let there be ...” and the universe came into existence (**Genesis 1:3ff**). The words we speak are also powerful! They contain the power of life or death, health or sickness. Amazing, and also rather daunting to know that everything we say **does** matter.

Satan (the devil) is known as the accuser of the brethren. Revelation 12:10 tells us that Satan was able to stand before God accusing us. Jesus saw Satan thrown out of Heaven (**Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:12b-18; Luke 10:18**). God banished Satan from His presence because of his rebellion. It was his rebellion, wanting to be like God, that caused him to be thrown out of

TESTIMONY

My Words Brought Death

“For many years I was the main carer for my disabled brother. Sometimes it was very difficult. One day I was very frustrated and angry with him and said: ‘Why don’t you go and die on the road?’ I was deeply shocked when he was hit by a car and died on the road five weeks later. My words acted like a curse over his life.”

Heaven. He continues to bring accusations against God's people. God is grieved when we come into His presence making accusations against Christian brothers and sisters (**1 Chronicles 16:22**). God did not tolerate this from Satan so He will not tolerate it from us either. We need to stop speaking negatively about ourselves and other Christians, and instead recognise that Christ dwells in each of us.

Sometimes we give praise to the devil without realising what we are doing. One pastor wrote about the following experience. God spoke to him and said: *"Why are you putting the devil first in your Church services? Why do you worship him and his demons (evil spirits) before Me?"* 'Oh Lord' he replied, 'I never do that, I always put You first in all of our services!' "No" said God. *"First you bind the demons, you talk to them, expel them and they consider this worship. Demons come from miles around to receive this worship from you. Praise Me and I will take care of the demons".* ('Let us Praise' by Judson Cornwall)

This came as a terrible shock to the pastor and it is a warning for us all. The lesson for us is to 'fix our eyes on Jesus', focus our attention on what God is doing, praise God at all times and let God deal with the enemy (**Jude 9**). The same principle applies in prayer.

"Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honourable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise." (**Philippians 4:8**)

Praising God in all circumstances is an important key to living a victorious Christian life. Praising God reminds us of how wonderful God is, of how much He has done for us already and that nothing is impossible with Him. Praising God defeats the devil. It is the most powerful form of Spiritual warfare (**Psalms 149:6-9**).

"I had a dream in which I said 'Hallelujah' three times and then saw the devil lying on his back, unable to move. When I woke up I thought about my dream and realised that I could easily say three Hallelujahs – even when I was in difficult circumstances."

Our minds and our words have creative ability; what we see in our minds tends to come true. Negative words and thoughts give the devil opportunities to oppress us and those we speak or think negatively about. The more we think or speak about good things, the more good things happen. In their book ‘Grace and Forgiveness’, Carol and John Arnott mention a pastor who studied his own life and found that at least 80% of his daily thoughts were negative, critical and judgemental. Only 20% were positive. Then he discovered that the same was true for most people. When we are saying negative things about ourselves, other people and situations, we are, in effect, doing the devil’s work for him (*Revelation 12:9-11*).

“If you call someone an idiot, you are in danger of being brought before the court. And if you curse someone, you are in danger of the fires of hell.” (Matthew 5:22b)

“Don’t use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them. Do not bring sorrow to God’s Holy Spirit by the way you live.” (Ephesians 4:29-30)

We need to repent. And we need to learn to train our minds and tame our tongues to ensure our attitudes and speech are positive. Instead of condemning people we need to bless, honour, encourage and build each other up in the faith; to forgive and not accuse. This should be our attitude in prayer as well as in our daily lives and conversation.

We can ask the Lord to show us any specific incidences that He wants to cleanse us from right now.

Prayer guide if you have spoken negative words:

- Repent of saying negative words (be specific) and ask God to change you
- In Jesus’ name, renounce and break every negative, critical word you have spoken over yourself or others (be specific)
- Speak blessings instead
- Invite Jesus to come into your heart (again) and fill you completely with the Holy Spirit

The following prayer can be prayed out loud.

Prayer of repentance over negative words I have spoken



“Father God, I acknowledge that I have been an accuser of the brethren. I have dishonoured myself and my fellow Christians and others by judging and criticising them; speaking against them and complaining to You about them. Please forgive me. (*Ask God to forgive you for specific words and incidences ...*). I repent. I want to change, please change me. Help me to bless and not curse, so that I speak words of life and not death.

“In the authority of Jesus’ name I break all these negative thoughts and words I have spoken against myself and others. Heavenly Father, please wash away these negative words and their consequences in the blood of Jesus and deliver us from evil. Please come into my heart and fill me completely with the Holy Spirit. In Jesus’ name. Amen.”

Very often it is people who have authority over us, such as parents, teachers and employers, whose negative words can hurt us, especially when we are young. Parents frequently say things that can be damaging to their children. For example, ‘I wish you had never been born’ or ‘you are lazy, your life will come to nothing’. Even the pet names given by parents to their children can be like curses over their child’s life. Teachers may also say negative words over us that damage our lives. We need to forgive all those who have condemned us and spoken negative words about us. In Jesus’ name we can break the power of negative words that have been like curses spoken over our lives and ask God to cleanse us from any consequences.

Sometimes it is not the negative words that **are** spoken to us that hurt us. The hurt can come when **no** words are spoken, either silence or lack of encouragement. For example, if a parent, teacher or spouse does not speak to you and gives you ‘the silent treatment’, it may

make you think that you are worthless, not worth talking to and that you are of no value as a person.

It can really hurt when we do not receive encouragement. For example, if a child scores an average exam result of 92% but the response from their father is: 'Your brother got 96%.' Or perhaps your father does not make any comment on your exam result. That can make you think that you are not important and that he's not interested in you. It is very hurtful. The important thing is to forgive that person, or ask God to help you forgive them.

Our own words or thoughts about ourselves can be very negative *eg* 'I am useless' or 'I wish I was dead'. These thoughts or words can act like a curse over our lives and we can develop health problems such as depression or suicidal behaviour. Negative words that devalue ourselves or over value ourselves (pride), should be repented of. Then we can free ourselves from their negative effects, in the authority and power of Jesus' name.

TESTIMONY

Jesus Restores A Relationship

"We prayed with a man who had been ill for years with Chronic Fatigue. When we asked if anyone had spoken negative words over him he remembered his father had said: 'Your life will come to nothing'. These words were acting like a curse. The man forgave his father and blessed him. Three days later the man's father dreamed of Jesus and realised he did not have a relationship with Jesus. He repented and invited Jesus into his heart, was 'born again' and their relationship was healed."

Prayer guide if someone has spoken negative words over you:

- Forgive the person(s) for what they said that hurt you
- Repent of any sinful response you made (be specific)
- In Jesus' name, break the power of every negative word (be specific) spoken over you
- Bless those who curse you
- Invite Jesus to come into your heart (again) and fill you completely with the Holy Spirit

Here is a prayer that can be prayed out loud, from the heart.

Prayer to break the power of negative words spoken about me



“Dear Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus, I acknowledge that negative words have been spoken about me (*tell God about specific negative words spoken about you ...*). I forgive ... (*speak out their names and the negative words they said – and the positive words they could have said, but did not*). Please forgive me, Father, for my sinful responses (*tell God about your sinful reactions ...*).

“In the authority of Jesus’ name I renounce and break the curses that have been placed on my life through negative words and release myself from their consequences. Please wash me clean in the blood of Jesus and deliver me from evil. I bless (*name the person*). Lord Jesus, please come into my heart and fill me completely with the Holy Spirit. In Jesus’ name. Amen.”

In the Annex there is a list of some Scriptures declaring who we are in Christ. It builds our faith to meditate on these Scriptures and to pray them for ourselves and for other believers.

TESTIMONY

Jesus Used Me To Help My Friend

“I used the prayers in this workbook with my friend. As she prayed through troublesome situations in her life I saw her face become brighter. I didn’t tell her but then she told me that she felt a heavy burden had been taken away. Hallelujah!”

LIBERTY FROM MONEY PROBLEMS

“But people who long to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many foolish and harmful desires that plunge them into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. And some people, craving money, have wandered from the true faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows.”
(1 Timothy 6:9-10)



Jesus talked a lot about money and possessions, often in the parables. He knows the human attitude towards money but He wants us to know His perspective on it. We all need money to survive but the love of money leads to destruction. When we put our trust in God, He gives us everything we need and He wants us to love Him with everything. Some say that the last part of a person to be converted is their pocket! Trusting God above money may be the last thing that we learn to do. There is much ignorance about this and we ignore many Scriptures because worldly thinking is deep-rooted in us. When we pursue prosperity rather than God, it will always bring us problems. There is nothing wrong with having money, even a lot of money. But we are to put God first in our lives, and be generous with our money, using it to help those in need and to finance the great commission (**Deuteronomy 14:33; Matthew 25:34-46; Luke 12:33-34; James 5:1-6**).

We have been so blessed by the Gospel of God's grace that we should never dream of giving less than 10%.

(Duncan Watkinson, IRNET, 2014)

Tithing is a principle established by Abraham

(**Genesis 14:20**), continued by Jacob (**Genesis 28:22**) and included in the Law by Moses (**Leviticus 27:30-32**). Jesus taught on tithing too. In the Bible, God's people gave God the first 10% of any crops or fruit they harvested, money they earned and everything they received; they gave it to the Temple. Now there is no Temple so tithing today

means giving 10% to your local church. The tithe is holy and belongs to God. Paying our tithe is an act of our worship to God.

Jesus said, “*give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and give to God what belongs to God.*” (**Matthew 22:21; Mark 12:17; Luke 20:25**)

Any gift we give God above the 10% is an offering. God blesses these offerings, and people who pay tithes and offerings still have enough! In the compilers’ experience almost all the Christians they have met who said they had financial problems, were not tithing properly (eg not giving the full 10% before tax and/or not giving their 10% to the local church). Churches and Christian ministries in financial crisis may find their problem is because they are not tithing 10% properly. Church and ministry income should be tithed

to Christian work not connected to their own. Can you imagine the big increase in your church finances if every believer attending the church tithed their money to it? And the increase in the funding of Christian work if each church tithed outside their own organisation? The principle is, *the people* tithe to the church they attend; *the church* then tithes to a **different** church or ministry organisation **outside** their own.

Worldly thinking is that we won’t tithe because we think we can’t afford to. But by not giving God His tithe, His hand of protection is lifted off us and our money does not go as far as it should. For example, equipment will break down, food will spoil and debts will mount. Even if we really don’t have sufficient money to live on in

HOW TO CALCULATE A TITHE

Add together all your income for this month to give you the total income, say Rs 2,000

[If you are a trader, take the total profit for this month]

Take the total income and divide by 10

$\text{Rs } 2,000 / 10 = \text{Rs } 200$

In this example, the tithe is Rs 200 for the month

Tithes are to be paid into the local church that you attend

the natural way of things, God says we will have enough if we give our tithe to Him first.

“You have cheated Me of the tithes and offerings due to Me. You are under a curse, for your whole nation has been cheating Me. Bring all the tithes into the storehouse so there will be enough food in My Temple. If you do, says the Lord of Heaven’s Armies, I will open the windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great that you won’t have enough room to take it in! Try it! Put Me to the test!” (Malachi 3:8-12)

This is the only text in the Bible where God invites us to test Him.

[‘Storehouse’ is understood to be the Church we attend; the place where we are spiritually fed (*Deuteronomy 14:22-23*).]

Please note that we are not promoting a ‘prosperity gospel’, but simple obedience to the word of God.

