









# **The Curse and the Promise And the Power to Overcome**

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## Introduction

The idea for this book came when God started opening my eyes to see some curses that were working against our ministry at the time. He also showed me curses that were working against people that I loved, and they couldn't see these at work. These were hindering their work for the Lord. In some they were stifling out their relationship with God. In my family, I was aware of curses at work as well. In my own life, I was experiencing a feeling like I was struggling up a sand mountain. If you've ever done that you'll know what I mean. That feeling of struggling to climb only to find that you have either slid back to the bottom or sunk under the pile. One of the first types of curses that God brought to my attention was generational curses. These are passed from generation to generation and can literally destroy generations. Another is the curse of sin and the curse of disobedience. Both bring about things that can destroy our soul. Others are brought about by attitudes like fear, bitterness, contention and jealousy. Some are mental bondages that cause our thinking to get out of whack binding our whole lives. Some can wind up being physical bondages causing sickness. Others come because of the world or because those close to us aren't serving God. There are even curses that God brings about by His Word. We'll talk about all of these.

In this book we'll learn about different types of curses that can bind us. We'll also talk about how to break these curses not only in our own lives, but in the lives of others as well. We don't have to stay in bondage. We don't have to watch those we love stay in bondage. Through Christ we are set free. John 8:32 tells us, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Galatians 5:1 says, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." We learn in this book to stand in the liberty that Christ has given and how to stay free. God does not want His children to stay in bondage. He wants us to walk in the liberty purchased for us by the blood of His Son. He has given us all the resources that we need to be able to do so. It is my prayer that through this book, you understand not only the power of deliverance available for you, but also that you in turn will take the authority given you and break the bondages in the lives of those you love.

As pastors and teachers it is our responsibility to keep ourselves free from bondages that the enemy tries to put against us. To do so, it is important that we recognize these. If we can't do this, then we will be too bound in our own personal lives to find enough victory to minister to others. Also, it is our responsibility to teach others in our congregations to recognize the bondages of the enemy, and to teach them how they can bind these. It is our responsibility to know that we have the power to pray and to bind these bondages in the lives of others, but even more importantly we need to teach our members so that they can overcome and know their authority on their own. If we simply pray for them, then they are constantly dependant on us for their victory. That is a sure way for all concerned to become losers when our strength gives out because we have carried them.

It is also important to be able to recognize the bondages of the enemy, and know how we can take authority. Thousands of churches every year close their doors because the devil declared war against them, and they weren't spiritually minded enough to identify it and make a stand. You have an enemy. Your church and ministry has an enemy. Your congregation as individuals has an enemy. An enemy who is out to destroy and steal. This book talks about the different ways that enemy comes against them, and how to take

authority. We will discuss the different curses that the devil tries to bring and the blessings from the Word of God that enable us to bind them, and overcome them.

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## Chapter 2. *Adam's Curse and God's Blessing*

When I mention the curse of Adam not many people will fail to know what I am talking about. We could call it the curse of Eve, since she had a big hand in things. A lot of people question why they and those they love have to suffer so in this world. I talked to someone not long ago who had actually tried to walk out on God totally because of a tragic thing that had happened to one of her children. She couldn't understand why God let that horrible thing happen. She lost faith in God and in church and hadn't been back to church in several years. I talked to her one day and helped her to see that God didn't cause this to happen. Her daughter was actually doing the wrong thing at the wrong place with the wrong people, and had gotten hurt. That wasn't God's plan for her. When this person saw this, she realized that this was not God's fault. She forgave God and realized that she had been wrong. She rededicated her heart back to Him.

We live in an imperfect world full of imperfect people. Most people as a whole fail to be led by God but instead give in to the devil. This world is not a world full of light, but it is full of darkness. John 1:5 tells us, "And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." Our only hope is to get so tied up and tangled up in Jesus that His light surrounds us. John 9:5 tells us the reason why His light can shine so bright in the darkness of this world. "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." John 8:23 tells us. "And He said unto them, Ye are from beneath I am from above; ye are of this world; I am not of this world." This world is dark. We all know that. It is filled with sickness and suffering. Most people around us have been touched with some type of bad sickness or a tragedy in their family. This gets worse as time goes by. This world is dark. If we aren't careful this can destroy our faith and separate us from trusting God. What is the answer to all of this? We have to concentrate on the One Who shines that is from above this world. The One Who is not of this world that brings light into this world.

To understand this world and to really understand how bad things can happen to God's people when He loves us, we have to look at Adam's curse. Now even though Eve started the whole thing, men you are not without excuse. You can't blame it all on the woman. If Adam would have stood up and taken authority over his household, things might have turned out differently. When a man who is supposed to be over his household according to God's Word fails to be the man of his household he is responsible for the woman in his household that fails. How many churches and ministries have failed because the man couldn't rule his own household. That is why the Bible tells us that even to choose deacons, one of the requirements needs to be that a man can rule his own house before he can be over anything in the church. (Timothy 3:12) That is just a little sermon on the side. Back to this Adam and Eve thing. I am just calling it Adam's curse because of a scripture I'm going to get to in a second. It also refers to mankind as the generations of Adam. We know how the story goes. God made a perfect place. He saw that it was good. He made people to share that place in communion with Him. He walked in the garden there with them. Sin had not yet separated Him from man and He could walk with them.

As far as we know, there was only one thing that they were told not to do and that was the thing that they did. Now a lot of times we can get really hard on Adam and Eve. Before we do, we need to think about this little experiment that I did as an example.

I did this with some Bible School children. We were studying Adam and Eve, and why they sinned. To illustrate this, I put a box in the classroom. I told them that whatever they did, they were not to look in that box. I told them that they were free to do anything else that they wanted to. There were neat games, toys, and things to play with that were a lot more interesting than that plain old box. The children had bugged me all morning to let them play outside. The door outside was right in the classroom. The teachers were outside of the door where they could see but not be seen. We were all curious to see what would happen. The minute we left that room every single one of those 20+ children headed for that box. Now there were some arguments that went on like, "Teacher said not to touch that". But nobody moved very far away while they waited for the bravest to open it.

Before we fuss at Adam and Eve we need to get serious about what we would have done in their place. How many times have we marched all around the thing that God told us to stay away from until somebody else got brave enough to open the box and there we were, all too ready to get involved. What was in the box in the room? It was an empty box. Sad to say all too often those other boxes we face in life are just as empty. Empty promises by empty people leaving us empty handed and empty hearted and separated from God by our sin. That is what happened to Adam and Eve. We all paid for that one. We don't need to blame all that on God either. We don't need to get mad because God drove them out of the perfect garden. Sin has its price. The price of that sin that Adam and Eve sowed was reaped. This is not a popular message to preach, but it is one of the most necessary messages that we can teach or preach. If we don't tell this, then we will have to watch our congregation weep as they reap the results of their sin. We ourselves will be held accountable. Who says? God says.

What we reap we sow. We read about this price in Genesis 3:16-24. The key verses sum up this passage. I am writing here verses 16, 17, 19, 22, and 23. "Unto the woman He said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam He said, because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden to till the ground from whence he was taken." A flaming sword in the hand of a Cherubim guarded them from ever being able to return to that perfect world. They could no longer return. I am sure that there were many times after that when they longed to return, but they could never do so. Because of Adam and Eve's disobedience the whole world was put under a curse. Imperfect people were born to fill up that imperfect world. What God had created for good turned out all wrong.

Before we go on, let's talk just a minute about the price that we pay for sin. I know about that. Probably many of you know about this as well. As a young person, I walked out on God to try all the junk that the world has. There was nothing that I didn't try during those rebellious years. It didn't take me long to destroy my life, my mind, and nearly my soul. I only spent a few years there but the scars that I brought into my life, my heart, my mind,

and into the hearts and lives of those that I loved lasted for a very, very, very long time. Yes, when I returned to God, I was forgiven and restored. Still the scars were there. Still I paid a price for my sin. Sin causes us to reap things that we have sown. There is a price for sin. In today's promiscuous society even the church world says to go ahead and do it. God will forgive you. Then the hurt comes. And the scars remain. Ask Adam and Eve. There is a price for sin. Yes, there is forgiveness. But the price for sin often is not cheap. Stay away from sin. Never teach your congregation that it is OK to sin because God will forgive you. Never present to them that it is fine to do what they want that God won't hamper their creativity by telling them no. Never concentrate on the popular message of God's love and fail to tell the truth of God's judgment.

Let's get back to the curse of Adam. Even the ground was cursed. Adam and Eve were driven out of that perfect world where they shared that perfect walk with God. Sin now separated them from Him. What hope did they have? I have known God for most of my life. I can tell you this about Him that He is always a God of hope. Even when He is telling you the worst thing imaginable, He will always tell you this with a glimpse of hope. The devil will bring feelings of despair when he is putting his lies into your head. When God is telling you that you are about to face a great problem or battle, He will always include hope for overcoming. In the middle of this curse, we see hope. We see a glimpse in verse 15. "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." It is fitting that the serpent got the first curse. He also got a promise that Eve's seed would bruise his heel. Now this means that we have authority over satan and he is under our feet. That is true. This also gave us that hope that I mentioned earlier. This is the first glimpse of Jesus and the victory over satan that He would bring. Notice that this didn't say anything here about Adam's seed. Just Eve's. Jesus was born of woman, not of a man. Here in this curse we see a glimpse of hope. We see a glimpse of Jesus. The Bible doesn't tell in verse 21 what kind of skins that God used to cover Adam and Eve. "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them." It did say that He covered them. In the next chapter though we get a glimpse of another covering. We see a glimpse of a lamb that was to be slain to cover our nakedness and our sin. God required an offering of a lamb. Cain, who wanted to do his own thing and have God bless it, didn't get what was going on at all. One day though he did. The day when he met the Lamb.

That is the hope of the world. That was the breaking of the curse. The Lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world. Romans 5:12 and 15-19 and 21 tells us our hope. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. For if by one man's offence death reigned by one much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. That as sin hath reigned unto

death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.” That is our hope. One sinned bringing a curse on us all. One then came and died to shed His blood to deliver us from that curse.

Still the world isn't perfect like it once was. It is a wicked place over run by those who don't serve God. Our only hope to overcome in this cursed world is to accept salvation and let the blood of Jesus erase Adam's curse. Our hope is to fill up with God's Word and His Spirit. Will that make everything perfect? It hasn't done so for me. How about you? I can surely tell you though that even though it isn't perfect, I have the strength to overcome. I am not walking alone, but with His precious nail scarred hand holding me, guiding me. His Holy Spirit in me helps me even to overcome my own flesh that I inherited from Adam and Eve's curse. God has made a way for us to overcome. We just have to want this more than we want the curse of this world.

Something else to remember when we try to answer the question, why does God's people have to go through bad things is this. Because we are in a world that has been touched with the curse, as we mentioned earlier our world is not a good world. It is filled with sickness, and bad things that happen. The Bible says that rain falls on the just and on the unjust. Bad things happen to the just and unjust alike because of the condition of this world. Also, because most of the people around us are ungodly people, we have to reap the pain that brings into our lives. But through it all we can remember all God's promises to overcome that He gives us in His Word. One of my favorite is that all things, even the worst of things, work together for our good. Just hold on in faith and trust Him.

Adam and Eve's curse is the first curse that is mentioned in the Word of God. It touches us all. As a part of that we see a glimpse of another curse. The curse of sin.

### **Chapter 3.** *The Curse of Sin and the Promise of Forgiveness*

I mentioned a little bit in the last chapter about the curse of sin. Let's cover it some more here. The Bible tells us that the wages of sin is death. That death is eternal separation from God. The verse that tells us that also gives us a glimpse of hope. Romans 6:23 tells us, "For the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Jesus died so that we could be forgiven. John 3:16-17 tells us, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved." So then what about the curse of sin? I mentioned in the last chapter the scars that I had from my sin in my younger days. That was more than 20 years ago. I still have some of those scars. Yes, God saved and delivered me. But I don't think that He always takes away all the scars. I think that He does this so that we can remember. So we never go back. Do you have scars from sin? You know then what I mean.

Sin is a curse. It brings a curse against your mind clouding your thinking. It brings a curse against your heart, messing up your emotions. It brings a curse against your health. It brings a curse against your relationships with others. Most importantly of all it brings a curse against your relationship with God. Yes, you can be forgiven and come back to God. But when you do, all those curses have to be broken before you can be restored to the place in God that you had before you sinned. The salvation and forgiveness that God gives us is free. However, the price paid for it was definitely not cheap. The precious blood of God's own Son paid for it. That is how the curses over us caused by sin are broken. Ephesians 1:6-7 tells us, "To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved. In Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." Ephesians 2:13 tells us, "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." Colossians 1:14 tells us, "In Whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins." Hebrews 13:12 tells us, "Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate."

Too many churches today are leaving out the blood of Jesus. I heard someone call Christianity, the slaughterhouse religion because it mentions blood so much. The devil's number one tactic is to cause us to leave out the blood of Jesus. That is what we use to overcome and bind him. We no longer teach about the blood of Jesus. Even sadder still, many pastors and teachers don't even know about the power found in the blood of Jesus. Without the blood of Jesus, we can not be forgiven. Without the blood of Jesus, we have no hope. That is the foundation of our victory. That is the foundation of salvation. That is the foundation of our power over satan. Without the understanding of this, our forgiveness is cheapened to the place that we take it for granted. In our spoiled flesh, we make every excuse for our sin and we continue in it. When we remember the blood of Jesus, and the price paid at Calvary for our sin, we aren't so quick to do our own thing. Without the blood of Jesus covering our sin, we would not be able to take authority. The blood of Jesus is the basis of our having power over satan. When we come against him in our own sin and flesh, he laughs at us. When we come against him with our sin forgiven and covered under the

blood of Jesus, we have a right to take authority over him. Through the blood of Jesus we can say, "Satan, in the name of Jesus, the blood of Jesus covers this person, or this situation, and through that blood and through the power of the Holy Ghost in me, I take authority over you." Understand about the power of the blood of Jesus. For heaven's sake, don't leave it out of your teaching and preaching.

