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# Receiving A New Role Model

- *Esteem* -

*One of the greatest difficulties that Christians face is trying to live the Christian life while looking at the old man with all the bondages of sin. We need a new role model. We need to see who we are in Jesus Christ. We need to see ourselves as a new creature having a righteous nature.*

## David's Men

**W**hat happened to David's men? When David met them, they were the downcast of the earth, but they became heroes, the mighty men of David. What happened? What caused the dramatic change?

In brief, David, was on the run from the evil king Saul, when the relatives of David's father came down to meet him. Samuel records the nature of the men that came to meet David. *"And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men"* (I Samuel 22:2). What a motley crew! David must have thought, "Is this to be my army? God, you must be kidding!"

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However, David, by faith, saw beyond their current conditions because he became a captain over them.

The sociological term for David's men would be "dysfunctional". There were so many external pressures upon them that they were distressed. They were frustrated, angry, confused, and didn't know which way to turn. They were hurt, anxious, depressed, and had lost their self-esteem. The description sounds like many of the people that come to a counselor for help. These men were also in debt. They couldn't keep up with their bills and they had to borrow money. They were in a hole and could not see their way out. We can imagine that they had family problems at home because of their debts. Worry, fretting, and contention would be the natural order of things around the dinner table. Last, they were discontented. They wanted peace, but did not have it. They wanted more out of life, but it seemed out of their reach. They grumbled and complained about their condition, but did not have any answers. They saw themselves as defeated victims of the circumstances of this life and could no longer hold on in their misery. Counselor, you have your counselees standing before you. What will make a change in their lives?

Now, let us fast forward and see David's men some time later, maybe about forty years. Although Samuel mentions thirty or more of the men, I would like to focus on three of the heroes. *"These be the names of the mighty men whom David had: The Tachmonite that sat in the seat, chief among the captains; the same was Adino the Eznite: he lift up his spear against eight hundred, whom he slew at one time. And after him was Eleazar the son of Dodo the Ahohite, one of the three mighty men with David, when they defied the Philistines that were there gathered together to battle, and the men of Israel were gone away: He arose, and smote the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand clave unto the sword: and the LORD wrought a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to spoil. And after him was Shammah the son of Agee the Hararite. And the Philistines were gathered together into a troop, where was a piece of ground full of lentiles: and the people fled from the Philistines. But he stood in the midst of the ground, and defended it, and slew the Philistines: and the LORD wrought a great victory"* (II Samuel 23:8-12).

The first mighty man of David was named Adino. His name means "his spear". He took his spear and killed eight hundred men at one time with his spear. I possibly could imagine spearing eight hundred men. However, he had not only to thrust his spear into each man, he also had to pull it out before spearing the next. This is almost uncomprehensible.

The second mighty man of David was named Eleazer. His name means "God is helper". This man fought the Philistines so intensely and so long that when the battle was

over and the victory was won, the people had to pry his fingers from his sword. The rest of the men just followed him to pick up the bounty.

The third mighty man of David was named Shammah. His name means "astonishing". This man is my favorite hero of David's men. He stood in the middle of a field of beans and fought off an entire troop of Philistines. Please note again the last clause of verse twelve, "*And the LORD wrought a great victory*" (II Samuel 23:12b).

**What happened to cause the dramatic change in these men?** We need to begin by understanding that these men submitted themselves under the authority of David. "*He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed*" (Proverbs 13:20). What did David know and teach these men to bring about such a difference in their lives?

The Word in I Samuel chapter seventeen reveals the secret. The superior Philistine army had come up against Saul and all Israel. One man, Goliath, a giant of over nine feet in height, came out to taunt the army of Israel. Goliath challenged Israel to send out a man to fight against him. He beat the Israelites' esteem down with his continuous challenges to them. They were dismayed and afraid because they saw themselves as being helpless against this giant.

Jesse sent his youngest son, David, down with some supplies for David's older brothers who were in the Israelite army. David had been staying behind to tend to his father's sheep. When David got to the battle line, he heard Goliath again making his challenge. He also saw the Israelites run from Goliath in fear. It is interesting to see David's reaction to the situation. "*What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach of Israel? for who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?*" (I Samuel 17:26).

Eliab, David's oldest brother, got angry at David for speaking to the men. Look at how Eliab tried to put down David, "Why have you come down here? With whom did you leave that small flock of sheep out in the wilderness? I know how proud you are. You are just a naughty boy who came down to see the battle." David responded, "What have I done? Isn't there a cause?" David then went about speaking to the other men about what would happen to the man who killed Goliath. When the king, Saul, heard of David, he sent for him. "*And David said to Saul, Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine*" (I Samuel 17:32). The king responded that David was but a youth and Goliath had been trained all his life for battle.

David responded that he had fought the lion and the bear, ". . . *and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God. David said moreover, The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and*

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*out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine"* (I Samuel 17:36-37a). David refused king Saul's heavy armor, but instead took his own staff, five smooth stones, and his sling. We should again remember that David was only a teenager meeting a seasoned man of war.

Goliath mocked him, made fun of him, and cursed him in the name of his gods. However, David said, *"Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defiled"* (I Samuel 17:45). He told Goliath that God would give him victory that all the people on earth would know about the God of Israel. He told Goliath that the battle belonged to the LORD and He would give him into his hands. Next, David ran toward Goliath and slung a stone to the mark, deep in the forehead of Goliath. The giant fell! Therefore, David took the giant's sword and cut off his head as the Philistine army fled.

Now, let us do a review to see the truth behind the story. David had learned growing up that God was the Almighty God. He had learned that God was not only the Creator, but the He was also the God that had entered into covenant with Adam and Eve. The Hebrew word for "covenant" means "to cut an agreement". After Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, God killed some animals, shedding their blood, and gave the skins to them for clothing to cover their nakedness. He also made some promises to them. David had also heard of the stories of the great flood and of how God had entered into a covenant with Noah after the flood with the sign of the covenant being the rainbow (Genesis 9:9-15). David had heard how God had entered into covenant with Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3, 15:1-18) and with his seed after him. David surely had heard the stories of how God had made a covenant with Moses and had him to lead the Israelites out of the hands of Pharaoh and the Egyptians. He had heard how God had promised that one man would chase a thousand and that two men would put ten thousand to flight (Deuteronomy 32:30).

David knew that man could enter into a covenant with God through faith and the act of being circumcised. David was an Israelite and, thus, a seed of Abraham. Therefore, he believed that he could by faith enter into a covenant with God. He was circumcised and set out to believe God's faithfulness as needed. When David commented that Goliath was uncircumcised, he was implying that Goliath did not have a covenant with God. David, as a shepherd boy, learned to depend upon the covenant promises that God had made to protect him and give him victory over his enemies. He had fought the lion and the bear, and God had given him the victory.

Therefore, when David faced Goliath in the name of the LORD, he was not afraid of the giant. The Hebrew word that is translated "LORD" is actually the word "Jehovah" or "Yahweh" which means "the self-existing one" or "I AM". The Bible uses the name "Jehovah" to describe God as the one who makes covenant with man. David was not looking at his ability to defeat Goliath, but he was looking at God doing the fighting for him. With these truths in mind, David ran toward Goliath expecting the victory.

