

# UNIT FOUR: SKILLED IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

## **Key Scripture Verse for Unit Four**

Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil. - Hebrews 5:13-14

## **Class 1: It Is Finished**

### **1 Reading, 1 Worksheet**

By grace through faith in Jesus, we receive His perfect record of righteousness. We can stand before God free of guilt, shame, and accusation, ready to receive all of His blessings!

## **Class 2: Established in Righteousness**

### **1 Reading, 1 Evaluation, 1 Exercise**

Those who have the faith of Abraham are established in righteousness through their faith in Christ.

## **Class 3: Rest for Your Soul & Unbelief**

### **1 Reading, 2 Exercises**

We receive salvation and all of its benefits by grace through faith. Either Jesus finished it or we have to. Our only job now it to receive God's grace freely by faith and resist all forms of unbelief.

## **Class 4: Established Together**

### **1 Reading, 1 Evaluation, 1 Exercise**

We are called to help one another stay strong in the Lord and firm in His purposes for our lives. The Church will only fulfill God's purpose when we stand in Christ together.

## **Key Questions**

## **Group Exercises**



## IT IS FINISHED

Through the offering of His body, Jesus made a way for everyone who believes in Him to be righteous before God. Before taking His final breath, Jesus cried out, "IT IS FINISHED!" At that very same moment, the veil in the Temple was torn from top to bottom - meaning that access to God, His presence, and His blessings have been made available to us. Jesus' sacrifice and the shedding of His blood have reconciled us to God so that in God's sight, we have been justified, made holy, and are without blemish. We can have an absolutely clear conscience from sin.

*Colossians 1:19-22: For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, **by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.** Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. **But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation.***

*Hebrews 10:19-22: Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to **enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body,** and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us **draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings,** having our **hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience** and having our bodies washed with pure water.*

The writer of Hebrews said that the spiritually immature are unskilled in the word of righteousness. I believe it is, therefore, safe to assume that the mature ARE skilled in it. Are you? Here is a refresher for you of what Jesus did for us to establish us in righteousness by faith.

### Acts of Sin Forgiven

Under God's Old Covenant regulations, only one man, the High Priest, was allowed to enter into His presence behind the veil in the Temple, and this was only once per year on the Day of Atonement after specific blood sacrifices of bulls, sheep, and goats had been offered. (See Leviticus 16; Deuteronomy 12.) Anyone else who attempted to enter into God's presence at any other time instantly dropped dead. Needless to say, even the one man who was allowed to go behind the veil at the appointed time did so with fear that he might not make it out alive.

The standard of God for entering into His presence is purity and holiness. No one has been able to attain this level of purity and holiness because when we sin, err, or make mistakes, intentionally or unintentionally, our sins create a blemish on our record and a debt which must be paid. None of us are perfect.

Therefore, the only way to attain this is through the shedding of blood of an unblemished sacrifice of atonement. (See Leviticus 17:11.) Moreover, the sacrifice must be equal in worth to the cost of the error according to God's value system in order to reconcile accounts and pay the debt in full.

Jesus lived His life without sin. Therefore, He had no need to offer a blood sacrifice to atone for His sins and maintained connection with God at all times. Additionally, His own blood and body qualified as an unblemished sacrifice of atonement for the sins of all mankind. Knowing this, even though He was the Son of God, totally innocent, and could have stopped His trial, beating, and crucifixion at any moment, Jesus

willingly laid His life down in order to fulfill God's eternal plan of redemption.

*Isaiah 53:4-7, 10: Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. **But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.** He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. ... Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and **though the LORD makes his life an offering for sin,** he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand.*

This willing and obedient sacrifice of His beloved Son has infinite value in God's sight, more than millions upon millions of offerings of lambs, goats, bulls, birds, grain, oil, new wine, and all the silver and gold in the world. This means that through the shed blood of Jesus, our sins have been paid for in full. We are completely forgiven, without blemish, continually clean, and purified from all sin. We have perpetual right standing with God as if we had never sinned and have been made holy and perfect in God's sight. Our right standing with Him no longer has anything to do with our own performance or measuring up to His standard because it is now completely secure through our faith in Jesus' blood that was shed for us.

*Ephesians 1:7: In him **we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins,** in accordance with the riches of God's grace.*

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

### **Redeemed from the Curse, Sinful Nature, & Personal Attributes**

Through His death, Jesus allowed all punishment for sin and every accusation against all of mankind to be unleashed upon Himself. The curse of the Law from the Old Covenant outlines God's schedule of retribution for all forms of disobedience and these penalties include all forms of sickness and demonic oppression, death, and exile from God's presence. (For the curse of the Law, read through Deuteronomy 28 and Leviticus 26.)

What this means is that at the cross, the record of charges against us for everything that we have done or not done or will ever do to deserve God's punishment was brought before God. God's wrath and vengeance were poured out upon Jesus. At the same time, while Jesus was on the cross, we were being crucified with Him. When He died, we died with Him. Every descendant of Adam was included in Christ's crucifixion.

*Galatians 2:20-: **I have been crucified with Christ** and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*

*2 Corinthians 5:14: For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that **one died for all, and therefore all died.** (See also John 12:32.)*

Jesus died and was fully confirmed as dead before they took Him down from the cross and buried Him. Needless to say, the death penalty is the ultimate punishment. But consider carefully that the death penalty also brings to an end the possibility of the offender being able to commit further offenses. Not to mention that in any righteous court, there is no double jeopardy. This means that we cannot be tried again and condemned for crimes that have already been justly punished. Accordingly, because the death penalty has already been satisfied in full, we have no further possibility of warranting God's punishment. This also means that the curse of the Law is rendered void against us.

Galatians 3:13: Christ **redeemed us from the curse of the law** by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a pole."

Colossians 2:14-15: Having **canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us**; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

When Jesus died and was buried, we died and were buried. Through this, God removed every hindrance of our humanity and nullified every genetic and generational limitation. Nothing about our race, gender, family history, nationality, or personality has any impact on God's love for us because the nature that we inherited from our first ancestor Adam is as good as dead in God's sight. Even our circumstances and our personal advantages or disadvantages have no influence on God's plan for us or blessings towards us. Think of it this way. Dead people don't have anything going for them and they are far too dead to be disadvantaged by anything. In Christ's death, we are dead.

Romans 6:3-7: Or don't you know that **all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death** in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. For if we have been **united with him in a death like his**, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. For we know that **our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with**, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.

Colossians 3:3: For **you died**, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

Galatians 6:14: **May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.**

Being dead and buried with Christ is exactly what we have going for us! There is no longer anything from our human nature that can hinder us from receiving God's love and blessings. Hallelujah!

### **Transferred to the Kingdom of Light**

In Jesus' death and burial, it truly seemed that death and the grave had triumphed as the Son of God descended into the place prepared for the devil and his angels. But on the third day, God resurrected His beloved Son, Jesus Christ, out of the grave in an imperishable body. Jesus was begotten again (or born again) by God and was delivered out of the domain of the evil one. The power of sin, the curse, death, the devil, and the powers of darkness were overcome and neutralized by the resurrection power of God. The gates of Hell did not prevail against the Son of God in His death, and everyone who believes Him was with Him. (See Matthew 16:18.)

When Jesus was raised from the dead, we were raised with Him. God created a New Covenant people for Himself. This means that the devil and all of his workers have no right to harm us because powers of darkness have no authority over our lives as children of the light. We never have to fear death (or anything else) again because we have been given everlasting life.

Colossians 1:13-14: For he has **rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves**, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

John 5:24: Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but **has crossed over from death to life**.

Hebrews 2:14-15: Since the children have flesh and blood, He too shared in their humanity so that **by His death He might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil**—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

As if that is not enough, when Christ ascended to heaven after forty days of resurrection appearances, we also ascended with Him. Consequently, we are seated in Christ at the right hand of God.

*Ephesians 2:4-6: But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, **made us alive with Christ** even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. And **God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus.***

Yes, even while we are here in the imperfections of our flesh and the brokenness of this dark world, we are truly and totally accepted by God as righteous and unblemished. We live in the throne room of heaven. Hallelujah!

### **A New Creation in Christ**

Through His life, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension, the Old Covenant has been fulfilled, and the New Covenant has been established. God created a whole new people group, a new type of humanity for Himself to be His New Covenant people.

*2 Corinthians 5:17: Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, **the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!***

After Jesus ascended to heaven, He poured out the Holy Spirit into the hearts of all who believe in Him. The Holy Spirit gives us the power and ability to live as children of God and as a totally new creation in Christ. We who believe the Gospel are a heavenly people in earthly tents of flesh and a resurrected people in un-resurrected bodies. We have been reborn as children of God so that we can live the way that Jesus lived when He was on the earth in the flesh. We can literally do the things that He did in the way that He did them by the power of God as the Holy Spirit guides and empowers us.

Through His righteousness, Jesus made righteousness available to anyone who believes Him. Through our faith in Jesus, that Jesus is the Son of God and that God raised Him from the dead, we are established in righteousness.