In today's society, even in the church, there is a fading away of right and wrong into some gray area. The Word of God is the Word of God and it is forever settled in heaven. Right is right and wrong is wrong no matter how we twist it for our own purpose. There is no accepted will of God where He lets us get by with what we want to do. There is only the commanded will of God and punishment for the disobedient. God isn't a lenient parent who can be twisted to our whims. When I was a kid, my mom stood firm on what she said. If she said no, then we didn't. We didn't make excuses. We didn't say to ourselves, "Well, no really doesn't mean no. No would be her perfect will for us, but lets go for the good or acceptable will and do it anyway." We knew better. If we had pulled that we would have gotten our butt busted. We may not have wanted to admit it, but we knew that when she told us to do something we didn't want to do, or told us not to do something that we wanted to do, it was really the best thing for us. How do you think God feels when He tries to lead us away from pitfalls in our life, and He hears us say, "Well that is only the perfect will of God for my life. I want to settle for just doing the acceptable will. This is what I think that He will let me get by with." Then He watches us fall headlong into destruction because we didn't listen and heed what He told us. Get real. Romans 12:2 says, "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." I teach English. Do you remember what adjectives are? They are words that describe nouns. What is the noun in that verse? It is will. What are the three adjectives that describe the will of God? The adjectives are good, acceptable, and perfect. How many wills are there in that sentence? There is just one will. What are the three descriptions of that one will? Good, acceptable, and perfect.

The Word of God reveals the truth about disobedience, but we run from that truth in every way that we can. We pay for it when we do. God's Word tells us the truth about how we should live and what choices we need to make. The Holy Ghost convicts us when we fail to line up to that truth. God leads us into green pastures and tells us what we need to do in different situations, but we hold our hands over our spiritual ears and refuse to listen because we want to do it differently. Then instead of green pastures we find ourselves in a spiritual briar patch. There is no gray area in God if we are submitted to Him, letting His Spirit have His way in our lives, obeying Him. The gray areas in Christianity come when we live so far from God that we don't hear His voice. The gray areas come when we aren't real with Him and with ourselves. The gray areas come when we have shut up the voice of God, when we have ignored His Spirit convicting us until we no longer feel it. These are all dangerous places to be in our walk with God. You see, when we walk on the edge of something it is just a short distance to the drop off. We have to fully immerse ourselves in God. We can't just stay on the beach with our toes getting wet and think that we have found what it means to walk with God. We have to move away from the shore altogether. We have to get wet all the way. Then we can find out what it means to get up and walk on the water.



You might have criticized Peter when he took his eyes off Jesus and sank. You must consider though that he experienced something that the other disciples never knew. What it felt like to walk on the water. And what it felt like to know that when he was sinking, Jesus was there to catch him by the hand and there was nothing to fear. That moment changed Peter's life. How many people through time has this been a message to? What if he had never left the shore? What if he had never gotten into the boat at all? What if he had never stepped out of that boat onto the water? If we only stay on the shore and never get all the way into the boat of God's love, we will never know what it is to walk on the water. Then we have to trust him enough to get out of the boat and step out in faith. So what if we sink. Just like Jesus was there for Peter, He'll be there for you. If we hang onto sin and refuse to let go, if we settle for halfway in our relationship with God, we will never know how to walk on water. We will never know how to lead others to do the same.

In our flesh thinking, in the world's mind, and in those thoughts that the devil whispers in your ear, it isn't good to get too involved in religion. After all, too much religion can make you mad, a little crazy. In truth, it is not too much religion but a little bit of religion that will make you mad. Trying to follow God's Word without a relationship with Him will drive you crazy. Standing with one foot in the world and the other in God will literally split you in two. Not doing what you know to do will drive you insane. Not committing and submitting yourself to God will leave you going in so many directions you won't even know where you are. Isn't it time that you get in the boat? Isn't it time that you draw near to God? Isn't it time that you step out of the boat and feel your feet hit the water? After all, that is where Jesus is.

When we walk on the edge of sin, it is too easy to fall into it. It is too easy to find out about that curse that it carries. Part of its curse is its drawing power. It will suck you right into it before you even know that it has you. It will grind you up and spit you out and you won't even know how you got there. The devil is deceiving. He comes in like an angel of light. II Corinthians 11:14 tells us, "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." He makes darkness look like light. He makes the bad look good and the good look bad. He can paint a wonderful picture that looks so good, but when you step in to it you find out that it will only bring you destruction. He can set a trap to destroy your soul and the souls of those you love and make it look like the most wonderful thing that you've ever seen. If he didn't do that he wouldn't trap anyone. Sin looks good. It is only after you fall into its curse that you realize the truth.

We need to stay so tied up and tangled up in Jesus that we avoid anything that looks wrong. We need to allow the Holy Ghost to convict us so that He is there to show us when we do wrong. So that He is there to keep us out of harms way. We need to daily obey His leading so that in those times of temptation we are in the practice of hearing His voice so that He can lead us. We need to be filled with the Holy Ghost so that His power gives us strength to stand. So that His gifts light our way. We need to be so full of the Word of God that the world's garbage won't fill our mind to draw us aside. We need to know the Word of God so we know who we are in God and that we have been given the victory over sin. We need to know that we have weapons that are mighty in the pulling down of strongholds.

All of these are ways that we can overcome the bondage and the curse of sin. We don't have to be bound by sin. Jesus paid the price to set us free. God sent the Holy Ghost to enter into us so that we can stay free. Praise God. I don't care what that bondage is that you

are fighting. God has made a way for you to be delivered. Stand up. Make your mind up. Hold your head up. Hold your hands up. Let God know you mean business. Declare your freedom according to God's Word. Let His Holy Ghost fall on you. Repent and shake off those bondages. God will deliver you. Refuse to settle for less than all He has for you.

In order for us to do this and in order for us to stay away from sin, we have to know the depth of God's love. That is one of the keys to unlocking ourselves free from the bondage of sin. We need to get a glimpse of Calvary that is up close and personal. I don't mean a glimpse of Mel Gibson's Hollywood version either. I mean letting God reveal to you by His own Word what really happened there. He sent his own Son to die for you. Not for your goodness. Not for your commitment. But He died for your sin. So that you could be forgiven. But He didn't stop there. He made a way for you to live every day victorious. If you haven't read my book *The Power of Calvary*, I recommend it. It is a powerful book that tells about what was done at Calvary. Yes, Jesus died for our sins. Praise God though what was done at Calvary was so much more. He gave you power over satan through His blood. He gave you healing through those stripes that He suffered. He gave you victory over death, hell, and the grave when He rose again. Why walk on the edge of sin when He died to give you total and complete victory?

He loves you. No one else can love you like Jesus. No one else can love you like God. They have that perfect love. He loves you so much that He would have died if you had been the only one. The Lord some years back gave me a song about His love. I'd like to share it with you here. He gave me this not long after I had come back to Him after my hard road of sin. I had run from His love until I couldn't run any more. The problem with this is when we do, we get so beat and banged up in our heart, it is hard to trust anyone's love. Especially God's. It is hard to love back, too. I was there in that place. I had a very low self-esteem, which is another thing that sin does to you. I couldn't trust God's love because I surely didn't deserve it. I had not yet figured out that really has nothing to do with it. When we aren't able to fully trust God's love, we are easy targets for the devil's condemnation. Once when the devil was beating me up over every sin I had ever done, God gave me a glimpse of something. God often talks to me in pictures. He showed me Jesus' nail scarred hands. He told me that was done for me. Until then, I knew in my head that Jesus died to forgive the world of our sins. I just wasn't taking it personally. It was a collective thing. Not a "just for me" thing. After that day though I knew that Jesus died for me. I was forgiven. I caught a glimpse of His wonderful love. It was enough to give me a trust in that love. After that day, the devil's hold of condemnation wasn't nearly as bad. I received a release from the curse of sin.

Through the power of God's love the curse of sin is broken. When you fail Him run to Him, not away from Him. Let Him forgive you. Let Him love that curse of that sin away. No matter if it is a big sin or a little one. Those little foxes spoil the vine. Those little sins gradually and deceptively draw us away. Trust in Him. He knows how to keep us. Ephesians 2:10 tells us, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." John 8:11 tells us Jesus' words to the woman who had been caught in adultery, "...Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." When we are forgiven we need to picture this scene in our minds. Jesus standing with the rock in His hands. Read the story. The woman saw enough love in His eyes that she was able to do as He told her. Just as He said these words to her, He says

the same words to us. "Go and sin no more."

As a footnote, I want to add the final curse of sin. We know that sin leads to separation from God. Today too many churches are teaching the attitude that it is OK to sin. God will forgive you. They teach that nothing you do can cause you to lose your salvation. Hebrews 10:26 tells us a different story. "For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for our sins." The sum total of the scriptures tells us the same thing. If we take an attitude that we can do whatever we want and we willfully continue in our sin we are in danger of damning our souls to an eternity in hell. If we take the attitude of disobedience, that attitude can and will cost us our salvation. If we fail to allow the Holy Ghost to convict us we are in danger of becoming like those in Romans 1. Please read this chapter in the scriptures. Don't play with sin and the curse of sin. It may require a price that you will pay for eternity.

## **Chapter 4.** *The Curse of Disobedience and the Blessing of Obedience*

You may wonder why I would put a chapter about sin and then put a chapter next about disobedience. Aren't they about the same thing? So why two chapters? I guess that it is because in most of our minds these have become separated. Sin has become the big things in life. Like drinking, drugs, and sex. We become convinced that just because we let the big sins alone that we don't sin. It is easy then to go merrily on our way ignoring the call of conviction because "that has to be for someone here besides me." Then the devil steals us further and further away and we don't even realize what he is doing. How many people do you know who aren't going to church any longer? When you ask them what happened, they really can't tell you. Somehow though you get a sense that years ago their priorities gradually began to shift. Their dedication and commitment wavered. You see, things happen gradually. The Bible talks about the little foxes that can damage us in Song of Solomon 2:15. "Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines; for our vines have tender grapes." These little foxes spoil our vines. They steal our grapes while we aren't watching. They steal our fruits. Even though we can't at first see the curse of these, they are more deadly than the big sins. Because if we aren't walking in the Spirit in obedience to God, they can steal away our victory before we know they are there. God convicts us when we sin. He guards us daily from going down those side paths that wind up in our being derailed somewhere wrecked because we ran out of track. So how do so many people wind up in that place with little real victory in their lives?

Daily if we aren't careful we may make decisions to put off hearing God's voice. Daily these little disobediences lead us further from God's love. As they move us from God's love, our priorities will shift. Serving Jesus no longer will be a number one priority. Other things that the devil plants in our lives will draw us aside little by little. These things will seem a necessity. They will seem harmless. But they will begin to gradually swallow up our time and our energy until we have none left for the things of God. We'll become too busy to be able to think about our lives, about our souls, and our spirits. We'll become too busy for the Word of God, too busy to hear the voice of God. We become hardened and calloused in our heart where we don't feel His touch of conviction. Where we don't feel Him pricking our hearts. If this happens to you, how can it be fixed? My first advice is to go back to where you were before it all started happening.

One of the first things that I mentioned at the beginning of this paragraph was moving away from God's love. The Song of Solomon is a beautiful section of scripture describing a wonderful love. We need to be so in love with Jesus that this is how we feel. Solomon 2:1-4 tells us, "I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys. As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters. As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting house, and His banner over me was love." When we are so in love with Jesus we won't see ourselves, we won't see this old world, we won't see everyone that tries to draw us away. We will only see Jesus. As the old song goes, "And the things of this world grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace." Sin and the devil that sneaks it in hold no power when our eyes and our hearts are stayed on Jesus. Other priorities can't creep in and steal us away from God.

They steal us away when we fail to delight in sitting at His feet.

When going to His house is sweet because it is a time to fellowship with Him and His people, we don't fall away from church. If we delight in the Lord in this way, it is easy to lead our congregation into a relationship that is the same. When He is really our delight and we hunger and thirst after His goodness nothing else this world offers can feed us. Psalms 42:1-2 tells us, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?" We need to hunger and thirst after God. Matthew 5:6 tells us, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." We are God's sons and we know who we are. We are beloved in Him. We are His sons. That is a very special position. That position comes along with a very special love. John 1:12 tells us, "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." Romans 8:17 tells us, "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together." Galatians 4:7, "Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." Philippians 2:15, "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world." Do you remember that feeling before you came to know God that you just didn't belong? That you weren't a people? Romans 9:9-25 is a wonderful section of scripture. Please read this section. I have put here just verse 25, "As He saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved." Now you belong. Now you are a people. Now you are beloved. When you have drunk deep of God's love, and He has worked a miracle in you it isn't easy to get separated from Him. When you start down that side-tracked rail, just listen to His voice. He will lead you back home.