Therefore, David taught those in distress, those in debt, and those who were discontented about their covenant relationship with the Almighty God, the LORD. He taught them by his life experiences that they could trust God to keep His promises to them. He taught them that they could count on God to do the fighting for them as they intrusted their lives into His hands. Therefore, the motley crew of David became the mighty men of David and of God. They needed a new role model and they found it in David. They needed to look at themselves from a victor's perspective rather than from a victim's perspective. We also need a new role model. We need to see from a victor's perspective.

## Standing In The Winner's Circle

The World Olympics are held every four years. People from all over the world came to participate in the athletic games. They all had trained to get a gold medal. If they won, they would have the honor of standing in the winner's circle. Only the winners were invited to stand there. Believers need to see themselves as winners! However, this is not automatic. We are to renew our minds.

First, **we must see Christ Jesus as being The Winner.** We may begin by seeing that Isaiah prophesied that God would give Jesus the victory and that He would share the spoil with others. *"Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors"* (Isaiah 53:12). We find that the purpose of Jesus' coming into the world was to have victory over the devil. *"For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil"* (I John 3:8). David prophesied of the victory of Jesus and the sharing of the victory with us. *"Thou hast ascended on high, thou has led captivity captive: thou has received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell among them. Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation. Selah"* (Psalms 68:18-19).



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Paul records the victory of Jesus by saying, *"Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it"* (Colossians 2:15). This is the picture of the general of one army returning to his home town riding on a white stallion and dragging behind him, on foot, the defeated leader of the enemy's army. Paul further states, *"For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all"* (I Corinthians 15:25-28).

Jesus himself declared, *"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world"* (John 16:33). We can have peace in the midst of conflict because Jesus has already won the battle. He has already won the victory over the world and the powers of the world. He is seated in the winner's circle (Philippians 2:9-11).

Second, **Jesus has invited us to step into the Winner's Circle.** Paul told the Believers that he would, *"Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus"* (Ephesians 1:16-2:7).

Paul wanted the people to **KNOW** by wisdom and revelation what is the hope of Jesus' calling, the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and the exceeding greatness of his power to us. Jesus won over all the powers of the enemy when he was resurrected. He was invited to sit in a position of authority at the right hand of the throne of the Father in a position far above all the powers of the devil (see Ephesians 6:12). The Father placed everything under his feet!

However, Jesus delegated His authority **to** the church. We are resurrected with Jesus. We were invited to sit with Jesus in a position of authority far above all principalities and powers of the enemy. Jesus is in the winner's circle and He has invited us to sit with him in the winner's circle (Ephesians 2:6). Jesus later spoke to the church of Laodiceans saying, *"To him that overcometh will I grant to set with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne"* (Revelation 3:21). **Who is the overcomer?** *"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"* (I John 5:4-5). If you are a Believer, you are a **overcomer**. If you are an overcomer by faith in Jesus, then you are seated with Jesus in the winner's circle.

Third, we need to **see** that we are in the Winner's Circle. We are to **see** the principle of faith. Christ overcame all the works of the devil



through the cross and resurrection events and he now invites us to join him in the winner's circle. It is important that we **SEE** where we are to stand. *"And the LORD said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour"* (Joshua 6:2). Before, Joshua was ready to enter into battle with the enemy, he needed to **see** that God had given him the victory. However, the victory was already established in the spiritual realm. Solomon declared, *"Where there is no vision, the people perish"* (Proverbs 29:18a). If we do not **see** that we

are standing in the winner's circle we will also lose the battles in our daily lives. We need this vision. *"For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he"* (Proverbs 23:7a). If we see ourselves as being ugly and repulsive, then we respond in that fashion. If we see ourselves as being failures, then we will be failures.

Fourth, **whatever we focus our attention on is what we become**. I often find in counseling, that the person who hates his father, becomes just like him. Hate is such a strong emotional tie that causes the son to focus his attention upon his father. The more that he focuses his attention on his father, the more like him he will become even if he does not want to. You may try driving down the road and focusing your attention on the

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car wreck on the side of the road. You will most likely veer in the direction of the wreck. Genesis 30:37-43 gives us a classic example. Jacob had served Laban seven years for Rachel to be his wife, but Laban gave him Leah instead. Then Laban required Jacob to serve him seven more years for Rachel. Jacob was to keep all the spotted animals and give the solid colored ones to Laban. Therefore, Jacob (the deceiver) put spotted and striped stakes of wood before the eyes of the animals when they came to water and when they mated. *"And Jacob set the rods that he had pilled before the flocks in the gutter in the watering troughs when the flock came to drink, and they should conceive when they came to drink"* (Genesis 30:38). What happened? The cattle brought forth spotted and striped offspring. Have you ever notice an old married couple. They talk, look, and even act alike. Why? They have focused their attention on each other for many years.

Fifth, we need to see that we are with Christ in the winner's circle. Paul states in Romans 6:5, literally, that we have been grafted together with Christ. Whatever happened to Jesus also has happened to us. *"At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you"* (John 14:20). Please take note that we are in Jesus. *"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love"* (Ephesians 1:4). If we are grafted unto Christ and are in Him and He is standing in the winner's circle, then we are also standing in the winner's circle.

### What We Need To See

However, what does it mean to see yourself in the winner's circle? I give the following contrasts to demonstrate the meaning of seeing yourself standing in the Winner's circle.

1. You are not helpless. **You are helped.** *"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need"* (Hebrews 4:16).

2. You are not left out. **You are chosen.** *"Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, as peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light"* (I Peter 2:9).

3. You are not abandoned. **You are adopted and never left alone.** *"God sent forth his Son . . . that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father"* (Galatians 4:4-6). Jesus said, *"I will not leave your comfortless (as orphans): I will come to you"* (John 14:18).

4. You are not a sinner. **You are a saint.** Paul wrote to the carnal Christians at Corinth, ". . . to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both their's and our's" (I Corinthians 1:2). Although they were getting drunk at the Lord's Supper, Paul still addressed them as saints.

5. You are not rejected. **You are accepted.** *"To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved"* (Ephesians 1:6).

6. You are not guilty. **You are justified.** A good way to remember "justified" is to remember it is just as though we have never sinned. We may have been fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, drunkards, thieves, covetous, and homosexuals (I Corinthians 6:9-10); however, God has changed us. *"And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God"* (I Corinthians 6:11).

7. You are not fearful. **You have a sound mind.** *"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, of love, and of a sound mind"* (II Timothy 1:7). Living in fear and a lack of love keeps us from having a sound mind.

8. You are not the victim. **You are the victor.** *"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God"* (I John 5:4-5).

9. You are not defeated. **You are more than a conqueror.** *"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us"* (Romans 8:37).

10. You are not poor. **You are rich.** *"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich"* (II Corinthians 8:9).

11. You are not weak. **You are strong.** Paul declared, *"And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest on me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong"* (II Corinthians 12:9-10). God's Word to you is, ". . . let the weak say, I am strong" (Joel 3:10).

12. You are not sinful. **You are righteous.** *"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."* II Corinthians 5:21).

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13. You are not without hope. **You are hopeful.** *"Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace. Comfort your hearts, and stabiish you in every good word and work" (II Thessalonians 2:16-17).*

14. You are not sick. **You are healed.** This is not to deny the reality of sickness, but to see the finished work of Jesus. Peter wrote concerning Jesus, *"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (I Peter 2:24).*

15. You are not bound by Satan or past experiences. **You are free.** *"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36).* Jesus also said, *". . . he hath sent me to preach deliverance to the captives . . . to set at liberty them that are bruised" (Luke 4:18).*

16. You are not ashamed. **You are free from shame.** Paul said, *"According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death" (Philippians 1:20).*

17. You are not insecure. **You are secure.** *"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31).* What more security do we need than having God on our side?