We need to be honest before God. If we have not been tithing properly, we need to repent of it and ask God to forgive us for robbing Him. From then on, we are to give the Church we attend 10% of our total income (before tax or any other deductions).

Prayer of repentance for not tithing⁶



“Dear Heavenly Father, all that I have is from You. I thank You for what You have entrusted to me. I understand now that the tithe is holy and it is Yours. I confess that I have not returned Your tithe to You (*Malachi 3*). Now I repent of withholding that which is rightfully Yours and I ask You to forgive me. In the authority of the name of Jesus I break every curse over me. From now on I commit to tithe on all my income to my local church, please help me to do this. I now release myself by Your grace from any unpaid tithes from my past. Thank You Father. Please bless me in every way and make me a channel of financial blessing to others for Your Kingdom purposes from now on. In Jesus’ name. Amen.”

⁶ Clive Pick: *The Revelation of Financial Renewal*, 1998, New Wine Ministries.

God requires us to be honest in all our financial dealings, paying what we owe and avoiding paying bribes.

The New Testament teaching on money is even more challenging to worldly thinking than tithing. Jesus told the crowds to give to those who ask (**Matthew 5:42; Luke 6:30**) and to “sell their possessions and give to those in need” (**Luke 12:33**). He told one rich young man to sell *all* his possessions and to give the money to the poor (**Mark 10:21; Luke 18:22**). The early Church community shared all they had so that no one lacked anything (**Acts 2:45**). This is the attitude that the Letters also encourage us to have (**2 Corinthians 8:11b-15** and **9:7-15; 1 John 3:17**). Once we have learned to tithe, God will start to challenge us about being more generous to others.

Give God your best. God will multiply back to you what you give to him, whether it's love, faith, money or any other good thing. He wants to give you a miracle, now.

(Oral Roberts,
Miracles of seed-faith, 1982)

“The one who plants generously will get a generous crop. You must decide in your heart how much to give. And don’t give reluctantly or in response to pressure. For God loves a person who gives cheerfully. And God will provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others.”
(**2 Corinthians 9:6b-8**)

Many Christians have debts and consider this as part of normal life, but this is worldly thinking. There are situations where people are forced into debt especially because of unforeseen expenses or job loss. The Bible tells us not to have debts: “Owe nothing to anyone” (**Romans 13:8**) or we can

TESTIMONY

Becoming A Channel Of Blessings

“14 years ago, I learned about tithing, especially that the whole tithe was holy and belonged to God and must be given to the local Church. I repented and started tithing properly. At that time, I was hugely in debt and my marriage was a disaster. Now my marriage is strong and we are no longer in debt. We have been able to help several other people to get out of debt and into their divine callings.”

become a servant to the lender (**Proverbs 22:7**) instead of a servant of God. Debt leads to despair. Many suicides are debt related. We have to learn to be good stewards of the resources God has given us, trusting Him to give us what we need (**Philippians 4:6**). If we have debts that are caused by greed and the love of money and possessions, we need to repent and ask God to forgive us. Then make a determined effort to pay off our debts quickly, asking God for help.

“You cannot serve both God and money.” (Matthew 6:24)

In order to stay free of debt we can keep our spending to the minimum, only buying what we really need and not what we want to have. We should stop buying more than we can afford. *“Do not covet anything that others have.” (Exodus 20:17)*. If we really need something that costs more than we have, we should save up for that purchase by putting a little money aside each day or each time we receive money until we have sufficient funds.

The Bible tells us to *“Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, live righteously, and God will give you everything you need.” (Matthew 6:19-34 especially 6:33)*. This requires us to change because most of us have worldly thinking on financial matters. But as we step out in obedience and trust in God’s promise of provision, we will see that He is with us and does take care of us and that in Him we have all that we need (**Psalm 23:1**).

The New Testament also tells us to contribute generously to the spreading of the Gospel. Many of us do not do this sufficiently because we fear that we might

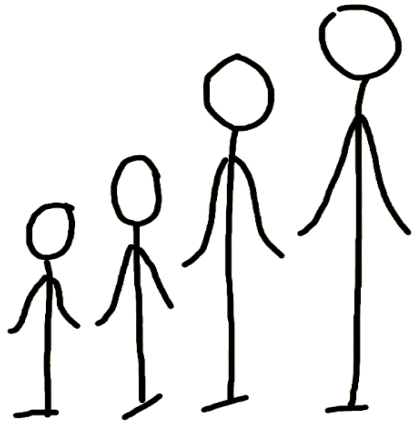
God’s work done in
God’s way will never
lack God’s resources.

(Hudson Taylor)

not have enough money for ourselves in future. God’s perspective is that we should fear giving away too little (**James 5:1-6; 3 John 5-8**).

RECOVERY OF DIVINE INHERITANCE

Most people look like their parents or some other relative. Physical looks and even spiritual characteristics are passed on through families. We inherit and learn many characteristics and traits from our parents. God intended this for good but bad characteristics are passed on in the same way. Strengths, such as abilities in languages or a helping nature may run in families. But, tendencies for particular problems or sins (*eg* sexual sin, financial ruin, alcoholism and some illnesses) often run in families and may be inherited, or ‘generational’.



All sin could be said to be generational, because it started with Adam and Eve and it has passed on through the generations to all of us. The sin of our forebears (generational sin) that has not been confessed and repented of may influence the descendants, making us more likely to fall into the same type of sin.

When God’s law is broken and sin occurs, a curse may fall on that person which may also fall on their descendants.

The Ten Commandments state that there are negative consequences (a curse) to 3-4 generations for sin (idolatry) and great blessings to 1000 generations for obedience (***Exodus 20:4-6***). Sexual sin can have a negative effect for 10 generations (***Deuteronomy 23:2***).

God is good, compassionate and loving. He does not want us to be separated from Him by our sin. He does not want us to be suffering under curses or the negative consequences of our own sin or our ancestors’ sins. But we are unable to help ourselves and that is why He has provided the answer; Jesus is the answer (***Galatians 3:13-14***).

In the Bible God tells us that *“Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.” (Hebrews 9:22)*. Sin does not disappear (***Nehemiah 1:6-7***). We cannot get rid of sin by trying to be good or by forgetting about it. The only way is by believing in, and trusting in Jesus who took our sin as if it were His own. He paid for our sin by taking the punishment that was due to us by shedding His blood.

Sin remains with us unless or until we confess it and ask Jesus to forgive us. Jesus then forgives us and His blood washes the sin away completely (justification). Our deliverance from negative family traits and sins is dependent on our forgiveness of parents, ancestors and wider family for their sins. Deliverance of our offspring from our sins and their consequences is dependent on our repentance from those sins.

“Repent and turn from your sins and do not let them destroy you.” (Ezekiel 18:30-32)

When we are born again, all our sin is removed; we are ‘justified’, made righteous, we are given a place in God’s family (***Acts 26:18; 1 Corinthians 6:11***). But the consequences of our sin are not necessarily removed. For example, if we stole money and repent, God forgives us but we still owe the money to the persons we stole from. There may also be legal consequences. Jesus takes the debt of my sin but I still need to pay back what I stole. There are consequences for the person we stole from and their family, children and grandchildren; there are consequences for us and our children and grandchildren; there are consequences for the police, for the community and so on. **Our sin is never a private affair.**

A very sad example from the Bible is explained in the Book of 2 Samuel 11 and following. King David lusted after Uriah the Hittite’s wife, Bathsheba; he coveted her and committed adultery with her. When she became pregnant David tried to trick Uriah into sleeping with his wife so to deceive Uriah and hide his own sin. When he could not deceive Uriah, King David arranged for him to be killed on the battlefield. The consequences of this were that the child

conceived in this act of adultery died even though David repented, fasted and prayed for the child to live. Also, many of David's children, grandchildren and subsequent generations of his family were affected by sexual sin and murder. God forgave David's lust, adultery and murder, but the consequences of his sin continued in David's descendants. It harmed his nation.

When we sin once, we increase the likelihood that we will sin in the same way again. Similarly, the sins of our parents/ancestors may also create an 'open door' making us more likely to sin in the same way. The sin is dealt with by confessing and repenting of these specific sins (ours and our ancestors'), forgiving those involved and asking God to cleanse us from the consequences. Then we can ask God to 'close the door' to that specific sin and remove the tendency for us and our families to sin in that way. If there is a curse operating, we can break the curse with the authority of the name of Jesus, and ask God to wash away its effects in the blood of Jesus.

"Jesus personally carried our sins in His body on the cross so that we can be dead to sin and live for what is right. By His wounds you are healed." (1 Peter 2:24; Isaiah 53:5-6)

"But Christ has rescued us from the curse pronounced by the Law. When He was hung on the cross, He took upon Himself the curse for our wrongdoing. For it is written in the Scriptures, 'Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.'" (Galatians 3:13)

For most of us, some sinful behaviour and curses are removed the instant we are 'born again' while a few continue to affect us. In Deuteronomy 27 and 28, many of the blessings for obedience and the curses for disobedience are listed. God wants us to be in fellowship with Him and to receive all His blessings. Most of us do not live our lives with the full blessing that the Bible promises those who are obedient and therefore we do seem to be living under some form of curse.

How can we know if we are living under a curse? The Bible teacher the late Derek Prince, identified seven different afflictions that could indicate whether a person, or family, is living under a curse. These are:

1. A history of mental and emotional breakdowns
2. Repeated or chronic sicknesses – especially if they are hereditary. ‘Hereditary’ may indicate a curse coming down through the generations
3. Repeated miscarriages or related female problems
4. A history of breakdown of marriages and family divisions
5. Continued financial insufficiency, especially when the income appears to be sufficient
6. Being accident prone
7. A history of suicides or unnatural death (including early death) in the family

The good news is that Jesus is the answer for every sin and every curse. Whether the curse came on a person because of their sin or an ancestor’s sin, or whether someone else put a curse on a person deliberately through witchcraft or unknowingly by negative words, Jesus’ blood has the power to cleanse every sin; the authority of Jesus’ name has the power to break every curse.

If you think that you and/or your family may be living under a curse then perhaps God requires you to confess and repent in greater detail or forgive more thoroughly.

To help you identify if there is a curse operating in your family, there is a worked example of a family history chart in the Annex. You can use this to prepare your own family history chart and look at your family in detail. This chart will enable you to identify what blessings and what sins and afflictions are occurring in your own family. It will also help you to identify patterns and roots of sin and affliction in the family and other issues that need to be confessed and repented of,

so that you can receive forgiveness and be set free. The more information we have about the cause and effect of curses in our families, the more effectively we can break and remove them through prayer in Jesus' name.

What family is free from idolatry for four generations? We are all guilty of idolatry – putting other things before God at some time in our lives (**1 John 5:21**). Who has not tried to be good by their own efforts? When we confess our sins and ask God to forgive us, we can be confident that we are forgiven. Then we can break any curses in Jesus' name and ask God to cleanse us from the consequences; and He will do it (**1 John 1:9**). In exchange, God gives us freedom and blessings even to a thousand generations (**Exodus 20:6**).

Prayer guide if you have generational sins or negative patterns affecting your life:

- Thank God for your life and all the good things you have inherited from your family
- Confess negative patterns of behaviour or sin in yourself, relatives and ancestors (be specific)
- Forgive parents, relatives and ancestors for those sins
- Repent of your own sin in this specific area
- In Jesus' name, ask God to remove the tendency to do that sin from yourself and your relatives
- In Jesus' name, break any curse off yourself and/or your family and ask God to remove the effects
- Bless your entire family and ask God to bless them too
- Invite Jesus to come into your heart (again) and fill you completely with the Holy Spirit. (Ask Him to do this for your family members and community also.)