One of the things that must be hard for pastors, ministers, and teachers is dealing with your sin, and admitting that your relationship with the Lord isn't what it should be. We are set up in front of people as an example. Don't ever let this cause you to think that you can't be real with God about your shortcomings, your sins, and your failures. Never let this cause you to think that you can't be real with your congregation and those that you minister to. If you aren't careful a spirit of pride can creep in when people are looking to you to be an example. Instead, a humble fear and respect for the position should be what comes. God has a lot of warnings to give those who are over others. One of the first ones is that to whom much is given, much will be required. Another is that it would be better for a millstone to be hung around your neck than you should offend a least one under your leadership. If the enemy slips in a spirit of pride, and you stop humbling yourself before others and before the Lord, and you stop allowing God's Spirit to convict you, then one day you will find yourself in the pit of hell with those of your congregation that you allowed to be deceived. That is a sobering and humbling thought in itself. (Just a side note here. I have heard Bishop Goad say this often. He says that he hates to hear pastors and ministers use the title Reverend before their name. He says there is no body reverend but Jesus, and that is scripture. This is a title that a lot of people use who have spiritual pride and they are setting themselves up above others using this. This is actually a title that implies that you are to be revered. Think about that. Are you really reverend?)

When I think of disobedience, I think of Saul. In first Samuel chapter 9, the

prophet Samuel first heard about Saul in verses 16-17 God told him,” Tomorrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him to be captain over my people Israel, that He may save my people out of the hand of the Philistines: for I have looked upon my people, because their cry is come unto me, And when Samuel saw Saul, the Lord said unto him, Behold the man whom I spake to thee of. This same shall reign over my people.” (Here is a thought. When you read the story, think about what if Saul had disobeyed God and not gone looking for his donkeys.) I Samuel 10:6-7 tells us about the promise that God gave to Saul. We read, “And the Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man. And let it be, when these signs are come unto thee, that thou do as occasion serve thee; for God is with thee.” Wow. What a promise! (Another thought, what if Saul would have disobeyed and gone in another direction and would never have met up with the prophets.)

See what a curse disobedience can bring to our lives. We miss out on a lot of God’s promises personally for us because we fail to hear His voice and obey Him. We aren’t in the right places at the right times. To be able to minister to people we have to obey God, hear His voice and follow His leading. We have to be there at the right time and place for our people. We have to obey His voice when He tells us to minister a certain thing. We have to listen before we speak so that we can give them His Words instead of our own. What good does our words do? There is a divine apex will for every sermon that we preach, every lesson that we teach, and every time we minister. If we want to have God’s anointing on what we do so that people are saved, healed, and delivered, then we have to find God’s apex will for what we do. God won’t anoint our will. He anoints His will. If we want to be successful in our ministry, do it His way. God’s way works. If we don’t learn how to submit and yield to His will and to His spirit, then we will just be spitting in the wind.

We read how right Saul was for the job in I Samuel 10:24, “And Samuel said to all the people, See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people? And all the people shouted, and said, God save the king.” In I Samuel 11:6 we read, “And the Spirit of God came upon Saul...” In those days, this was a wonderful thing. It didn’t happen often before Jesus died for our sins so that the Holy Ghost could dwell on us. Until Jesus’ death the Holy Ghost couldn’t dwell in our hearts. We had to have forgiveness and be washed clean before the Spirit of God could dwell in us.

All things went well up to that point for Saul. We see a glimpse of a change though that started to happen in I Samuel 12:24-25. It comes in the form of a warning that God gave to the people of Israel. “Only fear the Lord, and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider how great things He hath done for you. But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king.” This verse goes along well with the other verses that we have talked about in this chapter that show the curse of disobedience versus the blessing of obedience. This is a good illustration about how this works. Another verse showing this is found in Deuteronomy 11:18-28. Please read this section of scripture. I’m only summing it up by putting in a few verses here. Verses 18-19 and 26-28 tell us, “Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. And ye shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the Lord your

God, which I command you this day; and a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other Gods, which ye have not known.” Now this scripture is primarily discussing following after other Gods. However, it is also talking about obedience and disobedience as a whole.

Let’s pick up on Saul’s story again in I Samuel 13:1. Things went well for Saul for a few years. Or did they? Remember I Samuel 12:24-25. Why did Samuel close his sermon with the warning that he gave in verse 25? Was something in Saul’s heart even then that God had shown him? Where exactly things started to turn in Saul’s heart, we don’t know. It probably wasn’t quick. It probably started with those little foxes, those little daily disobediences. Those daily failures to let God convict. Those times when he over ran God’s leading, caught up in his own will and his own plans. It probably came with gradually becoming so involved with being king that he had no time left to daily worship the King of kings. It probably came from his forgetting where he had come from and forgetting how God had lifted him up. However it came, we first read about it in I Samuel 13:5-7. In this section of scripture Israel faced its first defeat in many years. They wound up hiding themselves in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits. Verse 7 tells us, “And some of the Hebrews went over Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. As for Saul, he was yet in Gilgal, and all the people followed him trembling.” They not only lost they were consumed with fear. What had happened? Before that day during those years of victory we don’t know how many battles were won. We get the idea though that they were won with great victory. What was different now? Saul or Israel one had crossed the line that Samuel had warned them about in 12:25. In I Samuel 13:11-14 we read about the ultimate result of Saul’s falling away. “And Samuel said, What hast thou done? And Saul said, Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that thou camest not within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash Therefore said I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the Lord; I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt offering.” In verse 13-14 we read the results of that disobedience, “And Samuel said to Saul, thou hast done foolishly thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which He commanded thee: for now would the Lord have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever. But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over His people, because thou hast not kept that which the Lord commanded thee.” He lost it all.

You might think that this was a little severe of a punishment because, after all, what harm was done? Saul had set himself up as a priest and had offered a sacrifice. The priests were set aside from birth and they were sanctified holy unto God. Saul was neither. He declared himself to be holy and in his presumptuousness made an offering. Besides that he led his people in disobeying God. If you are a leader you need to seriously consider where you are leading your people. Especially when you are leading them in spiritual matters. You are held accountable for your leadership. If you lead them in a direction that is against God’s Word, then you are accountable. We read in I Samuel 15 about Saul leading his people in disobedience. God told him to utterly destroy the entire enemy and all the herds of the enemy in verse 3. Believe me that does sound violent. But there were countless times that Israel didn’t obey these commandments, and they paid for this for generations. In some cases they are still paying today. For whatever reason, God had His reason. Saul was to

obey. God knew Saul's heart already before that day. Saul was close enough to the situation that he probably understood the reason a lot better than we do today. Still he disobeyed and came up with something that in his own mind was so much better than what God had told him to do. How did God feel about this new plan? We read this in verse 11, chapter 15. He told Samuel, "It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the Lord all night." Saul made himself smarter than God in his own eyes and he did what was right in his own eyes justifying it all.

Self-justification is dangerous. What is it? It comes when we make excuses. You know those things like saying, "It's OK if I do this just once, cause it won't hurt anybody". Or saying things like, "Well we really don't have to go to church today. Everyone is so tired. We had such a big weekend". Or, "I don't care if it is a sin to hold a grudge, they don't deserve forgiveness". Or, "God expects too much, let's pick and choose what is wrong and what is right". Or "We don't want to get too involved in our religion. No need to get fanatical." Or, "We have so many other things that we don't have time to get too involved with church activities". Or, "I know that God is a loving God. He won't judge me for my disobedience". Or, "God, I know you led me to go visiting tonight. But I am just too tired. I can go another time." Or, "God, this can wait until tomorrow can't it. I have other plans". We could go on and on. I am sure that we've all been there and done that. Saul did. We read Samuel's reaction to Saul's excuses in I Samuel 15:22-25. "And Samuel said, "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the Word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king." Saul begged again by making excuses in verse 24 and 25. "And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice."

I am afraid that there will be many preachers and pastors that will have this to answer to the same as Saul. They have failed to preach the truth to their congregations because they feared the people. In verse 24 we read, "Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord. Samuel answers in verse 26, "And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord hath rejected thee from being king over Israel." The Lord had rejected Saul because Saul had rejected His Word. Talk about an incentive to preach the whole truth and nothing but the truth no matter what the people expect. Does the Lord reject people today? Why would He do any different than He did in those days of Saul? Does God change through time and take on a new nature just because the Bible passed out of the Old Testament into the New? The Bible itself tells us this about God in Malachi 3:6, "For I am the Lord, I change not...." Did God's holiness, His righteousness, His justice, His uprightness, His power change just because the New Testament started and Jesus died for our sins? Jesus died to forgive us of our sins, not to do away with sin. Jesus didn't die to make God to become less of a just God. Sometimes we act like the all-consuming fire that God became in the Old Testament isn't how He is today. We play games with that. God's judgment is just. The same judgment that He had in the Old Testament is the same that He had in the New Testament, and it is the same that He has today. We are the ones that play



games, not God. God does reject people today.

How does Saul's story end? We read this in I Samuel 31 verse 4 and 9. It tells us that Saul and his army had been in a battle against the Philistines. Things didn't go well. Saul was sore wounded by the archers. We read in verse 4, "Then said Saul unto his armor bearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and abuse me, But his armor bearer would not; for he was sore afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword, and fell upon it." Verse 9 tells us, "And they cut off his head, and stripped off his armor, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about to publish it in the house of their idols, and among the people." That is severe. But the end result of unrepented disobedience is cruel. The end result of repented of disobedience is often as cruel. The curse of disobedience hurts. It hurts us, God, and those we love.

Now when you read this you might feel fear. Now there are two kinds of fear. If you are feeling the fear that turns into good old time conviction, then praise God. This is good. If you have started down the road of disobedience, in the big things or even in the little things, then you need to feel fear. I pray that this chapter has jerked you back to the place where you need to be. That kind of fear is good. That was my point in my writing this. However, if you read this and the devil causes you to be so afraid of doing wrong that you become bound, that is not the point. God is a merciful God. Psalm 103:17 tell us, "But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children's children." Psalm 108:4 tells us, "For thy mercy is great above the heavens: and thy truth reacheth unto the clouds." Lamentations 3:22-23 tells us, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is Thy faithfulness." Micah 7:18-19 tells us, "Who is a God like unto Thee that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage; He retaineth not His anger for ever, because He delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, He will have compassion upon us; He will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea." If you have taken this chapter to heart and realized that you are guilty of the disobediences that I have discussed, you have realized your sin and you have confessed and repented, or if you are someone who has allowed the enemy to condemn you unjustly, then both of you have to remember God's mercy. Condemnation comes from the devil that tries to separate us from God's love. However, Romans 6:1 and 2 tells us, "What shall we say then shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid, How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" We need to allow God to convict us. We need to repent with a sorrowful repentance. We need to get determined that with God's Spirit to help us we won't do this again. Then we need to come about from that sin and not continue in it any longer. We need to stop that sin or that disobedience.

We need to respect the price paid for our sin. The price Jesus paid for our grace. Because of that grace we need to sit at Jesus' feet, so close to Him that sin is no longer an option. How do we overcome the devil's condemnation when it comes against us? Romans 8:1 give us an insight. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." We see here that the way to escape the devil's condemnation is to walk in the Spirit. This means obedience. Obedience is a condition of the heart. It is a way of life. It is not a random act but a total picture. We need to live in obedience, submitted to God, hearing and obeying His Spirit, allowing His Holy Ghost to momentarily lead us. That is walking in the Spirit.

What are the blessings that God promises us for our obedience? Joshua 1:7 tells us one. See if you can find what the blessing is here. “Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee; turn not from it to the right hand or to the left that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.” Isaiah 1:19 gives us another one. “If ye be wiling and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land.” Another blessing for obedience is found in Matthew 7:21. This is one that Jesus Himself gave us. “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my father which is in heaven.” This promise is very important. Here are some more blessings. In each one though you will find a key to unlock the promise. This is something that we have to obey God in to find the blessing. Here below I have written the verse and the key. Read each one to find the blessing.

<i>Verse</i>	<i>The Key</i>
Deuteronomy 26:16	Obey with all your heart
Joshua 1:8	Meditate to do all
Matthew 7:21	Don't just talk. Do.
Acts 5:29	Obey God not man.
Deuteronomy 5:29	Keep a heart to serve Him
I Kings 3:14	Walk in His ways and keep His commandments
James 1:25	Continue therein
John 15:10	Abide in His love
Matthew 7:24	Hear and do
John 14:23	Love and keep His Word
II Corinthians 10:5	Have obedient thoughts
Revelations 22:14	Keep your eyes on the promise

One of the easiest forms of disobedience that we can do is when we neglect the things of God. We get so busy and our minds are so filled with everything but thoughts of God and His Word. We take time to pray at the end of a busy day. We fall asleep in the middle of our prayer. God is last after a long line of priorities. We wish we had more time to spend with Him, but we don't. That is one sign that our priorities are getting all out of line. That also may be a sign that the devil is controlling our lives instead of God. When God is

in control, He will be number one and there won't be a lot of chaos and confusion ruling our lives. We may know that things need to change but we have no idea how to even start.

The devil has a sneaky way of changing our priorities and stealing from us those things that are the most valuable. Days go by and our well-meaning intents mount into serious neglect. We need to remember this verse in Hebrews 2:3. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him." How can we neglect such a wonderful salvation? We need to repent and ask God to help us get our priorities in line. We need to walk in the Spirit instead of the flesh. We need to obey Him daily and then watch His blessing work in our lives. That chaos will turn to peace. Number one though to get back to the place where our priorities are in line, we need to go back to that first love talked about in Revelations 2:4-5. "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of His place, except thou repent." How can we neglect such a wonderful thing as God and His love if we are holding to His hand and walking in step with Him? If we are daily fellowshiping with Him, how can we fall away?

Deuteronomy 11:26-29 tells us, "Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you this day; And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day..." Choose you this day and every day whom you will serve.

