

***T.O.D.A.Y., I WILL...***

*“Live” in the Christ Zone*

## INTRODUCTION

Living in the Christ zone is a mindset and heart-set; it is a life-changing experience that will help you to feel the power of the Holy Spirit at work and present in your daily living for Him. It is a personal decision that will have an unbelievable impact in your life. So how do you get to that position where you know beyond a shadow of a doubt that you're living in Him---and for Him?

Romans chapter 8 tells us, those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. We don't allow our sinful nature to control our lives, because we give ourselves completely to Christ who has given us the power of His Spirit to dwell in us, which will lead you down His path of glory. It is a life of peace, love, and joy (full of praise and honor to God)---WITH no more condemnation, no doubts and regrets, no hatred and anger, no bitterness and jealousy, no revenge and hardhearted ways, no more fears and worries, no more sadness and sorrow, no more illness and loss, and no more struggles and domination. You are completely free to live in the One True Zone of eternal rest.

When you're in Him you feel conviction, counseling and comforting. You realize that you can only come clean by repenting for your sins and applying God's word to your life. You know that He's accepted you for who you are---a sinner saved by his amazing grace. You are secured in Christ and nothing can take that away.

In Him your life is of significance---you're His salt and light of the earth---you're a true branch of the True Vine---you're chosen by Him---you're His daily representative---and you understand that nothing is impossible when you're in His Comfort Zone.

Your heart, soul and mind will be completely devoted to Him, and you will be one in Him with an newness in life to exemplify His light and love each day. In all of your weaknesses, He will be your strength; and that is a Zone that we all strive for TODAY!

You will not be able to avoid strife in this world. However, when you fix your thoughts on God, we

can all know a level of peace, joy and comfort that surpasses all understanding. Focus on God and His word and you will be able to live with more steadiness in life. Keep your trust in Christ, obey Him, dedicate your all to Him, accept His ways in your life and have a burning desire to know Him more and more and you will come to a place that others long for.

The steps for living in the Christ Zone or practical and spiritual applications. They are guidelines for living in this broken world---TODAY.

- \* You must first make the ultimate decision to trust, obey and dedicate your all to Christ, each day.
- \* You must have a willing and committed heart, soul, and mind---let His strength shine in your weakness.
- \* You have to be accountable for your daily actions---you're either in Christ's Zone OR the dead zone .
- \* You have to prioritize your daily activities that will help you to stay in The Christ Zone; devoted fellowship with other believers and real worship in God's House.
- \* You must effectively and proactively Prepare and Plan daily prayer and daily study time.
- \* Through all of your trials and tribulations you must be Persistent---endure and persevere for His glory.
- \* Only Compromise to the ways of Christ; not the ways of the world.
- \* Have a Forgiving heart in all areas. God loves and forgives you for who you are, so you must do the same as Christ would.
- \* Be Satisfied with all that you have in Christ. This is the Zone of perfection and contentment.
- \* Honor Christ for all that He's done and is going to do in your life.
- \* Let others see the "Reality" of Christ in your life. Let there be an absolute and definitive portrayal

that you're in a Zone of meaning.

- \* Be a living Sacrifice for Christ each day. Give Him your all---nothing less.
- \* Strive to live a productive life in Christ TODAY---do and say things that impact the name of Christ for the glory of His Kingdom----that is His goal for you.
- \* Through it all---PRAY-PRAY-PRAY for his divine guidance, strength, wisdom, knowledge and discernment.

Romans 12: 1-2 tells us, *“I plead with you to give your bodies to God. Let them be a holy and living sacrifice---the kind He will accept. Don't copy the behaviors of the world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will know what God wants you to, and you will know how good and pleasing and perfect His will really is.”*

**“DECISION”**

TODAY, what you decide could impact your life, if not others for a long time. It could be a physical, social, emotional and *even spiritual* affect in your life. Could something really good or bad come from this decision? You agree to or will support this decision with authority and true determination. It could be something that can not be reversed in your life. It could be damaging or good for you and/or others. In some cases your decision was predetermined.

There is nothing that will waver you from this conclusion. Is it the evidence? What were the facts that led to this true determination? Something had to be compelling, profound, substantiating, and undeniably factual for you to make this decision in life. Are you allowing worldliness to sway your decision making in life?

If you look at the grid below, what branch of the decision tree do you fall under? Where do you have more checkmarks in life? Is it more of the world, or of Christ? Test yourself and improve your decision making process in Christ, Today!

<b><u>WORLDLY DECISIONS-ALL ABOUT YOU</u></b>	<b><u>GODLY DECISIONS-ALL ABOUT CHRIST</u></b>
EVIL MOTIVES-FLESH	LOVING MOTIVES-SPIRIT
TROUBLED HEART	JOYOUS DECISION
ANGER OR HATRED DECISION	PEACEFUL DECISION
IMPUSLIVE DECISION	PATIENT DECISION
UNCARING DECISION	KIND DECISION
DECEITFUL DECISION-SPITE OR VINDICTIVE	GOOD DECISION
RESTLESS DECISION	FAITHFUL DECISION
CONFRONTATIONAL DECISION	GENTLE DECISION
SELF AMBITIOUS DECISION	SELF-CONTROLLING
PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT	SPIRITUAL ACHIEVEMENT

If you're true to yourself you will see where your opportunity gaps are in life. Are you a decision

maker for the world **OR** for Christ? If you allow the Holy Spirit to lead you in your decision making process you will see the Fruit of the Spirit in your results. You will attain spiritual achievement, which is exactly what the Lord wants. Be responsible for decisions in life. If you have Jesus Christ first you can and will not go wrong.

Don't let the ways of this world sway your thought process. Don't let money, possessions, positions, fame and self get in the way of your decisions Today. Let them be of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-controlling ways in Christ. You will bear wonderful blessings from these fruits if you allow the Lord to control your thought process.

Proverbs 18:13, 15 & 17 tells us that there are three basic principles for making good decisions.

1. Get the facts before deciding. Be patient.
2. Have an open mind. Be loving, peaceful, kind, good, gentle and self-controlling.
3. Hear both sides before deciding. Be faithful in your decision.

Submit to the power of the Holy Spirit and you will be clear and concise. Trust, Obey and Dedicate your heart, soul, mind and strength to Him, Today and it will bring an area of acceptance in your life that's immeasurable.

There are many areas in your life where you've decided something of importance. Look at some of these examples below. They could have easily set the stage for your determined path in life. It was either a good or bad choice. Either way, it was your decision.

- Decision to go to college
- Decision on your first job
- Decision on your first home or car
- Decision on a relationship
- Decision on a family

- Decision on your career
- Decision where to live-neighborhood
- Decision on a move
- Decision on your personal budget-finances
- Decisions as a parent (with your children)
- Decision on your investments-future planning
- Decision on taking care of yourself-physically and emotionally
- Decisions when you're at a crossroad in life

All of these decisions are very important, for they set the path for your future. What is missing from this list? It is your spiritual decision in life? Why aren't they ranked high on your list, Today? Is it because you have not come to that point of accepting Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior? What is keeping you from the most important decision of all? It's either for Christ or the world. If you choose the world you will have eternal judgment. But if it's Christ, this decision will reap such great rewards in God's Kingdom.

- Decide to give your heart, soul, mind and strength to the Lord. Trust Him!
- Decide to submit to the Holy Spirit's leading in your life. Obey Him!
- Decide to devote a time of studying His word and prayer. Dedicate time to Him!
- Decide to accept Him as Lord and King of your life. Accept Him, Today!
- Decide to grow closer and closer by seeking Him first in all decision you make in life, Today. Yearn to know Him more, Today!
- Decide to surrender all of your weaknesses into His Hands. Surround yourself with Christ-Like ways in your life.
- Decide to give, live and share in all that you have in Christ, Today. Exemplify His

light and love in all that you say and do for His glory, Today.

- Decide to have true fellowship and worship. Live in the true family of God, Today!
- Decide to say NO to the evil one Today!
- Decide that you will have ultimate victory with Christ in your life, Today. No other decision is more important and satisfying than coming to Him!

The most important decision you make Today is accepting Jesus Christ in your life. It may bring trials and tests, but you must accept them for they will only build your character. They will bring Christ-Like authority in your life as you grow closer to the Lord.

God made a predetermined decision in choosing you, first! You need to determine your decision to follow all of His ways; no matter what. James 1:5 tells us *“If you need wisdom, if you want to know what God wants you to do, ask Him and He will gladly tell you. He will not resent your asking.”*

Let His love, mercy and grace be seen in your thought process. If your decision making is based around these three scriptures below, you will not go wrong in God’s eyes. Let them be your driving authority of determination.

1. I Corinthians 14:1 – Let love be your highest goal.
  - a. If you allow God’s love to be seen in your decisions it will bring peace and joy to your life.
2. Galatians 5:22 – When the Holy Spirit controls your life, He will produce in this kind of fruit in you.
  - a. Submit to the power of His Holy Spirit and allow Him to guide you in your decision makings for Today.
3. Proverbs 16:3 – Commit your work to the Lord, and then your plans will succeed.
  - a. Do everything as if you were doing it for Him. Let your decisions be Christ-based

around His Fruits of the Spirit. You will reap a great harvest of wonderful bearing fruits in your life, Today.

If you look at God's word, and all that God offers us through Jesus Christ, it is compelling, profound, substantiating and undeniably the truth in all that He will give you Today if you decide to choose Him. There is nothing more factual than Jesus Christ. There is nothing more real and evident. With all of these determining facts, why haven't you decided to give the ways of this world up and accept Him as Lord of your life? Decide to follow Jesus Today!

List reasons why you haven't decided

to follow Christ in your life

Note the scriptures that led to your decisions for Him


## “WILLING”

What does the word willing mean to you? It can be in the form of a promise or refusal; it could be conditional or unconditional. It could be an act in a loving or caring way. It is someone who complies without constraint. It is the act of preparing to do a particular job. Someone who is willing is also prompt--timely. They prepare the plan proactively and are positive and persistent in getting something done. It is a decision making capacity indicating a power of choice. It is a full commitment-100%.

Do you fall in the willing category or in the opposite category of unwilling? Someone who is unwilling is stubborn, for they do not want to cooperate. The power of choosing to do an act of willing with a pure heart comes from one source---Jesus Christ. He wants your act of willingness to glorify His Holy name.

When you're willing to do something, in most cases, there is a driving internal force behind this commitment. It is either for your own selfish desires, or out of the *goodness* of your heart? Is it real *love* behind this act, or is there some type of personal gain? This would tell the difference between your conditional and unconditional state of willingness.

If your intentions are pure at heart---Christ-Like---your act of willing is unconditional. If you expect something in return then it is **self**-conditional. It seems that many people expect something in return if they're willing to do anything. Are you like this? If you are willing to do something out of the goodness of your heart, Christ-Like, why do you expect something in return?

Examples of conditional and unconditional willingness are below. When you act in the willing state (I Will) you are doing this out of the goodness of your heart, which is the right thing to do. However, if there are conditional areas tied to your willing acts then it's wrong. Why is it wrong? Remember what we've illustrated in other study guides? You can not live in the flesh and the spirit at the same time. They can not co-exist. If you are willing to do something and “you” expect something in return, then you are

acting out of fleshly desires. When you do this out of love and goodness you are portraying the Fruit of the Spirit. Where do you fall in your willing act of doing, Today?