When you are ready, you can pray a prayer like this, aloud.

Prayer of forgiveness of parents and wider family



“Dear Heavenly Father, I thank You for my heritage. I cherish the many good things I have received from my family and community (*name them ...*). I recognise that negative patterns also occur in my family and community. I choose to forgive (*name the ancestors and persons in your family/community that you are forgiving if you know their names*) for the sins and bad things they have thought, said and done (*state the specific sins you are forgiving them for, eg abuse, rejection, criticism*). Please forgive them and me and the rest of my family and community for knowingly or unknowingly doing these sins too.

“Please cleanse me and my entire family and community with the blood of Jesus and stop this negative pattern of (*name the negative pattern(s) ...*) occurring from now on. In the authority of the name of Jesus Christ, I break every generational curse affecting myself and my family and my community and I ask You, Heavenly Father, to deliver us from evil. Please remove all the consequences of these sins and curses from me and my family and my community.

“I bless myself and my family and my community. I ask You Father to bless us too. Thank You for forgiving me and my family, and community. Please come into my heart (again) and fill me completely with the Holy Spirit. In Jesus’ name. Amen.”

Remember, if we do these sinful behaviours again, having already received God’s forgiveness for them, we may again come under a curse. We must confess our sin again, turn away from it, turn back to God and ask Him to forgive us and help us change.

A prayer to forgive previous generations can be expanded to any group that we can represent. For example, a woman can confess sins on behalf of other women; a member of a church can confess sins on behalf of that church and the wider Church; a person of one

community can confess sins on behalf of that whole community and so on. The person can ask God to forgive the sins of these people and groups. In this way it becomes a prayer of **intercession**. This was the pattern of intercession established by Moses (*Exodus 32:9-14, 34:5-9*), Daniel (*Daniel 9:2-23*), Nehemiah (*Nehemiah 1:4-7*) and others, as well as Jesus.

The Lord Jesus said, in John 20:23, *“If you forgive anyone’s sins, they are forgiven. If you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.”* Prayers of forgiveness are powerful and effective and have far-reaching results. So often we criticise people, places and even communities and nations. If we were to forgive and speak out blessings instead, God would change communities and nations with our prayers.

The extensive ‘Prayer of release of generational blessings’ in the Annex has been developed from those sins that are associated with a curse in the Bible. Please do read it slowly and carefully, and if you think you or a member of your wider family may have done any of the sins listed in this prayer, then we suggest that you pray the prayer for yourself. If you don’t think you or your ancestors could possibly have

TESTIMONY

Jesus Removed An Ancient Curse From Me

“Many ungodly patterns were in my family line even though my parents were both ‘born again’ Christians. Unknowingly, I fell into the same sins as my parents, grandparents and great grandparents! I hated myself and, as a child, attempted suicide. From my earliest memory, I had a bad relationship with my sister. I was ‘born again’ and was baptised in the Holy Spirit when I was a teenager. The suicidal thoughts stopped but I continued to hate myself and speak negative words over myself. Years later, in desperation, I went for prayer ministry. The hatred between my sister and myself originated in an unresolved, centuries-old, hatred between my father’s community and my mother’s community. I confessed their sins and forgave those on both sides of this conflict. I asked God to forgive them. In Jesus’ name, the prayer minister broke the curse off me. I felt an inner peace flood into me (I’d never felt that before). The war inside me stopped. The inner peace has remained in my heart. My hatred towards my sister and myself has gone.”

done such things – think again! They are in Scripture because people did these sins. You can pray the prayer as an **‘IF’** prayer because none of us fully knows what our ancestors did. This prayer has been adapted from one based on Deuteronomy 27 by the late Mariamma Thampy.⁷ Having prayed the prayer from your heart, if there was any curse over your life it is now broken! You are free to receive all the blessings that God wants to shower on you as His precious child.

TESTIMONY

Jesus’ Power Over Generational Curses Led My Family To Salvation

“My father had several adulterous relationships and this drove my mother to become an alcoholic. My parents and grandparents were involved in witchcraft. The lives of my brothers and sisters and their children were following the same sad pattern. One day, I had the opportunity to explain all this to my father and he could see how the generational sins were affecting all his children and grandchildren. He could see that he needed a Saviour – He needed Jesus to break the curses affecting his entire family. He was convinced and convicted. He fell to his knees asking Jesus to forgive him and asking Jesus to remove the curse from our family. It is amazing to see my father in Church, raising his hands in praise to Jesus! That was one year ago. Since then, my sister, the most ‘anti-Christ’ of our family, has also come to faith in Jesus!”

⁷ Mariamma Thampy: *Better than weapons of war*, 2009, Advantage Inspirational.

BAPTISMS

WATER BAPTISM

After someone has been “*born again*” (**John 3:3-7**) having put their faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour, the Bible declares that, like Jesus, we must be baptised: “*It should be done, for we must fulfil all righteousness.*” (**Matthew 3:15**). John’s baptism was a baptism of repentance showing that the person had repented of their sins and turned to God. Jesus was 100% human **and** 100% God and He never sinned (**2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 1:19, 2:22**). But He insisted on being baptised by John to identify with us and our sin.

Water baptism is the outward expression of inward faith in Jesus Christ.

To baptise means ‘to immerse’. Christian baptism in water shows that the person has identified with Christ’s death, burial and resurrection. Going down into the water represents the death and burial of our old sinful life; coming up out of the water represents our resurrection into a new life of following Jesus Christ⁸ (**Romans 6:1-7; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Colossians 2:12**). Baptism is the outward sign (the guarantee) of being part of the body of Christ, His Church (**Galatians 3:27**).

It is clear from Jesus’ words and the apostles’ teaching that water baptism is of great importance in the life of the believer (**Matthew 22:11; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:37-38; Galatians 3:27**). It is also clear from the Bible that in the early Church, believers in Jesus were baptised as soon as possible after they had put their faith in Jesus as their Lord and Saviour (**Acts 8:35-38, 9:17-18, 10:42-48, 16:27-33**). Jesus commanded His followers to be baptised in the name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Baptism is the second step of obedience to Jesus Christ, “*Repent and be baptised.*” (**Acts 2:38**).

⁸ Rev. Derek Prince, *Foundations for Christian Living*, Derek Prince Ministries, 2004. With permission.

HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM

“Be filled with the Holy Spirit.”
(Ephesians 5:18)

“John the Baptist said I baptise with water those who repent of their sins and turn to God. But someone is coming soon who is greater than I am – so much greater that I am not worthy even to be His slave and carry His sandals. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.”
(Matthew 3:11)



“If you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him.” **(Luke 11:13)**

When God gives us the baptism of the Holy Spirit, we receive His “power from on high” **(Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8)**. This baptism is total immersion in the Holy Spirit from above. This may come to us directly from God **(Acts 2:1-4, 4:31, 10:44-47)** or it may be received through the laying on of hands by someone who has already been baptised in the Holy Spirit **(Acts 8:14-19, 9:17, 19:6)**.

Whether the Holy Spirit baptism is directly from God or through laying on of hands by another believer, the purpose is to receive supernatural power from God so that we can share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with unbelievers effectively. This is how the baptism of the Holy Spirit was manifested in Acts 2; after the Holy Spirit baptism, Peter became bold and preached the gospel with power and with great effect.

As the Holy Spirit dwells in us, He transforms our character and enables us to bear fruit, *ie* love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness and self-control **(Galatians 5:22)**.

This is the fruit of the Holy Spirit that we should see in other believers and that others should see in us. There are more examples of this fruit in the Book of Acts. The Holy Spirit baptism enabled the believers to be so united in heart and mind, loving one another that they shared all they had with each another (*Acts 2:42-47, 4:32-35*).

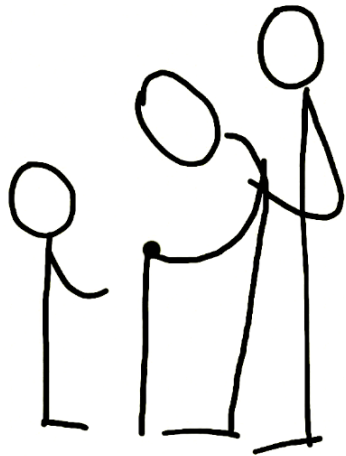
A newly married couple moved into a flat with a balcony upon which lived a white dove. It didn't take long before the couple had their first argument and started to hold grudges against each other. Then they noticed that when they argued the dove left. As they forgave each other and were reconciled and the peace returned to their home, they noticed that the dove returned. After a while the couple asked God to help them live together in such a way that the dove would never be driven from them again.

(R.T. Kendall, Sensitivity to the Holy Spirit, 2001)

If the fruit of the Holy Spirit is not seen in us, we need to consider why not. Through prayer and discernment we can discover what the reasons or root problems are, that are stopping us bearing this fruit.

"Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are My disciples." (John 13:35)

In addition to this supernatural power and fruit, we receive gifts through the baptism of the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12:7-11 lists them as knowledge, wisdom, great faith, unknown languages (tongues), interpretation of these languages, words of knowledge, discernment of spirits, miracles and healings. When you



receive these gifts you should use them! For example, after you receive the gift of tongues you should pray in this way daily. The Bible explains that speaking in tongues is a God-given prayer language, it

is mysterious and it encourages, comforts and builds-up the individual who practices it. It is talking only to God (**1 Corinthians 14:1-3**).

When we are born-again the Holy Spirit enters our hearts (**Romans 8:9-11; 2 Corinthians 13:5; Colossians 1:27**). Then we can receive baptism of the Holy Spirit (**Matthew 3:11**). Infilling of the Holy Spirit is not a one-time event. From that time on we can be continually re-filled with the Holy Spirit. In John 20:22, Jesus breathed on the disciples and said, “*Receive the Holy Spirit*”. In Acts 2:4 all the believers including some of the same people were baptised with the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues. Speaking in tongues was the sign for the early church that people had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit (**Acts 10:44-46, 19:1-6**). Then in Acts 4:31 some of those same people were filled (again) with the Holy Spirit. We need to be continually filled with the Holy Spirit and led by the Holy Spirit.

In order to have more of the Holy Spirit in our lives or to receive the Holy Spirit baptism we only have to ask our Heavenly Father. We can also ask Him to give us all the gifts of the Holy Spirit as well as the ability to witness boldly for Jesus; to have love for our fellow Christians and for unbelievers, even love for our enemies. We need to keep on asking and urging God until we are satisfied that we have received the promised “*power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you*” (**Luke 11:13; Acts 1:8**). We shall receive power – power to witness, power to do the very things that Jesus had been doing, power to love others, power to live a life of victory.

TESTIMONY

Jesus Baptised Me With The Holy Spirit And With Fire

“Two friends and I went through this teaching material and prayed through some of our issues - confessing and repenting of sins and forgiving those who had hurt us. We all felt free! Then, when we invited the Holy Spirit to fill us, all three of us spoke in tongues and felt a burning sensation in our hearts confirming to us that we had been baptised with the Holy Spirit and with fire!”

Spiritual growth is a process. To mature as a Christian, we need to keep on drawing closer to our Living God. We need to keep on reading the Bible and meditating on His word; keep on believing the facts of the Gospel; keep on responding to God's promises; keep on repenting, keep on forgiving, keep on re-dedicating ourselves to Jesus; keep on being filled with God's love, keep on inviting Him to work in and through us, keep on asking to be filled afresh with His Holy Spirit and to keep on being obedient to His commands.