## Chapter 5. *The Curse of The Flesh and The Freedom In Walking in the Spirit*

We caught a glimpse in the last chapter that you read about walking in the Spirit. We read that Romans 8:1 tells of a promise that we find when we walk in the Spirit. What does it mean to walk in the Spirit? I am including here a chapter from my book, *Walking in the Spirit*, as an introduction to what that means. I have included sections from several of my books in this book. I hope that you enjoy this glimpse at some of the other things I've written so that you can get those and read them too. This is an especially good book about walking in the Spirit that I think you will receive a blessing from reading. This is a good introduction to walking in the Spirit and surely bears repeating. Here it is below.

*The other day, I was thinking about this book, about what I should write, and how I should explain what it meant to walk in the Spirit. I came home from work. It had been a long day with the devil up in my face every minute. One of those days you struggle to get things done. All I could think of was that I wanted to fix a bite to eat and put my feet up. After all, the last time I'd had time to eat was about 8:30 that morning and it was about that time in the evening now. I didn't feel good besides all that. I was trying to catch some kind of something. I just wanted to put my feet up and drown myself in the old "boob tube". God started dealing with me, speaking to me in my heart about something I needed to do instead. Oh, believe me, I wanted to stuff my fingers in my spiritual ears (that's flesh). But I have learned to respect God's leading because of the blessing that it brings, and because I love Him more than I love my own flesh, I listened to Him. (That's walking in the Spirit.) He told me instead of turning on the TV tonight that I needed to turn on the CD player with some good Gospel music. I obeyed Him. I thought to myself, what is so important about listening to music (that's walking in the flesh), but obeyed the Spirit (that's walking in the Spirit). Pretty soon I was caught up in the music and praising the Lord for how good He is.*

*I soon forgot about the battles of the day and about how my body felt (that's walking in the Spirit). Victory started flowing in to my heart, body, and mind. The chills and aches of the fever that had been pestering me all day soon left. (By the way, I woke up the next morning feeling much better.) I got my blessing from the hand of God. Then He directed me into doing something that would bless and touch the hearts of others. That's God's way. When we center our thoughts on our own selves, and we receive a blessing, and that's the end of it, sometimes we only get half a victory. When we turn around and bless others as well, our victory is complete. I got my mind off my problems of the day and on to Him. I got outside of myself and into Jesus and the Holy Ghost, and then into ministering to others. That's walking in the Spirit. That's when this chapter of this book was written, and that's when God gave me the glimpse of what He wanted me to say throughout the book. I had my own idea of how it should be and I was stuck there. I had started the book nearly a month before this happened, but I was totally stuck. I had laid it to the side. But on this night, I put myself in neutral because I felt so tired I had nothing of myself left. I let the Holy Ghost write through me. That's walking in the Spirit.*

*Now I know without a shadow of a doubt that someone will read this chapter, and this book, and they will get an understanding of what it means to walk in the Spirit. I don't say this to brag about my own great power of persuasion, but I say it because I let Jesus do the writing, and He does a great job. I believe that someone who has struggled for years to*

*understand this vital key to living a victorious life in God will have their life changed.*

*Now let's replay my evening. What if I had let my flesh take over? What if I had turned on the old TV, hit the couch, put my feet up, and forgot all about everything because, "God, I just don't feel well." What about the victory I gained? What about the healing touch that came? What about this chapter, and the book that came from it? What about you who read this and receive something from it? What if you hadn't obeyed God and read it? What would we all have gotten without obeying God and walking in the Spirit? We would have gotten a big nothing. We would have gone on in our struggle, continued in our battle, and if our life never changed from this rut, and we never learned to walk in the Spirit, we will eventually be totally defeated, and the end would be that we lose our eternal souls. So tell me, is it important to walk in the Spirit?*

*I heard someone tell about a lady that had been caught in one of the Twin Towers Buildings during the 9/11 tragedy. She had gotten up that morning and had spent time praying. So she started her day walking in the Spirit instead of the flesh. She was what we call "prayed up". When the plane struck the building, she grabbed her things and started running. The other people in her room asked where she was going. She told them, "God told me to run and to run in this direction." They answered, "If He told you to do that, then we are behind you." Over 100 people were saved that day because they followed a Spirit filled, Spirit led woman. What about those around you? Is the example of your life leading them to safety? Do you daily have victory, in spite of your battles? Do people see in your life a direction that they long to take? You can be that kind of person, you know. God's Spirit is powerful enough to provide you with all you need. He has the peace, strength, love, joy, hope, victory, faith, and long-suffering, all you need. I guess another illustration that we can find in this true story is the destruction that following flesh can bring. We all know that not everyone was saved. Why? Even if they were Christians, were they prayed up and in the Spirit? Were they listening to His voice that day, or the voices of others? Were they hindered by bondages in their life so that they weren't in an obedient relationship with Him on that day?*

*You are leading people from things that are even more dramatic than death by fire in the twin towers. You are leading them to life eternal and away from the fires of hell. That is an awesome responsibility and I know that you feel that burden. The only way that you can victoriously do this is if you walk in the Spirit. You can't do it on your own. No body expects you to. You can do this if you walk in the Spirit and not in your flesh. Your flesh will fail. When you say, "Together with you God, I can do this. I can make a difference in the lives of those I love. I submit to you. Lead me. Help me to walk in your Spirit with your gifts evident in my life. Help me to walk in your anointing so that your anointing breaks the bondages and the yokes. God fill me with your spirit and use me." That is where you start walking in the Spirit.*

*The Bible tells us that these are the things that walking in the flesh will bring into our life:*

- 1. Strife ("For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions...." I Corinthians 3:3).*
- 2. Not understanding or receiving the things of God ("But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God" for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." I Corinthians 2:14.)*

3. *Spiritual death (For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.” Romans 7:5)*
4. *Much more.*

*To sum it all up, check out this section of scripture in Romans 8:5-17. Here are some of the highlights. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. Therefore brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” I guess this is enough to make us all want to walk in the Spirit.*

*You may have many days when you come home from having a battle. You may have many times when God asks you to do way beyond what you feel like you are physically or mentally capable of doing. You’ll be called on to minister to folks around you, when you don’t have any idea of what to say. You’ll have traps of defeat and sickness that the enemy will lay to defeat you and to steal your joy, or even your eternal soul. You’ll have times when the devil will sit on your shoulder and tell you that you aren’t worthy. You can’t walk in the Spirit. That is only for spiritual giants, not for squirts like you. You’ll have days when the devil will try even to steal your salvation by making you feel, or think, that you aren’t saved. That’s when you can shake yourself, get your eyes off the devil, and off of yourself, and look at Jesus and God’s Word. Stay close enough to Him so that you can see Him, and so that you can hear His voice. Let the Holy Ghost daily move in your heart and mind, not just in church on Sunday. Put a priority on moving when He says move. That is walking in the Spirit. Talk to your flesh. Let it know that it will not rule, and the junk that the devil pours into your flesh will not overcome your spirit. Say, “Flesh, I have Jesus inside of me, and He is in control today, and everyday. Get down. I have a better way of life than the one you give me and through the Spirit of God within me, I will overcome you.” That is walking in the Spirit. I Corinthians 3:16 says, “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” Let God’s Spirit rise up and be victorious in you.*

*When I first started out writing this book, the first time when I was trying on my own, I had an idea about giving people a guideline to go by on how to walk in the Spirit. You know- like a list of steps to follow. God rebuked me for my ignorance. He told me that it was His business to direct His people, that He would lead them. I was just to point them in His direction. He would do the rest. To walk in the Spirit, you have to have a real and right relationship with God. You have to make yourself available, and He will do the rest. Get settled in your mind that this is what you want, and head in that direction. He will meet you more than halfway. You also have to settle it that God will do this for you. That it does not matter whether or not you feel like you deserve it. This thing is not based on you in the first place, but it is based on Him. All of these are things that open up any of the promises of God.*

*This walking in the Spirit is a personal thing between you and God. It can’t be between you and someone else, and God. A lot of people try to do it that way, and they miserably fail, usually winding up making it hard on the people they are trying to follow. I’ve talked to so many people that tried on their own to be what they thought was spiritual.*

Many times their life was based on an idea they had gotten from other people who they thought were living spiritual lives. They did their best in the flesh to live up to the spiritual expectations of people around them. They weren't able to do so. The devil easily defeated them, before they got started. What was the problem? It was all about themselves and other people. Where was God? Where was His Spirit? You cannot perform a ritual on the outside and be something for someone on the outside, and that be real at all. This thing has to come from the heart. It has to come from a real, everyday relationship with Jesus. He has to be **number 1** for real in your heart, or it won't work. He has to be your love, your guide, your hope, your peace and joy, and your focus. Then you won't be doing it for others, you'll be doing it for Him. It will be real then. You can't walk in the Spirit unless you want to do so enough to commit yourself to Jesus. If you don't know Him personally, you won't really want to walk in the Spirit in your heart. Then is when we do it for everyone else. But when you get close enough to the foot of the cross to catch a glimpse of how wonderful His love is, it will be easy to turn loose of old number 1 and grab hold of Someone who will turn your life around. That is where walking in the Spirit starts. Are you ready? Run toward His love. He'll definitely catch you.

The best place to find out about walking in the Spirit versus walking in the flesh and what that means is found in Romans 8. Please read that chapter. It tells how to overcome the curses of sin and disobedience. I am only writing here the key verses in Romans 8:4-8, 13, 14. "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject against God; for it is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." We can get some important keys to living a victorious life in these chapters. Have you had those times when you tried so hard on your own to serve God, but you only wound up failing? Have you met those people who say, "I would get saved, but I am afraid that I'll mess up. I don't want to fail God, so I won't start. I can't live for God right now." You wondered what to answer them to get them out of that ditch? Romans 8 holds answers to both these dilemmas. All through this chapter we see flesh versus Spirit. Through the section from my other book, we caught a glimpse of what that means. All through this section we see a little about the curse of flesh and the blessing of walking in the Spirit.

We read in Romans 7:18-25 about the battle. This we are all familiar with. How do we overcome the battle that Paul described in Romans 7? Read on. We have to first realize just how awful our flesh is. That in our flesh there is no good thing. We can't do right on our own. We can't make the right choices on our own. We can't feel the right emotions or think the right thoughts. When we think that we are being very independently smart separate from God, we are only proving how independently stupid we really are. This is true for every area of our life, not just in the religious things. God knows everything. God sees all. If you want to know the truth about anything, just ask God. He helps me in my day-to-day decisions. He helps me to have the feelings about things that I need to have. When I am running low on love and need it to be able to reach out to those that are close to my heart,

*there it is on the inside of me. When I need strength to go that next step, to do that next thing that He has directed me to do, I can find His strength through His Holy Ghost inside of me. When the battle has all but stolen my faith, and I need a boost to be able to overcome, God is there with His supernatural Holy Ghost faith. I couldn't do without God and His Spirit on the inside of me to help me to do those things that I can't do on my own without Him. Matter of fact, I couldn't work where I work without His Spirit leading me. No matter that I work in a ministry. We all need His help day to day. We need His guidance on the job. We need His guidance in our day-to-day management of our finances. In our day-to-day choices that we make. We need Him in handling family problems, in dealing with our spouses, in leading our children. We really in our human minds do not know what is best. God does. Isaiah 55:8-9 tells us, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." God sees tomorrow as clearly as He sees today. He sees both with His perfect wisdom. He knows our thoughts and the intents of our hearts and the thought and intents of the hearts of others. He can guide us in our decisions with a perfect insight and a perfect wisdom. He can lead us in our relationships with those we love. He can even help us in the relationships with our enemies.*

*We have to submit to His will. We have to admit that His way is best, and our way won't work. We have to walk in obedience to His will. We have to listen to Him and do what He says. That is all a part of what it means to walk in the Spirit. We have to go where He leads us daily, putting ourselves in neutral gear. We have to submit ourselves to Him. We have to put our flesh in subjection to His Spirit and allow His Holy Ghost in us to rise up and flow through us. We have to stop being so full of ourselves and become filled up with Him. Then when we think, it is with the mind of Christ, because He is Lord of our minds. When we reach out to others, we'll put our hands out to reach out and Jesus will reach out through us. They will feel His love coming out from us. He'll lead us in where to go and what to say and His Holy Ghost anointing will minister to others through us.*

*Another blessing of walking in the Spirit is in the area of obedience. When we walk in the Spirit we can understand the things of God. In the flesh, we can't even understand salvation. Before we get saved, we can only glimpse what it means to walk with God. We can't even really understand the Word of God. Nothing makes sense. Have you ever noticed that before people really give their heart to God they have a weird idea of what Christianity and the Bible are really all about? That is because the Holy Ghost has to reveal these things to us. They can't be discerned or figured out in the flesh but in the Spirit. When God draws us by His Spirit and we begin to see His truth and His Word as His Spirit reveals them to us, things become clearer and in focus. It is the same way when we are working for the Lord. We really don't see things clearly without His Spirit leading us. We don't know where to go, or who to reach out to, or what to say, or what to do. We can't even really explain salvation to someone unless His Spirit quickens our words and makes them come alive to the sinners we are reaching out to. We don't have the answers on our own. We probably won't even know the questions. We have to rely on God to reach out to others. We also have to have Him in us to be able to continue in our work for the Lord. One of the things that the enemy does is to wear out the saints of God so that they lose heart. They lose that determination to serve God.*

*The devil will use anyone to hurt them. Family hurts them. Church members hurt.*