18. You are not cursed. **You are blessed.** *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3)*

19. You are not handicapped. **You can do all that God asks you to do.** *"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13).*

20. You are not deaf. **You can hear God's voice.** *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me" (John 10:27).*

21. You are not spiritually blind. **You can see.** *"he hath sent me to preach . . . recovering of sight to the blind" (Luke 4:18).* *"He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you" (John 16:14-15).*

When I was as a boy growing up, I did what we called "Indian Wrestling" with other boys. We would draw a circle on the ground. Then two of us would get into the circle and one would try to throw the other off balance and out of the ring. That is a good

illustration of what happens in the spiritual. We are to stand in the WINNER'S CIRCLE and Satan and his powers try to get us out of the circle. *"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness"* (Ephesians 6:10-14). Notice that Paul describes a face to face, hand to hand, combat. It is a wrestling match. However, as long as we stay in the winner's circle, we remain a winner. It is when we step out of the circle, that we lose the battle.

The reason that Shammah is my favorite hero was that he stood in the middle of the bean patch and fought off the Philistines. However, he saw himself standing in a covenant relationship with God. He saw himself standing on ground that God had given to the Israelites. Just like Shammah, David's champion, we are to stand on the ground that God has given us through Christ. Furthermore, we are to withstand. The enemy will come against us. We can count on that. We are not to be passive but assertive in holding the ground that God has given to us. Like Shammah we are to defend the ground. We are *"having done all, to stand"* (Ephesians 6:13). Like Shammah, we are to continue to stand in the victory that God has already won in Jesus.

Please note that the enemy will use: (1) surprise, (2) our natural weakness (when we are tired), (3) deception (things that are not really in the Word), (4) peer pressure (other people do not believe that), (5) natural desires (sex, hunger, need for approval), and (6) doubt and fear. Remember the enemy's goal is to get us to step out of the winner's circle. His objective is to get us to believe that we really do not have the victory.

HOW ARE WE TO STAND????? First, we are to stand by the strength of God. We are to *". . . be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might"* (Ephesians 6:10). Literally, we are to be "empowered" or have that power within us. Second, we are to put on all the armor of God. We are to have our loins girt about with truth. We are to have a breastplate of righteousness. We are to have our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. We are to take up the shield of faith. We are to have on the helmet of salvation. We are to use the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Third, we are to enter into prayer with all kinds of prayer and supplication in the Spirit.

The key is to stand in the middle of the circle of who we are in Christ and what we have in Christ. Furthermore, we must not allow Satan to allure us out of the circle. The moment that we step out of the circle, we lose the battle. Often, zealous Christians step

out the circle to go fight the enemy on their own. It does not work, because they end up fighting him with their own strength. We must stand on God's Word, even when it seems contrary to circumstances. As long as we are standing in the middle of the circle, we have the victory!

### **Psyche And Self-esteem**

Most people consider self-esteem as the value that one places upon his life. By value, one person may mean pleasure or personal enjoyment that one may obtain from life. Another person may define value by what he considers to be prosperous or successful. Another person may place value in intellectual capacity or physical ability.

Many people see unborn children as having little or no value except to the parents. Then if the parents do not want children, they may consider their unborn child as having no value and seek an abortion. One may also look at the bum on the street as having no value because he contributes nothing to society. Others look at the aged person in the nursing home as having little value. Indeed, the bum may also place little value upon his own life. The old person may desire death because he sees himself as having little value to anyone. My mother who recently had a stroke sometimes sees little value in her own life.

The psyche is the aspect of man that determines the elements of value. From a Biblical perspective, the psyche (The Greek word is "psuche") or soul has three parts: the mind, will and emotions. The mind is the cognitive aspect. It has the ability to reason and use logic. The mind also has the ability to store information. We generally call this process "learning". We may also refer to this as the ability to remember. We may subdivide this factor into two parts: memory and recall. Memory is the storage factor, while recall is the ability to retrieve the information. Another element of the mind is its creative ability. It has the ability to imagine. Imagination is the ability to put bits of information together in such a way that new thoughts may be formulated.

The second part of the mind is the will or volition. The will has the ability to make choices based upon the information available to the conscious mind. This aspect distinguishes man from machine. Even the most sophisticated computers will only do what one programs them to do. However, man makes moral, ethical, and pleasurable choices. The Bible tells us that man has God's law written upon the table of man's heart. Some people are "strong willed" and choose to make their own decisions with little consideration of what others may think. Others are "weak willed" and become the doormat letting other people do the thinking for them. These are all factors related to self-esteem. The "strong willed" individual may fight for his rights, lose, and obtain a low self-esteem. The

opposite may also be true. One may have be "weak willed" and allow others to run over them and may gain a low self-esteem.

The third part of man is his emotions. Emotions often move the individual to make certain choices. We may categorize emotions in several different ways. We may classify emotions by their intensity. One may consider the emotion of "irritation" as mild. In contrast, "rage" is a very strong and intense emotion. We may also classify emotions as being positive or negative. The fruits of the spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance) from an emotional view point are positive emotions. Emotions like sorrow, bitterness, anger, fear, hate, and jealousy are negative emotions. These may cause much psychological stress. We may also associate positive emotions with a high self-esteem. Negative emotions go with a high or low self-esteem. If one thinks of himself too highly, he may use anger to fight for his self-esteem. If he has a low self-esteem, he may find himself being jealous. The individual may well struggle between the two extremes.

Another factor one may look at is that of perception. One may define perception as the means to gathering information through the body's sensory system. These senses are hearing, smelling, tasting, feeling by touch, and seeing. These abilities may vary greatly from individual to individual. There may also be dramatic changes of perception within the individual. The individual may lose hearing or sight, or both with age. Accidents and disease may hinder perception. If the individual compares his sensory perception with others, he may develop a low self-esteem.

The individual's interpretation of the information perceived will largely determine how he sees himself. Factors involved in this interpretation include: knowledge, understanding, emotions, expectations, beliefs, and desires. Of course, one usually bases current interpretation upon past interpretation of similar experiences and events. This is his frame of reference. These factors may work in many combinations to influence the individual's self-esteem. For example, if a person knows that he is handicapped and understands that the handicap came about because of his neglect or self abuse, then he may develop a low self-esteem. If he expects to reach a certain economic and social status by age 29 and succeeds, he may develop a high self-esteem. If someone believes that through his faith that he will be healed, but is not, then he may develop a low self-esteem. If the same person is healed in a miraculous way, he may develop a high-esteem. If someone places a strong desire upon receiving the approval of his spouse and never receives it, he may develop a low-esteem.

One major factor concerning the development of self-esteem is discernment of truth. Divine truth is centered both in the Living Word, Jesus, and the written Word, the Bible. One of the greatest dangers in discerning truth is taking a truth and making it an absolute

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truth to the exclusion to all other truths. For example, the Word says we are to love others as we love ourselves. Yet, it also says that we are to die to self. It further states that we are not to esteem ourselves higher than we ought. Proper discernment must consider each of these truths. Truths often come to us through shaded glasses. The people that present the "truths" to us have their own perception of the truth and we have our own perception of the truth. A mother may perceive her child is not developing mentally as fast as other children of the same sex and age. The mother may consequently tell her child that he is not as smart as other children. He then may surmise that he is dumb or stupid. Perceived truth may be learned through the teaching of others, through revelation of the Spirit, and through experience.