In prayer ministry, it is good to end every session of repentance and forgiveness with prayers inviting Jesus and the Holy Spirit to come more deeply into our hearts and lives. This is the process we are calling 'Spiritual Breathing' and describe more in the section on Repentance. It can be summarised as 'sin out, Jesus in'. As the Holy Spirit fills our hearts and lives to overflowing, there is no place in us for ungodly things (*Matthew 12:43-45*).

TESTIMONY
Double Baptism!

"One man I baptised came up out of the water speaking in tongues! It confirmed to me the importance of water and Holy Spirit baptisms."

When praying with someone, as they invite the Holy Spirit to fill them, wait, observe and bless what God is doing in them. Then bless the person.

Here is a sample prayer that can be prayed aloud.

Prayer for consecration and cleansing



"Heavenly Father, I give my entire being to You, spirit, soul and body. I invite You now to completely fill me to overflowing with Your Holy Spirit, that I may be totally Yours. In Jesus' name. Amen."

HEARING AND OBEYING GOD

The purpose of being a Christian is to have a relationship with Father God – for this we need to talk to God and listen to God. We respond to Him and He responds to us. Many Scriptures in both the Old and New Testament emphasise our need to hear and obey the Lord our God. Jesus emphasises it too. These are some of the Scriptures where He says it:

“My sheep listen to My voice, I know them and they follow Me.” (John 10:27)

“You, Jesus, have the words that give eternal life.” (John 6:68)

*“A voice came from the cloud, “This is My own dear Son – listen to Him!””
(Mark 9:7)*

“Anyone who listens to My teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock.” (Matthew 7:24ff)

*“My mother and My brothers are all those who hear God’s word and obey it.”
(Luke 8:21)*

*“Not everyone who calls out to Me ‘Lord, Lord’ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who do the will of My Father in heaven will enter.”
(Matthew 7:21; Luke 6:46-49)*

As we can see from the words of Jesus in the previous passage in both Matthew and Luke, our obedience to God’s will has eternal value. It is extremely important for every believer to hear God speak to them and *“do whatever He tells you.” (John 2:5)*

Hearing from God is absolutely vital for every believer to lead a victorious Christian life!

God speaks to us in many different ways. As we read and meditate on Scripture, words may leap out of the page and impact us. This can be very powerful and can make our bodies tingle or cause us to weep, even profusely. Sometimes God will reveal things to us in visions or dreams containing symbols from the Bible. Or He may speak to us through the things we see around us. He often chooses to speak in a *“still small voice”* (**1 Kings 19:12 NKJV**) His voice comes to our consciousness

like a thought. Often when we have a thought that is pure, righteous and positive it is the Holy Spirit talking to us. Remember, the Holy Spirit comforts but the devil accuses.

Here is another way to hear God speak to us. We can worship Him, speak in tongues and get our hearts right with Him, repenting and forgiving as necessary (**Psalms 139:23-24**). Then sit **quietly** and ask Him a question. The first thought that comes to our minds, especially if it is not a thought we had been thinking, is most likely God answering our question; it will be in line with His written word, the Bible. He speaks lovingly to guide, strengthen, encourage and comfort His children (**1 Corinthians 14:3; Ephesians 4:29; Philippians 2:1**).

TESTIMONY I Met Jesus

“I had been very sad and suicidal for many years. I repented of my suicidal thoughts and asked Jesus to come into my heart. I saw a vision of Jesus appear in front of me. He was very big and looked very kind. He took me in his arms and lifted me up and said, ‘Now be My witness and remember, I AM with you always.’ I was full of joy and started to tell everyone I knew about what had happened to me. Sometimes it has not been easy to tell people about Jesus. That is when I remind myself of what He has done for me and that He is still with me.”

I have heard people say ‘I left my job to serve God’. My response to them is, ‘Why weren’t you serving God in your job?’

(Duncan Watkinson, IRNET,
2004)

Discernment is needed to know whether it really is God speaking or whether it is our own flesh or even the suggestions of the enemy. One easy rule for discernment is to see if the thought has its origins in the Kingdom of Light or in the kingdom of darkness. If it is associated in any way with the kingdom of darkness, keep away from it and have nothing to do with it. Satan **suggests** (*Genesis 3:1*), God **commands** (*Genesis 1:3ff, 2:16-17*).

When God speaks, He wants us to pay attention to what He says and to respond to Him. We should not move away from ‘that place’ where we sense God’s presence and His closeness to us. Instead, we should continue to sit quietly, listening for what else He may reveal to us. We can ask Him for further clarification, for example some more detail about what He is saying to us. If He asks us to do something, we should obey Him by doing it quickly and well. Many people in the Bible did this even though it looked odd to other people around them (*eg* Noah in *Genesis 6-10*). When God asks us to do something we need to do it, trusting that the Holy Spirit will help us. As we do what He tells us, God will do the part that only He can do. In his miraculous escape from prison (*Acts 12:7-8*), Peter did what he was told to do (he put on his shoes and coat then followed the angel) while God sent the angel to break his chains and release him!

When God is telling you to do something new or significant, He will confirm

An old man was sitting on his veranda, looking back on his life and thanking God for the blessings he had received and the big ministry he had been able to do. Then the Lord spoke to him and said, “But son, I called you to be a missionary in Africa.” The man was shocked and argued saying, “but my son had all those health problems and we needed to stay at home where we had the support of my extended family!” And God spoke again saying, “But that would not have happened to your son if you had obeyed Me and gone to Africa.” The man spent the rest of his life encouraging people to answer the call that God places on their life.

(Joan Hunter, *Healing the Whole Man Handbook*, 2006)

His word, usually by two or three witnesses (*Deuteronomy 19:15; Matthew 18:16*). When other people come to you with a ‘prophetic word’, if it is from God, it will usually be a **confirmation** of what God **has already spoken to you**. God gives these other people messages for you in order to confirm that it really is God’s voice and that God really wants you to know the truth that God is telling you. Sometimes the details of the prophecy are not clear (*1 Corinthians 13:9*). We need to prayerfully discern what the prophecy means and how to respond to it. If it involves doing an activity or action, God wants us to be obedient and do it, generally, as soon as possible.

When we prioritise God’s will over our will, we are surrendering to Him. It’s a regime change: from our rule over our lives to His rule over our lives; from following sin and self to becoming followers of Jesus and servants of God under the loving management of the Holy Spirit. We go where He wants us to go, we do what He wants us to do, we speak what He wants us to speak and we are what He wants us to be. When we submit our wills in obedience to God it is the outworking of the Lord’s prayer in our own lives – “*Your Kingdom come, Your will be done.*” There is a cost but it is only when we ‘die’ to our own desires and abilities that we can start to function in His supernatural abilities.

This is summed up in the words of the hymn: ‘All to Jesus, I surrender, all to Him I freely give ...’

This is a prayer of the Apostle Paul for spiritual growth:

“When I think of all this, I fall to my knees and pray to the Father, the Creator of everything in heaven and on earth. I pray that from His glorious, unlimited resources He will empower you with inner strength through His Spirit. Then Christ will make His home in your hearts as you trust in Him. Your roots will grow down into God’s love and keep you strong. And may you have the power to understand, as all God’s people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep His love is. May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God. Now all glory to God, who is able through His mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask

or think. Glory to Him in the Church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever! Amen.” (Ephesians 3:14-21)

This is what the Apostle Paul said about His own spiritual growth:

“I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.” (Philippians 3:14)

“So let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus ...” (Hebrews 12:1-3)



CALLING

Many people do not fulfil the call that Jesus has on their lives. This may be because they do not know what their specific call and ministry is. Our calling is **not** about making the most of the natural abilities. It requires His supernatural gifting for the task He has put before us. In this way we have to fully rely on God, then we will know that it is in His strength that the task was fulfilled, and God gets the glory.

Firstly, our calling is to be dedicated followers of Jesus. Whether we work for someone else or have a trade, whatever we do, we are to be wholly devoted to Jesus. We are to dedicate ourselves to prayer to Jesus, praise to Jesus, testimony about Jesus and to self-consecration to the Lord Jesus. To quote CH Spurgeon, “This being our one aim, we may leave distracting concerns to those who have no higher calling. They may manage politics,

List all the activities you do for God, then ask yourself: ‘Am I doing these things because He has told me to do them?’ If the answer is ‘No’ or ‘Not sure’ for any of them, then you need to think again.

(Duncan Watkinson, IRNET, 2004)

puzzle out financial problems, discuss science, and settle the latest philosophies, but we will give ourselves to serve the Lord Jesus, as ordained members of the Royal Priesthood. This is the sacred duty of every believer.”

Secondly, He gave the great commission to ALL believers (***Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-18; Luke 24:46-48***). Jesus will not return until the good news of the gospel has been told to every person in every people group. This responsibility He gave to **every** believer.

Jesus also gives people a special assignment or calling. This will be a specific task relating to the great commission.

Unsure of what their specific calling was, the compilers of this manual had been seriously seeking the Lord about it for some time, when they found the following prayer to release calling.⁹ Within three weeks of praying this prayer, the Lord revealed His special calling to them!

TESTIMONY

Jesus Lifts Us Up

“My wife and I prayed through every page of this manual, including this prayer for calling. Within a few weeks the Lord started to impress on me that I must take a risk, leave the ministry I had worked in for years and start a traveling teaching ministry. Within 3 months the Lord had done something unimaginable. He opened up a way for me to leave my job and for my wife and me to be self-supporting. With tears of joy my wife said ‘For the first time, I have hope for our family.’”

You can pray this prayer if you want God to release His calling on your life.

Prayer to release calling



“Heavenly Father, please give me Your heart for the people You are calling me to. In Jesus’ name. Amen.”

⁹ Esther Baker, *I once was a Buddhist Nun*, 2009, Intervarsity Press.

Once we know God's calling on our lives, it is in our best interests to do it because it is God's best for us. We can be assured that this is His perfect plan for us – this is what we were created for.

Don't ask God to guide your footsteps if you are not willing to move your feet!

"For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things He planned for us long ago." (Ephesians 2:10)

And Jesus promises that He will be with us always!

"... obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I AM with you always, even to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:20)

Once we step into our calling, there will be ups and downs, much to discover about God and much more fruit of the Holy Spirit to develop and mature in us (*i.e.* our character). God wants to make us like Jesus. Stay teachable, stay humble, don't give up. Repent, forgive and keep listening and be led by the Holy Spirit.

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR PRAYER MINISTRY

The church or pastor overseeing this prayer ministry should have an agreed policy statement regarding the practical considerations for prayer ministry. In the absence of these, here are some guidelines.

GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER MINISTRY

Prayer ministry has to operate within the law¹⁰ and with the agreement and authority of the senior pastor.

Note: In this type of ministry the person being helped should pray their own prayers of repentance and forgiveness **out loud**. That way the prayer ministers helping them can listen, guide them and pray in agreement with them afterwards (*Matthew 18:19*). If the person has never prayed before, it may be necessary for the prayer ministers to lead them in prayer but they should then pray their own prayers in their own words immediately afterwards. Prayers from the heart generally only come from the person praying in their own words. It should be explained that they do not need to use any kind of ‘religious’ language; God knows their heart.



- Choose a calm, quiet place whenever possible.