# ESTABLISHED IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

*In righteousness you will*

OLD SELF		CRUCIFIED WITH
Old Man	Examples	Selection of Scriptures
<b>Nature of Sin</b> Descended from Adam	<b>Anything that you were born with or into.</b> Race, gender, genes, height, age... Generational curses, family patterns of behavior... Heritage, nationality, region, tribe... Sensual mind, depravity, futile thinking, vanity, hardness of heart, selfishness, narcissism...	Galatians 2:20 - I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. Romans 6:6 - For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin
<b>Acts of Sin</b> Trespasses Iniquities	<b>Anything done by you, including your inner motives.</b> Lying, cheating, moral failures, errors, accidents, behavioral patterns, bad habits, addictions... Sexual immorality, adultery, fornication, impurity, lust... Acts of wickedness, evil, murder, deception... Evil desires, pride, competition, selfish ambition, slander, covetousness, obscene talk, hatred, anger, the way you have treated others ...	Colossians 1:21-22 - Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation. Ephesians 1:7 - In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace
<b>Curse of the Law</b> Afflictions Oppressions	<b>Any limitation on your ability to receive blessing.</b> Lack, defeat, missed opportunities, inability to advance, lack of joy, hopelessness, heaviness, self-loathing... Sickness, disease, physical limitations, weakness, mental torment, miscarriages, stillbirths, barrenness... Subjugation to others, broken relationships, oppression...	Galatians 3:13 - Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a pole." Ephesians 1:3 - Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.
<b>Kingdom of Darkness</b> False Spirituality Religion	<b>Any involvement you have had with works of the devil.</b> All forms of non-Christian spirituality, including occult involvement, divination, consulting the dead, idol worship, astrology, horoscopes, freemasonry, karma, fortunes told to you or about you, curses spoken to you or about you, spells cast, witchcraft, unwise vows... Any form of erroneous Christian religious activity, trying to attain righteousness through good works, piety, asceticism, ordinances or traditions of man, legalism, false humility, self-righteousness... Principles of nature, ways of this world, philosophy...	Colossians 1:13 - For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves. Colossians 2:23 - Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence. Colossians 2:8 - See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ.
<b>Personal Attributes</b> Advantages Disadvantages	<b>Anything you regard as an advantage or disadvantage.</b> Skills, birthrights, status, location, wealth/poverty, marriage/singleness/divorce, what you or your people are known for... Successes/failures, experiences, education level, physical abilities/limitations, looks/appearance... The way you were raised, the way others have treated you, the lifestyle you are accustomed to...	1 Corinthians 1:27-29 - But God chose the foolish things... God chose the weak things... God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things-and the things that are not-to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him. Galatians 6:14 - May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

*The old has gone, the new is here! – 2 Corinthians 5:17*



\*Worksheet on page 120.

*! be established... far from oppression... fear... tyranny... terror... – Isaiah 54:14*

TH CHRIST	ESTABLISHED IN RIGHTEOUSNESS
<p align="center"><b>Reckon Your Old Self Dead</b></p> <p>Surrender all your desires to God as if you are dead. Crucify your need to be right, to fit in with the crowd, to be recognized, or to be accepted. Surrender your ways of doing thing and “the way that we have always done it.” Stop regarding anything about yourself or your life as a limitation on God’s ability to use you.</p>	<p align="center"><b>New Creation Life by Grace through Faith</b></p> <p><i>By faith, I believe that:</i>            I was crucified and died with Jesus.            My old nature is dead. The desires of my flesh, body, and its members are dead.            I have been raised to new life with Jesus.            I am a new creation in Christ.</p>
<p>Receive forgiveness as a free gift because of the blood of Jesus.            Believe that the record of your errors, faults, failures, and the required divine punishment for them have been canceled at the cross.            Regard guilt, shame, fear, and remembrance of sin as an attack of the enemy. You are forgiven. Stop defending yourself. Let God defend you.</p>	<p><i>By the blood of Jesus:</i>            My sins are forgiven, as if I had never sinned.            Guilt, shame, and fear of punishment for my sins, past, present, and future have no place in me.            In Christ’s righteousness I am holy, spotless, and blameless in God’s sight.            There is no justifiable accusation against me.</p>
<p>Recognize areas of oppression, affliction, or subjugation in your life.            Believe that God paid for those areas to be blessed through the blood of Jesus.            By grace through faith, receive the blessing of your full inheritance in Christ.</p>	<p><i>In the name of Jesus:</i>            The curse of the Law is broken off of my life.            All oppression, torment, and scorn must cease.            Curses from my family lineage are null and void without right to oppress me or to restrict God’s blessings in my life.</p>
<p>Renounce forever any and all involvement with all forms of false spirituality and works of darkness.            Believe that the blood of Jesus atones for your sin and protects you from works of darkness and all of its effects and ramifications.            Renounce religious legalism. Stop doing anything from a motive of earning favor with God. Believe that Jesus fulfilled the requirements of God for you.            Stop believing that the ways of this world, natural principles, or philosophy dictate the path of your life.            Regard guilt, shame, condemnation, and fear as an attack of the enemy.</p>	<p><i>In the power and authority of the name of Jesus:</i>            I command Satan to leave me now.            I declare that any and all attachment to false spirituality is null and void in my life, including fortunes told about me, divination, false prophecies; spells cast, curses spoken against me; and unwise vows that I have made.            I believe that my right standing with God is based on what Jesus did for me, not on my personal piety. I receive God’s righteousness as a free gift.            I place my faith is in God’s wisdom and power, not man’s wisdom or any other spiritual forces.</p>
<p>Stop placing confidence in anything that you have regarded as a personal advantage. Deny yourself and your own strength. Trust God.            Stop believing that anything you have regarded as a disadvantage in your life has any power to prevent God from blessing you or using you. Trust God.            Start believing God makes the way for you according to His plans for you because of the work of Jesus.</p>	<p><i>By grace through faith, I believe that:</i>            I am crucified to this world, common sense, and the knowledge of good and evil.            I am crucified to pride in my accomplishments.            I am not the product of my past but the product of the perfect obedience of Christ.            My record of success or failure has no impact on God’s ability to bless me and use me for His Kingdom.</p>

## NEW CREATION LIFE

## RIGHTEOUSNESS WORKSHEET

### Accompanies Established in Righteousness Chart

*Isaiah 54:9, 14-15: "To me this is like the days of Noah, when I swore that the waters of Noah would never again cover the earth. So now I have sworn not to be angry with you, never to rebuke you again. ... **In righteousness you will be established:** Tyranny will be far from you; you will have nothing to fear. Terror will be far removed; it will not come near you. If anyone does attack you, it will not be my doing; whoever attacks you will surrender to you.*

1. In your life right now, what is your biggest area of struggle? Consider the following:
  - a. Are there unchangeable aspects of who you are that you feel are holding you back?
  - b. Are there areas in your life or your past where you still feel guilt, shame, or remorse?
  - c. Are there areas where you feel stunted or cannot seem to break through to blessing?
  - d. Are there patterns or cycles of disease, oppression, loss/accident/calamity, or demonic oppression?
  - e. Are there ways you feel your own abilities or profile qualify or disqualify you for serving God?
2. **From Column One: Old Man**, which category does this struggle fit into? This category is your **Target Area** for today. (You can repeat this exercise for all Target Areas one at a time as the Lord leads.)
3. **Use Column Two: Examples**, to identify ways in which you feel oppressed or blocked from God's blessing
4. **Use Column Three: Selection of Scriptures**, to find Scriptures in your Target Area which speak to Christ's forgiveness, redemption, or nullification of this issue.
  - a. Slowly read and speak these Scriptures out loud three times.
  - b. What do these Scriptures say about what Jesus did for you?
  - c. If these Scriptures are true (which they are) how does this impact your life?
  - d. How do you know now that God is not holding you back in this area?
5. **Use Column Four: Reckon Your Old Self Dead**, to repent of wrong beliefs in your Target Area.
  - a. Follow the instructions in the column in the way that the Lord guides you. For example, through prayer, journaling, confession, worship, acts of faith, etc.
6. Now that your old self is dead in Christ, how does this give you a fresh start and a clean slate?
  - a. How does this change how you view yourself and God's ability to bless you and use you for His Kingdom?
  - b. How does this change who you can be or who you want to be for God?
  - c. How is God asking you to walk in freedom from sin, the curse, flesh, and darkness?
  - d. How will you continue to walk in faith rather than slipping back into old patterns?
7. **Use Column Five: New Creation Life by Grace through Faith**, to declare the truth of God into your life and command the enemy's schemes of oppression off/out of your life.
  - a. Speak the declarations in your Target Area out loud. Repeat them until you believe them in your heart.
8. Praise God for what He has done for you. Jesus is King!
9. **BONUS:** Skilled in Righteousness.
  - a. Use this Righteousness Chart and Worksheet as a guide for ministering the truth of Christ's freedom and deliverance to others.



## ESTABLISHED IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

In the days when religious leaders were abusing and misleading the people of God, Jeremiah prophesied about the Messiah to come. God promised to raise up a King who would execute God's righteousness and would therefore BE the righteousness of the people and for the people.

*Jeremiah 23:5-6 ESV: Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: **'The LORD is our righteousness.'***

When Isaiah prophesied about the work of God for His people, He referenced the days of Noah. In Noah's day, the vile wickedness of mankind was washed away in the flood and humanity received a fresh start. God swore He would never again judge the earth by flood. This is symbolic of what happens in our lives when we put our trust in Jesus. Our sinfulness and our pasts are washed away by the blood of Jesus and we receive a fresh start with God. God swears He has established us in righteousness and is no longer angry.

*Isaiah 54:4, 9, 14-15: Do not be afraid; you will not be put to shame. Do not fear disgrace; you will not be humiliated. **You will forget the shame of your youth and remember no more the reproach of your widowhood. ... To me this is like the days of Noah, when I swore that the waters of Noah would never again cover the earth. So now I have sworn not to be angry with you, never to rebuke you again. ... In righteousness you will be established: Tyranny will be far from you; you will have nothing to fear. Terror will be far removed; it will not come near you. If anyone does attack you, it will not be my doing; whoever attacks you will surrender to you.***

This righteousness is only available through faith in Jesus Christ who shed His blood to wash our sins away. When we believe that Jesus is Lord and that God raised Him from the dead, we are established in the righteousness of Christ with a perfect record before God.