CONDITIONAL-WRONG	UNCONDITIONAL-RIGHT
Willing to stop smoking, unless I'm too stressed	I Will stop smoking and have <u>self-control</u>
Willing to stop drinking and using drugs, unless the temptations too strong	I Will stop drinking and using drugs with <u>self-control and faithfulness</u>
Willing to start exercising, when there's time in the day	I Will exercise and do <u>good</u> for His temple
Willing to help others; if it doesn't interrupt my schedule	I Will help and serve others in need and exemplify Christ's <u>love, kindness, &amp; gentleness</u>
Willing to eat right, unless it's something good	I Will eat right with <u>self-control</u>
Willing to play with my children; if I have time	I Will play with my children with <u>love, peace and patience</u>
Willing to help my spouse; if I get home early	I Will help my spouse with <u>love and gentleness</u>
Willing to spend time with family; if my job doesn't interfere	I Will spend family time with <u>joyfulness</u>
Willing to go to church; if the game is not on TV	I Will worship God with <u>love and faithfulness</u>
Willing to read the bible, if I can find time	I Will apply God's word to my life and exemplify all His <u>Fruit</u>
Willing to pray, if I can remember	I Will pray and ask God for his enduring strength with <u>faithfulness and patience</u>
Willing to ask forgiveness, but I've done no wrong	I Will repent for my sins Lord with <u>love and faith</u>
Willing to talk to God, when I need Him	I Will talk to God Today with <u>love, joy, peace and patience</u>
Willing to tithe, if I have the funds available	I Will tithe unto the Lord with <u>love, joy and faithfulness</u>
Willing to accept Jesus, if it helps my life	I Will accept Jesus as Lord of my Life and live by His <u>Fruit And Word</u>
Willing to listen to His Spirit, but I don't hear Him speaking, Why? Because you're in the flesh!	I Will submit to the Holy Spirit, for you are there to lead me, <u>Today!</u>

Your act of willing needs to be a complete commitment. When you say "I Will" you are making a promise and an agreement to act---"are you a doer in life?"

How do these relate to you? Be willing to act **with authority: “I Will”** do this for you Lord, Today! It comes down to a level of surrender, acceptance, commitment and choosing His loving ways.

The Lord will grant you wisdom to do make the right decision in the act of willing. Read Proverbs 2:6-7. Always know that you must be submissive to the Holy Spirit for strength. If you rely on yourself you will probably fail. Jesus tells us in Matthew 26:41, “*Even though your spirit is willing but your body (flesh) is weak.*”

Satan does not want you to be willing to help others and yourself for the glory of Jesus Christ. You must be wise and rely upon the Lord with trust, obedience, dedication and acceptance.

List areas where you have not been willing to

do things for His glory.

Note the scriptures you willingly used


## “COMMITMENT”

It is someone committed to and actively promoting a cause or particular course of action. It could be a difficult task with risk. It is one who feels obligated or pledged to oneself. What is the one thing or person you are committed to Today? Is it a promise or vow that you are committed to with all of your heart, soul, mind and strength? Is there anything that could deviate you away from this commitment? How true are you to this commitment? Are you committed to your parents? Are you committed to your spouse? Are you committed to your children? Are you committed to your employer? Are you committed to your government? Are you committed to your thoughts, actions and motives in life? Are you committed to God’s word? Are you truly committed to God being first in your life?! This is the rank of priority: 1) God, 2) Family, 3) Employer, 4) Neighbors/Friends, 5) Brothers & Sisters in Christ, 6) Your community and service to others, and 7) You.

It doesn’t say anywhere in God’s word that you should be first in life’s commitments. When you commit and surrender yourself to God first His loving ways will consume you and you will not be concerned about being first. Last is OK----it portrays humbleness and meekness in all that you do for Jesus Christ and His Kingdom.

Let His love be seen in your commitment to your family.

Let His joy be seen in your commitment to your employer.

Let His peace be seen in your commitment to the government and laws of the land.

Let His patience be seen in your commitment to your neighbors and friends.

Let His kindness & goodness be seen in your commitment to the body of Christ.

Let His gentleness be seen in your commitment to the community and service unto others.

Let His faithfulness and self-control be seen in your life’s commitment, as you follow all of His ways, Today!

When all of your commitments are with Christ first, now you're living as the true dedicated servant God wants. Remember what it says in Psalm 37:5, "*Commit everything you do unto the Lord.*" It does not say these things, but everything! Is God committed to you as his child? In Isaiah 46:4 it says that "*I will be your God throughout your lifetime, until your hair is white with age. I made you, and I will care for you. I will carry you along and save you.*" Titus 2:14 tells us "*He gave His life to free us from every kind of sin, to cleanse us, and to make us His very own people, totally committed to doing what is right.*" WOW! Is this the ultimate commitment? You see, Satan knows this and he wants to do everything in his power to take your focus away from God's commitment to you. Satan wants you to commit yourself to the ways of this world, and not to God. So ask yourself this question, "Am I 100% dedicated to living a committed life for the Lord, Today; no matter what?" Jesus committed His life for The Father, for your sake. We did not deserve it, but He dedicated Himself to His children because His love, mercy and grace is sufficient for everyone. Do you have this type of commitment? Are you this dedicated to Him as Lord and King of your life?

Romans 6:13 sums it up with the completeness of committing yourself to God. "*Give yourselves **completely** to God since you have been given new life. And use your whole body as a tool to what is right for the glory of God, Today.*" Wholehearted commitment is giving Him everything to use as He wishes. It is His will be done for His glory, not ours. You must come to that point of undeniable and 100% trust, obedience and dedication to Jesus Christ as Lord of your life. You can not commit to the ways of this world and have eternal life, only in Jesus Christ. How should you completely dedicate and commit yourself to God, Today? Note below:

- Commit and dedicate yourself to studying God's word, Today.
- Don't compromise your commitment to God. Apply His word.
- Commit and dedicate yourself to prayer time, Today.

- Talk to Him on things you need for Today.
- Commit and dedicate yourself to fellowship with Brothers/Sisters in Christ.
- Surround yourself with believers and supporters in Christ.
- Commit and dedicate yourself to the power of His Spirit.
- Let His Spirit reveal the wonderful Fruit in your life, Today.
- Commit and dedicate yourself to true worship.
- God wants your devoted commitment to Him, Today.
- Commit and dedicate yourself to 100% trust and obedience in Him, Today.
- God wants us to serve Him lovingly and freely, In doing this it will release control of our own commitments in life, and will give all control to Christ in our lives, which brings eternal life and true joy in your life, TODAY!

List commitments that keep you from Christ

What scriptures will you commit to?


## “ACCOUNTABILITY”

Accountability means to reckon with, or be responsible. It’s the settling of something with someone to make things right. It could be with another person *or yourself*. So, if we look at things made right it comes down to our behavior; to become justified in something, or made correct.

If we roll this up into a short term definition the word accountability is someone who is responsible and makes things right on something, or with someone else. It’s the settling of accounts - justified. Do you have an area in your life that you have not accounted for? Are there differences in your life with something or someone that needs to be settled - free and clear? Is it an area of your life that happened long ago, but it still haunts you to this very day? Remember what it says in II Corinthians 13:11, “*Live in harmony and peace, and the God of peace and love will be with you.*” Whatever it is, or whoever it is, you must make it right, Today!

It could be with a family member, an old boss, current neighbor-or even on old neighbor, a friend, co-worker, brother or sister in Christ or even a stranger. It could be a bad habit or addiction. Regardless, you must make it right with you, others involved, and with God. It can prevent you from dedicating yourself wholly to Him with the *love, joy, peace, kindness, goodness, gentleness and faithfulness* that He wants in your life, Today. You must be consistent with the ways of Christ in your life so you can dedicate your heart to Him with reverent faithfulness and obedience, Today.

God chose you as His own. He justified you by declaring you not guilty for your sins making you right with Him. He removed His punishment for sin in your life through the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ. He redeemed you by the price Jesus Christ paid on the Cross for your sins. He sanctified you by making you more and more like Jesus Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit. He glorified you by making you like Christ upon that day of glory. God, through all of His love, mercy and grace, has made things right and correct with you. *He has settled all accounts with us through His Son, Jesus Christ.* He

dedicated everything to His children by paying it all through His Precious Son - Jesus Christ. Now don't you owe Him that same level of dedication, Today? Are you accountable for everything that you do in life? Have you settled all of your accounts with Christ? Is your account free and clear, Today? Or do you have a lot of unsettled sinful waste in your account that needs to be reckoned with, Today? When you come to Him with a humble, faithful and dedicated heart, He will settle your account free and clear, Today, no matter how you are or what you've done. He is the only One who can clear your account! Have you made things right with Him, Today?

Don't let this area of your life prevent you from coming to the Lord with a dedicated and humble heart. Your heart must be right and pure in all things that you do for our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. You must have the right motives and attitudes of Christ. You must be accountable/responsible for your actions in life. If they are not of God, you will be held accountable. You need to repent for the ways of your wickedness and allow the Lord to take complete control of your account, Today!

If you have an area in your life where something is not right with another, no matter who or what it is, you are holding yourself in bondage, internally. It may not bother you Today, but Satan will re-surface this area back into your life when you least expect and it will haunt you sooner or later. Approach this person with the love, joy, peace, patience kindness, goodness and self-control that the Holy Spirit will provide if you come to Him Today. Let the ways of Christ's glorious light and love be seen in your ways, Today.

If you have not made things right with God in your own life, no matter what it is, then you need to come to Him Today. Surrender these areas of your life to Him, Today. Be accountable for your actions, your attitude, and your motives. If they are not Christ - Like then make it right. Romans chapter 14:12 tells us that each of us will have to give a personal account to God. So often our choices in life lead to the problems that distance us from God's righteousness. We want to elevate all things made right with

God to the wonders of His righteousness. Once we make things right with God, we can live free from guilt and sin. Isn't this the freedom you're longing for in life? Don't you want an account with the Lord that is free and clear?

Just as God made things right with us through His Son, Jesus Christ---He is our Righteousness. Jeremiah 23:6 tells us that the coming Messiah is the "Lord of Righteousness." He is the righteous branch! Are you a new branch of righteousness in Christ, Today?

So how do you become more accountable in Today's world? Don't follow the advice of the wicked as it tells us in Psalm 1:1. Follow God's commands according to His Word; choose wise and Godly friends to whom you can give account to yourself (Proverbs 27:6). When you do whatever seems right to you, but not according to God's will, you will tend to lean toward sin and the consequences could affect you and others. When you are looking for someone to help you in the area of accountability, let it be someone who is a Christ-Like adviser.

Proverbs 12:15 says that "*Fools think they need no advice, but the wise listen to others.*" Don't be a fool when someone is providing you with a clear direction based on God's word. Make things right in your life in all areas. Remember this promise from God in I John 2:3, "*How can you be sure you belong to Him? By obeying His commandments.*" Don't say you are a Christian or belong to God if you do not obey His commandments. Those who really obey God's Word do love Him. True Christian faith, obedience, and 100% dedication to Him results in loving behavior. When you dedicate more time to obeying Gods word you will see a true accountable person in Christ. Are you responsible with a Christ - Like behavior? Are you dedicating time to God's word? Be responsible in a Christ - Like way, and be honest as you grow in this area of your life, Today!

List areas where you are not accountable

for your actions

Scriptures that helped you to be more accountable?


## “PRIORITIES”

When you think of priorities you mainly think about things at work or your personal life; not your spiritual life. I wonder why? Something very important “to you” that takes precedence in how you arrange your order of business would be of top priority, right? It is not just important, but also imperative; it’s a point of matter. Why do you get so wrapped up with the priorities of your business or recreational life you clearly take your focus off of your spiritual life? What does God word tell you about priority? Mark 12:29-30 says, with Jesus replying, *“The most important commandment is this: Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is the One and only Lord. And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength.”* One of your highest priorities for Today is to love God and allow His love to be seen in your daily life. If God’s love is at the top of your list Today then how do you think this will impact your spiritual life? It will be seen in your Christ-Like ways and your spiritual closeness will grow more and more in Him, Today.