¹⁰ For example, Government of India’s POCSO Act (2012 and 2019), Juvenile Justice Act (2015 and 2021) and Domestic Violence Act 2012

- Start each prayer ministry session with prayer. Commit the time to God and ask for His leading and guidance.
- It is often best for two prayer ministers to help one person. At least one of the prayer ministers should be of the same sex as the person being helped; *ie* woman to woman, man to man. Do not allow one woman to help one man alone or one man to help one woman, alone. If a married couple come together for help, it is better to talk and pray with them separately until some breakthrough has come and they are ready to come together for reconciliation.
- It may take some time for the person being helped to trust the prayer minister, especially if they have a lot of deep hurts and emotional wounds.
- Always listen for the Holy Spirit's leading and guidance during the prayer ministry session. If one of the prayer ministers believes they have a word of knowledge or a picture, they should share it quietly with the other prayer minister during the session and together decide what to do next.
- Always look at the problem from a Biblical perspective, using appropriate Scriptures from the Bible. Each prayer minister needs to know the Bible well and be able to give a Godly/Biblical perspective on the issues faced by the person being helped.

"Work hard so you can present yourself to God and receive His approval. Be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly explains the word of truth." (2 Timothy 2:15)

- Follow the golden rule: *"Do to others as you would have them do to you."* (**Matthew 7:12**)
- The prayer ministers **must not gossip** about the person receiving ministry.
- Always maintain confidentiality, within permitted legal boundaries. for example, under the POCSO Act, information **may** have to be reported to the senior pastor, designated officials and the police if the person has experienced or confessed to, child abuse. If the person confesses to doing (or

says they have previously done) something illegal, it may be necessary to talk to them about the law. They may wish to discontinue the prayer ministry session. They should also be told that God may require them to make restitution, to make amends for what they have done. This may be a financial settlement or an apology to the person harmed.

- Maintain a respectful attitude, which especially excludes being impatient with, shouting at or threatening the person being helped. If the person asks to stop the session, it should end immediately. The opportunity to return must be left open for another time, should they want to.
- If the person being helped is not cooperating, then leave them – do not force them. They may not be ready to go through this kind of ministry. It has to be in God’s timing.
- Do not condemn them for what they have done, said or had done to them.
- Do not use the information the person shares. Never use the information against them in any way – either directly or indirectly *eg* in sermons or for personal gain.
- Always watch (**with eyes open!**) the person being helped, even when praying – anything could happen to them or to you!
- **ALWAYS GIVE GOD THE GLORY.** Guard against pride – do not take any credit for what God has done.

ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES WHEN MINISTERING TO CHILDREN

The protection of children before, during and after ministry is of the highest importance.

- Every child is a person with a spirit, soul and body. Children are damaged by harmful situations and by lack of nurture.
- The consent of their parent(s) or guardian must be obtained before you pray with a child. The child must also be willing to pray and receive prayer.
- There must be at least two trustworthy adults present with them at all times. Slowly, build the child's trust by chatting or being playful with them.
- Remember they have free will. Do not do anything without explaining and asking permission first.
- Teach the child. Help the child to recognise wrong understandings they may have and help the child to make right choices.
- Do not ask the child 'leading' questions. For example: 'Did your father beat you?' Instead, ask the question in this way: 'What did your father do next?'
- Expect the Holy Spirit to speak directly to the child (*1 Samuel 2:18; Matthew 18:3-4*).
- If the child does not want to talk, take a break and try to relax them. If they still do not want to talk they must be allowed to leave.
- Ministry with a child should last no more than about 1 hour.
- If a child has been beaten or abused, encourage them to come to the point where they forgive the person concerned. Time should be allowed for this.
- Child abuse must not be ignored. If child abuse is suspected or alleged, (including historical child abuse) appropriate action must be taken, in consultation with the senior pastor, to protect the immediate interests of the child. This may mean removing the child from the situation in which they are living if abuse is on-going. There are legal requirements under the POCSO Act.

ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES ON DELIVERANCE

When praying with people in the way detailed, deliverance may happen but usually not with manifestation of evil spirits. Occasionally those being helped may have strange manifestations (*eg* un-natural tiredness, swooning, shaking, rolling of eyes). This may indicate a specific sin that needs to be dealt with. If this starts to happen, the person should be interviewed to reveal that sin. As the person repents or forgives from their heart for that specific sin, the manifestation usually stops because the legal right of the enemy has been removed (***Proverbs 26:2; Ephesians 4:27***). Usually, any evil presence will gently leave the person without any sign but occasionally the person may burp, cough or yawn. If demonic manifestation is an obstacle to ministry, the prayer ministers can take authority in Jesus' name and expel the evil spirit.

Usually there is no need to speak to or shout at any evil spirit. Instead, our focus should always be on the cleansing, forgiving work of the blood of Jesus; praising God, praying to God and praying in the Spirit (in tongues). As the person confesses sins and repents or forgives from their heart, God removes their sin and delivers them from any evil presence that has been taking advantage of that sin. Afterwards, the person will know that God has done a cleansing work in them. They will feel free and at peace.

The compilers have found that some of the people who have experienced manifestations were already born-again Christians. Some Christians say that because every Christian believer has "*Christ in them*", then it is impossible for a Christian to have an evil spirit. Whatever you believe about evil spirits, it is clear that a Christian can be influenced by evil spirits. As we submit more and more to Jesus Christ and allow Him to rule and reign in our lives, He exposes our sins and their effects in and around us and will remove them when we ask Him. And as we crucify our sinful nature and forgive others, our heavenly Father delivers us from evil (***Matthew 6:12-13***).

SUGGESTED MINISTRY SESSION PLAN

Note: A ministry session can take anything from 15 minutes to many hours, so plan for 3 hours per person. If the person has not been helped in 3 hours and time is limited, end the session and make another appointment with them for a later date.

1. Using **GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER MINISTRY** (above), encourage the person being helped to talk about the burdens on their heart with you. Assure them that you are there to help them to draw near to God. Read appropriate Scriptures *eg* James 5:16 to them.
2. Talk with the person and establish issues in their lives that need repentance and/or forgiveness. It may not be obvious and it may not be what the person is expecting to pray about. Do this sensitively using Scriptures from the Bible. **Remember**, it is the Holy Spirit that convicts – not us. Remind them to be absolutely honest before God.
3. Request the person being helped to pray out loud so that you can hear and agree with their prayers. Confession of sin in the Bible is always spoken out loud. Make sure they confess and repent about each issue, one-by-one.
4. Listen to the person and watch them closely to see what God is doing. Their expression indicates whether you should continue, or stop, or change direction, all the while listening to the Holy Spirit.
5. Help them to be really specific and honest with God as they pray, mentioning actual incidents and names of people as they pray, *eg* 'I beat my sister and was very angry with her, please forgive me' rather than repetitive phrases such as 'Praise the Lord, Praise the Lord, Praise the Lord'. This helps them take responsibility for their sins. Ask them to pray about the consequences of the sin and to do more repentance and forgiveness as appropriate.
6. After they have completed a repentance prayer, read 1 John 1:8-10 to them and assure them they are forgiven of this specific sin.

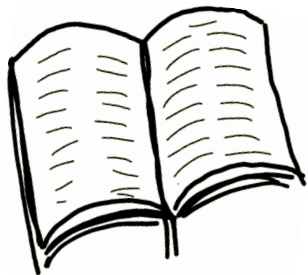


7. After forgiving and repenting of ungodly relationships, you should break the ungodly ties in prayer. You may 'cut' the ties prophetically using your Bible, *"the sword of the Spirit"*. After the person renounces any vows and negative words spoken, you should break their power over the words/vows (in prayer) in the authority of Jesus' name and ask God to wash them clean in the blood of Jesus.
8. Ask the person to invite Jesus and the Holy Spirit to come deeper into their heart and fill them again with God's love and ask Him to fill them to overflowing with the Holy Spirit.
9. Invite the person being helped to ask Jesus to speak to them and then listen, **silently**, to Him. This should be a very short prayer, then a longer period of silence as they listen to God speaking to them. God may give them a word, a Scripture, a picture or simply a 'feeling' or 'sense' of having done something.
10. Allow time for God to minister to the person while you quietly pray blessings over them.
11. After some time ask the person to tell you what happened, how they are feeling and what they sensed God had done. If there is a Scripture you know that fits what they have received from God then read it out and write it down for them. For example, if they have seen a bright light show them a Scripture like *"Jesus said 'I am the light of the world.'"* (**John 8:12**). God may give you a 'word' or 'picture' for the person.
12. Ask them to tell you how they felt about the session if they want to.
13. Bless the person and let them depart.
14. After a prayer ministry session, pray with the other prayer minister(s) and ask God to cleanse you, especially your memory, from what you have heard. Ask God to refill you with His love and fill you afresh with His Holy Spirit.

ANNEX

REPENTANCE LISTS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

“For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard.” (Romans 3:23)



Sin breaks our relationship with God and separates us from Him. There are twenty-one lists in the New Testament containing just over one hundred sins. These lists include the Ten Commandments, except for the 4th commandment – keeping the Sabbath (**Romans 14:5-6**). They give deeper meaning to Jesus’ new commandment: *“Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other.” (John 13:34)*.

Knowledge of our sins is somewhere in our minds, but we may have difficulty remembering. The Holy Spirit knows and will help us to remember.

“Search me, O God, and know my heart, test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends You, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.” (Psalm 139:23-24)

“The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.” (John 14:26 NKJV)

You can ask the Holy Spirit to show you where **you** have sinned as you read through these Scriptures.

Matthew 15:18-20

Mark 7:21-23

Romans 1:29-32

Romans 13:7-9

Romans 13:13-14

1 Corinthians 5:9-11
1 Corinthians 6:9-10
2 Corinthians 12:20-21
Galatians 5:19-21
Ephesians 4:17-19
Ephesians 4:25-31
Ephesians 5:3-4
Colossians 3:5-6
Colossians 3:8-9
1 Timothy 1:9-10
2 Timothy 3:1-5
Titus 3:3-5
1 Peter 2:1
1 Peter 4:2-4
Revelation 21:8
Revelation 22:15

The benefits of repentance are many. Some Scriptures stating the benefits are:

Psalms 19:12-13
Psalms 32:1-5
Psalms 66:16-20
Proverbs 28:13
Isaiah 55:7
Luke 13:3
Acts 17:30
1 Peter 3:7, 12

SOME COMMON REPENTANCE ISSUES

This is NOT a complete list of repentance issues but is for guidance only. If we participate in an activity or do something that conflicts with God's word, the Bible, then it is sinful and God would want us to stop it, repent of it and receive His forgiveness. If we feel uncomfortable over something we are doing, it may be the Holy Spirit convicting us and showing us that it is wrong.

"If you do anything you believe is not right, you are sinning." (Romans 14:23b; James 4:17)

LORD, Your word says ...