### The Faith of Abraham

Trust in God's victory over death is the type of faith that God has required since the beginning of His redemptive work of salvation through Abraham. Abraham's faith was credited to him as righteousness. Even though he was an imperfect man with the rebellious nature of Adam just like me and you, Abraham had right standing with God because of his faith. But God tested Abraham's faith by requesting that Abraham offer up his one and only son, Isaac, the very son through whom all the promises that God had made to Abraham were going to be fulfilled. Abraham willingly offered Isaac on the altar of sacrifice because he believed that God was able to raise the dead and that God would be faithful to fulfill every promise that He had made, regardless of how bizarre it seemed from a worldly point of view.

*Hebrews 11:17-19: **By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had embraced the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, even though God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned." Abraham reasoned that God could even raise the dead, and so in a manner of speaking he did receive Isaac back from death.** (Referring to Genesis 22:1-18.)*

When we believe that God has raised Jesus from the dead, we exhibit the faith of Abraham. This is why Abraham is called the father of the faithful and we are his spiritual offspring.

This said, the author and perfecter of our faith is Jesus. Leading us all by His example, Jesus was a man in a flesh like ours who entrusted Himself into the hands of His heavenly Father. With faith even greater than Abraham's, Jesus believed that God would raise Him from the dead and would fulfill every promise of His eternal inheritance. Jesus believed that God would not abandon Him in death and that His reward would be an eternal inheritance.

*Hebrews 12:1-2: Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, **fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer [the one who sets the example and leads the way] and perfecter of faith.** For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

Abraham's faith was credited to Him as righteousness when He first believed God. But his faith was put to the test when confronted with death. It was the test of his faith in God's power over death which proved the genuineness of his faith and assured the fulfillment of all of God's promises to Him. Jesus had perfect faith from birth. But it was the confrontation with the cross that proved that He truly believed God. For us, our faith is credited as righteousness when we first believe Jesus. But this faith will be put to the test through trials and persecutions of all kinds. Will our faith stand the test?

### **No Knowledge of Good and Evil**

In the historical account of Israel, when Moses sent spies into the Promised Land, ten out of the twelve spies did not believe that God was able to conquer their enemies and give them the land. The community of Israel believed the ten spies, even though they had seen God deliver them from Egypt and walk them through the Red Sea. Therefore, God informed them that the entire generation that did not believe would be unable to inherit the Promised Land. (See Numbers 13-14.)

When the census was taken to determine who would and would not receive the promised inheritance, only those under twenty years old who had no knowledge of good and evil were qualified. When the Israelites presumed to try to obtain the promise in their own strength without honoring God's word or requirement of faith, they were humiliated and chased out by their enemies as if chased by a swarm of bees. (See Deuteronomy 1:19-46.)

For us, because of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, God's requirements for receiving His blessings have been fulfilled. Consequently, we are no longer judged to be blessed or cursed according to the standard of the Old Covenant but according to the terms of the New Covenant, which is by faith. (See Hebrews 7:12; Romans 8:1-2.) There is no condemnation for us or for our sins and it is no longer sin which causes us to fall out of God's good graces – lack of faith in Christ's righteousness is.

As such, anyone desiring to be justified and receive blessing from God through any form of legalism (which is the knowledge of good and evil) is required to keep the whole Law perfectly, something which no one in history except Jesus has ever been able to do.

*Galatians 5:3-4: Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. **You who are trying to be justified by the law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.***

*James 2:10: For whoever keeps the whole law and yet **stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.***

All of this is to say that sin is no longer the issue of our righteousness - faith is! By faith, we have the righteousness of Jesus as a free gift and, therefore, we have access to God and all of His blessings that

otherwise would never be available to us.

*Romans 3:22-24: This **righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe**. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and **all are justified freely by his grace** through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.*

*Romans 5:1-2: Therefore, since we have been **justified through faith**, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have **gained access by faith into this grace** in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God.*

For us to think we can attain God's promises in our own striving and strength instead of simple faith in Jesus means that we have shifted our attention to the knowledge of good and evil rather than faith in Jesus' sacrifice. If this is the case, then the evil one has deceived us into religion, legalism, and performance-based spirituality, which is essentially the same thing the serpent did when he persuaded Adam and Eve to eat from the forbidden tree when they already had everything they needed from God. What God desires for us is to be like little children who have no knowledge of good and evil as it pertains to our right standing with Him so that we can freely receive all that Jesus died for to share with us.

*Matthew 18:3: And he said: "Truly I tell you, unless you change and **become like little children**, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven."*

*Mark 10:15: Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God **like a little child** will never enter it.*

### **According to Your Faith**

At one point during Jesus' ministry, two blind men followed Him crying out to Him for mercy. He stopped and asked if they believed He was able to heal them. When they affirmed their belief, Jesus said, "According to your faith, let it be done to you." (See Matthew 9:27-29.) Their sight was completely restored. On another occasion, a Centurion came to Jesus on behalf of his dying servant and Jesus said, "Let it be done just as you have believed." His servant was totally healed. (See Matthew 8:13)

We receive from God what we truly believe Jesus has done for us. If we believe God is our Provider, then we experience His supernatural provision according to our faith. If we believe God is our Deliverer, then we experience God's unexplainable hand of deliverance in our lives according to our faith. If we believe God is our Healer, then we receive miraculous healing from Him according to our faith. If we partially believe God, or believe God for some things and not others, then we partially receive from God just as we have believed.

When Jesus chastised His disciples for being of little faith, the word He used does not actually mean small or tiny in the same way that we interpret little. It means not trusting enough or not having enough confidence. It was not that Jesus' disciples did not trust Him at all—of course they did! They had dropped everything in their lives to follow the man they believed to be the Messiah. They had seen Him work countless miracles right in front of them, and they had even worked miracles in His name. It was only in certain scenarios that they did not trust Him or believe in His love enough to attain results.

It is safe to admit to having little faith. There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, and that includes no condemnation for little faith. Condemning little faith is completely unhelpful and can do serious damage to the faith that does exist - like crushing a seedling before it has time to sprout.

Moreover, God does not require great or gigantic faith. He is looking for pure faith. Jesus said that faith as small as a mustard seed can move a mountain. But, this mustard seed is not a hybrid mix with other garden plants. Our faith cannot be in Jesus plus anything else—just Jesus. Pure faith is simple trust in God and trust in God's nature. God is love. His love demolishes all of our fears of condemnation and punishment. His love removed every obstacle that stands in the way of us receiving every blessing from Him. His love pours

out endless streams of mercy and compassion. His love heals us in our hearts, our souls, and our bodies.

Because of what Jesus did for us, sin, the curse of the Law, and the devil are no longer the problem. Fear and unbelief are the problems. Fear and unbelief lead us to do things that spring from the knowledge of good and evil, but these things have no weight before the throne of God. God is not moved by begging, groveling, false attempts at humility and self-deprecation, or grandiose gestures of piety and faithfulness. He is not moved by our promises to be good, to serve Him, or to give to His Kingdom as if He needed anything from us or as if the work of Jesus is incomplete in any way. If we really meant these things, we would already be doing them. If we think God will be moved with compassion for our situation if we pray the right prayer, have the right person pray, or have a lot of people praying the same thing, then we have completely missed the point of what Jesus did for us. God is not the one who needs to move. God moved two thousand years ago when He gave His Son as an all-sufficient sacrifice for everything we will ever need for every trial we will ever face between now and when we go to heaven. God did a perfect work. Jesus said, "It is finished." The Holy Spirit's job is to teach us and remind us of this as our present truth. We need to simply trust God, move ourselves out of His way, and receive all that is His will for us.

We do not have to chase after the Kingdom or the power of God or every new wind of teaching that passes through the Church. In fact, doing so only reveals our immaturity and will most likely lead to fatigue, burn out, false hope, religious acts, and possibly deception because unfortunately, many ministries are built today on selling the knowledge of good and evil. We only think that we find it helpful to have more knowledge because we have grown so accustomed to a diet of the knowledge of good and evil. We convince ourselves that knowledge is power, but this is the lie that the devil has been selling from the beginning. But God put the same power that raised Christ from the dead inside us to equip and empower us to receive everything Jesus died to give us. All we need to do is believe it!

Actually, what takes the greatest faith of all is to repent and put our trust wholeheartedly and unreservedly in Jesus and His sacrifice for us as the greatest demonstration of God's love for us. The word for repentance the New Testament Greek means *change your mind* and the Old Testament Hebrew word for repentance means *to turn around*, implying a total change of direction in our actions. To say that we believe God but continue to trust in anything or anyone but God is not real repentance. We can say that we believe all sorts of things, but what we really believe is evidenced by the actions we take. Praying a prayer of repentance is not necessarily real repentance. God knows if we are honoring Him with our lips but far from Him in our hearts.

In addition to this, we cannot treat our walk of faith as if it is a walk with a psychologist rather than a Savior, Deliverer, and Healer. Jesus did not come to die on a cross, be raised from the dead, ascend to heaven, and pour out the Holy Spirit so that we could do endless self-inspections to uncover our past hurts and offenses and how they have shaped our lives. At His death, Jesus did not say, "It is a work in progress," but instead said, "It is finished!" No matter what events may have caused us harm or damaged our hearts and minds, if the offenses took place in the past, are occurring in the present, or happen in the future, the repentance we enter into as we walk with Jesus is one of bringing everything in our lives into alignment with the fact that He did a perfect work. If we have sinned, we must receive His forgiveness and move on with our lives by obeying His voice. If others have sinned against us, we must forgive them and move on with our lives by obeying His voice. When we do this, our lives will no longer be shaped by our past or our wounds but by the finished work of Jesus and by fulfilling His purpose for us in His Kingdom.