*The people that they try to reach out to turn and rend them. It gets hard to love God and love people enough to be determined in your service enough to run ram shod over the devil. The love of God and strength of God rises up in us during these times if we will let Him. He will carry us through. The worst thing that we can do is to draw back in a shell of hurt. That makes it hard for God to work. If we allow Him to He can even turn these times of hurt into victory. That is if we will walk in the Spirit enough to see what He is doing.*

*In everything that we obey God in we have to walk in the Spirit. We have to walk in the Spirit to even hear His voice leading us. Most of the things that God asks us to do is beyond what we can do in the natural. We have to walk in the Spirit to even be able to do them. That is part of the reason why so many people fail to obey God. They won't submit enough to walk in the Spirit. Then the devil comes along and easily discourages or even distracts them from obeying.*

*Another blessing that we find that comes from walking in the Spirit is being able to overcome satan. Our enemy is not a physical enemy but a spiritual enemy. We can't fight him in the flesh. He isn't flesh. He is spirit and has to be dealt with in a spiritual realm. I am enclosing here another chapter from my book **Walking in the Spirit**. This chapter is titled, "The Battle and How To Win It".*

*We have talked a lot in this book about the battle of satan and the world that comes against us, and that the only way that we can overcome this is by walking in the Spirit. I want to write this chapter to make sure that you know that even though there is a battle, we can be victorious in God. Ephesians 6:12-13 says this about the battle. "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 armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand, Stand therefore." This tells us that we do have a battle, which is something that I am sure you already recognize. We see that the battle that we face is not a flesh and blood battle. We can't go out and literally physically stomp the devil. We can't even stop him, because we can't even see him. Since this battle is a spiritual battle, we have to fight him in the Spirit. If we are walking in the flesh, this can't be done.*

*Our gospel group, Chosen, was singing at a Fourth of July celebration. We were also doing a live broadcast from our radio station that day from the celebration. There were a lot of people there that we were ministering to in song throughout the day. Our group sang, but we also played Gospel music and the radio station out through loud speakers during that entire day. Believe me, every person that came that day, and there were probably hundreds throughout the day, got a touch of Gospel through song. Well, that morning before we left the Lord showed me that we would face a battle, because the devil would try to discredit us by making us look bad. I was in a hurry to get ready, and didn't take time to pray. Later on that day, I found out what God meant. We had a problem with the equipment, and things just started turning out all wrong. I remembered what the Lord had spoken to my heart earlier, and this time we all took time to walk in the Spirit, and pay attention to His voice. We all prayed and bound the devil. The equipment started operating right, things were fixed, and everything went on great, in spite of him. If we would have been walking in the flesh, and not in the Spirit, that day would have turned out differently, and the devil would have won. We wouldn't have even known what had happened. That is how it is when the devil brings a battle against us. If we aren't walking in the Spirit, and*

*listening to God, we will have all kinds of things brought against us to hinder us, and we won't even know where they come from or what to do about them.*

What is the answer? How do we fight this battle? Ephesians has a lot to say about that subject in chapter 6 verses 14-18. "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God; Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance, and supplication for all saints." None of this is something that we can do in the flesh. So that proves out that to fight against the devil, we have to walk in the Spirit. Flesh cannot win in fighting satan. It is destined to lose. If you want to win that battle, you have to walk in the Spirit. And you have to mind the things of God. In II Corinthians 10:4 we read, "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds). In II Chronicles 32:8 we read, "With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the Lord our God to help us, and to fight our battles..." When we walk in the Spirit, losing is not an option.

We not only have to fight satan to keep the victory in our own lives, to be able to obey God and do things for Him, but we also have to fight satan in the lives of those we love. We have to learn to take spiritual control of those in our household. I see that so much in working with our Christian school. I have watched this in over 20 years of teaching. When parents of children are walking in the Spirit and they are taking Spiritual charge of their children, their children face a whole lot less than those who are letting the devil control them and their children. Those that are letting the devil control them are often Christians. The devil will actually fight the children of Christians more so than the children of sinners. The devil hates God's kids. Especially those that may one day work for God. This generation of children is special. I believe it will be the last group of children before the Lord comes back. No wonder the enemy is so busy at trying to destroy our young people. Their only hope is parents who will stand and purpose in their hearts that the devil and the world will not get their children. We have to stand in Spiritual authority for them until they gain a relationship with God of their own and they learn to stand for themselves. If we don't, they can be spiritually destroyed, and it really doesn't matter whether or not we weep when it happens because we love them so. You not only have to walk in the Spirit and take spiritual authority for yourself, but also for those in your household. You have a right to overcome satan, and you have a right to establish grounds that he can't come across.

Whether the grounds that you are claiming for deliverance from satan are your children, things that you are doing for God, your finances, your physical and emotional health, the health of your family, your church and its work, or whatever it may be, you have to take spiritual charge over satan. God gives us the right to do so. Why would He give us all the armor that we talked about earlier if there was no reason to fight? If He didn't expect us to win, why would He Himself provide the armor? I can remember a time when the devil had set a financial battle against the ministry. If God didn't undertake, we were in danger of losing our property. We walked in the Spirit. We identified the problem. We recognized that satan was on the rampage. We listened to the voice of God. He told us to physically march. We told us to march around our property and bind up the stronghold that the enemy had brought against us and command him to lose our finances. We did that. It was only a matter

of days that the Holy Ghost broke through and the battle was over. Walk in the Spirit. Identify the problem. Recognize who it is that is behind it. Listen to the voice of God. He knows how to handle the circumstance. What He tells you to do may not make a lot of sense. No matter. The Spiritual things won't make natural sense. But the battle is not in the flesh, nor is the solution. Find out what God says and do it, even if it blows the natural mind. I am sure that we looked really silly to our carnal neighbors that day while we were marching around. No matter. They understood our victory when it came.

There is one key to walking in the Spirit. I have put it last, though in some respects it really should have introduced this chapter. That is talking about the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. Without this important experience it is really impossible to walk in the Spirit. You might not have been taught about this experience. You might have even been taught that it isn't so. Before you make up your mind that you will reject this, keep reading. After all the thoughts that I am going to give you are not just my thoughts. They are the Word of God. Here is another chapter from my book *Walking in the Spirit* titled "The Baptism of the Holy Ghost".

*Trying to walk in the Spirit without having the Baptism of the Holy Ghost is like trying to race a 2003 sports car with a model T engine. You just won't have the power to win the race. I grew up not hearing about the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. I grew up in an area that had been blinded and bound to think that this gift of the Spirit was not real. I was taught that when you were saved, you got all of God's Spirit that there was. I was taught that after salvation, you had it all. I grew up not knowing a thing at all about the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. Through a miracle, God brought me into contact with a church that believed in the Baptism of the Spirit. After I received it for myself, no one could tell me that it wasn't real. It was the key that brought me victory over a life that had been bound by sin, drugs, and alcohol. The devil had worked overtime in much of my life to destroy me because he knew that I would one day serve God. Maybe you are going through the same thing. Maybe it seems like every time you try to get up, you get knocked back down. You know in your heart that you should walk up-right before God, but every time you take one step forward it seems you get knocked three back. You may be about to give up in defeat, which is exactly what the devil wants you to do. It may be that he sees that up ahead, you will bust his little kingdom wide open in some area. You may be sitting there thinking that it is hopeless. That there is no use to keep trying. You won't make it. The devil has you where he wants you. You think it is because you are worthless. It may be because you are getting ready to rise up and be what God has chosen for you to be. It is your choice. If you give up now, you will never know. Maybe the key for you to overcome is the same as it was for me-the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. When I first learned about it, I got it. I grabbed hold and didn't let go. There was none of that intellectual twisting around that a lot of people do. I knew that this was the key for a victorious life and I turned it. Even though I had grown up hearing that it was not right, when it came time for me to accept it, I knew I needed it. That settled that. Don't read about this and talk yourself out of thinking that it is real, and that it is for you. God said it is, so let that be the end of that.*

*Now over 25 years later, I can say that no wonder the devil tried to keep me blinded. I have been serving God full time for the past 25 years. Not in my own power, but in the power of*

*God's Spirit. I had to be hungry enough to submit myself to allow God to do things His way. I had to take Him and His Word at face value. I had to receive the gift that He had for me. I have never regretted it. God will allow His Spirit to control only the things that we allow Him to control. When we say, God, I have decided to do it your way. Come and fill me up to the brim. Then we are ready for the Baptism of God's Spirit. He fills us up all the way with His Spirit. That is what the Baptism of God's Spirit is all about.*

*Here is what God has to say about it in His Word. We first read about it in Acts Chapter 2. Here we read that the disciples were all gathered in one mind and accord. In verse 4 it tells us, "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." What was the outcome of this? These few who were hiding in fear after the crucifixion, became bold enough and so full of God's Spirit that they turned the world upside down. Without the Baptism, they would not have endured to start the church, and keep the Gospel that was committed to us today. Verse 41 tells of the outcome of that day, "Then they that gladly received His word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." This didn't stop here. We read about this throughout Acts. In Chapter 8, verses 14-17, these men received the gifts of the Holy Ghost. In Chapter 10, verses 44-48, the Holy Ghost is again on the scene filling the Gentiles. In Acts 19: 1-6, these men also received the gift of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. Paul asked them if they had received the Holy Ghost since they had believed. These men were already saved, but they had something in addition to salvation that they were about to receive. They answered, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." In verse 6 the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied. I think of myself when I read their answer to Paul, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." I hadn't heard, but God found me anyway.*

*How do you receive the gift of the Holy Ghost? I was blessed to find a church that believed this way. The congregation laid hands on me and prayed for me in the same way that Paul laid hands on the men in Acts 19:6. But I still didn't receive it that night that they prayed. Several nights later, when I was by myself, the Holy Ghost fell on me and I was filled. I prayed in tongues for the first time that night. You can receive it through the prayers of others, or you can receive it through your own prayers. However, if you are in a church congregation that is agreeing and praying with you, it makes it easier for you to receive.*

*The Baptism is a gift of God that He has given us to empower us against the battle of satan. It is a gift that gives us boldness in our witness, like it did those on that first day. It is for you. I have heard many people argue against the Baptism of the Holy Ghost being real. They argue that it is not for us today. When I hear this I know several things about those people. I know that they are ignorant of God's Word. In Acts 2:38-39 we read, "Then Peter said unto them, repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." I would say that means us too. I also know when I hear people argue that the Baptism is not for us today, that these people do not know God very well. I know that He wants the best for His children. He wants us to overcome and be victorious. I also know that*

*we live in the last days, which has to be one of the hardest times to live on the earth. Why would God give a gift to help the early disciples, tell us about it, and then deny us the right to have it or make it so that it is not available to us who need it the most? That is not the God I know.*

*I think that one of the things that hinders people in receiving the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is that it comes along with the gift of speaking in tongues. For many, that is a stumbling block. This is because the devil wants to scare people away from our being able to pray in the Spirit, or pray in tongues. What it means when we pray in tongues is that the Spirit of God prays through us in His own language. He is praying directly through us using our vocal chords. We may not understand what He is saying, though sometimes He will allow us or others to interpret. Whether or not we understand, the devil knows when we start praying that something is being done to bind him and to lose the power of God on the scene. No wonder he works overtime to confuse people about this powerful gift. Have you ever wanted so badly to pray for someone but didn't know how to pray? All you could do was to say a general half way prayer, when you know you needed to do more. The Holy Ghost knows exactly how to pray in God's perfect will. When He prays through you that is a powerful prayer that will get the job done. Also, when we pray in the Holy Ghost it strengthens our inner man, Who is the Spirit of God in us. Jude 20, "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost." When we are filled and consumed with the Spirit of God, and we allow Him to pray in us, we are submitted to His Spirit in a way that nothing else can do. We strengthen His Spirit in us. We submit our flesh and our flesh man takes second place in our life. With all that going on our flesh doesn't stand a chance. God's Spirit rises strong in us and we take on His likeness.*

*Now you may interrupt me here to say, what about the people who receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and wind up turning their back on God, or they sin in a big way and take on a life of sin instead of a life with God? Just because you have the Baptism of the Holy Ghost it doesn't make you perfect. You still have your flesh man. If you have the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, but the Holy Ghost is still not allowed to control your life, then flesh will. That is why it is important to allow the Holy Ghost to move in you. Pray in the Holy Ghost daily. Don't hinder the Spirit of God when He starts to move in or through you, whether it be in church or at home. Allow God's Spirit to control. Then He will be there when you need Him. One of the greatest stories I have ever heard about the power in the prayer of the Holy Ghost is this. The Holy Ghost moved on a man and began interceding through him. The man had no idea why, but he obeyed and yielded. God spoke to him to take note at what time this had happened. The next day he heard about a close friend who had been stabbed. That had happened at exactly the time that the man had prayed. The other man's life had been miraculously spared. Another time I heard about a man on a plane who had interceded through the Holy Ghost. After they landed, they were told of a mechanical failure that had nearly caused them to crash, but miraculously the failure had corrected itself. The man who had prayed had no idea, but God knew. hundreds of times I have heard stories about how the Holy Ghost had interceded by speaking in tongues through those who had the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. The situation was corrected, the life was saved, the soul was saved, the person was delivered, or whatever need there was, it was met. There is no*

*prayer that is more powerful than the prayer of the Holy Ghost Himself. If you do not have the gift of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, ask God for this. Seek it. The Bible says that when we seek God, or His gifts, we will find them. Who says so? Jesus. Luke 11:9, "And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Read this section of scripture through verse 13. In verse 13 we read, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?"*

We need to talk a little here about the gifts of the Spirit. If you don't have the Baptism of the Spirit, the filling up of the Spirit of God, then how can you have gifts of the Spirit? If you aren't walking in the Spirit, yielding to His Spirit, then how can you have gifts of the Spirit? You might have fleshly qualities that resemble Spiritual gifts, but are they really gifts of the Spirit? The gifts of the Spirit are the spiritual gifts that are evidenced in your life by the Spirit. The fruits of the Spirit are the qualities of the Spirit of God evidenced in your life when you yield to His Spirit. These are not qualities that you need to strive to have, but they are qualities that you obtain by yielding to the Spirit instead of striving to have them. Our own striving only fills us with flesh. That knocks things all wrong. When we yield, then God fills and pour out through us. Trying to do this on their own burns out so many times pastors and workers. Just yield and walk in the Spirit. Yield to the Spirit of God and let His gifts and fruits work in you.