If God’s love is at the top of your priority list, it will not only provide a fruitful life, but also in your work and recreational life. God wants you to be productive and fruitful in all aspects of daily living. Joshua 24:15 tells us, *“If you are unwilling to serve the Lord, then choose Today whom you will serve, but as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord.”* And Luke 12:34 says, *“Wherever your treasure is, there your heart and thoughts will also be.”* If God is your top priority for Today then He will be your focus point in life. If your heart has Him first you will reveal His wonderful Fruit of the Spirit. *“Always know that God will give you all you need for Today, if you live for Him and make the Kingdom of God your primary concern.”* This wonderful scripture in Matthew 6:33 puts it in perspective; if God is your primary concern—top priority---He will give you all that you need. He will help you; He will give you strength; He will pick you up; He will lead and guide your paths; He will comfort you, and He will always love you. If there is anything more important on your list of priorities Today than God, then you

have lost complete focus on the One that is there to help you through it all. Don't get enwrapped in the world thinking that your earthly power, wealth, and possessions will get you ahead in life. These are not the primary concerns in life, but your closeness with Him! Isaiah 58:13 tells us "*Honor the Lord in everything you do, and don't follow your own desires.*" Honor God as your top priority and He will honor and bless you, Today.

Where does God rank on your priority list? Is He there temporarily? Is He there just when you need Him the most? Shouldn't He always be there? We are talking about your life with Him---forever. He made you His top priority when He sent His only Son to die on the cross for all of your sins. So, why isn't He at the top of your priority list? You're first on His list; doesn't He deserve to be first on yours?

What keeps you from making God first on your priority list? Are you simply too busy with the "hustles & bustles" of this earthly life. Are you a "classic" busybody"? Don't let the world suck you in to its way of thinking and doing. Place God first on your list and let Him control you in His way of thinking and doing. Don't get too busy in this fast-paced life that you don't listen. **STOP** and listen to what God is telling you. Seek Him first in all areas of your life; pray for His divine guidance and strength and apply His word to your life.

You must surrender it all to Him and He will show you how to properly prioritize your list. It will make you a productive Christian for His glory, Today. How do you place Him first? Go back to Matthew 6:33 and this is how you place Him first. Fill your thoughts with His desires, not yours. Your earthly priorities may not be what God wants in your life, Today. Don't let people, goals, possessions and other desires push God out of first place. He deserves to be first, for He has blessed you. You must choose to follow Him now, not tomorrow!

You must understand that it's OK to have wealth and nice things. However, when they take precedence over God and they establish a #1 position in your life then you have lost sight on the

importance of God in your life and that will lead to sin. You are falling into the danger zone of idolatry and complete disobedience. No matter how much you have, if you don't have an intimate and personal relationship with Jesus Christ **you have nothing**. If you are not striving and working towards improving your spiritual growth then you become stagnate in life.

This is all temporary and nothing goes with you into His Kingdom. You must place your heart in His will and He must be first on your priority list, for this will bring you great treasures in the Heavenly Realms.

What does your priority life look like Today? Is it more balanced towards this life or to God's will? What is really important to you Today? Note the chart below. Be honest with yourself as you continue to grow in Him. **Three in One at work in your life as you grow closer to Christ.**

GODLY PRIORITIES + CHRIST-LIKE GROWTH = BALANCED SPIRITUAL LIFE IN HIM!

<b><u>LIFE'S IMPORTANCE</u></b>	<b><u>GOD'S IMPORTANCE</u></b>
GOOD OVERALL HEALTH	A CHRIST-LIKE HEART & SOUL
GOOD EDUCATION	A CHRIST-LIKE MIND
SPORTS-RECREATIONAL ACTIVITY	CHRIST-LIKE STRENGTH
PERSONAL TIME	TRUE WORSHIP WITH HIM
HOBBIES	FELLOWSHIP WITH CHRISTIAN BELIEVERS
SATISFYING CAREER	APPLY GOD'S WORD TO YOUR LIFE-TODAY!
TIME WITH FRIENDS & FAMILY	PRAYER TIME WITH GOD
COMMUNITY SERVICE	FAITHFULLY HELPING OTHERS, FOR HIS GLORY
TRAVEL	GOD'S RIGHTEOUS PATH IN YOUR LIFE
SPOUSE	INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS CHRIST
A BALANCED LIFE FOR YOU	A BALANCED SPIRITUAL LIFE IN CHRIST!

Living with Godly priorities---Christ-Like growth---and a balanced spiritual life in Jesus Christ is

not going to be easy, for that is not the ways of the world. That is why it is important for you to have an “organized schedule of spiritual growth”. You must choose Him first in all that you do, Today.

Romans 13:14 tells us, *“Let the Lord Jesus Christ take control of you, and don’t think of ways to indulge your evil desires.”* Proverbs 12:3 says, *“Wickedness never brings stability, only the Godly have deep roots.”* Placing Him first in all that you say and do will give you stability and unbelievable spiritual balance. Establish deep roots in Him, Today. I Corinthians 9:26-27 puts it in perspective, *“I run straight to the goal with purpose in every step. I am not like a boxer who misses his punches. I discipline my body like an athlete, training to do what it should.”*

Your #1 goal in life Today should be God first! Christ-Like discipline is needed when making your priority list. Nothing else takes precedence over God; you must focus on that goal in life Today. Malachi 2:2 tells us, *“Listen to Me and take it to heart, Honor My Name, says the Lord Almighty, or I will bring a terrible curse against you. I will even curse the blessings you receive. Indeed, I have already cursed them, because you have not taken my warning seriously.”* If you don’t take God seriously as Him being at the top of your priority list, you could be at risk. What is important to God is your love for Him with all of your heart, soul, mind and strength. This means listening to what He is telling you in His word and then setting your heart, soul, mind and will on doing what He says. When you love God, His word becomes that shining light, which guides your activities and priorities for Today. Prioritize your schedule around Him---#1, Today!

List things on *your* priority list that prevent you from living for Christ---more

Note the scriptures that help you to prioritize


## “PLANNING”

What are you proceeding to do in your business or personal, but most importantly your spiritual life? Have you sketched out a plan of perfection in your business life---your personal life, BUT most importantly, your spiritual life? Do you have a strategic plan of action that is arranged or designed to carry your goals to another level?

What is your ultimate purpose for certain goals? Is it for monetary or positioning reasons? Is it to attain more possessions in life? Is it to enable you to have more time with your family or for yourself? Is it for social reasons? No matter what, there is a driving force behind your plans in life. You have taken the time to arrange and design it meticulously for a reason. Is it a good plan? Is it an evil plan of deceit---for your own personal advancement? There has to be a “method behind this madness”.

We pray that this method of madness is of God’s will, not of this world. We hope and pray that you are not plotting evil plans, but plans that are of Christ-Like ways. We’re going to look at ways to help you in planning success in your “real life”, which means you’re revealing the Fruit of His Spirit, which are; love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Are your plans built around these Christ-Like fundamentals, or your own personal desires?

James 4:13-16 tells us, *“Look here you people who say, Today or tomorrow we are going to a certain town and will stay there a year. We will do business there and make a profit. How do you know what will happen tomorrow? For your life is like the morning fog—it’s here a little while, then it’s gone. What you ought to say is, if the Lord wants us to, we will live and do this or that. Otherwise you will be boasting about your own plans, and all such boasting is evil.”* It is good to make plans, but God must be first in your planning process! The future is in His hands. What are your personal plans this year or for the next ten years? What if God intervenes and changes your plans? Ask God for guidance when making plans and seek His will in your planning process. He will always be there to guide you along His ways.

Is Godly planning important in your life Today? Don't you want to accomplish your goals in life, for His glory? Don't you want an effective life in Christ Today? Don't you want to continue your "organized for spiritual growth" in life? Don't you want to attain your goals in life? Are your plans based around God's will for your life? Are you seeking His approval, not the world? Do you have Godly motives when laying your plans for Today? Are you praying for His wisdom and knowledge as you plan in life? Is your purpose in planning for His glory, not yours? Make plans to be a Christ-Like steward of your plans. Be successful in your planning process with God first. Note the chart below:

**GOD'S MAPPING PLAN OF SUCCESS**

**SCRIPTURES TO APPLY**

DO YOU HAVE A GODLY VISION?	Matthew 5:8-"God blesses those whose hearts are pure, for they will see God."
EXEPECT TO ACCOMPLISH YOUR PLANS!	Psalm 60:12-"With God's help, you will do mighty things."
BE EFFECTIVE IN YOUR PLANS!	Isaiah 41:10-"Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Do not me dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you. I will help you. I will uphold you with my victorious right hand."
SEEK GOD'S APPROVAL; NOT THE WORLD!	Matthew 5:41-42-"Your approval or disapproval does not mean nothing to Me, because I know you don't have God's love within you."
ARE YOUR MOTIVES OF HIM?	Proverbs 14:22-"If you plot evil you will be lost; but if you plan good, you will be granted unfailing love and faithfulness."
ARE YOU PRAYING FOR HIS WISDOM?	I Peter 3:12-"The eyes of the Lord watch over those who do right, and His ears are open to their prayers."
DO YOU HAVE A CHRIST-LIKE PURPOSE?	Romans 12:2-"Everything comes from Him; everything exists by His power and is intended for His glory."
IS GOD'S WILL IN YOUR PLANS?	Psalm 138:8-"The Lord will work out His plans for my life and Psalm 32:8-"The Lord says, "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise and watch over you."
ARE YOUR PLANS SUCCESSFUL?	Proverbs 16:3-"Commit your work to the Lord, and then your plans will succeed."

If you follow this map in your planning process you can not go wrong in **organizing your spiritual growth** around God. Proverbs 13:16 tells us that "*Wise people think before they act.*" And Proverbs 14:8 says "*The wise look ahead to see what is coming.*" You must have a Godly vision. Expect to accomplish your plans in life. Seek His approval, first and foremost. Make sure your motives are of God and not the world. Pray for His wisdom. Proverbs 3:21-26 tells us, "*My child, don't lose sight of good planning and insight. Hang on to them, for they will fill you with life and bring you honor and respect. They keep you safe on your way and keep your feet from stumbling.*"

*You can lie down without fear and enjoy pleasant dreams. You need not be afraid of disaster or the destruction that comes upon the wicked, for the Lord is your security. He will keep your foot from being caught in a trap.*” His wisdom is imperative as you make your plans Today. Don’t rely upon yourself, for without His wisdom and guidance you will not succeed.

If you are not sure what plans to make, in accordance to God’s word, read Psalm 5:8, for it tells us, *“Lead me in the right path O Lord...tell me clearly what to do, and show me which way to turn.”* And James 1:5 says, *“If you need wisdom—if you want to know what God wants you to do, ask Him, and He will gladly tell you. He will not resent your asking.”* He will give you all that you need in making your plans; just ask Him. Always remember what God’s word tells us in Psalm 25:8-9, *“The Lord...leads the humble in what is right, teaching them His ways.”* And Proverbs 3:7 says *“Don’t be impressed with your own wisdom. Instead, fear the Lord and turn your back on evil. God will give you wisdom and guidance to those who are humble.”* You need His wisdom and laying a solid plan for Today.