The secular humanist's view is that a child has established most of his personality by the age he starts to school. For this reason, many people are for government supported child care programs that take children out of the home and put them in a government structured education program long before the first grade of school. Of course such programs center their training based upon performance orientation. The problem is that when there is a measure of identity based upon performance, there are winners, and there are losers. Some children will always come up short. People often carry this over into the spiritual realm of thought. A child may think, "If I don't measure up, God won't receive me." Therefore, the child is isolated from God without any hope of remedy. The conclusions are that "I can't" and that "God is unfair." However, for the person that understands the **grace** of God, he understands that **he is accepted based upon the love of God and not based upon his own performance**. He understands that his old nature could never please God. However, he also understands that he has an entirely new nature in Christ (II Corinthians 5:17).

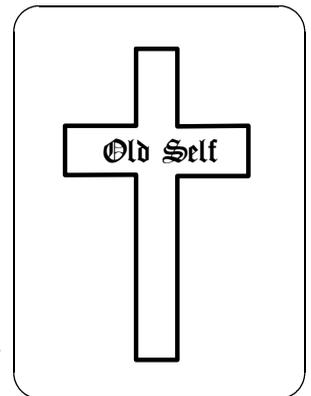
About two years ago I took a heavy dose of psychology courses at a state university. Every course that I took presented a search for man's identity. One psychologist had one view while another psychologist had somewhat a different view. Sigmund Freud's view was that the id of man is looking for self-acceptance or satisfaction. We can also see the struggle that is within the individual over identity. Carl Jung also saw conflict between what he called various archetypes within the individual; however, he saw the self as being the integration of the total personality. Alfred Adler looked at the birth order as being significant in the development of the self-image. Karen Horney presented the idea of the idealized self-image. An idealized self-image is a picture of oneself built on a realistic assessment of one's abilities.

Abraham Maslow, the father of modern humanism, developed his theory of a hierarchy of needs. At the bottom of the scale are the physiological needs such as food, water and sex. These needs are followed by the safety needs such as security, order, and stability. Belonging and love needs are next in order. These needs are followed by the esteem

need that comes from others and self. Last is what Maslow calls self-actualization. Self-actualization occurs when one realizes the fulfillment of all of his or her potentialities and capabilities. Self-actualization places self at the center of man's world. In essence, man becomes a god unto himself. Most all psychologists and sociologists accept this idea. They say that when man's needs are not being met, then psychological and sociological problems develop. This is one reason that our government has so many social programs. This is the reason why we have moved as a nation toward socialized medicine. This is the reason the government is trying to take the place of the parents in caring for children. The view is that if the parents meet all the needs of the child, the child will receive a positive self-image. However, if the parents in some way hinder the potential of the child by depriving the child, then the child will have a poor self-image. Of course, the government has postulated that most parents are incapable of supplying what the child needs.

Unfortunately, many Christian counselors and psychologists have also adopted these humanistic concepts. There has been a trend to disregard the concept of sin because sin brings with it guilt and guilt lowers man's self-esteem. Therefore, the conclusion for most counselors and social workers is that they must build up the self-esteem of the client. The truth is that this only brings a temporary solution. The person may feel somewhat better about themselves until they sin again or fail in some area. Then they hit a hard bottom.

The reality is that man has a sinful nature. Self is sinful. We should see ourselves rooted in Adam. However, in Adam we all die (I Corinthians 15:22). We need to see that for us to build a self-image is to encourage the life of the old nature. Therefore, we need to see that Jesus was crucified to destroy the sinful Adamic nature. We, therefore, are to consider the old nature to be dead with Christ. We need to see our self-image as crucified. However, the other side of the picture is to see ourselves identified with Christ in his resurrection. We are not to look for a self-image, but **we are to find our identity in Christ**. Our thoughts are to be replaced by Christ's thoughts. Our walk is to be Christ's walk. We are to consider who we are in Christ. We are also to **confess** who we are in Christ.



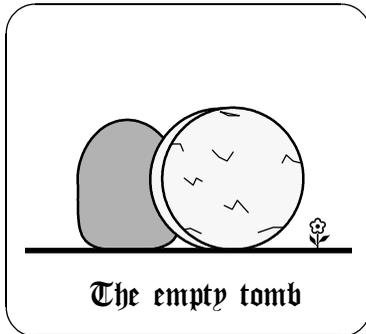
In reality, we, as Christians, need to change the emphasis from self-esteem to Christ-esteem. Whenever we look at the old nature of self, we get mentally sick. If we perform properly, then pride enters. If we fail to perform, we feel guilty and depressed. There is a story told of a man who was swimming and got caught in the under current. A couple of other men were watching at the time. One wanted to jump in and save the man, but he could not swim. The other man could swim well, but let the drowning man use up his strength fighting for his life before he plunged in to save the man. I often get counselees

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who are fighting for their identity. They have been fighting all their lives. I advise them to give up and to quit fighting for their identity. If they are willing to do that, then I can show them a new identity that they have as Believers in Christ. As long as one fights for his identity, it does little good to try to help him with fear, anger, and other problems dealing with control.

I recognize that rejection almost always has an influence upon the psyche and one's self-esteem. I know someone in his fifties and he still wrestles with the rejection that he received from his father as a boy. However, we should understand that Jesus came to set us free from the bruises to our identity (Luke 4:18) and to give us a new identity in himself. *"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; ye not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me"* (Galatians 2:20). One side is the death side while the other side is the resurrection side. We are to live the resur-



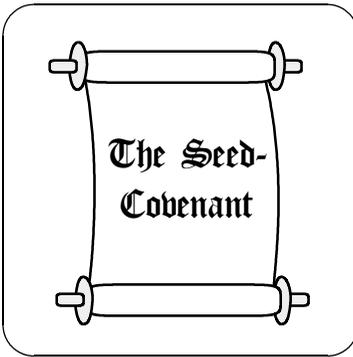
rected life of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

## The Seed-Covenant

The first Commandment that God gave to man was to be fruitful and multiply. *"And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."* (Genesis 1: 28). In the natural sense, "man" was to provide the seed and multiply. However, we may also see a spiritual principle of multiplication. In the spiritual sense, God would provide the seed (II Corinthians 9:10).

Going a step further, we can also see in Scripture that there is a prophecy of a spiritual seed to come. *"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel"* (Genesis 3:15). God instituted a seed-covenant with promises to Adam and Eve. This prophecy reveals that the seed of woman would destroy Satan by bruising his head. However, the woman could not of herself produce a seed. The seed that would come from her would destroy Satan. We should note the passage speaks of a seed, not seeds (plural). We should also understand that "seed" has a connotation of masculinity. Jesus, God's Son, is to be the male mentioned here that who would come to destroy Satan.

Next, God instituted the seed-covenant with Abram. *"Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house,*



unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 12:1-3). Look at the seven promises. (1) God would make of him a great nation. (2) God would bless him. (3) God would make his name great. (4) God would make him a blessing. (5) God would bless those who blessed him. (6) God would curse those who cursed him. (7) All the families of the earth

would be blessed.

A little later, God reintroduced the covenant with Abraham. *"That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice"* (Genesis 22:17-18). God gave him more promises. (1) God would bless him. (2) God would multiply his seed. (3) His seed would possess the gates of his enemies. (4) All nations would be blessed by his seed. Note the use of the term "seed".