We must also be careful about abusing God's love, grace, and mercy for us to comfort ourselves in our lack of repentance. We do this when we say things like, "I have been wounded and God knows that it is hard for me," or, "God knows my weakness and He loves me anyway." Yes, God does love us all the time. But if His lovingkindness is truly at work in our lives, then it will lead us into deeper repentance and trust in Jesus for our salvation, deliverance, healing, and sustenance. The Christian life is not about being broken

in our sin but being broken from our sin. In fact, for us to profess faith in Jesus without aligning our lives with what He did for us is hypocrisy, vanity, and self-deception. Faith in a God who enables false dependencies of our flesh is a perversion of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, who died on a cross for us to blot out our past, give us heaven on earth, and set us free from reliance on anything but Him. Instead of distorting God's love and mercy to settle for less than Jesus died to give us, we must press into real faith until the Kingdom of God manifests in our lives.

God is such a loving heavenly Father that He is willing and able to work with us wherever we are on this spectrum of faith and regardless of whatever mistakes we may have made in our lives or our journeys of faith. However, if we think we are faith superstars who know it all, or that God delights to pander to our fleshly weaknesses, then God will most likely let us stay stuck in the same place for as long as we think so.

### **Receiving by Faith**

Approximately half of Jesus' healing miracles in the Scriptures are linked to the faith of someone involved. This same concept can be applied to just about any blessing we desire to receive from God which we know to be His will for us.

*Matthew 8:13: Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go! **Let it be done just as you believed** it would." And his servant was healed at that moment.*

*Matthew 9:29: Then He touched their eyes and said, "**According to your faith** let it be done to you."*

*Matthew 15:28: Then Jesus said to her, "Woman, **you have great faith!** Your request is granted." And her daughter was healed at that moment.*

*Mark 2:5: When **Jesus saw their faith**, He said to the paralyzed man, "Son, your sins are forgiven."*

*Luke 8:48: Then He said to her, "Daughter, **your faith has healed you**. Go in peace."*

*Luke 17:19: Then He said to him, "Rise and go; **your faith has made you well**."*

*Luke 18:42: Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; **your faith has healed you**."*

Notice that Jesus did not judge or condemn anyone in any way for their sin before healing them. He did not require confession of sin, proof of repentance, or any other preconditions for meriting a miracle. Though He occasionally tested the genuineness of the prospective recipient's faith and the engagement of their will, He was always able and willing to heal the sick that came to Him in faith.

*Matthew 9:28: When He had gone indoors, the blind men came to Him, and He asked them, "**Do you believe that I am able to do this?**" "Yes, Lord," they replied.*

*John 5:6: When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, He asked him, "**Do you want to get well?**"*

*Luke 5:12-13 NLT: In one of the villages, Jesus met a man with an advanced case of leprosy. When the man saw Jesus, he bowed with his face to the ground, begging to be healed. "Lord," he said, "**if You are willing, You can heal me** and make me clean." Jesus reached out and touched him. "**I am willing,**" He said. "**Be healed!**" And instantly the leprosy disappeared.*

*Mark 9:21-24 NLT: "How long has this been happening?" Jesus asked the boy's father. He replied, "Since he was a little boy. The spirit often throws him into the fire or into water, trying to kill him. Have mercy on us and help us, if you can." "**What do you mean, 'If I can'?**" Jesus asked. "**Anything is possible if a person believes.**" The father instantly cried out, "I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief!"*

In contrast, those who thought they could earn blessings from God based on their own righteousness received nothing from Jesus. For example, when the religious people in Jesus' day became upset and

offended because of the people Jesus chose to heal, bless, and spend time with, He rebuked them for being blinded by their own pride and religion. Moreover, those who demanded a sign from Jesus (even in their hearts) as proof of His godly identity received nothing from Jesus but a rebuke.

*Matthew 9:12-13 NLT: When Jesus heard this, He said, "Healthy people don't need a doctor--sick people do." Then He added, "Now go and learn the meaning of this Scripture: 'I want you to show mercy, not offer sacrifices.' For I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners."*

*Matthew 16:4: A wicked and adulterous generation looks for a sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah." Jesus then left them and went away.*

In spite of all of their religious piety and good works, Jesus worked no miracles for them.

This is why it is a good practice to engage our will in faith by putting our faith into action. We can ask God to give us a step of faith to help us engage with Him. For example, Jesus told a man with a withered hand to stretch it out, something that had been impossible for him before. His hand was not healed before he stretched it out, but while he stretched it out. (See Matthew 12:13.) When Jesus, Peter, and Paul told lame men who had never walked to stand up and walk as if they had never not walked, the men were healed when they put their faith into action and obeyed. (See Mark 2:11; Acts 3:6, 14:9.) When Jesus told the ten lepers to go show themselves to the priests, they did not receive their healing in the presence of Jesus but *as they went*. (See Luke 17:14.) When Jesus told the nobleman that his son would live and not die, he *took Jesus at His word* and demonstrated faith by returning home. (See John 4:50.) Their faith was revealed by their actions. This said, I do not recommend haphazardly creating rules like this for ourselves because God is not obligated in any way by our self-induced mandates.

God will guide you by His Spirit into all that He has for you. Listen to Him and do what He says. The point is for us to step out of hope and into faith. Abraham, the father of the faith, did not waver from believing the promise of God or in God's ability to fulfill His word, even though his circumstances appeared completely contradictory to everything God had said. He continued to live his life as if God's promises were true until they came to pass just as God had promised. (See Romans 4:20.) When the time came, Abraham had to go into Sarah and do his part in order for Isaac to be miraculously conceived. In the same way, we must each put our own faith into practice if we are to receive everything that Jesus died to give us.

## FAITH INSPECTION

<i>1 = Needs improvement</i>	<i>2 = In Refining Process</i>	<i>3 = Doing Well for Now</i>	
Is Jesus Christ real to me?	1	2	3
Do I believe God? Do I take God at His Word?	1	2	3
Do I believe that Jesus is Lord?	1	2	3
Do I believe that God raised Jesus from the dead?	1	2	3
Do I have lingering doubts against the sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice for me?	1	2	3
Do I hold feelings of guilt, shame, condemnation?	1	2	3
Am I resting in Christ's sufficiency for all aspects of my life? (As opposed to striving.)	1	2	3
Am I double-minded?	1	2	3
Am I placing my faith or confidence in any of my own natural abilities, qualities, or strengths, or on any particular set of circumstances rather than on Christ?	1	2	3
Do I have even the slightest reliance on anything or anyone other than God?	1	2	3
Am I trusting God more than common sense and the ways of this world?	1	2	3
Am I relying on God to work by His Spirit in what He has placed before me to do?	1	2	3
Is Jesus Lord of my life? Do I serve/obey Him as I would serve/obey an earthly King?	1	2	3
Do I use my faith to advance the will of God rather than my own desires?	1	2	3
Does my approach to the Christian life make me stand out from the ways of this world?	1	2	3
Do I regularly see God move on my behalf? (As opposed to natural efforts & outcomes.)	1	2	3
Do I believe God to heal my sickness and infirmities in my mind and body?	1	2	3
Do I believe God to provide for my food and clothing?	1	2	3
Am I content in Christ in all situations, whether abounding or abased?	1	2	3
Do I experience persecution for living a godly life in Christ Jesus? (2 Timothy 3:12)	1	2	3
<i>For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed--a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith." Romans 1:17</i>			

## FROM FAITH TO FAITH

Romans 1:16-17 ESV - For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation [deliverance, healing, sustenance/provision, life] to everyone who believes; to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."

### DESCRIPTION

Through our faith in Jesus, and what He did for us through His death and resurrection, we have been made righteous before God. Therefore, have free access into all the benefits of being in right standing with God. We receive all these benefits by faith. By definition, in the Romans verse above, the word used for salvation includes salvation, deliverance, healing, and sustenance/provision. Therefore, the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God on our behalf for every problem we will ever face. It is God's desire for us to trust Him and live by faith in every area of our lives. We bring God glory when we allow Him to move on our behalf in ways that only He can. This said, similar to training muscle groups of our bodies, we may have exercised our faith in one area but remain weak in another. Plus, even when we feel that we are standing strong in faith, there are always new levels of trust that the Lord desires to take us to so that He can receive greater glory in our lives. Therefore, to practice From Faith to Faith is about building our faith in God and what He did and desires to do for us by turning over new areas of our lives to a deeper commitment of trusting Him.

### PRAYER

Father, I believe that I am righteous before you because of the work of Jesus. Increase my faith in more areas of my life so that I can bring you greater glory. Show me how to exercise my faith by trusting you more in all things. In Jesus' name, Amen.



### PURPOSE:

To grow in faith and application of trusting God in our lives.

To increase in obedience and understanding of God's will and ways.

To identify and prune our lives of areas of faithlessness.

### SPIRITUAL FRUIT:

Faith and faithfulness.

Deeper experience of God's ways and work on our behalf.

Repentance from self-reliance over trust in God.

Purified motives and approach to life.

### PRACTICE

1. Ask God to reveal to you an area where He desires for your faith to grow. (We'll call it your Focus Area.)
  - For example, living by faith in His salvation, deliverance, healing, sustenance/provision, sanctification, miracles, or any other situation in your life right now.
2. For ten (10) days, consciously, deliberately, and totally submit your Focus Area to God. (Ten represents total.)
  - Pray, "Father, I turn \_\_\_\_\_ over to you. I place my trust in you and your ways above my own thoughts, abilities, and resources. Guide me in the way you want me to go. In Jesus' name, Amen."
3. Ask the Lord to give you one or two Scriptures to believe in and build your faith upon for your Focus Area. (Note: Using only one or two will help you center your faith.)
  - Read these Scriptures out loud every morning when you wake up and every night before you go to bed. Read them throughout the day whenever you are able.
  - Spend at least ten (10) minutes per day in prayer about your Focus Area. In your times of prayer, alternate between quoting your Scriptures and praying in tongues. Also, try singing your Scriptures and singing in tongues.
4. Over the course of the ten days, allow the Lord to build your faith in Him for your Focus Area.
  - Renounce presumption that you understand God's ways.
  - Listen to any guidance He gives you. Do what He says.
  - Resist the wisdom of this world. Resist the lies of the devil.
5. After the ten days is completed, take note of the following:
  - What did God do in your situation?
  - How do you see things differently than you did before?
  - In what ways were you tempted to believe lies from the enemy or trust in your own strength?
  - How does knowing that you are righteous in Christ help you to trust God with situations in your life?