To be determined even more to find the blessings of walking in the Spirit, we need to look at the curses that come with walking in the flesh. What are some of the curses of the flesh? Let's go back to Romans 8 and look at some of these found in verses 6,7,8,9,13. "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. 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. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." These are just a very few verses that talk about the curse of walking in the Spirit. We can get the picture though clearly. This all is summed up well in the scripture found in Galatians 5:16-25. "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelling, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit."

We need to desire with all our heart to have the blessings in our life that walking in the Spirit brings. We also need to desire with all of our hearts to run away full speed from the curses that walking in the flesh can bring. In summary Romans 8:14 tells us, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God." Galatians 4:7, "Wherefore

thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”  
Philippians 2:15, “That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke,  
in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.”  
Ephesians 5:8, “For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as  
children of light.” For you to be able to be a son of God and to walk as a son of God,  
shining as a light in this dark world, you have to walk in the Spirit. Be filled with the Holy  
Ghost. Walk in obedience to Him. Walk in the Spirit and not in the flesh. Turn your world  
upside down for Jesus.

## **Chapter 6.** ***The Curse of Mental Bondage and the Promise of a Sound Mind***

Now before I start this chapter I need to explain something. When I talk about mental bondage in this chapter I am not necessarily just speaking about mental illness. Even though that is a vital need and one that is growing. That isn't all I am referring to here. There are many ways that how we think can become bondage.

Let me give some examples. The first one that I am going to give is a little extreme but a good illustration. I know someone who began to feel fear. It was an unreasonable fear but no matter. It grew to the place that it consumed and controlled her everyday existence. It actually grew to the place that it bound her from being able to leave her house. She was trapped by fear in her home. This was a demonic curse. This was a demonic bondage. After years of this bondage she finally began to identify that it was a bondage of satan. She came to the place where she was sick of it and determined that she was not going to stay bound. She sought the Lord in faith that He would deliver her. She became determined to obey God. He told her that she would need to go out of her house and go to church. Now I am sure that some of the church people would gladly have come to her house to pray with her. Deliverance prayers work at home too. But that isn't what God told her to do and that isn't what she did. I believe that if she had not obeyed God, she would not have been delivered. Her stepping out in faith was the key that unlocked her deliverance. She told me later that she actually would get physically nauseatingly ill when she was consumed with this fear. The day she obeyed God to go to church, this happened. She pressed on past this and obeyed. This was the beginning of her deliverance. The power of the Holy Ghost fell at church that day. She was touched by the One Who delivers. She also found a church full of saints of God who knew how to pray. Throughout the week they lifted her up before the throne of God interceding for her continued deliverance. She found help in her battle. Today, even though that devil still tries from time to time to harass her, she stays free and is no longer bound. This has been over 10 years ago.

I know someone whose mother died of cancer. She lives in constant fear of sickness. As she gets older this gets worse. She has many symptoms of sicknesses that keep her an invalid, inside all the time, where once she was very active. Doctor's can find no physical causes for her symptoms. Her mental bondage has caused her physical sickness.

My mother was healed of lymph cancer over 10 years ago. Her cancer had spread all over and was even in her bone marrow. She had called me the day that she was healed and told me that God had spoken to her and told her that she was healed. She was completely and totally healed and today remains cancer free. During that time of healing her sister died of the very same kind of cancer. Right at that time my mother found another knot that turned out to be cancerous. God also healed that. Now that too is gone. I am convinced that if she would have dwelled in fear about the death of her sister, that knot would have spread and turned cancerous. I am convinced that the doubt that the enemy brought against her during this time of her watching her sister die would have caused this to undo her healing that she had received all those years earlier. I am also convinced that the stress and worry that she went through at that time would have made this happen. So were her doctors. However, she refused to live in fear and stress and worry, and is cancer free still today. We'll talk more in the next chapter, "*The Curse of Physical Bondage*", about the sicknesses



that the devil brings against us. Let's talk about some more people who have been bound in their mind and the curses that these brought against their lives. This goes beyond sicknesses.

I counsel with young people in our Christian School and have done this for years. There have been literally hundreds of times I have seen situations where bad teachers literally cursed children for life. (I don't mean by this that these were teachers in our school.) Before you get the picture of witches with black hats behind teacher's desks, let me explain. I'll give one example. We had a young man who came to school when he was about 9 years old. He had a teacher in his old school that had constantly belittled him in front of the entire class. I think that he had failed that grade and actually had this lady two years in a row. She would stand him up in front of everyone and discuss how stupid he was and that he would never learn or amount to anything. This boy had an undetected, severe vision problem. Because of this he couldn't read. Instead of diagnosing his problem, the school put him in special education classes and this lady was his teacher. He went through all the ridicule from the other children that these special education children have to go through. Then he ran into a teacher whose form of correction for his failure was to ridicule him.

Then he came to New Life to our Christian Academy. With the help of God's Holy Ghost I discovered that he was really bright. He just couldn't read because he couldn't see the words. When we got him big print books and magnifiers, he could see the words. He learned how to read. He was so bright that he had fooled many of his earlier teachers into thinking that he could read because he had memorized everything that was said. He had developed his memory to the place that he almost had a photographic memory. He loved to watch the science and social studies programs on TV and had an understanding of these things that was way beyond his grade. However, by the time he got to us he was damaged. He had one of the most severe confidence problems that I have seen. He constantly would say that he was stupid and couldn't do it. That he wouldn't amount to anything. We worked and worked with him to help change his attitude. He wasn't allowed to talk these negative things at school. That was over 10 years ago. Now he is out of church, out of fellowship with his family, into drugs and alcohol and the mess that all that brings into our lives. Why? He was never able to break that curse against him enough to believe that he could overcome. He never let God get close enough to deliver him even though he had grown up in a deliverance church. This self-confidence problem and how he thought about himself even went so far as to erode his relationship with God.

I have a friend who grew up in a perfectionist home. She was a preacher's kid and this didn't help. Down through the years, she ran into those people in congregations who didn't have enough backbone to come against a preacher, but instead came against the preacher's kids. It was years before she came to the place that she could commit and submit to God's love, even though she had grown up in church. She came to the place where she didn't trust anyone and when you are there you also erect walls up between you and God. She had developed a lot of those "porcupine quills" that people develop as defense mechanisms to protect them. God is a wonderful God. One of the things that God did to deliver her was to send her a beautiful baby girl that surely broke down many of those walls. When she finally peeked out, she found out that it wasn't so bad out there after all. More and more she learned to trust God and His people. As she got closer to God she got more filled up with the Holy Ghost and she submitted more and allowed Him to work in

her. She allowed God to work in her life. This was the beginning of her deliverance.

There have been many students through the years that I have worked with who have had split families. I have known many adults that grew up there, too. There are so many people whose parents divorced and went their separate ways. The saddest of all are those who went their separate ways with a new spouse who was not willing to share them with their children. They left their children behind while they started their new lives. They left them with whoever would take them. More and more I see this happening. Usually it is grandparents who wind up raising children, which is not how God intended it to be. This rarely works. These kids grow up feeling that something had to be wrong with them or their parents wouldn't have left them. They had a constant feeling that they were failures. They felt that they couldn't do or be what they really wanted to do or be. They constantly had a severe fear of failure because look at what their failure had cost them. Even when they grew up they were cursed with these feelings, even after they realized that all this was really unfounded. They constantly feared failure and often they'd quit trying really hard because if they did, they were afraid they'd only fail. So why try really hard. This would only cause them to fail again. These kids always wind up looking for love in the wrong places. They become prey to those kinds of people who are like buzzards, looking for the wounded so they can consume them. They would get tangled up in abusive relationships and wind up being used. This would make everything worse. They would come to God and still carry this curse from their past. Because of this curse, they were so afraid of failing God that they really couldn't trust His love for them. Always there was this thought that they would just mess it up and be rejected. They struggle too hard to do and overdo things. This itself sometimes pushes people away. Then they identify the curse against them with God's help. The Holy Ghost delivers them. The walls begin to fall down. Some of my favorite people are those that have been through this and they endure to serve God. When they do they have a precious love for the One who delivered them. Nobody can turn them around. They are at their Savior's feet in the light of His love, planted there for eternity. Talk about some faithful workers for the Lord.

This is also true for people who go through divorce. Divorce can throw people into a total downward spin that destroys them spiritually, and physically. Their life is filled with turmoil and self-doubt. They think, "If the one person who loved me the most rejects me, then I must be worthless", and this worthless feeling can cause those things we mentioned in the last chapter to happen to them. They can go down many of those roads as well. Since their self-doubt is so crippling, their relationship with God can be crippled or even destroyed. They need deliverance from this.

Now through all this you get an idea about what I mean when I say, "curses against our mind". These things can bring about tremendous bondages. I have even had times when the enemy would cause someone to say something. This would get grafted into my mind and become bondage. There are hundreds of ways these things work against our mind. Through all of this previous section, too, we get an idea of how God delivers us and our part in that deliverance. If you would please go back and reread these examples. You can tell from what the individuals did or failed to do certain steps and ways of thinking that led to their deliverance or that led to their continued bondage. This will help you in dealing with some of the bondages that you experience.

What does the Word of God say about mental bondages? How do we break these?

One of the first bondages that comes to my mind and one of the most prevalent today is the bondage of fear. Throughout my examples you can find a glimpse of that bondage. Fear causes health problems. It causes all kinds of anxieties that turn into all kinds of little and big bondages. The little ones can be just as cruel. I was sitting in church one day listening to conversations of those around me. Please pardon me for eavesdropping, but God really used this to show me something. Several of the little groups that were talking had no idea of what the other groups were talking about because each one was engrossed in their own conversation. Most of them were discussing the kinds of medication that they were on for stress anxieties of some kind. We travel in our evangelistic group and go to several churches. Well, the same thing happened in church after church.

The church today has become so bound by fears of some sort that instead of talking about praising God and the power of His Holy Ghost before service starts they are too busy discussing their medication. No wonder the Holy Ghost doesn't move in the services. We used to spend time before service in prayer and praising the Lord. Now we discuss our bondage. Church, this is sad. We need to come out from the world and be a separate people. We need to seek the face of God. We need to allow His conviction to fall and repent of our falling away. We need to commit, submit it, and leave it at the altar. We need to raise our hands and praise God and seek His deliverance until His Holy Ghost falls and cuts loose these bondages. We need to stay free in that liberty that we are called into. How can we be a light and a powerhouse to the world when our circuits are so jammed with fear and we are so bound that God's current can't flow through us. We need to get real, get right, get delivered, get filled up and fired up. Every bondage the devil puts against us makes us that much closer to the devil's kingdom and further away from God's. God has not given us a spirit of fear. II Timothy 1:7 tells us, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." I John 4:16-19 tells us, "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in Him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love Him, because He first loved us." How do we fight the curse of fear? Fall in love with Jesus. Draw near to God instead of following Him at a distance. Fill your mind with His Word instead of with all the world's junk. This world is full of fear. It has no hope and nothing to protect it. You have God on your side. What have you to fear, but fear itself.

God doesn't want us to fear. No Father wants His children bound in fear. Would you want your children to live in fear? Wouldn't that mean that they doubted your ability to take care of them? When we fear, we really doubt God. Hundreds of times in the Bible, God tells us not to fear. Get a good Concordance that indexes all the words in the Bible. One that I really like is the Strong's Concordance. There are hundreds of scriptures that say "fear not". We need to identify that fear is sin. Whether it be fear coming from experiencing bad things in this world, or stress, or fear from rejection. Or fear from the devil who is the author of fear. We need to identify and repent. Draw near to God. Get filled with the boldness of the Holy Ghost and stomp on that fear. Put it under your feet where it belongs.

Another mental bondage comes when we walk in the flesh and not in the Spirit. Our fleshly thinking will destroy us. We can't trust our human nature self-centered mind. It will get us into trouble every time. We need to walk in the Holy Ghost and take on the mind

of Christ.

Another mental bondage that comes is because we are double minded. James 1:8 tells us, "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways." Some of the most tormented people that I know are those who are trying to go in both directions at one time. With one foot they travel toward serving God. With the other foot they travel toward sin and the world. That won't work. That will split you in two. When we constantly do what we know that we ought not to do, that will even eventually give us a split personality. We'll become one person in church and another when we go to the bar. Many people try to do this. They know that they risk their eternal soul, but still play the games, take the chances, and then make the excuses, justifying everything that they do. Nothing will cause mental friction worse than the rub that this life style brings. If you are doing something that you know not to do, you put yourself in mental bondage. You will never know true peace of mind until you give it up and give it over to God. The worst mental bondage that I can think of is the one Paul talks about in Romans 1:21,24,28, "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves: And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient." I have actually known people who had been turned over to a reprobate mind. They had lived the life style I talked about here. They had silenced the voice of God and the power of His conviction so long that they no longer could hear it. How sad. What hope do they have? They actually think that they are right, but they are bound for hell. You can't have it both ways.