God also presents the seed-covenant to Jacob. *"And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of"* (Genesis 28:13-15). God elaborates on the promises to Jacob. (1) God would make his seed without number. (2) God would cause his seed to be spread to the four corners of the earth. (3) God would cause his seed to be a blessing to all the families of the earth. (4) God would be with him. (5) God would keep him. (6) God would bring them to the promised land. (7) God would not leave him.

Next, from Scripture we see that Jesus became that seed. Jesus was the seed of God. Mary was a virgin who conceived by the Spirit. *"Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and*

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*thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." (Matthew 1:18-23).*

Furthermore, we see that Jesus was the one **seed** to whom all the promises were given. *"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ" (Galatians 3:16). "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us" (II Corinthians 1:20).* It may seem redundant, but we need to see that the promise was to one seed and not to many seeds.

This one seed of Abraham, Jesus, was to destroy the devil. The writers to the Hebrews states, *"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Hebrews 2:14).* Luke records in the book of Acts the acts the Holy Spirit, *"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).* John the Apostle also writes, *"For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (I John 3:8b).* The Greek word for "destroy" means to loose or untie.

The amazing thing is that God offered the seed-covenant to all the world. To enter into the seed-covenant, one must be born of the Spirit of God. *"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (John 3:3-8).* Jesus actually offers the rebirth experience on the day of the resurrection when he met with the disciples in the upper room. *"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost" (John 20:21-22).*

We should also understand that when one is born again, he is born of God. *"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:12-13).* This means that one must receive Jesus as

the seed of God. He must receive Jesus as his Lord (Romans 10:9-10). This also means that one is born incorruptible seed of the Word of God. *"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever"* (I Peter 1:23). This seed lives and abides in the individual for ever. Furthermore, John writes, *"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."* (I John 3:9). The seed does not sin. The seed remains in the believer. The seed can not sin. The seed is born of God.

Since we as Believers are born of the seed of God, we also enter into the seed-covenant with God. *"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust"* (II Peter 1:4). First, the promise for us is that we receive a divine nature. Paul reminds us, *"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his"* (Romans 8:9). We have a new spiritual nature. We have the Spirit of Christ dwelling in us. *"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God"* (Roman 8:16). We actually become the children of God. We also become the seed of Abraham, who is the father of our faith. *"Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham"* (Galatians 3:6-7). Paul writes, *"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise"* (Galatians 3:28-29). Since, we are the seed of Abraham we also inherit the promises given to him.

However, there is a principle in God's Word that most of us wish that was not there. That principle is of death of a seed. Jesus said, *". . . If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?* (Luke 9:23-25). The one purpose for a seed is that **it must be planted**. *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal"* (John 12:24-24). For us to experience the fullness of the promises of God, we must experience a death to self. The other side is the sprouting of a new plant, growth, maturity, and reproduction.

We may find at least three purposes of planting of a seed. First, one may find joy or true pleasure. Jesus, our example, looked forward to the joy that was set before him. *"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of*

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*the throne of God"* (Hebrews 12:2). David declared, *"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him"* (Psalm 126:5-6).

A second purpose of planting a seed is for reproduction and multiplication. *"... but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit"* (John 12:24b). In the parable of the sower and the seed, Jesus said, *"And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred"* (Mark 4:8).

A third purpose of planting a seed is that it is to be a blessing to others. *"And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed"* (Genesis 12:3). Paul, himself, wrote to the church of Corinth, *"Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men"* (II Corinthians 3:2). Through God blessing us, we are to be a blessing to others.

Finally, if you are a Believer, you have the seed of God (Jesus) living and abiding in you. You are the seed of God. However, for you to find your new identity, you must die to self, take up your cross and find your new identity in Jesus. He will then make you a fisher of men.

## Checking Your Identity

The Apostle Paul wrote, *"For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world"* (I John 2:16). *"But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death"* (James 1:14-15). I designed the following brief test to help one discover if he is living by the flesh or by the Spirit. Please answer each of the questions by [Y] for Yes, [N] for No, or [S] for Sometimes.

### LUST OF THE FLESH:

- Are you more concerned about praying for those in need than getting an extra hour of sleep?
- Do you find yourself more concerned about reading, studying, memorizing, and meditating on the Word of God than about eating your physical food?
- Would the people who are closest to you say that you are filled with the Spirit rather than being filled with the desires of the flesh?

### LUST OF THE EYES:

- Do you spend more time fellowshiping with your family and other Believers than you do watching television, going to movies, and going to ball games?
- Do you work that you may give to others who have need and to do the Lord's work as opposed to working that you may get for yourself?
- Are you more interested in improving your inward qualities than your natural physical appearance?

### **PRIDE OF LIFE:**

- Do you try to see from the other person's view rather than arguing to prove your point?
- When others criticize you, do you examine yourself to see if you need to make improvements more than getting angry about their criticism?
- Do you praise and thank the Lord for your situation when things do not go your way rather than becoming depressed about your circumstances?

*"And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (Revelation 3:14-22).*

Jesus, himself, is speaking to *the church of the Laodiceans*. Although this was a historical church, it is also representative of a type of church and the church age in which we are now living. Jesus addresses this church differently from all the other six churches. Although it is a church of Believers, Jesus describes the church as belonging to the Laodiceans. Rather than being a theocratic (rule by God) church, it was a democratic church. It was a church of the people, by the people, and for the people. The Greek word "Λαοδικεων" (Laodiceans) is a compound word. "Lao" means people and "diceans"

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means opinions. Therefore, Jesus characterized this church by the opinions of the people. It was a type of church that voted on what God said in His Word.

Jesus characterizes Himself to the church as being *the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God*. Jesus tells this church that He knows its works and that it is lukewarm and makes Him sick to his stomach. We know historically that the town of Laodicea had strong mineral water. People could drink it if it was hot or cold, but found it difficult to stomach if it was just warm. Spiritual lukewarmness makes God sick to His stomach. I must insert that this does not mean that we may lose our salvation. However, it does mean that we get God's rebuke and chastisement. It also means that we are not useful to God in ministering to others while we are in that state.

You should understand that I did not design the brief test to condemn, but to bring conviction for a need of correction. Someone who is *lukewarm* is someone who is deceiving himself. You may have found yourself answering "Sometimes" to many of the questions as did I, thinking that "Sometimes" was not too bad. We need to come to realize that "Yes" means that we are on fire for the Lord, "No" means that we are cold toward the Lord, and then "Sometimes" means that we are *lukewarm*. How did you do? Jesus would desire that we be hot, but even if we are cold, he can still deal with us. Lukewarmness is more difficult because of the deception involved.

The church says that it is rich, has everything, does not need anything, and does not know that it is wretched (afflicted), miserable, blind and naked. Jesus does not command the church but instead *counsels* the church. Why? Jesus counsels the church because the church is in denial of having need of Jesus. She would say, "Thanks, but I can live the Christian life by my self." "I am O.K., after all, I am not cold like others. Jesus counsels the church knowing that the church must make a decision for herself. Jesus wants to encourage, not to condemn His church.

**How does a lukewarm church become on fire for the Lord?** The church of today often finds little place for suffering, especially, here in America. The church often desires instant gratification. Jesus tells the church to buy gold that is tried in the fire (Revelation 3:18, I Peter 1:7). Therefore, we must understand some purposes of suffering. One purpose is for correction (Hebrew 12:5-11). Another purpose of suffering is for patience (James 1:3-4). Still another purpose for suffering is for being an example (I Peter 2:19-23). Finally, suffering is to bring us to the need for trusting in God.