Abuse	<i>1 Corinthians 6:10</i>
Adultery	<i>Matthew 5:28-32; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10</i>
Ambition	<i>Matthew 6:33; Galatians 5:20</i>
Amulets	<i>Ezekiel 13:20</i>
Anger	<i>Proverbs 15:18; Matthew 5:22; Galatians 5:20; Ephesians 4:26-32; Colossians 3:8; James 1:19-21</i>
Astrology	<i>Isaiah 47:13-14; Jeremiah 10:2</i>
Bad thoughts	<i>Mark 7:21; Romans 12:2; Philippians 4:8</i>
Bad words	<i>Proverbs 18:21; Matthew 5:22; Matthew 12:36-37; Ephesians 4:29; Philippians 4:8; James 1:26, 3:10</i>
Bitterness	<i>Ephesians 4:31; Hebrews 12:15</i>
Blasphemy	<i>Exodus 20:7; 2 Timothy 3:2</i>
Boasting	<i>James 4:16</i>
Brawling	<i>Ephesians 4:31; James 4:1-2</i>
Bribery	<i>Exodus 23:8; Deuteronomy 10:17, 16:19-20; Job 36:18; Ecclesiastes 7:7; Luke 3:14</i>
Charms	<i>Ezekiel 13:18, 20</i>
Cheating	<i>Proverbs 20:23; Mark 7:22; Luke 16:10-13; Romans 13:6-7</i>
Coveting	<i>Exodus 20:17; Colossians 3:5; James 4:2</i>
Criticism	<i>Romans 14:13; Ephesians 4:2; Philippians 4:8</i>

Complacent Corruption	<i>Luke 9:62; Revelation 2:4; Revelation 3:2-3, 16 Leviticus 19:35; Proverbs 20:23; Luke 3:12-14; Romans 13:6-7</i>
Debt/Not tithing	<i>Malachi 3:8-12; Romans 13:7-9; James 5:1-6</i>
Discord	<i>Psalms 133 [opposite of discord]; Galatians 5:14-15</i>
Dishonour	<i>Deuteronomy 5:16; 1 Corinthians 11:28-30; Ephesians 6:2</i>
Disobeying God	<i>Deuteronomy 28:1ff; Psalm 2:12; Luke 6:46-49; John 14:23-24; James 1:22-25, 4:17</i>
Disobeying parents	<i>Exodus 20:12; Ephesians 6:2; Colossians 3:20</i>
Divorce	<i>Malachi 2:15-16; Mark 10:2-12; 1 Corinthians 7:10-11; Hebrews 13:4</i>
Doubt	<i>Matthew 21:21-22; Mark 9:23-24; James 1:5-8</i>
Drunkenness	<i>Proverbs 23:29-35; Isaiah 5:11-12; Galatians 5:21; Ephesians 5:18; 1 Timothy 3:2-3</i>
Egotism	<i>Mark 10:44; 2 Timothy 3:2</i>
Fear	<i>Isaiah 41:10, 43:1; Matthew 10:28-33; Romans 8:15; 2 Timothy 1:7; 1 John 4:18</i>
Fornication (see Sexual sin)	
Fortune Telling	<i>Leviticus 19:26b; Deuteronomy 18:10; Jeremiah 10:2; Acts 16:16</i>
Gluttony	<i>Ezekiel 16:49; Ephesians 5:5; Titus 1:12</i>
Gossip	<i>Leviticus 19:16; Romans 1:29-30; 2 Corinthians 12:20</i>
Greed	<i>Acts 2:44-45; Ephesians 5:5; 1 Timothy 6:10</i>
Hatred	<i>Matthew 5:43-45; 1 John 2:9-11, 3:15, 4:20-21</i>
Homosexuality	<i>Leviticus 18:22; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10</i>
Horoscopes	<i>Deuteronomy 18:10; Jeremiah 10:2</i>
Hypocrisy	<i>Matthew 7:3-5, 23:1-33; Luke 13:14-16; Galatians 2:11-13</i>

Idols	<i>Exodus 20:4-5; Deuteronomy 4:15-19, 6:13-18, 7:25-26, 12:2-4; Jeremiah 10:3-5; 1 John 5:21</i>
Idolatry	<i>Exodus 20:3-4; Deuteronomy 6:13-18, 32:16-18; Psalm 106:34-39; Hosea 4:12; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Galatians 5:19-20; 1 Peter 4:3; 1 John 5:21</i>
Ignorance	<i>Isaiah 5:13; Hosea 4:6; Acts 17:30-31</i>
Impatience	<i>Numbers 21:4-5; James 1:12; 2 Peter 3:9</i>
Jealousy	<i>Proverbs 14:30; Romans 13:12-14; 1 Corinthians 3:3; James 3:16-18, 4:1-3</i>
Judging (condemning)	<i>Matthew 7:1-2; Romans 14:13; James 4:11-12</i>
Laziness	<i>Proverbs 24:30-34; 1 Corinthians 9:27; James 1:22; 2 Timothy 2:15</i>
Lovelessness	<i>John 15:17; Romans 1:31; Galatians 5:14; 1 John 4:7-8</i>
Lust	<i>Matthew 5:28-29; Mark 7:21; Romans 1:26-27; Galatians 5:19; 2 Timothy 2:22; 1 Peter 4:3</i>
Lying	<i>Exodus 20:16; Ephesians 4:25; Colossians 3:9; Revelation 21:8</i>
Magic	<i>Ezekiel 13:18, 20; Acts 19:18-19; Revelation 9:21, 22:15</i>
Marrying an unbeliever	<i>Joshua 23:12-13; 1 Kings 11:2-4; Ezra 9:12; 2 Corinthians 6:14</i>
Martial Arts	<i>Exodus 20:3-4; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Galatians 5:19; 1 John 5:21; Revelation 22:15</i>
Meanness	<i>Psalm 112:4, 5, 9; Proverbs 19:17; Matthew 5:42; Luke 3:11, 6:38; Acts 2:44-45; 1 John 3:17</i>
Murder	<i>Exodus 20:13; Matthew 5:21-22; 1 John 3:15; Revelation 21:8</i>
Murmuring	<i>Exodus 16:2; 1 Corinthians 10:10; James 5:9</i>
Not loving God fully	<i>Exodus 20:3; Deuteronomy 6:5; Matthew 6:33; Mark 12:29-30; James 1:5-8; Revelation 2:4-5, 3:15-16</i>
Oaths/vows	<i>Matthew 5:33-37; James 5:12</i>

Occult	<i>Leviticus 19:26, 31; Deuteronomy 17:2-7, 18:9-14</i>
Own-effort (reliance on)	<i>Psalms 118:8-9; Romans 4:3; Galatians 2:16, 3:6-12; Ephesians 2:8-10; Hebrews 11:6</i>
Partiality	<i>Acts 10:34-35; Romans 2:11; Ephesians 6:9; Colossians 3:25; James 2:1-9</i>
Pornography (see Lust)	
Prayerlessness	<i>1 Samuel 12:23; Mark 14:37-38; Philippians 4:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18</i>
Pride	<i>2 Chronicles 32:26; Proverbs 16:5; 2 Timothy 3:2; James 4:6, 10; 1 Peter 5:5</i>
Quick temper	<i>Psalms 37:8; Proverbs 14:17, 29:22; Ephesians 4:31; Titus 1:7</i>
Rebellion	<i>Numbers 16ff, 27:12-14; Deuteronomy 9:7; 1 Samuel 15:23; John 2:5, 14:15</i>
Rejection	<i>Isaiah 49:14-16a; Matthew 5:43-45; Ephesians 1:5-6; 1 Thessalonians 4:9; 1 John 2:7</i>
Renouncing Jesus	<i>Matthew 10:32-33; Hebrews 10:29; 1 John 2:22-23</i>
Resist Holy Spirit	<i>Acts 7:51; 1 Thessalonians 5:19-21; 2 Timothy 3:5; Hebrews 10:29</i>
Selfishness	<i>Romans 2:8; Philippians 2:3-4; James 3:16</i>
Self-righteous	<i>Matthew 23:6-7; Luke 18:9-14; Philippians 3:8-9</i>
Self-will/ stubborn	<i>1 Samuel 15:23; 2 Chronicles 30:8-9; Romans 2:5</i>
Sexual Sin	<i>Exodus 20:14; Acts 15:20; 1 Corinthians 3:16-17, 6:15-20; Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Thessalonians 4:3; Hebrews 13:4; Jude 1:7</i>
Spiritual healing (non- Biblical)	<i>2 Chronicles 16:12-13; Colossians 2:8</i>
Stealing	<i>Exodus 20:15; Luke 19:8; Ephesians 4:28</i>
Suicidal thoughts	<i>Exodus 20:13; Acts 16:27-28; 1 Corinthians 3:16-17, 6:19-20; Ephesians 2:10; James 1:18</i>

Tattoo	<i>Leviticus 19:28</i>
Unbelief/ not trusting	<i>Psalm 118:8; Matthew 13:58; Mark 9:19-24; Luke 1:37</i>
Unforgiveness	<i>Matthew 6:14-16; Matthew 18:21-35; Mark 11:25-26</i>
Ungrateful	<i>Deuteronomy 28:47-48; Luke 17:17-18; Philippians 4:8; 2 Timothy 3:2</i>
Unkind	<i>Matthew 7:12; James 1:27, 2:14-17</i>
Unholy	<i>Leviticus 11:44; Romans 1:29; 2 Timothy 3:2; 1 Peter 1:15-16</i>
Vengeance	<i>Leviticus 19:18; Psalm 94:1; Obadiah 15; Matthew 5:43-48, 6:14-15; Romans 12:19; Hebrews 10:30-31</i>
Violence	<i>Psalm 7:16; Proverbs 16:29; 1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7-8</i>
Wife-beating	<i>Proverbs 31:10-31; Ephesians 5:25-26; Colossians 3:19; 1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7; 1 Peter 3:7</i>
Witchcraft	<i>Leviticus 19:31; Deuteronomy 18:9-14; 1 Samuel 15:23; Acts 19:19; Galatians 5:19-21; Revelation 21:8</i>
Worldliness	<i>Romans 12:2; 2 Timothy 3:4; Titus 2:12; 1 John 2:15-17</i>
Worry	<i>Matthew 6:25-34; Philippians 4:6-7; James 5:7</i>

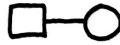
MAKING YOUR FAMILY HISTORY CHART

A family history chart allows us to look at different generations of our families in picture form. Specifically, the chart helps us identify any patterns of blessings and/or curses in our families, over several generations. Families are complex therefore we may not notice any patterns until we make our family history chart and study it.

When we draw a family history chart we use symbols to represent the people and lines to indicate family relationships. This helps to keep the chart simple. So, to draw members of a family,

- i. A male is represented by a square  and
a female is represented by a circle 

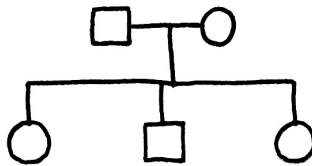
- ii. Marriage is represented by a horizontal line joining the male and female



Couple

- iii. Children from the marriage are represented by a vertical branch drawn down from the marriage line (see below)

This is an example of a simple family history chart showing a couple with three children.

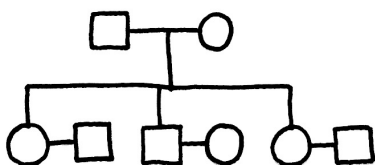


Couple

Children of Couple

In the example above, from the left, the couple's first child was a girl, the second child was a boy and the third child was a girl.

In the drawing below, the children are all now married.

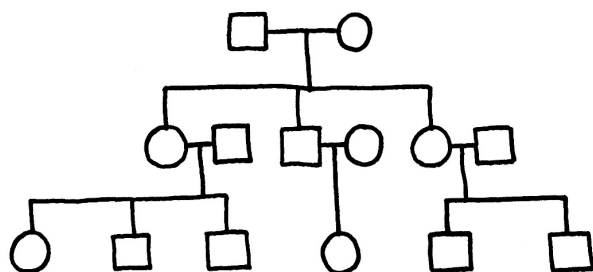


Couple

Married

Children of Couple

In the example below, all three children in the second generation have also had children. The chart now shows 3 generations: grandparents, parents and children.



Grandparents

Parents

Children

In the example chart, above, the first child of the grandparents is a daughter. She is married and has one daughter and two sons. The second child of the grandparents is a son. He is married and has one daughter. The third child of the grandparents is a daughter. She is married and has two sons. The children in the third generation are all first cousins.

In your own family history chart, you can add as many generations as you know about.