You have a good insight on God’s mapping plans of success. Follow our key word steps and you will succeed in your plans Today:

- Trust Him with your plans. Let Him lead and guide you along His paths. Don’t allow yourself to make your own plans and don’t let others lead you astray from God’s plans.
- Obey His word when making plans. Let His words supply you with His wisdom and knowledge in making your plans successful, for His glory.
- Dedicate your all to Him when making your plans. Commit your plans to Him; know His approval by submitting yourself to the power of His Spirit. He will lead you Today!
- Accept His will and plan for your life. It may not be your plan, but it may be His

plan for His glory. Know it by staying in His word and praying for His guidance.\

- Yearn to know His plans and will for your life. Continue to build your spiritual growth foundation in Him and don't let the world take you away from the great plan!

*“You can make plans, but the Lord’s purpose will prevail.”* This is a very compelling passage found in Proverbs 19:21. You must understand that God needs to be first in your planning process. Just like priorities, He needs to be #1. Ephesians 1:5, 9 tells us, *“His unchanging plan has always been to adopt you into His own family by bringing you to Himself through Jesus Christ. And this gave Him great pleasure....God’s secret plan has now been revealed to you; it is a plan centered on Christ, designed long ago according to His good pleasure.”* It gives God great pleasure to give eternal to those who come to Him through Christ. Your ultimate plan Today should be to glorify the name of Jesus Christ in all that you say and do. He should be in the focus center of your plans Today. Without Him in your plans, you will fail in life. Make your plans around Him and watch the blessings in your life come to fruition, Today.

List personal plans that keep you from God

What scriptures do you plan to apply Today


## **“PREPARATION”**

What are you getting ready for Today? Have you made any provisions as you prepare in life? Is it something difficult, dangerous or harmful? Is it undesirable? As a business executive you may be preparing for a major presentation that would elevate your career or position on the job. As an athlete you may be preparing for a big game or big race that would take you to unbelievable heights of notoriety. As a labor worker you may be preparing for a huge contracting job that could bring more earnings. As a business owner you may be preparing to add on more jobs that will carry your objectives to new heights. As a spouse you may be preparing to spend more time with your family, for you’re looking at ways to improve your personal life at home. You may be preparing to work out and take better care of your health. You may be preparing to run for a local office in the community. Whatever you are preparing for in life Today, in most cases, it is to make something happen for the good. When you prepare for something and you know it “in and out” it brings you a level of self-gratification. It brings you a level of peace. It lifts your spirits and motivates your self-esteem. You have made a lot of business, personal or social preparations in life, but what have you done in preparing your spiritual life, Today?

Have you prepared yourself in case your future plans were rearranged by God? Have you prepared yourself for personal tragedies that could come your way? Have you prepared for the evil one’s attacks in your life? Are you ready for any and all barriers Satan will throw your way, Today? Ephesians 6:10-11 tells us, “Be strong with the Lord’s might power. Put on all of God’s armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies and tricks of the devil.” You can count on one thing, as you prepare to grow closer to Jesus Christ and Savior Jesus Christ, the evil one will oppose you and do his best to distract, de-focus and discourage you. He will do his best to shatter all of your preparations in life. He will try to break you down internally and make you feel like a failure, all alone and discouraged. You can not allow this to happen! You must prepare a life in Christ, first. You must enable yourself so the Fruit of

His Spirit are part of your life's preparation. See how His Fruit can be included in your preparations for Today.

- Know the abundance and sufficiency of Christ's love for you. Prepare to share His love for others to see in your life, Today.
- Be encouraged with the joy you have in Christ's salvation, for He's prepared a place for you, Today. There is no reason to be discouraged, but joyous!
- Be confident in your Christ-Like preparation, which will bring you peace, Today.
- Have Christ-Like patience and watch your preparations become productive in your life, Today.
- Prepare to share your blessings with others so you can exemplify His kindness.
- Attract others to your Christ-Like goodness. Prepare a life of in Christ's righteousness.
- Let others see your faithfulness in Christ, for then you will see your preparations come to fruition.
- Prepare to model yourself with Christ-Like gentleness, Today. Let Christ be true ways be seen in your life, Today.
- Prepare to focus and discipline your life around Christ's self-controlling ways in your life Today and He will give you strength and bless you.

You must know the weakest areas and how the evil one will attack. In order for you to strategize against the evil one you need to prepare yourself in the foundation you're building Today; that is Jesus Christ! Galatians chapter 5 talks about freedom in Christ. When you ground yourself in His freedom and live according to His plans, you will see all of your preparations come to fruition. Galatians 5:6 tells us,

*“We who live by the Spirit eagerly wait to receive everything promised to us who are right with God through faith.”* John 14:2-3 says, with Jesus speaking, *“There are many rooms in my Father’s home, and I am going to prepare a place for you. If this was not so, I would tell you plainly. When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with Me where I am.”* What is more important in life, your earthly preparations for worldly things, or your spiritual preparations for the day of glory He’s promised you? When you prepare in life Today, you must include the Fruit of His Spirit in your life. It will help you in knowing and preparing what He has in store for you Today.

There is no better way to prepare in life than to listen and learn on what God’s word is telling you, Today! Remember, it is your key source—it’s your guiding light for Today. Proverbs 2:1-9 says, *“My child listen to Me and treasure My instructions. Turn your ears to wisdom, and concentrate on understanding. Cry out for insight and understanding. Search for them as you would for lost money or hidden treasure. Then you will understand what it means to fear the Lord, and you will gain knowledge of God. For the Lord grants wisdom. From His mouth come knowledge and understanding. He grants a treasure of good sense to the Godly. He is their shield, protecting those who walk with integrity. He guards the paths of justice and protects those who are faithful to Him. Then you will understand what is right, just, and unfair, and you will know how to find the right course of action every time.”* If you are faithful to God as you prepare your purpose in life, for His glory, you will gain His wisdom and knowledge in knowing what is the **right preparation** in life, Matthew 7:24 tells us, *“Anyone who listens to My teaching and obeys Me is wise, like a person who builds a house on the solid rocks.”* WOW! This is the foundation you’re building Today!

Your preparation needs to be grounded in God’s word - nothing else. II Timothy 3:14-17 tells us, *“You must remain faithful to the things you have been taught. You know they are true, for you know you can trust those who taught you. You have been taught the Holy Scriptures from childhood, and they have*

given you the wisdom to receive the salvation that comes by trusting in Christ Jesus. All scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It straightens us out and teaches us to do what is right. **It is God’s way of preparing us in every way, fully equipped for every good thing God wants us to do.** WOW! Is this passage about God’s word profound or what? God’s word is trustworthy, for God was in control of its writing. You can count on it as you prepare in life Today.

As you prepare in life Today, where is Jesus Christ? Don’t let the sins of this world keep Him from your preparations in life. Matthew 3:2 tells us, *“Turn from your sins and turn to God, because the Kingdom of God is near.”* You need to prepare for the coming of Christ by turning away from your sin, turn to God in faith, and living in humility. A great promise from Jesus Christ is found in Matthew 25:34, *“Then the King will say to those on the right, “Come, you who are blessed by My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”* He has prepared a place for you - eternally. Does your preparations in life include Him, Today? Without Him you will not inherit His glorious Kingdom. Are you prepping your foundation in Him Today? Are you living according to His word, and are the Fruit of His Spirit seen in all that you say and do for His glory. Are you getting ready for the day of glory? Today could be the day! Are you prepared – fully?

List preparations you can make for God Today

Note the scriptures that helped you to prepare


## “PERSISTENCY”

How important is your course of action---Today? In spite of obstacles or barriers that may come your way, how important is it for you to continue in a state of completion. As you continue to grow in your spiritual closeness with Jesus Christ you need to understand that persistency is very important as you continue to build your foundation in Him. You have now prioritized your schedule around the Lord; you have planned to study and apply His word to your life, and you have prepared yourself for all things, especially listening and learning as you continue to grow. BUT you need to know that the evil one is always waiting to attack. He can throw obstacles your way when you least expect it. You must be persistent Today in:

- Loving one another despite what they have done to you
- Shining the joy of living, giving and sharing with others what you have in Christ
- Living a peaceful life versus a life of vengeance, anger and hostility
- Practicing patience when times are stressful
- Showing His kindness to others in need; no matter who they are
- Doing good; even when evil is all around you
- Exemplifying faithfulness in Christ in your life Today
- Living the model of Christ's gentleness during stormy trials
- Practicing Christ-Like self control when tempted in life Today.

God's word tells us in Acts 14:22, "*They encouraged them to continue in the faith, reminding them that they must enter into the Kingdom of God through many tribulations.*" Persistence is a necessary component in your spiritual growth process. Life Today will not be easy, but when you prioritize and put God first in your schedule, plan to study His word and apply it to your life, prepare yourself and listen and learn to the Holy Spirit's guidance, and persistently seek His will, and don't let anything stop you.

He will be there to comfort you, guide you, help you, give you strength and motivate you to finish the race for His glory. You've started the foundation and you've made it this far, so you must continue for His glory!

How can you develop Christ-Like persistency in life Today?

1. Be persistent in your daily prayers. Seek His will and strength in your life.
2. Be persistent in your desire to grow closer and closer to Him; stay the course!
3. Be persistent in your pursuit for God. If you want to pursue anything in life with persistency it must be for God. He is always there. Don't let the evil one sidetrack you.
4. Be persistent in exemplifying the light and love of Jesus in all that you say do, Today.
5. Be persistent in revealing His Fruits of the Spirit in your life, Today.

Look at the scriptures that will help you in developing persistency below:

- I Chronicles 16:11: *"Search for the Lord and for His strength, and keep on searching."* You can develop persistency by continuing in your prayer and seeking the Lord.
- Proverbs 4:27: *"Don't get sidetracked; keep your feet from following evil."*
- Galatians 6:9: *"Don't get tired of doing good. Don't get discouraged and give up, for we will reap of harvest of blessing at the appropriate time."* WOW!
- Philippians 3:13: *"No, dear brothers and sisters, I am still not all I should be, but I am focusing, all my energies on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead."*
- I Peter 1:13: *"So think clearly and exercise self-control. Look forward to the special blessings that will come to you at the return of Jesus Christ."*
- Ephesians 6:18: *"Pray at all times and on every occasion in the power of the Holy*

*Spirit. Stay alert and persistent in your prayers for all Christians everywhere.”*

- *Matthew 7:7: “Keep on asking, and you will be given what you ask for. Keep on looking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened. For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks finds. And the door is opened to everyone who knocks.” WOW!*
- *Job 17:9: “The righteous will move onward and forward and those with pure hearts will become stronger and stronger. Matthew 24:13 tells us, “Those who endure to the end will be saved!” WOW*

**What are some key words from these key scriptures that will help you Today?**

- Focus on Christ - ALWAYS!
- Utilize all of your energy for His glory!
- Stay alert; stay the course and don't let the evil one de-focus you from your foundation.
- Think clearly; don't let the evil one plant seeds of deception in your mind. Think with a Christ-Like mind.
- Exercise self-control; do and say the things that are pleasing to Him.
- Forget the past and look ahead; for the day of glory is coming!

What is ahead of you? That day of glory that He's promised you. Endure and persevere, for you have the strength of the Lord on your side. Remember, you can not accomplish this on your own, but in Christ you can do all things, Today!

No matter what trials and troubles come your way Today, you must be prepared. Is it part of your plan? Is Christ #1 on your priority list? These are all steps in your “organized schedule for spiritual growth” in your life. This is the foundation you are building for His glory in your life Today! You have

His Holy word; you have His Holy Spirit, You have Christ's strength on your side, so what more do you need in life Today? If you focus on Him and continue down His path of righteousness you will finish your foundation in Christ, Today!