The church of today is often self-sufficient. She says, "I can handle sin, if I try hard enough." Jesus tells the church to buy white raiment that she may be clothed (Revelation 3:18, 7:14). Therefore, we must take off the old man and put on the new man. Paul encourages us by saying, *"That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old*

*man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Ephesians 4:22-24). It is simpler than the devil would have us believe. "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof" (Romans 13:14). This means that we come to understand that we can not live a righteous life by ourselves. We can not use God's help. We need a new person to live it for us. We must allow **Jesus** to live His life through us.*

The church of today is often blind spiritually. She does not have the ability to see into the spiritual realm. Jesus tells the church to anoint her eyes with eyesalve that she may see. This anointing is a picture of the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, we need to receive the anointing of the Holy Spirit. We need the anointing of the Holy Spirit to share, Jesus, the Bread of Life, with others (Luke 11:1-13). We need the anointing of the Holy Spirit to be witnesses unto Jesus (Acts 1:8). We need the anointing of the Holy Spirit to live a supernatural life (Mark 16:15-20). We should seek the anointing until we experience it. Then we should be refilled daily (Ephesians 5:18).

**Jesus gives us some STEPS to take.** The first step was to be zealous. This means that we get very serious about having our lives changed. The second step is to repent. This means that we are to by God's grace to do an "about face". It is interesting that Jesus does not say whether or not the church repents. He just counsels the church to repent. The third step is to enter into fellowship with Jesus. In order to do this, we as Believers must hear the voice of Jesus and open the door for Jesus to come in as Lord. Then we are to sit down and eat with Jesus on a regular daily basis. The more that we do this, the more we become like Jesus. *"Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away. Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord"* (II Corinthians 3:17-18). As we fellowship with Jesus, we gain a new identity in Him. We are outwardly (countenance) changed as well as inwardly (in the soul) changed. Amen.

## **STEPS To See Who We Are In Christ**

Which is greater, our opinion about ourselves, the opinion of others about us, or what God says about us? The obvious answer is that God's Word is greater. We should therefore acknowledge, confess, and act upon each of the following Biblical truths.

**1. We should see ourselves as being children of God.** *"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God"* (Romans 8:16). It is very

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important to know who we are in Christ. The Holy Spirit agrees with our spirit that we are children of God. This is important because Satan tries to make us believe that God has rejected us and that there is no hope. If he can accomplish this, then he has opened our lives for despair to enter. *"For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day"* (II Timothy 1:12). It is also important to remember that we did not become children of God by doing good works. We became children of God by making a faith commitment to Jesus as our Lord and Saviour. Furthermore, it is important to remember that we remain children of God because God keeps us in His salvation.

**2. We should see that we can do all that God asks us to do.** *"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me"* (Philippians 4:13). We need to understand and believe in our hearts that God will enable us to do all that He asks. It would be quite frustrating to have God ask us to do something that we were incapable of doing. We would consider that to be quite unfair and feel totally inadequate. *"And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work"* (II Corinthians 9:8). We also need to understand that the ability to do what God asks is not within ourselves. The ability to do what God asks comes from God. Therefore, it is very important that we die to ourselves and live unto Him.

**3. We should see that fear does not come from God.** *"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love and of a sound mind"* (II Timothy 1:7). One of Satan's devices is to bring fear into our minds and then to make us think that it is really coming from us. He tries to convince us that we are fearful. However, God's Word points out that fear comes from the enemy and not from God. The fact is that God gives us just the opposite of fear. *"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me"* (Psalms 23:4). When we do feel fearful, we do not have to fear. By knowing that God is with us we don't have to choose to fear. David said that he chose not to fear. David looked at the power, authority, and care of God for his life.

**4. We should see that we find purpose in giving as God did.** *"Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith"* (Galatians 6:6, 10). We must begin by being under the instruction of Christian leaders and the Word of God. However, we have a responsibility to share with others what God has taught us. I always try to get those to whom I am ministering into sharing the ministry with others. When they discover that God can purposefully use them, their view of self-worth is increased tremendously. *"They that sow in tears shall*

*reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him"* (Psalms 126:5-6). God's Word encourages us to sow good seed in the lives of others. The people around us often just mirror what they see in our own lives. Furthermore, as we continually sow good seed in the lives of others, God in time usually brings that seed to maturity. The result is that they often end up encouraging us.

**5. We should see that God has given us His grace to perform daily tasks.** *"But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me"* (I Corinthians 15:10). We need to recognize that God is the One who has provided His gift of His divine ability for us to be a child of God. We also need to recognize that it is only by God's ability that we are able to live the Christian life. We can thank God for what God has given to us. *"According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon"* (I Corinthians 3:10). Paul encouraged the church in Corinth by explaining that God is the designer and the contractor. Paul also recognized that he had participated in that grace of God by laying the foundation of Christ in the lives of those in Corinth. Therefore, he could thank God for what God was doing through him.

**6. We should see that feelings of unworthiness come from the Devil.** *"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"* (Romans 5:8). We need to understand that God deemed us worthy. God demonstrated His love for us while we were still in sin. He sent His Son Jesus to die for us. Jesus saw us as being valuable enough to die for us. Paul, after describing man's sinfulness, said, *"And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God"* (I Corinthians 6:11). A second aspect of worthiness comes from the fact that God has done a mighty work within us. He has made us worthy by washing, sanctifying, and justifying us by the Holy Spirit. Worthiness comes from God.

**7. We should see the power of praising God in finding Christ-esteem.** *"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light"* (I Peter 2:9). We were created to praise the Lord. We find purpose in praising the Lord. We find fulfillment in praising the Lord. Praise lifts our spirits. *"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name"* (Hebrews 13:15). God's Word encourages us to offer up praise. We are to praise God both when things are going right for us and when they do not seem to be going alright. We are to praise the Lord when we don't feel like it!

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Praising God helps us to take our attention off ourselves and put it upon God and His love for **8. We should see the need of putting on the new man in Christ.** *"And have put on us.*

*the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him"* (Colossians 3:10). We need to understand that we have a new man living in us and that we have the capacity to put on the characteristics of the new man. That new man is a new creation, created in the image of Jesus Christ. *"And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness"* (Ephesians 4:23-24). We can put on the new man as we would a coat. When we do put on the new man, we are renewed in our mind. We have an image of who we are in Christ Jesus. We see ourselves as being righteous and holy before God.

**9. We should see that we need to clothe ourselves as children of the KING.** *"Now it came to pass on the third day, that Esther put on her royal apparel, and stood in the inner court of the king's house, over against the king's house: and the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the gate of the house"* (Esther 5:1). Our outward appearance often reflects our inward concept of ourselves. A sloppy appearance may cause others to give a negative feedback to us. The result may be that we, in turn, react to that negative response. Esther put on her best to appear before the king and we in like fashion should keep a respectful appearance before the King of kings and the court of our God. David wrote, *"The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold"* (Psalms 45:13). I believe that one can apply this passage to the Church who is the daughter of God. As Christians dress in nice clothing, they project the royalty from which they come. When we properly groom ourselves and wear nice clothes, we are reminded that we are children of the King.