### NOTES:

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### ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES:

Hebrews 11:1, 6  
James 2:17-18  
Colossians 2:8  
1 Corinthians 1:24, 2:5  
Proverbs 3:5-6  
Genesis 15:6  
Habakkuk 2:4  
John 6:29  
Jude 1:20



## REST FOR YOUR SOUL & UNBELIEF

God loves us so much that He removed every obstacle that stood in the way of our ability to receive His blessings. Plus, He continually gives us a clean slate as if we had never sinned. Therefore, instead of chasing experiences of passion or hiding ourselves in doubt and shame, we can fearlessly rest with peace in our hearts and receive God's blessings and guidance.

### Rest for Our Souls

Soon after God had delivered Israel out of Egypt, the Israelites grumbled out of hunger and expressed their desire to return to Egypt where they had eaten as much as they wanted. They seemed to have forgotten that the food they ate in Egypt was not free. They had been slaves, working under harsh task masters to build cities for an evil ruler. And so, the first command God gave to the Israelites after they had departed from Egypt was given as a permanent reminder that He had redeemed them from a life of slavery. Before the Ten Commandments were given at Sinai, God instruction was to keep the Sabbath on the seventh day. For six days they could gather what God provided for them. But on the seventh day, they were required to rest from all work and observe the Sabbath. (See Exodus 16.)

The Hebrew word for *sabbath* means to *cease from exertion, to rest from labor*, and is used in other places to indicate *doing away with something or failure to produce*. Accordingly, to observe the Sabbath requires devoting the day to complete rest and doing no ordinary work. Later, when God gave the Law to His people, the Sabbath became the fourth commandment. Anyone who desecrated the Sabbath or failed to observe the Sabbath must be cut off from the people of God or be put to death.

This is significant because since the fall of Adam, all of mankind has been under the curse of sweat and toil with thorns and thistles. Everyone must work hard for their food and provision or die of starvation. Workaholism would seem to be the only correct approach to survival but instead, God gave His people rest. Observing the Sabbath became a new sign that symbolizes inclusion in the redeemed people of God. (See Exodus 16:29, 31:13,17; Deuteronomy 5:15.)

In addition to every seventh day being a day of rest for the people of Israel, there are a number of other days throughout the year on which the Law prohibits ordinary work, particularly connected to the Feasts of God. (See Leviticus 23.) Instead of working overtime at specific times during the year that are important for securing a good harvest, the Law requires God's people to observe multiple days of mandatory rest as an act of worship. No ordinary work is permitted at all, as they trust in God's faithfulness to abundantly supply all they need and take time to rejoice in all He has done. The most extreme example of this mandatory rest is on the Day of Atonement when all Israelites are required to do no ordinary work and humble themselves before God through fasting. Anyone who does any work or does not deny themselves on the Day of Atonement will be cut off from the people and destroyed by God.

*Leviticus 23:28-32 NKJV: And you shall do no work on that same day, for it is the Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before the LORD your God. For any person who is not afflicted in soul on that same day shall be cut off from his people. And any person who does any work on that same day, that person I will destroy from among his people. You shall do no manner of work; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. "It shall be to you a sabbath of solemn rest, and you shall afflict your souls; on the ninth day of the month at evening,*

*from evening to evening, you shall celebrate your sabbath.*

Needless to say, God takes rest very seriously. This is because rest is an outward display of covenant relationship with Him. Rest proves trust in Him. Rest demonstrates gratitude for His redemption. Rest is an act of faith. Rest is an act of worship.

Without the shed blood of Jesus for atonement, we would still be subject to the Law of God, earning blessings or meriting curses through our own works and would be slaves to sin. You could say that we would be subject to a spiritual form of sweat and toil with thorns and thistles for our souls. But through Jesus' death and resurrection, we have been set free from the labor of the Law so that we can be at rest in His provision of righteousness and mercy. Jesus became our perfect sacrifice of atonement so that we can rest in our redemption as God's children. (See Romans 3:25.) Jesus said it this way:

*Matthew 11:28-29: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and **I will give you rest.** Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and **you will find rest for your souls.**"*

In other words, and as is reflected in Hebrew translations of the New Testament, Jesus is saying, "Come to me and I will give you Sabbath, a Sabbath for your soul." Jesus redeemed us from slavery to sin and from the curse of spiritual sweat and toil because our blessings no longer depend on our own obedience but His! This means that we can rest, cease from, and put away all of the things we are doing or not doing from a motive of earning God's blessings because we recognize that they will fail to produce anything of eternal value. Now, the only thing that has any value before God is our faith in Jesus.

When Jesus cried out on the cross, "It is finished," He either meant that it is finished or He meant that it is not quite done yet. Either the blood of Jesus works or it doesn't. Either He paid the price in full for our sins or He didn't. Either He took all of our punishment upon Himself or we can still be penalized. Either He conquered the devil or the devil still reigns over us. But if Jesus has done all of these things, which He has, then the only thing for us to do now is to be at rest in our hearts, immovably certain of God's faithfulness, power, ability, and willingness to bless us because of what Jesus has done for us.

Entering into rest on the Day of Atonement called for people to afflict their souls. While fasting from food was required to afflict the body, afflicting the soul also involves the mind, will, and emotions. Accordingly, in order for us to honor and observe the eternal Sabbath that Jesus has given to us through His atonement, we must crucify our mind, will, and emotions to align ourselves with His perfect work. This means that we must cease from religious regulations, human commands, the ways and wisdom of this world, doing "good things," and anything else we might be trusting in somehow thinking we will earn or deserve God's favor or produce anything of value through them. We must also guard our freedom carefully from all forms of legalism, self-justification, and any teachings that imply that the blood of Jesus is not completely sufficient for our salvation, deliverance, healing, and sustenance.

*Colossians 2:20-23: **Since you died with Christ to the elemental spiritual forces of this world, why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules:** "Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!"? These rules, which have to do with things that are all destined to perish with use, are based on merely human commands and teachings. Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.*

*Colossians 2:16-17: **Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day.** These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.*

*Galatians 4:8-9: Formerly, **when you did not know God, you were slaves to those who by nature are not gods.** But now that you know God--or rather are known by God--**how is it that you are***

**turning back to those weak and miserable forces?** Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again?

Galatians 3:1-3: You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. I would like to learn just one thing from you: **Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by believing what you heard?** Are you so foolish? After beginning by means of the Spirit, **are you now trying to finish by means of the flesh?**

Romans 4:4-5: Now to the one who works, wages are not credited as a gift but as an obligation. However, **to the one who does not work but trusts God who justifies the ungodly, their faith is credited as righteousness.**

Galatians 5:1: **It is for freedom that Christ has set us free.** Stand firm, then, and **do not let yourselves be burdened again** by a yoke of slavery.

Rest is an indication of our understanding that God's mercy and blessings are truly undeserved and cannot be earned through any kind of work. Our rest in Him serves as a sign between Him and us that we trust in His redemption and that we are humble enough to admit that we have nothing of value to add to His atoning work. If we are stressed because we are trying to deserve God's blessings through our own efforts, then our souls are not at rest. We must instead strive to enter into the rest that Jesus has provided.

Hebrews 4:9-11 ESV: So then, there remains **a Sabbath rest for the people of God**, for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from His. Let us therefore **strive to enter that rest**, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.

## Peace with God

The Hebrew word for peace is shalom and, in addition to peace from war, shalom includes completeness, soundness, wholeness, safety, good health, prosperity, tranquility, contentment, friendship, and ease. Shalom is a state of being where everything is working exactly as it should, and there is perfect harmony between all the many facets of life. Shalom with God is when we have right standing with Him because every hindrance to our relationship has been removed.

Since the fall of Adam, there has been an ongoing war between God and man. When there was no way for anyone to have peace with God, God made a way by sending His Son. As an example of God's approach to war and peace, when He sent the nation of Israel to war against enemy nations, He instructed them to first proclaim peace. (See Deuteronomy 20:10) Israel would extend an offer of peace to their enemies and, if this offer was accepted, the enemies would become servants of Israel. If the offer of peace was not accepted, the enemies would be destroyed. Shalom could only be attained through submission to the God of Israel.

In line with this, when God sent Jesus into the world which had become His enemy, Jesus came to proclaim peace. Jesus extended an offer of shalom with God to the Jews, who could not attain righteousness through their own efforts, and He extended the offer of shalom to Gentiles who previously had no hope of peace with the One True God.

Ephesians 2:17: **He came and preached peace** to you who were far away and peace to those who were near.

John 14:27: **"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you.** I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."

As is true in any war, terms of peace require a settling of accounts so that the parties can be reconciled. Whatever it was that caused the disruption that led to war must be brought to the surface and fully addressed or the peace agreement will prove to be inadequate and peace will not last. Through His perfect life and sacrificial death, Jesus singlehandedly settled the accounts for all of humanity to have

peace with God by fulfilling God's legal requirements for a peace offering. (see Leviticus 3, 7)

*Isaiah 53:5: But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; **the punishment that brought us peace was on Him**, and by His wounds we are healed.*

*Colossians 1:19-20: For God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, **by making peace through His blood, shed on the cross.***

*Romans 5:1: Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, **we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.***

The way we accept the terms of peace that Jesus offers is to love Him and obey Him as our Lord. (see John 14:15, 21, 23; 1 John 5:3-4) In the end, on the Day of Judgment, anyone who does not accept Jesus' terms of peace will be destroyed. This said, when we accept the offer of peace with God that Jesus extends to us, we no longer need to be anxious about anything or be concerned that God is treating us like an enemy, no matter what may be happening in our circumstances.