Your Christian walk was never promised to be easy. If you continue to stay the course for Him, He will help you in life Today. Focus on your "organized schedule for spiritual growth". Note below:

- Your priority is to place Him first in your life and get the prize He has in store for you.
- Your plan is to study His word and apply it to your life.
- You must prepare and listen to the Holy Spirit for guidance.
- Endure, persevere and be persistent, for the evil one will attack.
- Don't procrastinate; don't let the past stop you from finishing. Let the labors of your work produce those glorious Fruits in your life, Today.
- Pray for His divine strength and power. Be diligent.
- Finishing your foundation and the crown He has in store for you Today!

Never get tired of building your foundation in Him. Do not get discouraged, for He's with you every block of the way. Don't get tired of doing good things for His glory. Let His wonderful Fruit be seen in all areas of your life. Be strong in Christ's grace, even when your faith is weak. Watch that foundation blossom in His splendor. If you continue this foundation for His glory, you will have a place of rest for eternity. What a wonderful feeling. These steps can you help you in being more persistent in life Today. Just focus on what lies ahead for you. WOW!

List areas in your life where you need to be  
more persistent for Christ's glory

List the scriptures that you will continually apply


**“COMPROMISE”**

What does the word compromise mean? It is meeting half-way; coming to terms by giving up part of a claim. What areas in your life have you compromised for yourself? How about for someone else? How about for Jesus Christ---your Lord, King & Savior? Maybe, instead of compromising to the ways of the world, you should submit yourself to His power---where there are no more worldly compromises. Are you willing to meet the Lord half-way? He’s already there at the half-way point waiting for you---He just wants you to compromise and come to terms with Him---Today.

<b><u>COMPROMISING FOR YOURSELF</u></b>	<b><u>SUBMISSIVE FOR HIS GLORY</u></b>
SELF AMBITIONS-BAD HABITS	FRUIT OF HIS SPIRIT IN YOUR LIFE
YOUR WILL FOR YOUR LIFE	GOD’S WILL IN YOUR LIFE
YOUR INTERPRETATIONN OF HIS WORD	THE TRUTH OF GOD’S WORD
ASSOCIATE WITH WRONG CROWD	ASSOCIATE WITH TRUE BELIEVERS
FOLLOW WAYS OF THE WORLD	FOLLOW TRUE WAYS OF CHRIST
ACCEPTING SIN IN YOUR LIFE	ACCEPTING CHRIST’S WAYS
UNFORGIVING WAYS	FORGIVING WAYS IN CHRIST
BLAME OTHERS FOR YOUR FAULTS	ACCOUNTABLE AS A CHRISTIAN
YOUR OWN SUCCESS IN THE WORLD	REAL SUCCESS IN JESUS CHRIST
NON-COMMITTAL TO CHRIST; YOU MEET HIM HALFWAY?	TRUE COMMITMENT TO CHRIST; FOLLOW ALL OF HIS WAYS, TODAY!

What are you willing to compromise for yourself ---is it the ways of this world, which lead to SIN?  
Or, do you want to submit yourself to the power of the Lord where you will be uncompromising to those sinful ways? Are you willing to accept Christ-Like ways in your life, Today?

When you compromise to the ways of this world it will:

- Destroy your witness for God.
- Lead you to **not be** fully committed to God's ways.
- Lead to an alliance for the world, not God.
- Lead you to unbelievable pressures and stress in life.
- Lead you to adapt to the sinful desires this world offers; not the ways of Christ.
- Lead you to a crossroad of confusion. When you compromise to the ways of this world your expectations supersede over reality in life.
- Lead you down the road of destruction

Compromising to ways that are opposite of Jesus Christ will bring about total destruction in your life. Are you ashamed of your faith and love in Jesus Christ? Do you want others to know how you really feel about Christ and what He means to you? Are you willing to compromise your reputation as a “macho type person” if someone asked you about your “real” relationship with Jesus? What would you do if your reputation were on the line? Are you going to compromise for yourself, or be uncompromising for Christ's glory? How much does He really mean to you? Are you ashamed of Him? Read Mark 15:15, where it tells the story about Pilate handing Jesus over to be crucified. What did Pilate do? He compromised his own safety by giving the decision over to the people. He knew Jesus was innocent, but he did not want to make a decision that would destroy his relationship and integrity with the Roman people. He compromised his own well-being by making a safe decision; giving it to the people. He gave in to political pressure for his own sake; his own well-being; his own safety. When you fall into the area of compromising to the ways of the world because of the group of people you are associated with, then you are not following the ways of God's word and His ways in your life. You must be true to Him, Today!

You must live by His Fruit of the Spirit. You must live according to His will in your life, not your will or the ways of the world. You must live by the Truth, which is God's word. You must be forgiving unto others - don't allow hatred, anger and pride to be the compromising factor in your life. Be accountable for your actions, do not blame others. Don't compromise lie over truth. Don't compromise others well-being for your sake of success in the world. Real success in life is exemplifying Christ's light, love and glory---Today. You can not meet Jesus Christ half-way; you must commit to him 100%. Accept His ways in your life completely and you will not compromise to the ways of the world. It's a level of acceptance and choice in your life for His glory, Today.

When you compromise to the ways of the world you can expect these things to happen in your life; sooner or later. But when you don't compromise to the ways of the world it will lead to Christ-Like ways.

**THE WORLD**

**CHRIST-LIKE WAYS**

HATRED AND ANGER TOWARDS OTHERS	GOD'S <u>LOVE</u> -LOVE ONE ANOTHER
ABSENCE FROM CHRIST	GOD'S <u>JOY</u> -HIS PRESENCE IN YOU
RESLTLESSNESS	GOD'S <u>PEACE</u> -INNER PEACE & STRENGTH
IMPATIENCE-YOUR OWN DECISION	GOD'S <u>PATIENCE</u> -ACCEPTING HIS WILL
SENSITIVE TO THE WORLD	GOD'S <u>KINDNESS</u> -HELPING OTHERS
YOUR OWN MOTIVES/PLEASURES	GOD'S <u>GOODNESS</u> -BE GOOD TO ALL
CROSSROAD IN LIFE	GOD'S <u>FAITHFULNESS</u> -TRUST HIS PATH
YOUR OWN ACCOMPLISHMENTS	GOD'S <u>GENTLENESS</u> -BE A CHRIST-LIKE MODEL
SELF-AMBITIONS	GOD'S <u>SELF-CONTROL</u> -FLEE FROM YOUR SINS
<b><u>EXPECTATIONS OF YOURSELF</u></b>	<b><u>REALITY IN CHRIST</u></b>

Don't let compromising to the ways of the world lead you to expectations in life that are not real in God's eyes. When the expectations of this world is your benchmark in life you will compromise anything for your own self-gratification. If you continue to compromise to ways of the world---eventually you will feel like a failure AND God does not want you to fail in life. He wants you to experience the blessings He has in store for you. You must accept and follow all of His ways - 100%. There is no in-between or half-way; you are with Him all the way!

The only time compromising is appropriate in life is when you are giving up something for the sake of someone else's Christian walk. Philippians 2:2 says "*Make Me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other; loving one another, and working together with one heart and one purpose.*" Compromising for the sake of agreeing to others and not just you is pleasing to God. When you live by the Fruit of His Spirit you will be more concerned about *everyone* more so than you.

Romans 6:12 where it tells us, "*Do not let sin control the way you live; do not give in to its lustful desires.*" This clearly tells us that it is inappropriate to compromise any sin of any kind. And III John 1:11 says, "*Don't let any bad example influence you. Follow only what is good.*" When you are trying to please others and follow bad examples then this is wrong. Your goal is to please Christ first.

Here's a great passage for you in knowing that real success in Christ does not compromise integrity, which is found in Proverbs 12:3, and it says, "*Wickedness never brings stability, only the Godly have deep roots.*" When you have deep roots in Christ, and His Fruit are growing to fruition in your life, you have real success in Christ. It only comes to those who do what is right according to God's word. If you surround yourself with people who are consumed with the ways of the world such as: drinking, drug abuse, cheating, lying-deceiving, sexual immorality, pride, greed, hatred, envy, success-wealth, backstabbing, gossip, quarreling-hostile, and all types of sin in their lives, DO NOT compromise your real success in Christ for these ways, which are tricks and deceitful ways of Satan. Know what's God's

word says and live according to His ways in your life; not this world.

Remember this promise from God in I Chronicles 22:13, *“If you carefully obey the laws and regulations that the Lord gave to Israel through Moses, you will be successful. Be strong and courageous; do not be afraid or lose heart!”* If you trust, obey, dedicate and accept Christ’s ways in your life Today you will be transformed and conformed to His ways. You will not compromise to the ways of the world, for you now want to please Jesus Christ in all things that you do for His glory, Today.

List areas where you’re weak to the world

List scriptures that help you to overcome


## **“FORGIVING”**

Someone who acts in forgiveness has a forgiving attitude, mildness and/or merciful. It basically means forgetting the wrong committed against you. Is this hard in life, Today? Do you think forgiveness of someone requires it to be forgotten? In order to forgive and forget, what is the benchmark in life for us to follow?

That’s right, Jesus Christ. Hebrews 10:17 tells us that “*The Lord will never again **remember your sins!**” This is powerful and the exemplification on how you should treat forgiveness **and** forgetting. **Christ forgives and forgets completely**, so that is the measuring stick for us as Christians Today!*

As true believers, you can be confident that the sins you confess and renounce are forgiven and forgotten. This is how you should treat others in the area of forgiveness. Forgiveness is two-fold in life:

- 1) Forgiving others for what they’ve done to you: (Matthew 6:14-15 and Romans 12:19-21)
- 2) Asking for forgiveness of your sins in Jesus name: (Ezra 10:11, Matthew 26:28, Acts 10:43).

Don’t let your pride, hatred and anger prevent you from living in God’s wonderful Fruit of the Spirit. These sinful attributes will lead you to have a callous heart towards others who have wronged you in life. Remember what Jesus says in Matthew 6:14-15, “*if you forgive those who sin against you then your Father will forgive you. **But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.**”*

Don’t let stubbornness deprive you of Gods’ glorious ways. Don’t think you are so self-righteous and haven’t sinned, because **no one is perfect - only Jesus Christ is**.

I John 1:8-9 tells us, “*if you say you have no sin, you are only fooling yourself and refusing to accept the Truth. But if you confess your sins to Him, He is faithful and just to forgive you and to cleanse you from every wrong.*”

WOW! You will receive God’s unconditional forgiveness when you confess your sins to Him. Stop

doing what is wrong in your life and turn to Him with a humble heart, Today!

There are many great acts of forgiveness in God's word, but one of the greatest depictions, other than our forgiveness of sin through Jesus Christ, is the story on how Joseph forgave his brothers after they sold him into slavery. Read the story of Joseph and his brothers beginning In Genesis chapter 37. What a wonderful story of forgiveness.