Now I have met many people through the years who thought that they had blasphemed God's Spirit and He had turned them over to a reprobate mind. I knew He hadn't done so when I talked to them. They were worried about having done this. They were concerned. When you have been turned over to a reprobate mind, you will no longer be concerned. You won't know you are doing wrong and won't care. Telling people that they have been turned over to a reprobate mind is one of the enemy's favorite lies.

Let's take time here to talk about another mental bondage. That is the condemnation that the devil brings against us. Like when he tells us that we have a reprobate mind. The devil's job is to accuse us. I Peter 5:8-9 tells us, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world." The devil is the accuser of the brethren both day and night. He'll even accuse you and try to trip you up by bringing dreams against you when you sleep. He will literally torment your mind with accusations. If you give into him you may fall into sin that you weren't even thinking about before he accused you so. Learn to identify his thoughts that he puts into your head. Don't entertain them. Like the old saying goes, he may fly over your head, but you don't have to let him nest in your hair. Identify and bind him. You have authority. James 4:7 tells us, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." Resist the devil in faith. Don't listen to his lies of condemnation. They will only make you feel so condemned that you can't stand up to him and then you will listen to his lies. Eventually if you aren't careful you will begin to accept them as truth. Also, to fight against the condemnation of satan, you need to stay close to God. If we seek

Him every day we can have faith that His Holy Ghost will convict us.

When the devil accuses me, I don't run away from God, I run to Him. I find out if I have failed Him in some way. If I have done something, then I repent and make it right. If I haven't, then I turn around and give the devil a black eye. In John 8 we read the story of the woman caught in adultery. In John 8:10-11 we get a glimpse of Jesus. When we are accused we can run to Him. His voice will again say, "Neither do I condemn you so go and sin no more". And what about the devil, that accuser? Revelations 12:10-11 tells us, "And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of their testimony...." One day we will glance where he is thrown into the pit and say, "Is that what gave us all the trouble?" Then we'll go on into the glory God has for us.

Another of the bondages of our mind comes when we are stretched and stressed out in so many different directions. Everybody runs here and there. No time for peace of mind. This is not good. It will definitely catch up with you in mental stress. That's when you need to say, "Hey, I need to get my priorities in line." When we get this stressed out it is a sure sign that we aren't walking in the spirit, but in the flesh. Walking in the Spirit brings peace of mind. Not mental bondage. We need to separate ourselves and draw back close to Jesus.

This world and the battles of the enemy can also bring a bondage to our mind. Sometimes my mind gets literally worn out with these. That is when we need to draw aside and bury ourselves in the Word of God and in the Holy Ghost and renew our mind. Ephesians 4:23 tells us that we can "Be renewed in the spirit of your mind." I Peter 1:13 tells us, "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." If we aren't careful, we can run in circles so hard that we get drunk. We stagger at life. We need to sort out the clutter and let God lead us. We need to walk in the Spirit daily and His order and peace will rule in our lives instead of the chaos of this world.

All of these are mental bondages. What promises do we have in the midst of this regarding a sound mind? I Corinthians 2:16 tells us, "For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ." When we walk in the Spirit and submit to the Lord, we can have the mind of Christ who is in our mind through the power of His Spirit. Romans 12:1-2 tells us, "I Beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." I Peter 1:13 tells us, "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." II Thessalonians 2:2 tells us, "That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand." II Timothy 1:7 tells us, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

We have the Word of God to keep us. We have the blood of Jesus to cover us. We have the power of the Holy Ghost to empower us. We have the mind of Christ. Yesterday is gone and covered with His blood. Let it go. Reach to what tomorrow holds. God holds it in

His hands. You are delivered. The price was paid at Calvary for your deliverance. Be new in Him. I have a song that I want to share with you.

### **Shake Them Off Children**

#### *Chorus*

You've got to shake them off children.  
Shake off those bondages you've got all around you.  
Shake them off children.  
Rise and claim the promise of God's Word.  
Stand up be a child of God.

#### *Verse 1*

Shake off those chains that hold you bound.  
The devil stands and laughs at all that he has done.  
Declare God's promises be determined in His Word.  
Get a made up mind to live in what Word you have heard.

#### *Verse 2*

Aren't you tired of that battle in your heart and mind.  
Give it all to Jesus soon you will find.  
If you will not waver like the man upon the sand,  
A solid rock foundation is in your building plan.

Shake them off children!! God has delivered you. Claim it. Draw nigh to Him and experience it. Let His Holy Ghost deliver you. You are free by His Word. Live free.

There is another point that I have to make in discussing mental bondages. I thought I was finished writing this chapter. I turned on the TV and started thinking about all the bondages the world brings against our mind through TV and zillions of other sources. These things aren't always yelled out from 10-foot high billboards. Mostly they are subtly implanted into our spirits. Let me give one example. We have become politically correct. It is wrong to say anything bad about anyone and we have to even in our thinking become politically correct. We aren't to point fingers. No one is doing wrong. Just bad. That took the word sin out of our vocabulary. This has even crept into the churches. We took out the altars and preached generic messages because we didn't want to make others uncomfortable. The church became a social gathering. No longer was it a place where God's Word was preached to God's people with His Holy Ghost convicting hearts and bringing change.

The world's thinking is very dangerous. What is one of the outcomes of this? They are now legalizing homosexual marriages, in some denominations ordaining as ministers. Some churches don't even know that it is wrong. We need to go back to the altar. We need to get filled up with the Word of God and the Spirit of God so that this junk doesn't bind our minds. Whatever it is that the world is preaching, we need to forget. We need to be careful that it doesn't bind our minds and how we think. We need to do what the Bible says and be a separated people. II Corinthians 6:17 tells us, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean things: and I will receive

you.”

I am going to add here at the end of this chapter another way that we can be bound in our minds by how we think, our patterns of thinking. For example, I know someone who is totally bound in a routine. They think that they have to do a certain thing at a certain time. They can't get anything done for God because He doesn't function in their routine. I am a process analysis type person. I analyze how to do things before I do them. This is good and bad. I'll figure out a way to do something before I start. The problem comes in when I think wrong. If I am not careful I will analyze the situation and think that it can't be done. That will be because I am thinking wrong. I'd give up on the idea except for God. That is when God talks to me. He'll say, "Why don't you do it this way". Then it will click and it will even be easy. I will have one of those "duh" moments. The way that I think would have made that job impossible and I wouldn't have even started it and tried.

I have known many kids at school that hated math. They hated it so bad that when they got their math book out their mind would freeze. They couldn't do it at all. In all these examples you can see how patterns of thinking can bind us. In all of these cases even though they were mild we see how the end results would be failure. We can develop all kinds of patterns of thinking, habits, routines, etc. that can lead to defeat. What is the remedy? Remember the illustration about myself. I have learned the hard way to listen to the voice of the Lord. That is even in normal every day decisions. If not careful I can easily fall into these thinking patterns. We have the mind of Christ when we walk in the Spirit. When we listen to His voice, and submit to His leading, His mind is doing the thinking. When we do this, how can we be defeated?

Another area where we can get into patterns of thinking that can defeat us is in our doctrine. There are lots of doctrines that may have started in the Word of God but at this time have little or nothing to do with it. These doctrines cause us to develop certain ways of thinking that may even cause us to be defeated. Let me explain. I was once in a church that had a strange doctrine. They took the defensive attitude that they had a corner on the truth that no one else had. Beware of churches that do this. They become defensive in their "rightness" and that often leads to self-righteousness. I noticed one day that most of this congregation had bad sicknesses and even crippling conditions. Young and old alike were affected. I asked God why. He told me that it was because they didn't have the truth. John 8:32 tells us that the truth will set us free. This congregation did not have the truth and they were bound. When we are bound, we are subject to many things the devil uses to bind us including sickness.

Another group that I know of concentrates on the outward appearance more than what is going on in their heart. The outside is important, but what you look like won't get you to heaven. It is what is going on inside you that counts. Their children don't completely understand why they have to live with those standards. This often causes them to rebel. This doctrine winds up being a defeat instead of being a commitment of heart that strengthens. Strengthens them in their walk with God. That is why it is so important to forget doctrine. Don't follow after a set list of things to believe. Get a relationship with God that is real and follow after Him. Bury yourself in His Word and let His Holy Ghost reveal His word to you. It is important, though, never to take the attitude that no man can teach you anything. Only God can. God chose that by preaching we would be taught. He anoints preaching. So that in itself tells us that we need to listen. The Bible also says that there is safety in a

multitude of counsel. In other words, we can't go off in the corner with our own little truth and think we have it all. There is safety in a multitude of counsel.

Throughout this chapter we have read some of the mental bondages that the enemy can set against us. We learned how we could be delivered from these. We can be free in our minds. We have the promise of God's Word and the power of the Holy Ghost. Accept them both. Live free.



## **Chapter 7.** ***The Curse of Physical Bondage and the Promise of Healing***

We talked about earlier how my mother had lymphoma cancer-cancer in the lymph nodes. If you have ever known anyone that had this, you'll know that it is one of the most dangerous cancers to have. My aunt had the same kind of cancer. Even though there was no evidence at the time that this type of cancer is hereditary, this was enough to change their doctor's thinking to put some doubt there. They both had the same doctor. Their doctor asked to meet with all the family to discuss how to watch for signs of cancer and to make us aware that we were "at risk". I didn't go to that meeting. Right then I declared my healing. I claimed the blood of Jesus and broke that curse against my health. I refused to let that fear lodge in my mind and I still stand against that. I claim a new blood line. One that flows from Calvary. It is definitely cancer free. I ran to God with this and I heard what He had to say. I got assurance from Him that cancer will not harm me. I have a peace that passes understanding about the subject because I have His Word that this is not something that I have to fear. I identified that the weapon that the enemy had to use against me in this case was fear. I also know that if you give into fear, what you fear will come upon you. I wrapped myself in God's love and He wiped away that fear. I think that the final breaking of that curse that came against my health came when I stayed with my aunt while she was dying. She had no fear. She didn't fear the cancer or her death. She was totally at peace about it all. When all she could do was raise her hand, which was just skin and bones, and praise the Lord, she did. Until she went into the sleep that turned to death, she had victory. I knew without a doubt that there was nothing to fear. My fear of the subject left me. That was the seal on my own victory over cancer. Sure the devil hasn't closed the subject. I think that he is totally mad because he had a plan for me. You see, I had surgery a few years before that with what might have turned out to be a cancerous condition, but didn't. When the devil knocks on that door, I just don't answer. I don't dwell on anything but the sweet victory of God regarding that subject. I dwell on the voice of God, God's Word, and the promise that He gave me. The devil has lost.

There is a lot to my illustration that teaches how to overcome a curse against our health. It also tells what causes a lot of curses to come against us. What would have brought this curse against me? Something that was a truth in the minds of medicine, a fact in the natural, but something that was not a fact in the spiritual reality. Doctors thought it might be linked to me through my blood line. But in God's reality, this wasn't true. We have to walk in the spiritual and accept God's Word and God's truth as reality. Then the doctor puts it into words. That is when fears become a reality and a bondage. It is best if we keep our mouths shut. That is why what we confess we often get. Words lodge in our minds and in our hearts. Words invoke an agreement. Somebody says. Somebody or several hear. They listen and agree. They take it in. That is where a lot of sicknesses overcome our faith to start with. If I had agreed with the words the doctor had said, my battle would have started right there. I believe that if I had entertained those words, without seeking God and His Word first, those words would have become a reality in my life. My fear would have been compounded. My loss of faith in the subject would have quadrupled.

Then there was and is the fear thing. The enemy brings fear against us and fear is like an open door in our spirit. Our faith is like a wall around us. Fear is a hole in that wall.

Fear separates us from trusting God and putting the battle into His hands. Fear separates us from believing and accepting God's Word. The devil uses fear a lot to destroy. The scripture talks about this in II Timothy 1:7, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." Our thinking can get off when we are afraid. We don't have a sound mind when we are shaking in our spirit. Fear is where a lot of battles with sickness start. Even doctors and health experts say the same thing. We are just fortunate enough to know why this is so. Fear, stress, worry, doubt, anxiety, all these are the same thing. When we have God as a number one priority, we are walking with our hand in His, listening to His voice, obeying Him. He is the center of our lives. When we do these things we will live in His peace. When we come out separate from the world in our thinking, we will be wrapped in the shelter of His love and His Word. What then do we have to fear? When we dedicate our bodies to Him and submit to His Holy Ghost in us, He is the Lord of our health.

Sure we will have battles with our health. Many of them come because we don't reasonably take care of ourselves. Some come because of the stress of our rat race lives when we allow everything but God to have control and our mind and bodies get all out of balance. Some come when generational curses like mine pop up. Some come because of the sin of others around us, and that rubs off on us. One example is communicable diseases. Some come because our environment is cursed by Adam's curse and sickness is something we have to deal with. Yes, we have battles. But through the Word of God we have power to overcome. Through His stripes we are healed. We have His Word for it. Isaiah 53:5, "But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with his stripes we are healed." Psalm 103:2-3, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; Who healeth all thy diseases." Malachi 4:2, "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall."