*Philippians 4:6-7: **Do not be anxious about anything**, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. **And the peace of God**, which transcends all understanding, **will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.***

*Colossians 3:15: **Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts**, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.*

Through the sacrifice of the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53, God established us in righteousness. This means that we are settled in right standing with Him, have peace with Him, and are secure in His care. (See v. 53:14.) This also means that any enemy that attempts to attack us is not from God, including any natural or spiritual weapon forged against us and every tongue of accusation that contradicts the work of Christ on our behalf. (See v. 53:15-17.) Therefore, we have an assurance that no accusation against us is from God's mouth and that anything evil in our lives was not sent by Him. We no longer have to be concerned that anything has somehow disrupted the peace with God that Jesus secured for us and this means that we can have absolute confidence in our hearts and total security in our daily lives. Jesus paid the price for us to have perfect peace with God.

### **Help My Unbelief**

There was a man who brought his demon-possessed son to Jesus to have the demon cast out of him. Jesus' disciples had been unable to expel the demon, so at first the man said to Jesus, "If you can do anything...please help us." Jesus rebuked him for this assertion that anything was impossible for God and the man corrected himself, crying out, "I do believe; help my unbelief!" (see Mark 9:24) At this, Jesus commanded the evil spirit to leave the boy and he was completely healed. When Jesus' disciples asked Him why they had not been able to drive the demon out of the boy, He told them it was because of their unbelief. (See Matthew 17:20.)

Unbelief prevents us from experiencing all of the blessings that are God's will for us. It occurs when we consider that our current circumstance is too difficult for God to handle or that our present problem has somehow not been addressed through the sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus. There are various types of unbelief and enemy attacks against our faith that seek to thwart our ability to receive the blessings God has for us. Understanding them can be helpful in assessing the condition of our hearts.

**Disbelief** is the inability or refusal to believe or trust in something. Disbelief says things like, "I do not believe that Jesus heals today." Just because we do not believe something does not mean it is not true. This said, if we do not believe something that Jesus died to give us, then we will be highly unlikely to receive it from God unless He dramatically intervenes in our lives—which He has been known to do.

**Unbelief** in its simplest form is *weakness of faith* or *faithlessness*. It stems from the same word used for an unbeliever because it indicates that we think something is too impossible or too *unbelievable* to be real. This does not always mean we have no faith but that we have been stretched in our faith past our ability to believe or accept something. For example, unbelief says, "I know that Jesus died for my sins, but I'm not sure He can provide for me financially." When we have varying levels of unbelief in our hearts, it is still possible to receive from God, but it will undoubtedly be inconsistent, unreliable, and feel more like a wrestling match than an easy flow of faith.

**Misbelief** is faith in something that is wrong. We have faith, but we have placed our faith in something that has no power to save us. Believing in anything other than the finished work of Jesus' sacrifice and resurrection as the solution to any circumstance, trial, or apparent problem is a misbelief. For example, misbelief says things like, "Time heals all wounds." Time does not heal, Jesus heals. Misbeliefs are also the result of ideas, strategies, or teachings that support the belief that Jesus is not God, did not come in the flesh, did not die, was not raised from the dead, or is not King of the Universe. This type of misbelief says things like, "I believe Jesus was a good teacher like many other religious leaders."

**Self-righteousness** is the most common and deadly misbelief. Simply put, self-righteousness is faith in our own record before God rather than in Jesus' perfect record. Self-righteousness says things like, "If I am a good person and do this or that, then God will..." or it may also say something like, "I deserve this problem because I did something bad." Self-righteousness can surface as pride or as self-pity by saying things like, "I deserve to be blessed," or, "I'm not good enough for God to bless me," or it can whine in exasperation, "I am a good person, why won't God bless me?"

**Psychologizing** our faith is another prevalent misbelief. Psychologizing points us to inspect our past for reasons why we feel disconnected from God or are not experiencing the fullness of His blessings. This kind of misbelief says things like, "I was unloved by my father, so it is hard for me to believe that God is a loving Heavenly Father." Unfortunately, this is the wrong basis for faith in God altogether. God's love for us is not based on our past but on the sacrifice of His Son in order to adopt us as His children. Everything about the person we used to be died on the cross with Christ so that we can live as a new creation and receive all of God's blessings. Digging into our past is the enemy's tactic of bringing to remembrance the very things Jesus blotted off the record through the shedding of His blood.

**Unforgiveness** is not the same as unbelief but it can be evidence of unbelief. This said, Jesus never refused to heal someone because they had unforgiveness in their lives. The blood of Jesus provides such complete forgiveness for our sins that He is not holding our unforgiveness against us. However, if we are believing God for something, we should not be surprised if opportunities to forgive others all of a sudden become prevalent in our life, including past wounds resurfacing and new offenses being inflicted by those around us. The state of our faith for receiving mercy from God is evidenced by how readily we extend mercy to those who hurt us.

**Offense** at God's ways is also not the same as unbelief but it can create resistance to what God wants to do in our lives. God's ways are much higher than our ways and sometimes, they seem nonsensical or even humiliating to us. For example, the people of Nazareth were offended by Jesus' humanity and, therefore, He could not do many miracles there because of their unbelief. (See Mark 6:5-6.) Religious people were offended by Jesus' approach and, therefore, He would not do any miracles for them to endorse their unbelief. When John the Baptist was uncertain if Jesus was truly the Messiah because His ways were so different than what he expected, Jesus said, "Blessed is the one who is not offended at me." (See Matthew 11:6.) If we find ourselves offended by Jesus or His ways of leading us, then we are in unbelief and will find it challenging to receive from Him.

### **Repent & Enter His Rest**

In order to truly combat and conquer unbelief, misbelief, and disbelief, we must be willing to let go of

everything we have ever thought to be true in order to be taught by the Holy Spirit. This will include challenging, refuting, and disproving common sense approaches of this world, beliefs that we were taught as a child, methods that may have worked for us in the past, and even some of the best known teachings in the Church. We have to allow the Holy Spirit to renew our mind, will, and emotions by demolishing our pride and our wrong ideas about God and His love for us.

In fact, Jesus taught that if our eye causes us to sin, we should pluck it out, and if our hand causes us to sin we should cut it off. (See Matthew 5:29-30.) Even though Jesus often spoke in parables, He was not using hyperbole or exaggeration in this passage as much as we would like to think. When Paul taught about not indulging our own desires, he went further than Jesus had and instructed believers to consider ourselves completely dead to all of our body parts so that we could live as slaves to the perfect will of God. (See Romans 6:11-18.) This is what repentance looks like and is part of what it means to take up our cross and follow Jesus by saying to God, "Not my will, but Yours be done."

It only takes a mustard seed of faith for mountains to be moved. Therefore, do not ever condemn yourself or anyone else for struggling with unbelief, and do not make faith into a self-righteous performance-driven way of meeting God's criteria for blessing. Jesus met all of God's requirements for you to be at peace with God. Your part is to enter into the rest He has provided for you. Start with the faith that you have and cry out to God to help your unbelief!

## REST & REMEMBER

Deuteronomy 5:15 NIV – Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the LORD your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the LORD your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day.

### DESCRIPTION

Rest is very important to God. Even God rested on the seventh day after He finished all of His work. Through faith in Christ, God invites us to enter His rest because Jesus finished all of the work of our salvation and redemption.

The Israelites had been slaves in Egypt, subjugated and driven by harsh task-masters. But by the blood of the Passover lamb, God delivered them out of slavery. Their historical reality gives us a beautiful prophetic picture of how we were slaves to sin, to this world, and to the evil one. But now by the blood of Jesus, we have been set free.

God called the Israelites to rest as a way of remembering that His leadership is not like the slave-masters they had experienced in Egypt. In fact, He had rescued them from that kind of abuse.

Therefore, practicing Rest & Remember is about stopping to rest from our tasks in order to remember the ways that God has redeemed us and set us free from the bondage this world, from our own nature, and from the evil one.

### MEDITATION

Invite the Holy Spirit to speak to you and read the Deuteronomy passage above and the Additional Scriptures listed on the next page.

What stands out to you in these passages? How do these passages give you freedom for rest?

How have you viewed God as a harsh task-master?

How is serving Him supposed to be different than this?

What else do you sense the Lord speaking to you?



### PURPOSE:

To enter into the rest that Jesus provides for our souls.

To recognize in our own lives how God has delivered us from the world, the flesh, and the devil.

To deepen our understanding of what Jesus has accomplished for us.

### SPIRITUAL FRUIT:

Deeper rest in Christ.

Greater trust in God.

Increased peace in our hearts.

Genuine thankfulness and joy for what God has done for us.

More recognition of the work of Jesus.

## PRAYER

Father, thank you sent Jesus to be my Passover Lamb who delivers me from the flesh, the world, and the devil. Help me to remember the ways that I was in bondage and the ways that you have rescued me and changed my heart since the day I first placed my faith in you. Fill me afresh with wonder at your mercy and grace. In Jesus' name, Amen.

## PRACTICE

1. Stop and rest (literally) from the demands of life including business, community, household, family, and even ministry or church-related duties. If needed, schedule a time.
2. Consider your life before Jesus (i.e. your way of life, behavior, trusts, additions, the path your life was on, etc.) Use the following questions as a guide for reflection:
  - What or who were you enslaved to before Jesus entered your life? How has God rescued you from this?
  - In what ways are you different now than your former life? How has life with God changed you?
  - How has God delivered you from subjugation to evil? Addictions? Oppression? Demons?
  - How has God delivered you from over-working or the burden of providing, performing, or producing to take care of yourself?
  - How has God saved you from the need to be busy or task-driven to feel accomplished or useful?
  - How has God freed you from finding your legitimacy in your work or in your ability to meet certain standards?