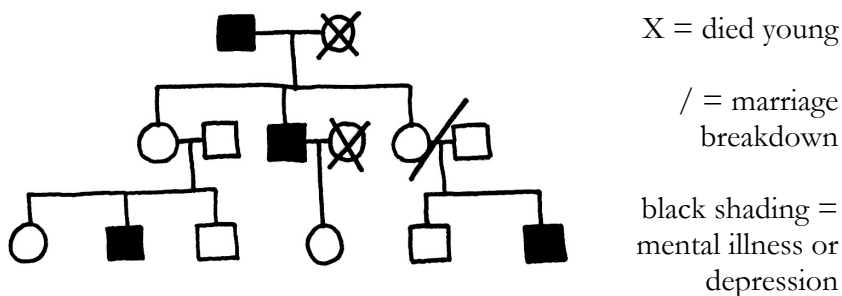
Draw a chart for your own family. Draw all your family members, generation by generation, starting with one set of grandparents, in the way illustrated above. You may prefer to put people's names on the chart to make it easier to identify individuals. You should draw separate charts for your mother's side of the family and your father's side.

Then, using a simple system of coding (*eg* a colour, symbol or letter) put a mark beside everyone who is, or has been affected by the characteristics you are considering. Using the list of afflictions, below, look at one characteristic at a time starting with item 1 first. You may find that there are other issues in your family that you want to look at. Mark them on your family history chart in the same way.

1. Marriage problems (Separation/Divorce/Polygamy/Affairs)
2. Tragic illness/premature death
3. Financial failure
4. Family unhappiness/breakdown
5. Chronic illness (mental, physical)
6. Fertility problems/childlessness
7. Accidents
8. Addictions
9. Unfulfilled destiny
10. Molestation/Abuse

Many of these afflictions will not be in your family or may be kept secret.

Example of how to use a Family History Chart



Notice that in this family history chart, the second child in each family (all males) have depression.

With different colours and symbols you can show different afflictions or problems, and also good things including blessings.

Pray as you consider your family. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you things about your family that He wants you to see.

You can draw any number of charts and show any number of things – blessings or afflictions, attitudes and behaviours (Godly and/or sinful). It is good to thank God for the good aspects. If there are patterns of affliction or frequent afflictions then your family is not living under blessing but might be living under a curse.

Read the chapter on ‘Recovery of Divine Inheritance’ to find out what the causes might be, what the cure is and how to take hold of what Jesus has done for you and your family, to set you free.

TESTIMONY

Jesus revealed my family’s sin

“Working through the ‘Victorious Christian Life’ brought a new freedom for me. After drawing my family history chart, I looked to see if there was any sin issue going through the generations, but there was nothing obvious. As the session came to a close, I picked up the chart and as I looked at the squares and circles of my father and his siblings, they appeared ‘agitated’ on the page. I tried to refocus my eyes but again the squares and circles were visibly agitating on the page. I suddenly felt the overwhelming need to pray and ask God for forgiveness, and to repent and renounce my past sins and the broken relationships between my father and his siblings. With a companion I worked through the prayer guide. Finally, I invited Jesus to come into my heart again and fill me afresh with the Holy Spirit. That was 2 years ago. Since then, I have had a closer walk with the Lord, immersing myself in Scripture and understanding it better. More often I seem to delight in the small things. The Holy Spirit nudges me along and sometimes I can be BOLD! I am planning to use the Victorious Christian Life manual as a guide for a weekly Bible study group.”

PRAYER FOR RELEASE OF GENERATIONAL BLESSINGS¹¹

Below is a prayer of confession and repentance for the sins that, according to the Bible, result in negative consequences (curses). It can be prayed as an **'IF'** prayer, since we do not know how our ancestors sinned. Then we can ask God to remove the negative consequences from us (our family members, our churches and our nation) and ask Him to release His infinite blessings to us.

“Dear Heavenly Father, I confess that I, and every generation of my ancestors back to Adam and Eve, have sinned against You; we have done evil and acted wickedly (*2 Chronicles 6:37*).



I acknowledge that we may have sinned in ways that the Bible says bring curses onto me, my family, my church and my nation.

“Please forgive me and every one of my ancestors back to Adam and Eve IF or WHEN:

- We have not turned to You, or given You all the glory (*Revelation 16:9*)
- We have not loved You with all our hearts, souls, minds and strength (*Deuteronomy 6:4-5; Mark 12:30; 1 Corinthians 16:22; 1 John 5:21*)
- We have rejected You, ignored Your commands and have gone our own ways instead (*Deuteronomy 11:28; Deuteronomy 27:15-26, 28:15; Isaiah 24:5-6; Isaiah 53:6; Jeremiah 11:3*)
- We have not worshiped You, our Creator, but have worshiped created things including ourselves, other people and idols of every kind (*Exodus 20:4-6; Deuteronomy 4:15-19; Deuteronomy 27:15; Romans 1:21-23; Ephesians 5:5; 1 John 5:21; Revelation 21:8*)
- We have not put our trust in You but have trusted in ourselves and in other people (*Psalms 118:8; Jeremiah 17:5*)

¹¹ This is not an exhaustive list of sins, but only those that are linked with a curse in the Bible

- We have practised witchcraft and other forms of occult activities (*Deuteronomy 11:28; Deuteronomy 27:15; Revelation 21:8*)
- We have dishonoured and disobeyed our parents (*Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 27:16; Ephesians 6:2*)
- We have committed all kinds of sexual sin and perversion including lust, fornication, adultery, sexual intercourse with our parents' spouses, homosexuality, incest and bestiality (*Genesis 38:9-10; Exodus 20:14; Deuteronomy 27:20-23; Ezekiel 22:10-11; Matthew 5:27-28; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9, 15-20; Ephesians 5:5; Revelation 22:15*)
- We have married unbelievers and made covenants with unbelievers (*Nehemiah 13:23-25; 2 Corinthians 6:14-15*)
- We have carried out suicide, murders and the killing of innocent people including abortions (*Genesis 9:5; Exodus 20:13; Deuteronomy 28:47-48; Psalm 71:6; Psalm 139:13-17; Isaiah 49:1, 5; Matthew 5:21-22; Mark 8:34; Romans 13:9-10*)
- We have attacked our neighbours, sometimes in secret (*Deuteronomy 27:24; Mark 12:31; 1 John 3:15*)
- We have accepted bribes, even bribes that may have led to the death of innocent people (*Deuteronomy 27:25*)
- We have not buried bodies of executed people on the same day (*Deuteronomy 21:23; Galatians 3:13*)
- We have not faithfully tithed or attended the Church that You designated for us (*Deuteronomy 12:11; Malachi 3:9*)
- We have closed our eyes to poverty and not shared with those in need (*Proverbs 28:27; Matthew 25:41-46*)
- We have withheld justice from the alien, the fatherless and the widow (*Deuteronomy 27:19; Isaiah 58:6-7; James 1:27*)
- We have not honoured Your Holy name (*Deuteronomy 28:58; Zechariah 5:4; Malachi 2:2; Revelation 16:9*)
- We have cursed You, other people and ourselves (*2 Samuel 19:21; Job 2:9; Psalm 109:17; Matthew 5:22; 1 Corinthians 11:29; James 3:10; Revelation 16:9, 11*)
- We have cursed and not blessed Israel, Your chosen people (*Genesis 12:3; Isaiah 45:17; Obadiah 15; Romans 11:28b-29*)
- We have lied and sworn falsely (*Zechariah 5:4; Revelation 21:8; Revelation 22:15*)

- We have stolen land and moved other people's boundaries (*Deuteronomy 19:14; Deuteronomy 27:17; Proverbs 22:28*)
- We have been intoxicated with alcohol and other drugs (*Proverbs 23:29-35; Romans 13:13; 1 Corinthians 11:27*)
- We have not shared Your Gospel (*Leviticus 19:14; Deuteronomy 27:18; Luke 17:2; Galatians 1:8; 2 Peter 2:14*)
- We have tried to save ourselves by our own efforts instead of trusting in Your grace alone (*Mark 1:15; Romans 4:1-24 especially 24; Romans 10:9, 13; Galatians 3:6-12; Ephesians 2:8-10*)

"I confess to every wrong thought, word and action committed by me and my ancestors back to Adam and Eve. I renounce these sins. Please forgive me, my ancestors, my church and my nation for every sin that we have done, known and unknown.

"Thank You Jesus for dying for our sins and rescuing us from the curse pronounced by the Law. You took upon Yourself the curse for all our sin (*Galatians 3:13-14*). Because of my faith in this, I take authority in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth and I break every curse off me, my family, my church and my nation.

"I ask You Heavenly Father to cleanse and deliver me, my family, my church and my nation from evil and bless us with every blessing available under heaven (*Ephesians 1:3*) to 1000 generations. Thank You. I choose to love You and obey You, and I commit myself firmly to You (*Deuteronomy 30:20; Joshua 24:15; Mark 12:30*). Please help me Holy Spirit, I need You. Please fill me afresh today.

"Heavenly Father, may Your glorious name be praised! May Your Name be exalted above all blessing and praise! (*Nehemiah 9:5b*).

"In Jesus' name I pray. Amen."

WHO I AM IN CHRIST

As a born-again Christian, I am in Christ and He is in me. Every one of the following Scriptures is completely true of me. I can repent for every thought and action that does not line up with the word of God, and ask God to change me. God says that

IN CHRIST...

... I am loved:

I am a child of God (*John 1:12; Romans 8:14; Galatians 3:26, 4:6-7; Ephesians 1:5*)

I am Jesus Christ's friend (*John 15:15*) and sibling (*Hebrews 2:11*)

I am loved by God. God loves me as much as He loves Jesus (*John 17:23*)

I cannot be separated from the love of God (*Romans 8:35-39*)

I am a member of Christ's body (*1 Corinthians 12:27; Ephesians 5:30*)

... I am accepted:

I am made right in God's sight by faith in Jesus Christ (*Romans 5:1*)

I am freed from the penalty of my sins (*Romans 3:24; Colossians 1:14*)

I am dead to sin, my life is Christ's life (*Romans 6:1-6; Galatians 2:20; Colossians 2:11*)

I am free forever from condemnation (*Romans 8:1 and 8:31-34*)

I am entitled to come boldly to God for help (*Ephesians 2:18, 3:12; Hebrews 4:16;*)

... I am significant:

I am in a place of undeserved privilege, confidence and joy (*Romans 5:2*)

I am a branch of the true vine, a channel of Christ's life (*John 15:1, 5*)

I am God's very own possession (*1 Peter 2:9*)

I am a member of a chosen people, a holy nation (*1 Peter 2:9-10*)

I am blessed with every spiritual blessing available under heaven (*Ephesians 1:3*)

... I am safe:

I am hidden with Jesus in God; God has done this (*1 Corinthians 1:30; Colossians 3:3*)

I am an example of God's amazing mercy, grace and kindness (*Ephesians 2:7*)

I am confident that the good work God has begun in me will be perfected (*Philippians 1:6*)

I have been born of God; the evil one cannot touch me (*1 John 5:18*)

I am established, anointed, sealed by God (*2 Corinthians 1:21-22*)

... I have a purpose:

I am called to be like God, truly righteous and holy (*Ephesians 4:24; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 1:15-16*)

I am chosen and appointed by Jesus to bear His fruit (*John 15:16*)

I am the salt of the earth and the light of the world (*Matthew 5:13-14*)

I am God's royal priest in God's royal priesthood (*1 Peter 2:9*)

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (*Philippians 4:13*)

... I have a glorious eternal inheritance:

I am a joint heir with Christ, sharing God's Glory and suffering (*Romans 8:17; Galatians 4:6-7*)

I am a citizen of heaven, seated in heaven right now (*Ephesians 2:6, 19; Philippians 3:20*)

I am called to one glorious hope for the future (*Ephesians 4:4*)

I am rescued from darkness and transferred into God's Kingdom (*Acts 26:18; Colossians 1:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:5*)

I am filled with Christ; Christ is the hope of glory! (*1 Corinthians 3:16; Colossians 1:27*)

THEREFORE REMAIN IN CHRIST!