So what should your act of forgiveness be in life, Today? Note below the two different types:

**Forgiving others:**

- Understand God's forgiveness and you will be able to forgive in *love*, as well
- Brings freedom and *peace*
- Takes a Christ-Like attitude with *patience, kindness, goodness and gentleness*
- Will change your bitterness into *joy*
- Is important as a child of God with *self-control*
- Can't occur unless you forget their wrongdoings
- Is the only spiritual solution for revenge
- Requires Trust, Obedience, Dedication and Acceptance
- Must be first before judging
- Restores your relationship with others, and is pleasing to Christ
- **Brings victory in your life, Today**

**Asking for forgiveness of your sins:**

- God loves you as His child and He wants you to trust in His love, mercy & grace
- Frees you from the bondage of sins in your life, when you're in Christ
- Requires a humble, willing and changed heart
- Will bring you the Fruit of His Spirit; *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness,*

*faithfulness, gentleness and self-control*

- Establishes your place of rest as a child of God
- You're forgiven for all of your sins when you confess them to Jesus Christ
- Is provided through the blood Jesus shed on the cross for you
- Requires Trust, Obedience, Dedication and Acceptance
- Admit your need for forgiveness; it involves your attitude & action
- Restores and builds your relationship with Jesus Christ
- **Establishes your victory in Jesus Christ, Today!**

If Jesus Christ is first in your life you will desire to please him in all that you say and do for His glory, Today. You will forgive others with a loving and gentle heart, and you will ask for forgiveness of your wrongdoings with a faithful heart.

It is important that you confess your sin to God. Know them and take them to the Lord, for He will give you rest. If you want God to forgive you then you must forgive others and exemplify Jesus Christ's glorious light and love in your attitude and actions.

Remember this promise from God in Isaiah 43:25, "*I, yes I alone, am the One who blots out your sins for My own sake and will never think of them again.*" God forgives your sins, He totally forgets them. You never have to fear that God will remind you of them later, because He forgives you. You need to forgive others as He forgave you.

In the chart below list areas where you have not forgiven others in life and on the other side list areas where you have forgiven others no matter what they've done. Which list is longer? Are you really acting in Christ-Like forgiveness?

**Areas where you “have not” forgiven others**

**Areas where you have forgiven others**


**WHICH LIST IS LONGER?**

**USE GOD’S WORD TO ADD TO YOUR FORGIVING OTHERS LIST!**

**“SATISFIED”**

Are you pleased with your life? Is it fulfilling---sufficiently---there’s nothing else you need? Are you full of peace and joy? Does your satisfied life exemplify Christ-like loving ways? Do others see a person who is filled with the Fruit of the Spirit? Is your area of satisfaction from earthly achievements, or your achievements in Jesus Christ? Which cup do you want to fill the most - your earthly cup or your spiritual cup?

<b><u>FILLING YOUR EARTHLY CUP</u></b>	<b><u>FILLING YOUR SPIRITUAL CUP</u></b>
NEW RELATIONSHIPS	ANEW IN CHRIST’S <u>LOVE</u>
WEALTH-POSSESSIONS	LIVING WITH <u>JOY</u> OVER HEAVENLY RICHES
NEW BOSS	IN CHRIST’S <u>PEACE</u> THROUGH IT ALL
MAKING DECISIONS FOR YOURSELF	WAITING FOR GOD’S GUIDING <u>PATIENCE</u>
DOING GOOD DEEDS FOR THE WORLD	LIVING WITH CHRIST-LIKE <u>KINDNESS</u>
REVENGE AGAINST SOMEONE WHO WRONGED YOU	EXEMPLIFY GOD’S <u>GOODNESS</u>
BELIEVING IN YOUR OWN SUCCESS	TRUSTING GOD’S <u>FAITHFULNESS</u>
BUILDING A NAME FOR YOUR OWN GOOD	A TRUE MODEL OF CHRIST WITH <u>GENTLENESS</u>
HANGING OUT WITH FRIENDS FOR A GOOD TIME	LIVING IN CHRIST’S <u>SELF-CONTROL</u>
EXPECTING GREAT THINGS TO HAPPEN IN THIS LIFE	<b><u>LIVING IN THE REALITY OF GOD’S WAYS</u></b>

Let’s put you to the test. In the grid below, list earthly things that satisfy your life and then list the spiritual things that satisfy your life. What is filling your cup in life, Today?

**YOUR “REAL” SCORECARD**

<b>FILLING YOUR EARTHLY CUP</b>	<b>FILLING YOUR SPIRITUAL CUP</b>

How did you score? If your earthly cup has more items listed, then you need to focus on satisfying your spiritual cup in life

It is OK to be satisfied with new relationships, wealth-possessions, a new boss, making decisions, doing good deeds, building a name for yourself, hanging out with friends or expecting great things in this life? You have to ask yourself this question, “are these satisfactions taking first place in your heart? You must know that you need to be grounded with Christ---FIRST.

The things of this world may satisfy your cup temporarily, but it will not last an eternity. How can you find contentment or satisfaction regardless of life’s circumstances? II Corinthians 12:10 tells us, *“since I know it is all for Christ’s good, I am quite content with my weaknesses, and with insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, I am strong!”*

You must always be mindful that this life will not bring satisfactory conditions. You will go through trials and tribulations, so don’t rely on certain areas to bring you satisfaction or contentment because you will become unhappy, especially when things don’t go your way. If you accept Jesus in your life and rely upon His divine strength and power you will have all the satisfaction and commitment

needed in this life, for you are secure because He will never fail you. He will satisfy all of your needs, Today! Here's a great passage for you, Psalm 90:14, "*Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love, so we may sing for joy to the end of our lives.*" WOW! God is your source of every good thing and He can satisfy all of your needs and give you contentment. His way is your way in life. He is satisfied with you as His child, are you satisfied with Him in all that He has done for you in life, Today?

Remember, you can not satisfy your needs on the things of the world. I Timothy 6:17 tells us, "*Those who are rich in this world do not be proud and not to trust in their money, which will soon be gone. But their trust should be in the living God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment.*" Ecclesiastes 5:10 says, "*those who love money will never have enough. How absurd to think that wealth brings happiness.*" These types of possessions only make you think "if you only had more." They will never satisfy your needs. Hebrews 13:5 tells us "*to stay away from the love of money; be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, I will never fail you. I will never forsake you.*" Things of this world can not bring you satisfaction and contentment. It's the presence of God in your life. Have you accepted all of His ways in your life, Today? Are you striving for His perfection? This will quench your thirst and satisfy your longing for Today and Eternity. Psalm 107:9 – "He satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things." If you don't have an intimate relationship with God's Son, Jesus Christ, you will never be satisfied with the things of this world. If you accept Him as Lord of your life and follow His ways, you will be satisfied with the living water and the bread of Heaven, which is Jesus Christ. Remember, John 14:6 tells us that "*Jesus is the Way, Truth and Life and no one comes to the Father except through Him.*" He's everything you need in life for Today!

A great promise from God is in II Peter 1:3, "*As you know Jesus better, His divine power gives you everything you need for living a Godly life. He has called you to receive His own glory and goodness.*" You will become satisfied and content when you realize God is sufficient for all of your needs in life.

Colossians is a great letter to read in knowing that everything you need is in Jesus Christ, for He is supreme and sufficient!

When you think that materialistic possessions can satisfy your basic needs in life then what are you telling God? He is not good enough to satisfy your needs in this life? Why haven't you accepted the blessings that He's provided in your life, Today? When are you going to come to that level of acceptance that He's your main source? He's your Provider. He's all you need, Today. If you want to fill your spiritual cup in life then read John 6:35. Jesus clearly tells us, *"I am the bread of life. No one who comes to me will ever be hungry again. Those who believe in me will never thirst. But you haven't believed in me even though you have seen me."* You can only satisfy your hunger and thirst by having a true relationship with Jesus Christ. He must be in your life Today in order to sustain your spiritual cup.

When you are focused and pressing toward the goal of believing and knowing all that you have in Christ, read Philippians 3:8, for it says, *"Everything else is worthless when compared with the priceless gain of knowing Jesus Christ Jesus Christ. **I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I may Christ.**"* WOW! You should be satisfied with all that you have in Jesus Christ! Are you Today? If you want to satisfy God Today, then accept and believe in the One that He sent for you--John 6:28-29.

List things in your life that satisfy you,

But keep you from that sufficient life

What scriptures helped you to fill your cup?


## “HONOR”

What do you honor or praise in life, Today? What do you respect with high regard in your life? What do you really appreciate in life? What do you put above all others in your life, Today? Is this honor or level of praise a person or thing? Why do you revere it so much? How did this level of honor take root in your life? Has it helped you emotionally, morally, physically, socially or spiritually? Something has led you to this reverence of honor in your life. Is it something that you distinctly recognize with dignity? Is it someone or something with a good name and reputation, in your eyes? You credit this person or thing with high praise for its exceptional rank or place in your life. What are some people or things you honor in your life? Are they important to God? Is God first as you honor these people or things? Note the difference.

EARTHLY HONORABLE’S	GODLY HONORABLE’S
SPORTS	PARENTS
ATHLETES-CELEBRITIES	SPOUSE
SELF-ACCOMPLISHMENTS	CHILDREN
SELF-ACCOLADES	NEIGHBORS-FRIENDS
FALSE IDOLS-TEACHERS	TRUE TEACHERS OF THE WORD
POSSESSIONS	BODY OF CHRIST
YOURSELF	GOD

What’s the difference between the two? The earthly honorable can easily lead to idolatry while the Godly honorable is based on His word. You have to be careful in what you honor first in your life. However, you don’t want to let honoring other people and things take precedence over your honor to God. He should be first on your list of honor, Today!

How can you honor God more?

- Praise Him for your parents.
- Praise Him for the spouse He's brought into your life.
- Praise Him for your children.
- Praise Him for your job and accomplishments.
- Praise Him for your well-being.
- Praise Him for your neighbors, friends and co-workers.
- Praise Him for the country you live in, and its leaders.
- Praise Him for your church and body of Christ.
- Praise Him for the good times and the bad times, for they strengthen you in building your own Christ-Like reputation for His glory, honor and praise.

He needs to be first on your honor list. Is He? Psalm 29:1-2 reveals God's great power in nature.

You can trust God to give you both peace and strength through all of your storms in life. That alone is deserving of your honor to Him. God's word tells us "*Give honor to the Lord, you angels; give honor to the Lord for His glory and strength. Give honor to the Lord for the glory of His name. Worship the Lord in the splendor of His Holiness.*"

The quality of honor is someone having a good name. Do you know of anyone who has a better name than Jesus Christ? What is the state of highest honor? It's glorification. What does the end of Psalm 29:2 tell you? "*Give honor to the Lord for the glory of His name!*" Isn't He the Most High? Isn't He the Righteous One? Isn't He the Only One who was pure in His reputation upon this earth? He was renown and of the highest standing. If this defines Jesus Christ, then doesn't He deserve your honor above all other things? Is He #1 on your list of honors in life, Today?

Who has provided your way to eternity? Who has provided a means for forgiveness of your sins?

Who has blessed you with everything you see around you Today? Who will accept you for who you are; no matter what you've done? Who will provide you with the love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control that surpasses all of your understanding? Who has given you a guide to follow in living an honorable for His glory, Today? Who is there for you every step of the way Today? Good or bad; He's there. It's God! He is the source for all of these things. He is willing to commend you with all of the accolades you could ever imagine. He is willing to honor you with your place in Glory. He is willing to give you the most precious prize of all---Eternal Life through Jesus Christ. All you have to do is accept Him in your life and follow Him for the rest of your days. WOW! God has done all of this for you. He's blessed you immensely. Know it, believe it, live it and share it with others for His glory. Let your heart express your honor, glory and praise to Him, for He's your worthy King---FOREVER!