3. Take time to praise God for His mercy and kindness towards you. Praise God that He is a kind and loving leader, not a harsh task-master. Thank God for your new life with Him.
  - Begin afresh and enter into the rest (physical and spiritual) that God has provided for us in Jesus. Trust Him to continue His work in your life.
  - Considering your answers to these questions, in what areas is God calling you a deeper level of rest, trust, deliverance, and freedom in Him?

## NOTES:

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## ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES:

- Genesis 2:2
- Hebrews 4:1-11
- Romans 4:1-8
- Matthew 11:28-30
- Philippians 1:6
- Psalms 127:1-2
- Isaiah 55:1-3
- Revelation 21:6
- Mark 6:31-32
- Psalms 23
- Psalms 81
- Matthew 25:24-25

## HELP MY UNBELIEF

Mark 9:21-24 NIV - Jesus asked the boy's father, "How long has he been like this?" "From childhood," he answered. "I have often thrown him into fire or water to kill him. But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us." "If you can?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for one who believes." Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!"

### DESCRIPTION

Unbelief prevents us from experiencing all of the blessings God has for us, including miracles. It occurs when we consider that our current circumstance is too difficult for God to handle or that our present problem has somehow not been addressed through the sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus. This does not mean we have no faith but that our faith has been stretched past our ability to believe.

This said, the free gift of salvation, deliverance, healing, and sustenance is ours to receive by faith. This means that when we have real faith in God, even if it is only the size of a mustard seed, everything is possible to us. We stop fearing anything or even thinking things like, "If you can..." to God because we start to truly entrust ourselves into His hands as our loving Heavenly Father no matter how grim our circumstances may appear to be.

Therefore, to practice Help My Unbelief is about recognizing that even though we have some faith, there are ways in which we are not fully trusting God. Recognizing these areas helps us turn them over the Lord, repent, and build our faith to receive from Him.

### PRAYER

Father, I believe, help my unbelief! Show me the ways that I am not trusting you fully or am believing wrong things. Increase my faith in more areas of my life so that I can bring you greater glory. Show me how to exercise my faith by trusting you more in all things. In Jesus' name, Amen.



### PURPOSE:

To resist and conquer various forms of unbelief.

To grow in faith and application of trusting God in our lives.

To experience more miracles because of greater faith.

### SPIRITUAL FRUIT:

Strengthened faith and faithfulness.

Deeper experience of God's ways and work.

Repentance from self-reliance over trust in God.

Repentance from wrong beliefs.

Purified motives and approach to life.

## CONSIDERATIONS

Consider these forms of unbelief, listed in no particular order:

- **Disbelief:** The inability or refusal to believe something. Says things like, "I do not believe that Jesus heals today."
- **Doubt/Unbelief:** Thinking something is too unbelievable to be real or having faith stretched past our ability to believe.
- **Misbelief:** Faith in something that is wrong. Says things like, "Time heals all wounds." Time does not heal, Jesus heals.
- **Self-Righteousness:** Faith in our own record before God rather than in Jesus' perfect record. Believes, "I deserve it."
- **Psychologizing:** Inspecting our past for reasons why we are unable to receive God's blessings. Says things like, "my father didn't love me so I doubt God does." This is the wrong basis for faith altogether. Jesus did not come as a psychologist. He came as a Savior.

### PRACTICE

1. Ask the Holy Spirit to highlight one of the unbeliefs above that is relevant to your life right now.
2. Ask the Lord to show you how this unbelief has infiltrated your thoughts. Talk to Him about:
  - When did this unbelief begin? Was there an event which triggered this? Was it from a disappointment?
  - Ask the Lord to reveal to you the real root of the issue. For example, pride, fear, intellectualism, theology, etc.
3. Repent. Ask the Lord to forgive your unbelief.
  - Ask the Lord to forgive your unbelief. Receive forgiveness.
  - Ask the Lord to help you change your approach.
4. Ask the Lord how He wants to help you overcome this unbelief through greater faith and trust in Him.
  - How will He transform your faith and renew your mind?
  - Is there something He is asking you to do to build your faith?
5. Do whatever He says.

### NOTES:

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### ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES:

Unbelief  
 Matthew 13:58  
 2 Kings 17:15-15  
 Psalm 78  
 Isaiah 65:2

### Faith

Matthew 19:26  
 Philippians 4:13  
 Hebrews 11:1, 6  
 Romans 10:17  
 Mark 11:22-25  
 1 Corinthians 2:5  
 Romans 4:16



## ESTABLISHED TOGETHER

When the time came for all the tribes of Israel to inherit the Promised Land, there were a few tribes who received their inheritance on the east side of the Jordan. At first, when they requested their lands, Moses was appalled at the thought that they wanted to settle in their own inheritance while the rest of Israel went to war for their own lands. But then, these tribes agreed to go to war ahead of their brethren to aid in the battle against their enemies on their behalf until all of their brethren received their allotted inheritance. (See Numbers 32; Deuteronomy 3:12-22.)

As followers of Christ, we are in a war with this world, our flesh, and the evil one. The battle can be fierce and wearisome. When we are established in righteousness, we are settled with a peace in our hearts and no matter what circumstances may bring, we are at rest in our own souls. This is a blessing from God. But at the same time, our brothers and sisters in Christ who are not yet well established in the righteousness of Christ are still battling to enter into the fullness of their inheritance in Him. For us to be complacent while they are still at war is unloving and appalling.

After Peter first confessed that Jesus is the Messiah and Son of God, Jesus declared that upon this rock, HE would build His church. The work of the Lord in someone's life is something that only the Lord can do. This said, once we are established upon the Rock of Christ, we must co-labor with Jesus to help others be established in Him so that they also build upon the Rock rather than on sand. When the author of Hebrews wrote about exactly this, the community had grown battle weary from extended and severe persecution. Some were even on the verge of turning away from Christ to return to Judaism just to make their earthly lives easier. So the writer of Hebrews exhorted them to encourage one another daily and not to neglect meeting together so that they could stay focused on Christ and His eternal Kingdom without stumbling into sin, error, or unbelief. (See Hebrews 3, 10.)

### **The Purpose of the Church**

God's purpose for His Church is to reveal His wisdom and love to the world. (See Ephesians 3:10; John 13:35.) This will be accomplished through believers who are so confident in Him that they will not bow down to the evil one and who will love one another so well that God's humble and selfless heart is put on display. When Jesus prayed His final High Priestly prayer in John 17, the depths of His heart was for oneness among believers. This unity will not happen by creed or doctrinal statement. It can only be done by the Lord through His Spirit working in the hearts of individual people to bring them together in like-mindedness.

Throughout history, the Church has taken various approaches to its purpose regarding the development of believers in Christ and the Christian faith. For example, the Roman Catholic approach has been more focused on the forgiveness of **sins**. People lived their lives, they were imperfect and they sinned so they needed forgiveness in order to be restored to right standing with God. They could go to the Catholic priest, confess their sins, say a few prayers and be cleansed and restored. The church became like a blood-bank for taking withdrawals from the wells of mercy while the priests maintained rituals to keep God happy. In contrast, the Protestant church focused more on the fact that Jesus came to save **sinners**. The whole person and all of their individual sins were forgiven and atoned for through the sacrifice of Jesus. Therefore, faith in God and independent study of His word for knowledge which aided this faith

became the primary focus. The church became a center for the redeemed to study God and be encouraged in moral living.

However, the early Church gathered together to worship, pray, share, and teach one another and every believer had something to contribute. (See 1 Corinthians 14.) The people lived their lives by the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit in the midst of persecution and came together to share what God was doing, and strengthen one another to stand firm amidst the opposition of the world. Traveling apostles, prophets, and teachers were sent by God to various cities to bring the word of the Lord and teaching in the Scriptures to strengthen believers in their faith. Evangelists were sent out to gather lost souls into the Kingdom. Elders/pastors cared for the people in each local congregation. Everyone had their role within the Body of Christ and they worked together to spur one another on in the love and holiness of God.

The point is that in helping our brothers and sisters to be established in the righteousness of Christ, it is not one but ALL of these elements. Our duty is to encourage one another that our sins are forgiven through the sacrifice of Jesus. Our responsibility is to exhort one another to live as children of God and sinners who have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. The purpose of our gatherings must be to share with one another, to learn from one another, and to care for one another until we all attain maturity in Christ.

The Church has fallen far short of her calling and duty. I have heard it said that in every culture influenced by Christianity, the culture also influences the Christianity within it. In Jerusalem, Christianity became a religion. In Rome, Christianity became a government. In Greece, Christianity became a philosophy. In Europe, Christianity became a community center. In America, Christianity became an enterprise. Throughout history and in every culture, the Church has become distracted with the things of this world, with governments of nations, with philosophies and selfish ambitions of men. It should not be so.

Instead, let us press on to become so grounded in what Christ has done for us that we are unshaken by calamity and unmoved by any distraction. Let us press on ahead of our brothers and sisters in Christ to battle for them until they attain the full revelation of Christ and His righteousness for them. Let us not be complacent or stop encouraging one another as long as it is "Today" so that all of us will endure to the end and receive the rewards of our eternal inheritance.