(*John 15:7-10; Hebrews 3:6; 1 John 2:27-28; 2 John 9*)

AN EXERCISE:

By studying Paul's letters you can make your own list of who you are in Christ. Take one letter (such as Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians) and read each verse carefully. Pick out what Paul says about your identity in Christ and Christ's identity. In this way you can prepare your own list of who you are in Christ. You will find that almost every verse contains something marvellous about your identity in Christ!

HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE¹²

Bible reading plans

It is good for our Spiritual growth to read the whole Bible through each year, if possible. Bible reading has more variety when we read from both the Old and New Testament each day. There are 929 chapters in the Old Testament and 260 chapters in the New Testament. You can work out your own Bible reading plan. We suggest you read three chapters from the Old Testament and one chapter from the New Testament each day. In this way you will read the whole Bible through within one year. Put place-markers in your Bible to remind you where you have reached. There are many Bible Apps and websites with online Bibles in many languages and versions and different Bible reading plans.

Try www.youversion.com and www.biblegateway.com

Bible meditation and praying God's word

In addition to reading God's word, it is important to study God's word (***Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:1-3; Psalm 119:15-16; Hebrews 4:12***). Meditating on God's word leads to spiritual fruitfulness and maturity.

There are many ways to study the Bible. Here are some guidelines that will be helpful.

- Make a decision to study His word regularly. Do not worry about things in the Bible that you cannot understand now.

"Open my eyes to see wondrous things from Your word." (Psalm 119:18)

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." (Psalm 119:105)

- Pray and ask the Lord which book or passage of the Bible to study.

¹² Campbell McAlpine, *Explaining Biblical Meditation*, 2004, Sovereign World Ltd.

- Be still ... consider whether everything is all right between you and the Lord. Spend a few minutes thanking Him for His goodness and grace to you. Praise Him for who He is. Worship Him.
- Ask God to speak to you, trusting that He will give you His thoughts.
- Now go to the passage God has directed you to and read it slowly a few times.
 1. What thoughts do you have?
 2. What is God teaching you? (*eg* a command, a warning, an example to follow, something about His character, something to thank Him for)
- Write down the answers to questions 1 and 2. God may turn your mind in a different direction from what the passage is about and speak to your own special need. Don't limit Him.
- When you have more time, look up parallel passages or cross-references.
- In prayer, respond to what He is teaching you.
- Make your prayer BIGGER by praying it for your family, church, nation and for every nation including Israel.¹³
- During the rest of the day, think about what God has spoken to you.

¹³ For more information about this kind of prayer, please contact Lydia Fellowship International www.lydiafellowship.org

HEALING THE SICK¹⁴

Jesus gave the same commission to all believers (*Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-18; Luke 24:46-49; John 20:21-22*). As His disciples went everywhere and preached the Gospel, the Lord worked through them, confirming what they said by many miraculous signs (*Mark 16:20; Acts* – the whole book!).

Healing the sick and other miraculous signs accompany the preaching of the Good News about Jesus (the good news that through Jesus, there is forgiveness of sins for all who repent).

Jesus commanded every believer to HEAL THE SICK (*Matthew 10:1, 8; Mark 6:12-13; Luke 9:1-2*). He told us all to heal the sick, not only to pray for the sick. To some, the Lord gives special gifts of healing (*1 Corinthians 12:9, 28*). God can and will use each of us to heal others, so long as we pray for people to be healed. He promised and He never lies (*Hebrews 6:18*).

These three promises give us confidence as we pray for healing:

1. “By His stripes we are healed.” (*Isaiah 53:5; 1 Peter 2:24*)
2. “We are in His new (and better) covenant.” (*Hebrews 9:12-15*)
3. “The Kingdom of God is within us.” (*Luke 17:21*)

Some of the many other Scriptures that encourage us to pray for healing and miracles are:

“With God, everything is possible.” (Matthew 19:26)

“Jesus said ‘I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father. You can ask for anything in My name and I will do it, so that the Son can bring glory to the Father. Yes, ask Me anything in My name and I will do it.’” (John 14:12-14)

¹⁴ From a seminar given by Randy Clark (2010), Global Awakening and also from seminars given by Charles and Frances Hunter (available on DVD and YouTube).

“God loves us as much as He loves Jesus!” (John 17:23)

“Jesus said ‘I also tell you this, if two of you agree here on earth concerning anything you ask, My Father in heaven will do it for you.’” (Matthew 18:19)

“God can do more than we can ask or possibly imagine.” (Ephesians 3:20)

Jesus touched sick people therefore we can too. We can ask God to use our hands for healing. Before we do, we need to ask the person's permission. We should touch them as near the part that needs healing as possible, or where the disease is, but not anywhere 'private'.

Then we can pray for the person. We can bless them, ask God to bless them and speak words of healing. In our prayer, we should remember God's promises to use us for healing (‘By Your stripes this person is healed; because I am a born-again believer in the New Covenant – be healed; because Your Kingdom is within me – this person is being healed’). We heal **“In the authority of Jesus’ name”**.



While touching them, it is helpful to interview the person, asking them questions such as ‘When did this sickness start?’ or ‘What was happening in your life when the sickness started?’ There may have been a traumatic incident around the time the sickness started and we can help them to forgive anyone who was responsible or to repent and ask God to forgive them if they were responsible. Unforgiveness prevents healing and stops prayer from being answered (**Mark 11:22-25; James 5:16b; 1 Peter 3:7**). Unforgiveness can also be a cause of sickness and pain (**Matthew 18:34-35; Hebrews 12:14-15**). Forgiving and encouraging others to forgive is very important. Forgiveness releases healing.

We can also ask the person what is happening to them as we pray – sometimes they might feel heat, or cool, or a tingling sensation. If they feel something or nothing – be encouraged and continue to pray. Whether there is evidence or not, we can thank God for what He is doing.



Jesus gives us authority to instruct the body part to be healed such as: “Leg be straight in Jesus’ name”; “Blood sugar come to the normal levels in Jesus’ name.” And we can tell the pain or sickness to go, eg “Headache be gone, in Jesus name.” The more information we have about their physical problems, the more specifically we can pray.¹⁵

And if the person is not *apparently* healed – don’t give up! Don’t doubt! Jesus is answering. Pray a little longer. And when there is no time left, suggest they keep praying for their own healing and ask them to believe that Jesus is answering; He healed everyone who came to Him. We too can continue to pray for their healing. Jesus taught His disciples that they should always pray and never give up (**Luke 18:1-8**).

We need to thank Jesus for each and every little bit of healing that He does in response to our prayers. God heals people because He wants to draw them to Himself.

TESTIMONY

Jesus Healed Her Hand

“I was teaching an elderly lady how to pray for healing. She was praying for a young woman with back pain. She held the woman’s shoulders and commanded the young woman’s back to align and told the pain to go. She prayed this way for a few minutes. Then I asked “what happened?” The young woman still had back pain but the elderly lady’s hand was completely healed. I didn’t know it, but the lady had broken some bones in her hand and, until then, she had not been able to use her hand fully for several years.”

“It is God’s kindness that leads you to repentance.” (Romans 2:4b)

Jesus denounced towns and cities where He had done so many of His miracles *“because they had not repented of their sins and turned to God.”* (**Matthew 11:20**)

¹⁵ Charles and Frances Hunter, *How to Heal the Sick*, 1981, Whitaker House. Also Charles and Frances Hunter, *7 hour Power Pack* DVD set, Hunter Ministries.

God answers our prayers. As we see more answers to prayer we are encouraged to pray more and to pray for other things and for seemingly impossible things such as relationships, marriages, churches, cities, states and nations, businesses, agriculture; whatever you notice that needs God's healing touch. God created it all and He can heal and restore it all, even more than we can ask or possibly imagine (*Ephesians 3:20*).

TESTIMONY

Jesus Healed Her Completely

"A family invited me to visit their mother who had been bed-ridden for three years and who was expected to die very soon. At the woman's bedside I asked her if there was anyone she needed to forgive. There were many! I helped her pray and she forgave them and invited Jesus into her heart. She felt different. Then I prayed for her healing and immediately she got better and walked out of the house with me. Her family members were completely shocked. They had not expected her to live, let alone to enjoy a healthy life again! This miracle has given me a lot of opportunities to talk about Jesus."

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT GETTING RIGHT WITH EACH OTHER AND WITH GOD

This Bible study helps you to examine what the Bible teaches about getting right with each other and with God. You can do this study on your own or with a small group of people. Take time to consider how it applies to you and your life and ministry.

Answer the following questions. You will find the answers in the Scriptures mentioned. To understand more, read the verses around these Scriptures.

1. What is the core message of the gospel of Jesus Christ?

(Luke 24:47; Acts 26:18)

2. What do we need to do in order to receive forgiveness?

(Psalm 32:1-5; 1 John 1:8-10)

3. What are the benefits of being forgiven?

(Romans 6:23; James 5:16; Acts 3:19-20)

4. Why should we forgive someone who has wronged us?

(Matthew 6:12, 14-15, 18:23-35; Hebrews 12:14-15)

5. What should your attitude be towards a friend/husband/wife who continually sins against you?

(Matthew 18:21-22; Colossians 3:13)

6. What is repentance?

(Isaiah 55:7; Luke 3:8; Acts 26:20; 2 Corinthians 7:9-10)

7. How can a person change their behaviour?

(Romans 7:25 (18-25); Hebrews 12:24)

Discussion Question for small group:

8. How would you ask your friend/husband/wife to forgive you for doing something that hurt or disappointed them?

Personal Reflection for yourself in silence:

9. How would you ask God to forgive you for something you have done that hurt or disappointed Him?

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT MONEY

This Bible study helps you to examine what the Bible teaches about money. You can do this study on your own or with a small group of people. Take time to consider how it applies to you and your life and ministry.

Answer the following questions. You will find the answers in the Scriptures mentioned. To understand more, read the verses around these Scriptures.

1. What is the remedy to all our (money) problems?

(Matthew 6:33; Luke 12:33-34; 1 Timothy 6:17-19)

2. What happens when we seek money more than we seek God?

(Ecclesiastes 5:10-11; 1 Timothy 6:10; Matthew 6:24; Colossians 3:5; Exodus 20:4-6)

3. What is a tithe? Who should we give our tithes to, and why?

(Genesis 28:22b; Deuteronomy 14:22-23; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 22:21)

4. Why should we avoid paying bribes, but pay our taxes?

(Exodus 23:8; Proverbs 15:27; Matthew 22:17-22; Romans 13:6-7)

5. What does the Bible say about debt?

(Romans 13:8; Prov. 22:7)

6. What does the Bible say about helping the poor?

(Deuteronomy 15:10; Proverbs 19:17; Luke 6:34-36; Luke 12:33-34; 2 Corinthians 9:6-12; 1 John 3:17)

7. What does the Bible say we are to invest in?

(Luke 8:1-3; James 5:1-4; 3 John 5-8)

8. Why should Church leaders and Ministries pay tithes from the offerings they receive?

(Numbers 18:26-29; 1 Timothy 3:1-5)

Meditate on Psalm 23:1. Pray and respond to what God has shown you in His word.