Don't be a hypocrite as the religious leaders were during the days of Jesus. Matthew 15: 8-9 says, *"These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far away. Their worship was absurd."* Don't claim to honor God when your heart is not right with Him. Your actions and attitudes will signify your true honor. Place God first in your heart and you will honor Him above all other things. Have you every noticed how a renown earthly person is recognized? "Ladies and Gentlemen, it is my distinct privilege and honor to give you?????" Wouldn't you like to be in a stadium of millions of non-believers who were there to see someone of high ranking, high standard, highest reputation and Highest Name of all—Jesus Christ. They don't know it, for you're the only believer there. Jesus has given you the opportunity to present Him as the Precious One for others to receive His prize. You get up on the stage and you announce, "Ladies and Gentlemen, it is my high honor and privilege to give you the One that can save you from all of your sinful ways and provide you with an unbelievable level of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control that is beyond your comprehension. He is

here to show you the Way to His glory. You can accept Him Today with no price. He’s paid the price for you---**it’s free!** I want to give you the Holy One and Most High---Jesus Christ!” Millions go silent, but when they see Him in His glory it is their choice to accept or reject Him, Today. Wouldn’t you love to have that honor? How about this honor; Jesus is presenting you with honors to God His Father into the place of glory; a place He has prepared for you. WOW! This is your highest honor in life, period! If He provides you with this level of honor, what level of honor do you owe Him? When you honor Him it’s for His glory. Read these glorious scriptures below:

- You’re crowned with His glory and honor; Psalm 8:5
- Jesus is the King of glory; Psalm 24:8
- Jesus lives for the glory of God for your salvation; Romans 6:10
- Glory to God for He will bring you into His glorious presence; Jude 1:24
- Your future glory with Him; Romans 8:18

When you honor God first and foremost in your life, you will be honored in His place of glory. He is the Most High Honorable God who deserve your, glory, honor and praise for all things in life. Accept Christ ways in your life and follow Him in honor, Today.

List all things you honor in life that do not include God.

What scriptures will you take to heart and apply?


## “REALITY”

What is real in your life Today? What is the “matter of fact” or “absolute”? What is actually taking place in your life that is far beyond your expectations? This is the state of reality! What you may have expected in life did not come true, right?

Are you happy with reality, Today? Were there choices along the way that may have led you to this point? You can not go back and change anything. But what we do know, for a “matter of fact” is what you do Today can establish a path of reality for days, months and years to come. There are no promises in this life because it is not the “real-deal”!

The real-deal is your choice for Christ---your future. Deuteronomy chapter 8 portrays a call for us to remember, trust, and obey God. If you think you have enough of the real life, according to the world, then you will continue to live with an emptiness and dissatisfied taste. “Real life” comes from a total commitment to God, the One who created life itself. It requires discipline, sacrifice and hard work. It requires you to trust, obey, dedicate and accept His ways. Until you come to this point of realization you will continue to be disappointed, discouraged, unhappy, depressed, lonely, and feel as if you failed in life. Live in Christ and you can prepare yourself in dealing with reality. Have hope in Him, for He determines your future. This is THE reality in life, Today!

So, if hope is real, where does it come from? Psalm 39:7 tells us “*That your only hope is in Him.*” If you are in a hopeless situation Today and the reality of life has overwhelmed you, then read God’s word in Psalm 18:4-4, for it says “*The ropes of death surrounded me; the floods of destruction swept over me; death itself stared me in the face. But in my distress I cried out to the Lord; yes, I prayed to my God for help. He heard me from His sanctuary and my cry reached His ears.*” Hope is trusting God to act in His good timing. Hope also means that you realize your eternal perspective may sometimes be interrupted by the evil one here on earth, but never God’s plans in Heaven. What a better state of reality

than a promise from God in I Peter 1:21: “*Because God raised Christ from the dead and gave Him great glory, your faith and hope can be placed confidently in God.*” If you want to put real life in perspective then focus on this promise from God. That is more real than anything else.

Where is your state of reality Today; the world or in God-earthly or spiritual? Note the chart below:

<b><u>EARTHLY REALITIES</u></b>	<b><u>SPIRITUAL REALITIES</u></b>
HATRED FOR OTHERS	LOVING WAYS OF CHRIST
DISAPPOINTMENT-DISOURAGEMENT-UNHAPPINESS	LIVING IN THE JOY OF CHRIST
LONELINESS-FAILURE-HOSTILE-ANGER	LIVING A LIFE OF HIS PEACE
COMPLAINING-IMPATIENT	SHOWING HIS PATIENT WAYS
UNFORGIVING-INGENEROUS-UNCOMPASSIONATE	EXEMPLIFYING CHRIST’S KINDNESS
UNETHICAL-IMMORAL-EVIL BEHAVIORS	PORTRAYING CHRIST-LIKE GOODNESS
TRUST IN “SELF”	TRUST IN GOD’S FAITHFULNESS
UNGODLY ROLE MODEL	LIVING IN CHRIST-LIKE GENTLENESS
GREED-PRIDE-ENVY-LUST-SELF AMBITIONS	LIVING IN GOD’S SELF-CONTROL
<b>APART FROM GOD’S “REAL LIFE”</b>	<b>FAMILY OF GOD-ETERNAL LIFE</b>

I Corinthians 13:12 says “*Now you see things imperfectly as a poor mirror, but then you will see everything with perfect clarity.*”

If you are looking for the state of reality, it is your hope in Jesus Christ. You don’t have all the answers in life-Today, but one day you will have the “real life” of eternity with Him-the Family of God. Don’t live with what this earthly life offers, for the things that seem real are imperfect, but when you have the “real life” in Christ you will see everything.

Unfortunately, there are these realities in life; broken families, loss of a family member or friend, divorce, impure thoughts-actions-addictions, sexual immorality, false teachings, false idols, selfishness and sinful desires (Galatians chapter 5)---all types of evil activity. The reality in this earthly life Today is

that Satan is attacking you from every angle that he can to destroy you and your family. BUT, you must know that your hope in Jesus Christ for the “real life” supersedes all of these negative realities. He has power over the evil one; and that is the real-deal!

You can not change reality in life Today, but you need to know that the absolute and infinite future that God offers will give you a peace and joy in life that surpasses all of our understanding. You will have the freedom in Christ that will help you to cope with the earthly realities of life. As you live your life Today, know that your choices are real, so have these positive and Christ-Like attributes below when making real decisions.

Be responsible with a Christ-Like attitude; considerate, good, loving, patient, kind, fair, honest and respectful. Have a Christ-Like character in making real decisions Today. Your character is developed through the real experiences and tests you go through life and a commitment to knowing God’s word. Knowing His word will develop wisdom and knowledge that will help you to endure and persevere and be ready for anything.

Always know this reality in life; Jesus is the Truth, Way and Life and no one comes to the Father except through Him! (John 14:6.).

- He is the Truth; the reality of all God’s promises.
- He is the Way to God our Father.
- He’s the Life; He’s joined His divine life to you, Today and eternally! WOW!

List realities in life that keep you from

God's fruitfulness?

Scriptures that will help you to live the "real life"


## “SACRIFICE”

Sacrifice is giving up something for the sake of something else. It is the act of giving up. What have you sacrificed or given up lately for your family, a friend, neighbor, co-worker, yourself or God? What was the driving force behind your willingness to give it up? Was it for your health? Was it a social sacrifice? Did you sacrifice something for the sake of someone else’s emotions; did you give something up to make someone else feel better? What does true sacrifice mean to you? Actually, what does “self-sacrifice” mean to you? It is the act of deliberately following a course of action that has a high risk or certainty of suffering, in order to achieve a perceived benefit. It could be in warfare, social relationships, and deeply held causes or for some type of religious belief. If you were told Today that you had one year to live and all of the things around you, which have given you *joy and peace*, had to be given up what would you do? Could you sacrifice the joyous things of your life that have brought you this *peace, love* and comfort on this earth?

Sometimes we take time for granted and we simply fail to realize the ultimate self-sacrifice of all, which was the price Jesus Christ paid on the cross for our sins. If you reflect on what He gave up for you and me what does it tell you? What He did was the grand act of giving everything up for His children who come to Him with a faithful, obedient and dedicated heart. We fail to think about the things we should give up, which prevent us from dedicating our lives completely to Him Today. Romans 3:25 tells us *“God sent Jesus to take the punishment of our sins and to satisfy God’s anger against us. We are made right with God when we believe that Jesus shed His blood, sacrificing his life for us.”* Romans 8:3 says *“God destroyed sin’s control over us by giving His Son as a sacrifice for our sins.”* Our sins led to the most precious and ultimate sacrifice you can ever imagine. It was for you! Are you willing to sacrifice for Jesus Christ, Today?

So what have you given up Today for yourself or someone else? Does it make you feel good? Are

you committed for the long run? Just how long do you think this sacrifice will last? Most sacrifices are made in all areas of a person's life, except spiritually---a living and holy sacrifice.

The one chapter that speaks about being a living sacrifice for God is in Romans chapter 12. I would challenge you to read this chapter and be a true living and dedicated sacrifice for your God and King. When you truly sacrifice your all to the Lord you will live a fruitful life. Sacrifice it all for Him Today and let the Fruit of His Spirit be seen in your life. God sacrificed His son for you so you could have eternal life through Him. Are you willing to give it all up and offer yourself wholly to Him Today?

Are you willing to sacrifice something for looking or feeling good? There is nothing wrong with feeling good about yourself, but if it takes precedence over your spiritual well-being you need to ask yourself, "what is the purpose of this sacrifice". Is it for you or for Jesus Christ?

Could you give up time on the weekends, such as; watching a football game with your buddies and spend it in true fellowship with your family, or brothers or sisters in Christ? Can you sacrifice time on the weekend to help God's children in need? Can you sacrifice your golf game this weekend to mentor brothers in the local prison? Can you give up your time shopping with friends to witness to neighbors whom you know are lost?

Where are your priorities in life Today? What are you willing to sacrifice for His glory? It's not going to be easy. You either choose to continue to live with the pleasures of the world or sacrifice a little for the Lord. He's not asking you to give up everything, but He wants you to put Him first in all things you do Today. Don't compromise your own self-gratification on earthly areas of your life over the satisfaction of pleasing the Lord with your choice of sacrifices for His glory Today!

List areas that are keeping you from sacrificing

your all unto the Lord?