## KINGDOM WARRIOR EVALUATION

1 = Needs improvement	2 = In Refining Process	3 = Doing Well for Now	
<b>Kingdom/Boot Camp Training – Are you training like an athlete to receive the prize of your King?</b>			
Jesus is my King and the Commander of my life.	1	2	3
I demonstrate my allegiance to my King through obedience to His voice.	1	2	3
I understand the power and authority given to me by my King.	1	2	3
I honor my King who He died for me rather than use His authority for His own benefit.	1	2	3
I use the power and authority He has given me for His purposes and to be like Him.	1	2	3
I discipline my life in order to become increasingly useful to my King for His purposes.	1	2	3
I keep my life pure and holy.	1	2	3
I eliminate behaviors which are hazardous or unbeneficial to my Kingdom mission.	1	2	3
I reject my personal inclinations and preferences to serve the commands of my King.	1	2	3
I live my life according to the Word of God, the Holy Scriptures/Bible.	1	2	3
I reject and am victorious over sickness, oppression, demonic spirits, and anything cursed.	1	2	3
I do not tolerate unclean or demonic spirits in my life.	1	2	3
I separate myself from others whose behavior may corrupt my pursuit of God.	1	2	3
I rely on my King for everything I need.	1	2	3
I do not love money, strive for money, or make decisions based on money.	1	2	3
I am aware of and continually alert to my enemy's schemes and tactics.	1	2	3
I resist and am victorious over unbelief.	1	2	3
I am not bound by religion, legalism, or spiritual pride/superiority (like a Pharisee.)	1	2	3
I discern deception and "wisdom" which is not of God (i.e. earthly, sensual, demonic.)	1	2	3
I discern false teaching, teachers, and prophets and do not comply with their teaching.	1	2	3
I resist and am victorious over the urges of my flesh, including lusts for food and sex.	1	2	3
I have no fear of man. I do not wrongly submit myself or suppress truth in any way.	1	2	3
I do not use my God-given authority to tear people down but to build people up.	1	2	3
I use God's strength in my life to protect others, bring them to salvation, and equip them.	1	2	3
I handle conflicts with others directly, swiftly, and privately.	1	2	3
I aim for peace and regard conflicts with others to be a liability to my Kingdom mission.	1	2	3
I am willing to die in obedience to King Jesus so that others can live and know God.	1	2	3
I submit to the God-appointed authorities over me without grumbling or divisiveness.	1	2	3
My allegiance is exclusively to Jesus and no other person, organization, or nation.	1	2	3
I serve Jesus impartially/above any nationality, ethnicity, tribe, family, or relationship.	1	2	3

*Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize?  
Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training.  
They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.  
1 Corinthians 9:24-25*

## HOLY SPIRIT: PROPHECY

1Co 14:3, 24-25 NIV - The one who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouraging and comfort. ... But if an unbeliever or an inquirer comes in while everyone is prophesying, they are convicted of sin and are brought under judgment by all, as the secrets of their hearts are laid bare. So they will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, "God is really among you!"

### GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit in 1 Corinthians 12 are gifts which are freely distributed by God when believers gather together. Jesus demonstrated that spiritual maturity includes operating in any and all of these gifts as God wills. *Note:* These gifts are different than those in Romans 12 and Ephesians 4.

### DESCRIPTION

The Holy Spirit gift of Prophecy is distributed by the Holy Spirit when believers are gathered together. By definition, prophecy is "a discourse emanating from divine inspiration and declaring the purposes of God, whether by reproving and admonishing the wicked, or comforting the afflicted, revealing hidden things, or foretelling future events.\*" As such, the Holy Spirit gift of Prophecy is for edification, exhortation, comfort, and may also be used to expose or bring conviction of sin. Any believer can function in this gift at any time as God grants them revelation. This said, the Scripture is clear that all hearers of prophecy must test/judge the word of prophecy for themselves before receiving it as from the Lord or taking action on the word. As a general guideline, words from the Lord will impart hope and restoration while words of condemnation or manipulation are not from God.

Practicing the Holy Spirit Gift of Prophecy is about listening to God when we are with people for anything He may desire to say to them and then speaking it forth on His behalf.



### PURPOSE:

To speak forth God's words of encouragement, and alignment with His will.

To convey the heart of God towards others.

To discern accurately the situations in the lives of others so we can help them according to God's will.

### SPIRITUAL FRUIT:

Speaking the truth in love to others.

Building up the Church.

Compassion coupled with words of exhortation to right action.

Considerate warnings and rebukes to those who need correction.

Comfort for the afflicted.

\*Definition from Thayer's

### PRAYER

Father, thank you that you desire to speak through me by your Spirit so that others may be brought into the fullness of your love and blessings. Help me to speak your words to others so that they can know you more. In Jesus' name, Amen.

### PRACTICE

- When you are with someone, take some time to ask the Lord if there is anything He desires to say to them.
  - While you are with the person, listen to them and listen to the Holy Spirit at the same time.

- Pay careful attention to what the Holy Spirit reveals to you as you focus on the person you are with. Pay attention for things such as:
  - Scripture verses or passages that come to your mind.
  - Simple phrases which seem to come into your mind (which may hold significance to them even if not to you.)
  - Pictures or visions you see with the eyes of your heart (which you must then describe to them.)
  - Revelation of the call of God on their life or some aspect of how God has gifted them.
  - Discernment of the time or season of life with God that they are in and God's purpose in it.
  - Instructions from God for what they are to do next.
  - Insight into an area of their life which God desires to heal.
  - Invitations to deeper trust in God and His ways.
  - Warnings of danger ahead.
  - Calls to repentance or rebuke for ungodliness or unbelief.
  - A scene or prophetic act the Lord wants you to do to demonstrate His message to them.

- Share the insights you receive from the Lord with the person you are with or do what the Lord tells you to do.
  - Encourage them to test the word and take it to the Lord in prayer for application.
  - Give God all the glory for speaking through you!

### NOTES:

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### ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES:

- 1 Corinthians 14:1-5, 29-33, 39
- Acts 11:28
- Acts 13:1-2
- Acts 21:8-14
- Acts 21:9
- 1Thessalonians 5:19-22
- 1 John 4:1

## UNIT FOUR – KEY QUESTIONS

### Skilled in Righteousness

Use this worksheet to test your grasp of the material and exercises of Unit Four.

<b>What does it mean to be skilled in the word of righteousness? (in your own words)</b>	
<b>How did Jesus' sacrifice establish us in righteousness?</b>	<b>How can we be sure that Jesus paid it all?</b>
<b>What is the role of faith in New Covenant righteousness?</b>	<b>What must we do to enter into God's rest?</b>
<b>What are some types of unbelief?</b>	<b>What is the purpose of the Church?</b>
<b>What is one thing you learned that you did not know before?</b>	<b>What questions do you still have about this subject?</b>

## UNIT FOUR: GROUP EXERCISES

Use the Established in Righteousness Chart to minister to one another. AND/OR Take communion.

Group Training Exercise	
COMMUNION TOGETHER	
<p><b>DESCRIPTION</b></p> <p>Jesus Christ is our eternal Passover Lamb. Like the Israelites painted the blood of the lamb on their doorposts to be protected from the destroyer, Jesus shed His blood so that our sins are forgiven. Through His blood painted on the doorposts of our hearts, we can be protected from destruction of sin, the world, the flesh, and the evil one. Jesus' body was broken so that we can freely enter into the presence of God to worship. When we take communion, we remember His great deliverance and what Jesus Christ did for us and receive in ourselves the life of God.</p> <p>The first disciples of Christ took communion (or "broke bread") regularly. Consecrated bread and wine were made readily available for believers to serve themselves or take communion together. As a holy nation and a royal priesthood, every believer is a priest of God and able to administer the body and blood of Christ with due reverence. (1 Peter 2:9) This said, communion and the benefits of Christ's sacrifice are only available to those who believe that Jesus is Lord and that God raised Him from the dead. This means that if you do not yet believe in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, you should abstain from communion or better yet, believe Jesus and partake.</p> <p>Practicing the partaking of Communion is about commemorating Christ's sacrifice, renewing our faith in what He has done for us, and to looking forward to His return.</p> <p>As you take communion together as a group, take a moment to look around the room at the people of God. These are your people. We are one nation, one people, one family, one body, one Kingdom chosen by God to be His. Hallelujah!</p> <p><b>SCRIPTURE PORTION</b></p> <p>Luke 22:19-20 NIV - And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.</p>	<p><b>GROUP PRACTICE</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Prepare the bread and wine.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consecrate the bread and wine to the Lord by praying over them. For example, "I consecrate this bread and wine to the Lord for holy use and purpose."</li> <li>▪ Do not use this bread or wine for casual snacking.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Perceive the body and blood of Jesus.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Jesus said of the bread and wine, "this <i>is</i> my body" and, "this <i>is</i> my blood" even when He still had a natural body.</li> <li>▪ Read the Communion Scriptures about what the body and blood of Jesus have done for us.</li> <li>▪ Believe that these Scriptures apply to the body and blood you are about to partake of.</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Examine yourself and your faith.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Do you believe that Jesus Christ shed His blood for the forgiveness of your sins?</li> <li>▪ Do you believe that you are totally forgiven?</li> <li>▪ Do you believe that you can receive all of the benefits of Christ body and blood through faith in Jesus?</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. <i>Optional:</i> Have people share one aspect of Christ's sacrifice that they are focusing on as they take Communion today.</li> <li>5. Remember the Lord's death and proclaim His return.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Praise God that because of Jesus's sacrifice, you are protected from the destroyer until Jesus returns.</li> </ul> </li> <li>6. Partake.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ As you eat the body and drink the blood of Jesus, be consciously strengthened with the life and power of God in your inmost being. The indestructible life of Christ and the same power that raised Christ from the dead is in you.</li> </ul> </li> <li>7. Praise God and rejoice in His salvation!</li> </ol>
<p><b>SCRIPTURE PORTIONS:</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">John 1:29</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">1 Corinthians 5:7</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Luke 22:15-20</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Matthew 26:26-28</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Mark 14:17-25</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">John 1:32:1-30</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">John 6:53-57</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">1 Corinthians 11:23-34</p>	<div style="text-align: center;">  <p><b>PURPOSE:</b></p> <p>To remember, honor, and revere Christ's sacrifice of atonement on our behalf.</p> <p>To rejoice in God's salvation and the way that God has made for us to be saved.</p> <p>To partake of the life of God.</p> <p><b>GROUP SIZE:</b></p> <p>Any size group.</p> </div>

Category: Basics

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