**10. We should see the importance of being faithful in service.** *"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not"* (Galatians 6:9). Staying active is both of benefit to others and to ourselves. When we are active, we have less tendency to worry about being a failure. When we are active we are also productive. Productivity raises our view of self-worth. *"Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation"* (I Peter 2:12). The one thing that brings the greatest joy into the life of a Christian is leading someone to Christ. When we do what is right, others see us, and then when God speaks to them through the Gospel, our lives play a big influence in their decision for Christ. Knowing that we have helped lead someone to Jesus brings self-worth into our lives.

**11. We should see that comparison often brings jealousy into our lives.** *"For jealousy is the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance"*

(Proverbs 6:34). Jealousy is a seedbed for low self-esteem. Jealousy comes out of a fear of losing a relationship that we have with someone. Jealousy produces a strong anger that gets out of control and becomes rage. Rage, in turn, produces revenge. *"Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame"* (Song of Solomon 8:6). Jealousy is a cruel master in that it breeds more jealousy. By someone comparing himself to someone else, he feels that he does not measure up to the other person. That comparison produces jealousy. Then the jealousy becomes a consuming force and produces even a lower self-esteem.

**12. You should see that getting proper counsel may be of great value.** *"A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels"* (Proverbs 1:5). Everyone needs counsel from time to time. Someone who is wise will choose to seek wise counsel. Usually the person who has a low self-esteem, because of pride, will avoid seeking the counsel of others. The person who has the proper view of himself is not easily threatened by counsel from others. *"Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellors they are established"* (Proverbs 15:22). Counsel from others often gives us a better picture of ourselves, our goals, and our purposes. We get an objective perspective. Other people can see where our blind spots are and how we can overcome them. With the fuller picture in mind, we gain more self-confidence to reach our goals.

## A New Creation

Paul declares, *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new"* (II Corinthians 5:17). As a Christian counselor, my first goal is to lead people to Christ. My second goal is to establish the meaning of who they are as a new creation. I have gleaned from the Word the following material on the meaning of being a new creation. I would encourage you to begin by filling in your name in the blank space. Next read it aloud, making it a confession of who you are in Christ.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am born again. The first birth was a fleshly birth, but the second birth is a spiritual birth (John 3:1-8). This birth is from above also. I am born not of seed that is corruptible, but of incorruptible seed. I am born of the Word of God, which lives and dwells in me forever (I Peter 1:23). This means that when I do sin within the will, that I will not corrupt the spirit. Since I am born again in the spirit, I am not able to sin in the spirit. I can not sin because God's seed lives within me (I John 3:8). Satan can not touch the spirit of the believer to destroy it (I John 5:18). I was taken out of Satan's kingdom of darkness and have been translated into the kingdom of Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:13). I

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have been joined unto Christ (I Corinthians 6:17). In Christ I am complete. I need nothing more (Colossians 2:10). I am sealed with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13).

I was spiritually dead to the things of God. I was actually dead in my spirit, but I have been made alive by the spirit of Christ (Ephesians 2:5). I was considered a sinner, but now I am made the righteousness of God in Jesus Christ (II Corinthians 5:21). Because of the righteousness that I have in Christ, I am fully accepted of God (Ephesians 1:6). I am actually called a saint. I am set apart from the world unto the living God (I Corinthians 1:2). I am not condemned as I live in Christ (Romans 8:1). I actually have the divine nature of God dwelling within me (II Peter 1:4). In the spirit, I am seated with Christ Jesus in heaven (Ephesians 2:6). I have eternal life in Christ. From the very moment that I received Christ until the end, I shall not perish, because Jesus keeps me and God, the Father, keeps me (John 10:28-29).

I should see that God has called me unto himself, but not according to my works, but by his own gift of grace (II Timothy 1:9). He has elected me to be holy and receive his love (Colossians 3:12). He has predestinated that I be formed into the image of Jesus Christ (Romans 8:29). God has confirmed me unto the very end. I am considered to be without blame (I Corinthians 1:8). I can be confident that since God began the work in me that he will continue until the day of Jesus Christ (Philippians 1:6). God will keep that which I have committed unto him until the day of judgment (II Timothy 1:12).

As a new creation, I am made free through Jesus from the power of the enemy (John 8:36). Since I am born of God I have overcome the world. I have victory over the world through our faith (I John 5:4). I am more than a conqueror through God who loves me (Romans 8:37). In fact, nothing can separate me from the love of God (Romans 8:35). The spirit of Jesus that lives me is greater than the enemy in the world (I John 4:4). God always causes me to triumph in Christ (II Corinthians 2:14).

As a new creation, I am a heir of God an a joint-heir with Christ. What the Father gave to Jesus also belongs to me (Romans 8:17). I have access to all of the promises of God in Christ. God says, "Yes" and "So let it be." (II Corinthians 1:20). I am blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ (Ephesians 1:13). God has redeemed me from the curse of the law that He might give me the promises of Abraham (Galatians 3:13-14).

As a new creation, I have the capacity to hear and obey the voice of Jesus (John 10:27). I am God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works (Ephesians 2:10). I have the capacity in Jesus to do anything that God asks me to do. I am the light of the world, giving off the light of Christ (Matthew 5:14). I am the salt that gives life flavor and the salt that preserves purity (Matthew 5:13). I am a chosen person, a part of a

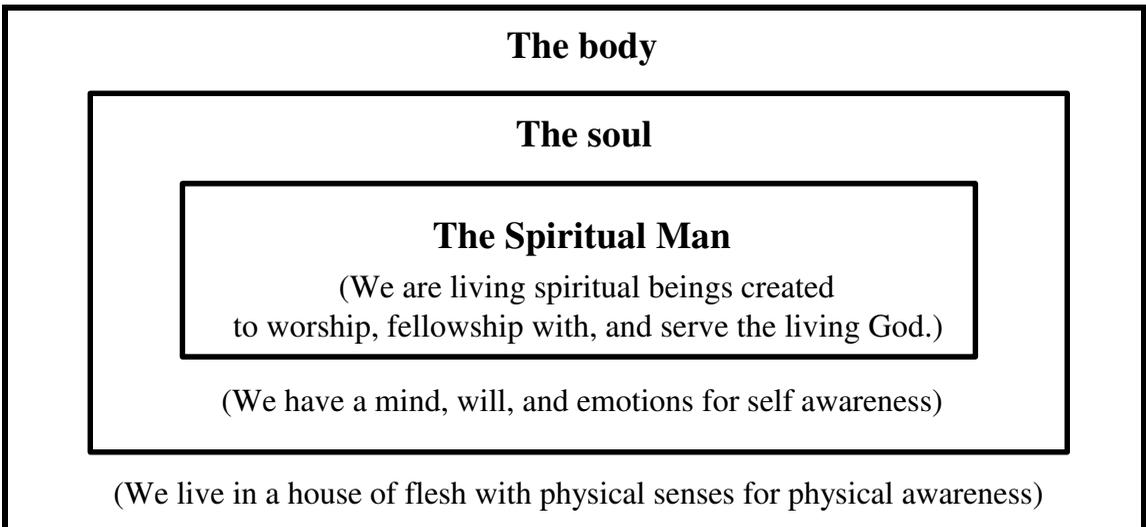
kingly priesthood, a holy nation, and a God-possessed person that I should declare the praises of God who has called me out of darkness unto to his marvelous light (I Peter 2:9).

### God's Perspective

We often look to see how others see us. The emphasis of modern psychology is upon how we see ourselves. However, the real question is, "How does God see us?" Others may see us through their distorted psychological, social, and spiritual frame of reference. Of course, there are many factors that influence the way that we see ourselves. This is the reason why the field of psychology has become a field for professionals.