Sacrifice time to read Gods word in this area


## “PRODUCTIVE”

NOW your input is submissive and strong, and your output is bearing the wonderful Fruit of the Spirit. The love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control are on the climb for His glory. How did you do it? Through God’s almighty & unbelievable strength, and your determination. Look at your path of success in Christ below:

- You are achieving the successful work that God has been looking for. Remember what Proverbs 16:3 tells us, “*Commit your work to the Lord and your plans will succeed.*” And Psalm 84:11 says, “*The Lord God is your light and protector. He gives you grace and glory. No good thing will the Lord withhold from those who do what is right.*” You have stayed the course of His righteousness and you have been blessed. WOW!
  - You have built and conducted your life with Him in control, which is very pleasing to Him. Ephesians 1:5, 9 tells us, “*His unchanging plan has always been to adopt you into His own family by bringing you to Himself through Jesus Christ. And this gives His great pleasure. God’s secret plan has been revealed to you; it is a plan centered on Christ, designed long ago according to His good pleasure.*” He wants you in the Kingdom of God and now you have built your foundation in Jesus Christ, which pleases Him Today!
  - You have accomplished your goal in building your foundation in Christ, by simply obeying Him along the way. WAY TO GO! I know it was hard, but you endured and persevered. Romans 1:17 says, “*This Good News tells us how God makes you right in His sight. This is accomplished from start to finish.*” As the scriptures say, “*It is through faith that a righteous person has life.*” Yes the “real life”! You gave God your heart and you were faithful, and He accomplished His foundation in you, because you are in Him!
  - Even when opposition came your way and barriers tried to stop your building, you

continued in faith and strength in Him, because you knew it was God's will for you to finish, for His glory. I Peter 4:19 tells us, *"If you are suffering, according to God's will, keep on doing what is right, and trust yourself to the God who made you, for He will never fail you."* Philippians 1:6 says, *"God, who began the good work within you, will continue His work until it is finally finished on that day when Jesus Christ comes back again."* Remember what Psalm 138:8 says, *"The Lord will work out His plans for your life."* And Jeremiah 29:11 says it so clearly, *"I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord. They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope."* Where is your future? With Christ in His Kingdom. Who is your hope? Jesus Christ! I Peter 1:21 tells us, *"Because God raised Christ from the dead and gave Him great glory, your faith and hope can be placed confidently in God."*

- You have grown in His wisdom and attained the ultimate purpose in your life, Today! Acts 20:24 tells us, *"My life is worth nothing unless I use it for doing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus---the work of telling others the Good News about God's wonderful kindness and love."* God has given you a purpose and work to do for His glory, and your foundation in Him is part of His purpose to bring His Good News and salvation to others. Let others see His wonderful works and Fruit in your life, Today! And always remember what Proverbs 3:21-26 says, *"My child, don't lose sight of good planning and insight. Hang on to them, for they will fill you with life (real-life), and bring you honor and respect. They keep you safe on your way and keep your feet from stumbling....."*

- And, finally, you have built your foundation in Christ as your place of worshipping Him with true faithfulness. I Chronicles 16:29 tells us, *"Give to the Lord the glory He deserves! Worship the Lord in all His Holy splendors."* And I Corinthians 1:9 says, *"God...always does just what He says, and He is the One who invited you into this wonderful friendship with His Son, Jesus"*

*Christ our Lord.*” You were given the opportunity of His invitation to build a foundation in Him and you have completed it with His divine power and guidance. Matthew 25:29 tells us, *“To those who use well what they were given, even more will be given, and they will have an abundance. But from those who are unfaithful, even what little they have will be taken away.”* I know you will use your foundation to its fullest for his glory and you will be blessed with more in life, Today! Give Him the glory, honor and praise for all things!

You’ve established a foundation in the Christ Zone that will prepare you for the daily battles in life. You are revealing the Fruit of the Spirit that will impact your life and others around you forever. Praise to God Almighty for His divine power and love. You are now living in the Fruit of His wonderful colors. You are now learning how to **Trust, Obey, Dedicate, Accept and Yearn** all of His ways in your life, Today. You have risen to the occasion and He has raised you above the storms with His almighty strength in helping you to get to this level of your life. What a wonderful and glorious feeling! Praise the Lord!

When you yield to His divine power and guidance, you can achieve anything. You must always remember---it is His will in your life, not yours. You are faithfully serving Him with all of your heart, soul, mind and strength, Today!

Romans 7:4 tells us, *“Now you are united with the One who was raised from the dead. As a result, you can produce good fruits, that is, good deeds for God.”* Submit to Him always, no matter what, and you will continue to impact your life and others for your Lord and King. He is the One that matters Today, no one or nothing else!

Matthew 4:18-20 illustrates how Jesus can take you from your earthly productive life to a spiritual productive life. How do you accomplish this? By picking up your cross and following Him in faith.

As you continue to **Trust, Obey, Dedicate, Accept, and Yearn** all of His ways in your life,

read Proverbs chapter 3 and know what He never wants you to forget. He will always be there for you; so be there for Him. This will help you as you continue on His path of righteousness, and sustain your productivity in Him Today!

- Never forget the things He has taught you.
- Store His commands in your heart---they will give you a long and satisfying life!
- Trust in the Lord with all your heart.
- Do not depend on your own understanding.
- Seek His will in all you do, for Him and He will direct your paths Today!
- Fear the Lord and turn your back on evil.
- Honor the Lord with your wealth and the best part of everything you produce.
  - If you do, He will fill you and HE WILL BLESS YOU!
- Don't ignore the Lord when He disciplines you.
- Don't be discouraged when He corrects you.
- Happy is the person who finds wisdom and gains understanding.
- The profit of wisdom is better than silver and gold.
- Wisdom offers you real-life.
- Wisdom will guide you down delightful paths; all ways are satisfying.
  - Embrace wisdom and it will bring happiness.
- Don't lose sight of good planning and insight---they will fill your life with honor and respect---they keep you safe and your feet from stumbling.
- Need not be afraid of disaster, for the Lord is your security!
- Don't withhold good from those who deserve it---help them.
- If you can help your neighbor, then help them.

- Don't plot against your neighbor.
- Don't make accusations against someone who has wronged you.
- Do not envy violent people; don't copy their ways.
- The Lord's blessings are on the homes of the upright.
- God shows favor to the humble.
- The wise inherit honor!

Follow in the steps of Christ and you will be blessed. He will honor when you live a life of productiveness. Watch your life bear the wonderful colors of His Fruit. Remember this wonderful scripture in Galatians 2:20. *"I myself no longer live, but Christ lives in me. So I live my life in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."* He gave Himself to you, now you can wholly give yourself to Him by living in the Zone of Christ.

List plans that will help you to be a producer

for Christ

List scriptures that will lead to productiveness


## “PRAYER”

Prayer is when you humbly come to Jesus Christ with thanksgiving, honor and praise. It is a time for you to have true worship and one-on-one time with Jesus Christ. This stage of your foundation is a very important part of living in the Christ Zone. Without prayer in your life you have no direct line to Jesus Christ for guidance and strength. Prayer is a time when you seek Christ and ask Him for His leadership, guidance, strength, wisdom, knowledge, direction and comfort. It is a time for you to pour out your heart to the Lord, for that is what He wants; your whole heart.

It is a time to build that true and intimate relationship with Jesus Christ. It is a time for not just asking, confessing and seeking, but also a time for waiting on the Lord. Remember, He does not always answer your prayers on your time-table, but His. It's that quality time you have that prospers your spiritual growth. It's a time for listening and learning as you strive for His perfection and elevate your maturity in His Holiness. It's your inner most expressions on what's on your mind, what's in your heart, what's troubling you spiritually, and where you need His strength.

Remember, when you pray, it is a time for changing yourself, for it aligns your thinking with God's. Stop, be quiet, listen to what He is saying through His Spirit----be patient and wait. Yield to His will in your life!

Prayer is a time of growth. It's a time of knowing and revealing His will, in His time, when you come to Him with a humble and willing heart. He is always there in all areas of your life. Believe it and know it, Today!

The most important thing for you to remember in praying is that His will be done, not yours. I John 5:14 tells us, “*We can be confident that He will listen to us whenever we ask Him for anything in line with His will.*” Seek His will first and be submissive and you can rest assure that He will listen and answer your prayer.

As you grow closer to Jesus Christ, come to Him with a fruitful heart; be submissive and surrender it all to Him. As you place Him first, selflessly, He will bless you.

How should you pray? Matthew 6:9 tells us, with Jesus talking, *“Pray like this.....My Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name thy Kingdom come thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give me this day my daily bread, and forgive me of my sins as I forgive those who have sinned against me. Lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from evil, for thine is the Kingdom, Power and Glory, forever, AMEN!”*

Pray to your Provider, Sustainer, Guide and Comforter. Pray that His perfect purpose will be accomplished. You are here as a faithful servant for His glory. Let His wonderful Fruit be seen in your life Today. Prayer is a powerful source in bringing all of His Fruit to a productive stage in your life. Let prayer be your source for calming all storms in your life. Let it be your source for exemplifying the light and love of Christ in your life. Remember what Philippians 4:6-7 says, *“Don’t worry about anything, but pray for everything... Tell God what you need, and thank Him for all He has done. If you do this, you will experience God’s peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.”* When you pray to God, know that you can trust Him with all things in your life. He’s in control of all things.

Look at **P-R-A-Y-E-R** in this form and maybe this will motivate you to pray Today!

**P**ower – the power of prayer can change your life & people you know. I Timothy 2:1-4 & James 5:16

**R**elationship – prayer will establish a blessed relationship with God. Jabez’s prayer; I Chronicles 4:9-10

**A**ttitude – have a consistent and persistent attitude of prayer. Colossians 4:2 & Matt 7:11

**Y**earn – have a burning desire to grow closer to Him by seeking Him first. Jeremiah 29:13

**E**xpect – always pray with confidence and with the expectation for His will to be done. Psalm 138

**R**est – God will give you rest. Philippians 4:6-7

Today, you must always know that the power of prayer is amazing; it builds your relationship with God; you must have a consistent and persistent attitude of prayer; have that burning desire to grow closer to Him; expect and be confident and you will have rest and peace in your life Today. You're foundation is getting stronger and stronger in the "Rock of Ages!"

If you are all alone, in distress, discouraged in life, or just need something to guide your daily life in prayer, read these Psalms, for they will lift you up with encouragement. Know that God is there to help and guide you through life Today.

- Psalm 5:1-3, *"Oh Lord, hear me as I pray; pay attention to my groaning. Listen to my cry for help, my King and my God, for I will never pray to anyone but You. Listen to my voice in the morning, Lord. Each morning, I bring my requests to you and wait expectantly."* How do you build that close relationship with God? Pray diligently and earnestly each morning. Have a routine for daily prayer in your "organized schedule for spiritual growth".
- Psalm 55:16-17, *"But I will call on God and the Lord will rescue me. Morning, noon and night I plead aloud in my distress, and the Lord hears my voice. He rescues me and keeps me safe from the battle waged against me, even though many still oppose me."* Stay in contact with God throughout all times of the day. This is a great step in your area of priorities. He will help you with evilness when it attacks.
- Psalm 70, *"Please God rescue me! Come quickly, Lord and help me....."* If you are in need for urgency in your life, know that God will be there. Come to Him with your humble heart, mind and soul and He will help you. Be strong.
- Psalm 77:1-12, *"I cry out to God without holding back. Oh, that God would listen to me. When I was in deep trouble, I searched for the Lord. All night long I pray, with hands lifted towards Heaven, pleading. There can be no joy for me until He acts. I think of God, and I moan,*

*overwhelmed with longing for His help.....”*

You must always know that God is trustworthy through it all. Focus on Him first and foremost in your daily prayers, and when you go through turbulent times, just reflect on all the times God was there and calmed the storms for your safety. This will encourage you and strengthen your faith in the One who is always there to listen and answer you in life.

You should not only pray for yourself, but also for others. It is very important that you exemplify all of Christ's ways in your life, as you continue to grow closer and closer to Him. Colossians 1:3-11 tells us how to pray for others.

- Rejoice for those who have come to Christ with new life.
- Ask God to lead them down His path of righteousness.
- Ask God to give them true discernment through His wisdom and knowledge.
- Ask God to help them also to exemplify the light and love of Jesus.
- Ask God to give them strength, for we are all weak.
- Ask God to fill them with joy, strength and thankfulness.

In the Family of God pray for each other. Don't let anger and dissension prevent you from earnest prayer. Surrender all of your problems to the Lord and ask Him for His strength in helping you to pray with fruitfulness. You need to pray for others; not just friends and family. You need to pray for your employer. You need to pray for your government. You need to pray for leaders. You need to pray for brothers and sisters serving in His ministry. You need to pray for the weak. You need to pray for the poor. You need to pray for your enemies and you need to pray for the loss. When was the last time you prayed for someone other than a friend or family member?

Today is a wonderful day for **P-R-A-Y-E-R!** It will bring forth the wonderful colors of His Fruit in your life and enable you to live in the Christ Zone each day of your life!