The field of philosophy usually starts with "man" in search for God, if there be a god. Many philosophers see man as being the center of the universe. On the other hand, we may use our imaginations and conclude that God sees us as being nothing more than any other creature in the animal kingdom. Those in the field of science and sometimes medicine often promote the same view. Even many Believers are deceived into taking the one or the other of the world's views of man.

Where then do we get an accurate perspective of how God sees us? We get it from God! We get it from His written Word as revealed by His Holy Spirit in the Believer. The Bible, God's Word, begins with "God" (Genesis 1:1) rather than beginning with "man". The Bible then proceeds to look at man from God's perspective. In brief, I would like to share two views. The first view is that God sees us (as Believers) as living spiritual beings that have a soul (mind, will, and emotions) and living in a house of flesh (the

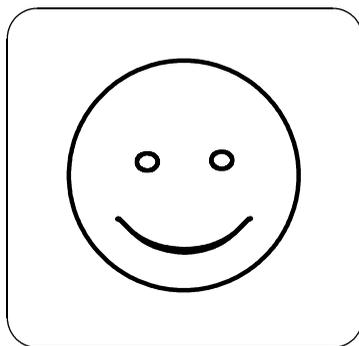


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body). From this perspective, God sees His Holy Spirit living in us and giving us spiritual life.

Another view that we may see from God's Word is that God sees us (as Believers) as spiritual beings living in Christ. We live and move and have our being in Christ. We are actually seated with Christ in Heaven. The Appendix will give sufficient Scriptures to support these views.



## Appendix

### Of Identification Scriptures

#### ➤ IN CHRIST

**Romans 12:5** So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

**Ephesians 1:3** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.

**I Thessalonians 4:16** For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first.

**II Timothy 2:1** Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

**Philemon 1:6** That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.

#### ➤ IN THE BELOVED

**Ephesians 1:6** To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

#### ➤ IN THE LORD

**Ephesians 5:8** For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light.

**Ephesians 6:10** Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

#### ➤ IN WHOM

**Ephesians 1:7** In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.

**Ephesians 1:13** In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.

**Ephesians 3:12** In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.

**Colossians 2:3** In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

#### ➤ BY CHRIST

**Romans 3:22** Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference.

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**I Corinthians 1:4** I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ.

**II Corinthians 5:18** And all things are of God, who hath reconciled unto himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation.

**Ephesians 1:5** Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.

**Philippians 1:11** Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

### ➤ BY HIM

**Colossians 1:20** And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.

**Colossians 3:17** And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

**Hebrews 7:25** Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

**Hebrews 13:15** By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.

**I Peter 1:21** Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

### ➤ WITH HIM

**Romans 8:32** He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

**II Corinthians 13:4** For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.

**Colossians 2:12** Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

**Colossians 3:4** When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

**II Timothy 2:11-12** It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us.

### ➤ BY ME

**John 6:57** As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

**John 10:9** I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

**John 14:6** Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

➤ **IN ME**

**John 6:56** He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.

**John 14:20** At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

**John 15:4-5** Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

**John 15:7-8** If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

➤ **BY HIMSELF**

**Hebrews 1:3** Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.

**Hebrews 6:13** For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself.

➤ **BY HIS BLOOD**

**Hebrews 9:11-12** But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

**Hebrews 9:14** How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

**Hebrews 10:19-20** Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh.

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

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### ➤ IN MY LOVE

**John 15:9-10** As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue my in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

### ➤ IN HIS NAME

**Matthew 18:20** For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

**Mark 16:17-18** And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

**John 14:13-14** And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

**John 16:23-24** And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

**I Corinthians 6:11** And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

### ➤ IN HIM

**Ephesians 1:4** According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.

**Colossians 2:10** And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power.

**I John 2:27** But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

**I John 3:24** And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

**I John 5:20** And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

### ➤ BY WHOM

**Romans 5:2** By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

**Romans 5:11** And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

**Galatians 6:14** But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

➤ **FROM WHOM / WHICH**

**Ephesians 4:16** From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

**Colossians 2:19** And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.

➤ **OF CHRIST**

**II Corinthians 2:15** For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish.

**Philippians 3:12** Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

**Colossians 2:17** Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

**Colossians 3:24** Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

➤ **OF HIM**

**I John 1:5** This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

**I John 2:27** But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

➤ **THROUGH CHRIST**

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

**I Corinthians 15:57** But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Ephesians 2:7** That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

**Philippians 4:6-7** Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

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**Hebrews 13:20-21** Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

### ➤ THROUGH HIM

**John 3:17** For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

**Romans 5:9** Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

**Romans 8:37** Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

**I John 4:9** In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

### ➤ WITH CHRIST

**Romans 6:8** Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.

**Ephesians 2:5** Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;).

**Colossians 2:20** Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances.

**Colossians 3:1** If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

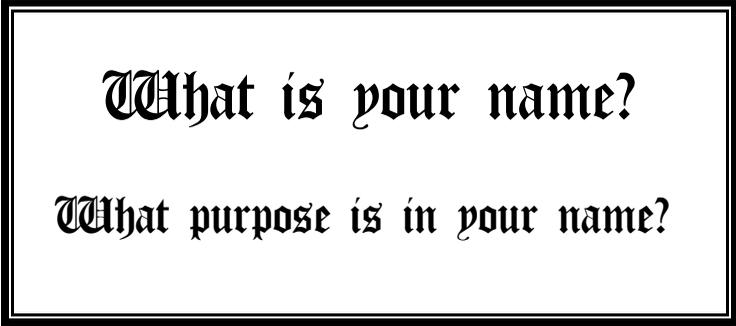
**Colossians 3:3** For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

## What's In A Name

I am convinced that God had a part in giving you your name. God makes no mistakes! Your name is to be an indication of who you are to be. In part, it is to indicate God's purpose for your life. In Scripture, God renamed Abraham to indicate that he would be the father of many people (Genesis 17:5). God renamed Jacob calling him Israel (meaning prince of God) (Genesis 32:28). Moses (which means "to draw out") was to draw the Israelite people out of Egyptian bondage (Exodus 3:10). Jesus (which means "I am + savior") was to save the people from their sins (Matthew 1:21). In the New Testament we also find a man by the name of Barnabas (meaning encourager) (Acts 4:36). There are many other references concerning God's purpose within the person's name that you may find in Scripture.

As a Christian counselor, I have discovered that the enemy, Satan, often attacks people at the point of their name. I was working with someone who kept experiencing sadness in their life. We covered many of the sorrow producing issues in the individual's life. However, the individual kept on experiencing feeling of sadness. While I was on a break from counseling the individual, I prayed, asking God what was going on. Immediately, the Holy Spirit said, "Ask her what her middle name is?" When I returned to counseling the individual, I said, "This may sound a little weird, but what is your middle name?" She said, "Joyce." Immediately, I understood. God meant for her to express **joy** in her life, but the enemy was attacking her with feeling of sadness. The last time that I visited with her, she just radiated the **joy** of the Lord.

Therefore, in counseling, it is good to have a comprehensive book on names around. If the name is a biblical name, then you may find its meaning in a Hebrew or Greek lexicon or concordance. If it is not biblical, then you may find a book on babies names. I have yet to find a Christian work on names that is consistently reliable. It is also important that you ask the Holy Spirit for revelation of the shades of meaning for the name as it relates to the specific person.



**What is your name?**

**What purpose is in your name?**