God's healing breaks the curse of sickness and disease. One of the most powerful testimonies that I have of God's power to heal comes from a time when I didn't even know at the time that I needed healing before God healed me. I didn't pray for healing, and no one else prayed for me that was there with me. No one else in the natural knew that I needed prayer because I was alone at the time. I fell asleep at the wheel of a car driving on the interstate. I flipped it upside down, mashing the top of the car in beneath the steering wheel. I was laying down, pinned in. When they pulled me out of the car, I had been in it for just a little while. There was blood down both arms, both my legs, and on my seat. Even on some of the things that were in my seat. But I didn't have a scratch on me. I had no internal injuries. God had healed whatever was wrong before I even knew that anything was wrong. Talk about freaking out some rescue workers. God is a healer. The price for our health was paid for at Calvary. It is definitely God's will that we walk in healing and break the curse of sickness.

The Bible tells us plainly that it is good for us to be in health and prosper. (III John 2, "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.") Here are other verses that tell our rights as children of God to walk in healing:

**Isaiah 53:5** tells us, "But He (Jesus) was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed."

**Luke 4:18** tells us, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me (Jesus), because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance of the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.”

**Proverbs 4:22** tells us, “For They (God’s Words) are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh.”

**Jeremiah 30:17** tells us, “For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord....”

**Jeremiah 17:14** tells us, “Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for thou art my praise.”

**Exodus 15:26** tells us, “...If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in His sight, and wilt give ear to His commandment, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the Lord that healeth thee.”

**Psalms 91:16** tells us, “With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.

**Isaiah 65:22** tells us, “They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.”

Here are accounts of some of the healings that Jesus did while He was on earth: (Read them. I have chosen the ones recorded in Matthew to make them easier to look up. There are many more. If you have a concordance, or cross reference Bible, look these up. There is strength in God’s Word. It is the only book that you can read that can build your faith in the powerful way that it can.)

Matthew 8:14-15, Matthew 8:2-4, Matthew 9:2-8, Matthew 12:9-13, Matthew 12:15, Matthew 12:22, Matthew 8:28-34, Matthew 9:18-19, Matthew 9:18-26, Matthew 9:27-34, Matthew 15:22-28, Matthew 20:29-34

It is important to know that you are a child of God, and that part of your inheritance is the right to be healed. Stand on this knowledge and know who you are in God. When we are well, or sick, the devil specializes in condemning us. The best way to fight this condemnation is to ask God to reveal any sins that we haven’t confessed and repented. Then we put God’s Word in the devil’s face. If you have accepted salvation, you are a child of God. Instead of concentrating on trying to defend yourself on who you are in the natural, stand on who you are according to God’s Word. God’s Word declares some things about you. You need to start seeing yourself in the light of God’s Word. Declare who you are and stand on it. As children of God we have the right to these things:

**Galatians 3:29** tells us, “And if ye be Christ’s then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.

**John 1:12** tells us, “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.”

**Romans 8:14** tells us, “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”

**Galatians 4:7** tells us, “Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”

**Ephesians 1:18** tells us, “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.”

Some people believe that healing is not for today. That it was only for people in Bible times. It might be easier to accept that if I had never seen anybody healed, and I hadn't been healed myself. God's Word can build your faith, and so can the testimonies of those who have been healed. God has healed me many times. One of the first times I remember Him healing me was when I had broken my foot. It swelled up about twice its size and turned black and blue. I had one problem. I was to drive someone to a town 8 hours drive away from home. I was their only transportation. I couldn't even put my weight on it, and to make the problem worse I had a straight drive car. We all prayed that night. The next day, I made the trip without a problem. My foot was healed.

I've heard Brother Goad tell about how at a revival meeting they saw a little boy without an eye in his eye socket. His socket was empty. They prayed for him to be able to see. God did one better than that. The little boy can see now out of a beautiful little blue eye that God made especially for him. In another service a lady who had been in a wheel chair all her life rolled up to Brother Goad's wife and asked her if she wanted to take a walk with her. Our pastor's wife didn't know that the lady couldn't walk. She agreed. The lady got out of her chair and walked with her. By the end of the service she was running around the tent. I remember a lady who was in the hospital waiting a life saving surgery. She couldn't have the surgery because of another complication. She started to get better. The doctor did more tests. Much to the doctors amazement they found a new valve had been put in her heart. The Master Surgeon had been at work. Another lady was dying because cancer had eaten away parts of her stomach and intestines. She was in the hospital basically to die there. Much to the doctor's amazement she began to get better. Tests revealed that she had a new stomach and intestines that had been reconstructed without human hands.

Another friend was in the hospital. A car had struck him and the bone in his arm had been shattered. X-rays started showing a new bone that grew in the place of the one that was shattered. The purpose of my telling how God has healed me, and others that I know is not to make you feel bad or bitter as to why God hasn't healed you. The purpose is to encourage your faith. God's Word teaches that God is no respecter of persons. What He does for one He will do for others. He will do for you. God is still in the healing business.

When Jesus suffered those stripes for your healing, He could see down through time down to where you stand. He did that for you. Yes, it is His will that you be healed. Yes, Jesus is a healer. He bore those stripes on the back for you. In those days the Roman soldiers used strips of leather, sometimes 10 in a bunch, with pieces of metal or glass tied on the ends. We know that He was also beaten so badly that you couldn't tell what His features looked like. Through these stripes we are healed. (I Peter 2:24, “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.”) He took that pain and bore that suffering so that we don’t have to. I know it is His will for us to be healed. So do you. Not only that, I also know that His Word tells us that we **are** healed.

Healing is ours. The curse of this world, the curse of the sin of others, the curse of fear, none of these are more powerful than the promise that we have in God’s Word. Nothing is more powerful than the will of God for your life. When you need healing, run to Him before you run to others. He is the One that made your body. He knows what is wrong with it. He lives inside you through His Holy Ghost. Who can know it better than He can. Yet we automatically run to the doctor, or run to someone who has had similar symptoms. We take their cures before we seek His face. Go to a doctor if He leads you to go. But don’t make the mistake of letting the doctor be your God. Trust in the One that made you. Listen to Him. If He tells you to take the doctors advice, do so. If, like in my case about the time that the doctor wanted to meet with us about the cancer, He tells you to bind the doctor’s words and trust in Him, then you had better do so. Brother Goad has had a tremendous healing ministry through the years. I have heard him make this very wise statement. He has said that when people with terminal conditions trusted in the doctors instead of trusting in God, he would bury them every time. When they put their trust in the Lord, they would go on living. Put your trust in God.

In closing, bury yourself in God’s Word. God’s Word grows your faith. Romans 10:17 says, “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.” Keep God’s Word in your mind and you’ll have less room for everything else. Proverbs 4:22 says this about God’s Words, “For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh.”

Healing is yours. We don’t have to live under the curse of sickness. We have the promises of God for that. Claim them. Walk in them. Refuse to accept anything else. The price paid for our healing was dear. Isaiah 53:5 tells us, “But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed.” Jesus was beaten with a whip 39 times. The Romans used a whip that was strips of leather with bits of glass or metal tied into the ends. Can you imagine a soldier beating with this as hard as he could. Just a few times would tear away the flesh. This many times would strip the meat entirely away from the bones. Jesus was flesh and bones. He wasn’t immune to pain. Can you imagine the pain that He felt that day? He did that for you. So that you can be healed. Healing is a part of the children of God’s bread. Feast at that table that was spread for you. Don’t settle for sickness.

In praying for others for healing, realize it isn’t you who is healing them. There is no such thing as “faith healers”. You just pray in the Holy Ghost and God does the healing when that prayer lines up with the faith of the one being prayed for and it is lined up with your faith in God as you pray. My mother was healed when a sister in our church prayed for her. This lady was an older lady who had a real ministry in praying for people with cancer. She had dared to step out in faith and pray for others who she loved who were suffering. God heard her prayer and healed. That encouraged her faith. She didn’t hold back or hang back the next time that some one needed her prayer. In faith she stepped out. This happened time and time again, and her faith was built up to the place where God could really use her in a powerful way in a healing ministry. That is how a prayer ministry happens.

It is important that you stand in your right for healing. If the devil can’t stop you in any other way, he will try to stop you using sickness. For the sake of those you minister to, when he starts to put this on you, bind it. Don’t accept it. Stand firm in the Word of God. Also, stand firm in claiming healing for your congregation. Teach them about healing. Teach them the

scriptures that we mentioned in this chapter. Encourage their faith. I remember a gentleman whose mother was really sick. He believed in healing and prayed for his mother to be healed. She died because of her illness. This gentleman asked the Lord why He didn't heal her. The Lord answered him that she had attended a church all her life where healing was not taught, where the Spirit of God was not allowed to move in their midst. She had no understanding of healing, and the move of God's Spirit that brings healing. Because of this, she died where she might have been healed otherwise. It is very important to teach and preach about healing, and to let God's Spirit move in your midst.

## Chapter 8. *Generational Curses and Generational Blessings*

I have a close friend that started serving God later in her life. Before that, she was a sinner married to a sinner. She mostly raised her children while that was true. I heard her say something the other day that was so true. She was saying that she had noticed her daughter being the kind of parent to her children that she had been to hers. Now, like most of us, God had tempered her down a lot when He came into her life. To sum it up, she told me that there was a lot of yelling going on in her household when the kids were growing up. She herself hadn't grown up in a happy home. She was afraid that this was becoming true with her daughter's home.

It is so true that how we raise our children is how they will raise theirs. It is also true that how we were raised is often how we will raise our children. There are a lot worse things than a "yelling" household that we can pass down to our children. I am using this as my first example. There is a lot more to this story that I will add later in the chapter.

My Dad was a special person to me. However, he had a weakness. He was a third generation alcoholic. The best thing that he ever did was to marry my Mother. That was the hope for all of us. I'll explain more later. By the time I was 19, I was an alcoholic. Such a bad alcoholic that my drinking buddies at my university worried about my drinking problem. I have a first hand experience with the power of generational curses. Now psychiatrists argue that alcoholism is inherited, or they argue that it is a pattern established by environment. Don't know which of that is true, and I really don't care. Neither one of those truths will bring about deliverance for an alcoholic. The Word of God will. What does it say about generational curses? Numbers 14:18 gives a glimpse. "The Lord is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation." Sin costs. I have heard many people testify about how the devil blinded them to think that the thing that they were doing wrong, they were doing in a corner where it wouldn't hurt anyone else. I am here to tell you this is a lie. You will pay for your sin. So will those you love. So will their children and their children's children. I am not saying this just because God is a judgmental God. I am saying this because He is a just God. He doesn't wink at our wrongdoing. He doesn't excuse it away. He is righteous and just in His judgments. He is an upright God. If He winked at our sin, what would stop us? What would become of His holiness? What would become of His righteous nature?

I have taught for over 20 years. Most of that time has been with teenagers. Now if you have a teen in your house, you are going to relate to the next statement. They are masters at pushing your limits. When you say no, be prepared to stand your ground. They will do everything they can to cause you to compromise. The worse that you can do is to give in. That means that next time, they will push it even harder. Then it will be easier that time to give in. Before long they are standing there in trouble up to their eyeballs berating you because you didn't establish guidelines for them. They will then mock you for being a push over with not enough backbone to stand up for what is right. You don't give in to what is wrong and not pay for it, especially with those who push you to get their own way. Often we are not any better before God than a pushy teenager, pushing to get a compromise, pushing to get our way. That is human nature. However, we are blessed to have a heavenly Father who is not a push over. He is a righteous God. Psalm 145:17 tells us, "The Lord is righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works." Revelations 16:5 and 7 tells us, "And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art

righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.”

Even the angels who have been with the Lord from the beginning of eternity praise Him for His uprightness, for His righteousness, for His right judgments. He has not changed in who He is for all of eternity. We know what to expect with God. He doesn't waver like the wind, giving into our whims. What if He would have been that way? What guidelines would we really have then? What stock could we even put in His Word? If He wouldn't stand up to us, how could we even trust that He would stay there to stand up for us when it really counted? (Hey parents, if you listen, I am preaching a little sermon on the side to you. When we compromise in our standards to give in to our children, we will cause them to develop attitudes of rebellion and disobedience. This will turn into a curse for them that they may even pass down to their own children.) God isn't a pushover. What He says He is, He is. His yes is yes and His no is no. His Word is His Word and He stands by it to the place that it is forever settled in heaven. Psalm 119:89 tells us, “For ever, O Lord, Thy Word is settled in heaven.” Isaiah 40:8 tells us, “The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the Word of God shall stand forever.” In His Word, right is right and wrong is wrong and that won't change no matter how hard we try to warp it so that we can get our way. God is not a pushover. He is a righteous judge. If He were not righteous, what hope would we have? When we stand before Him on that last judgment day, we have hope and confidence that His judgment will be just. So let's not get all up in the air when we read verses like this one in Numbers 14:18 about God's promise of judgment. When God says don't, don't. Or you will pay. And so will your children. This is true both because He is a righteous God and because certain actions have certain consequences. We won't change either of these by wishing that these weren't so. What we sow we will reap.

Now in a few minutes I am going to pick up all those loose ends from the beginning of this chapter like how did my story turn out the way it did, and why was the best thing that my Dad do was to marry my Mom, and just how did my friend at the beginning of the chapter turn her generational curse around for her children, and what hope is there to break these curses. We'll finish those threads up in this tapestry in just a moment. For now, let's talk about some other generational curses.

Someone I know is always sick. Their mind is filled with doubt and worry about everything but especially about their health. They have children who have grown up in this atmosphere of fear and constant talk about sickness. They are beginning to develop the same pattern in their lives as their mother. It was no surprise to me to learn that this person's mother had this same pattern of thinking and the poor health that went with it. We have already talked some in the previous chapter about how this works. Sometimes how we think can be a generational curse in itself. One such curse comes when someone who refuses to believe in God passes on this same pattern of thinking to their children who have a hard time just seeing that God is real. Or when someone who has been really hurt by Christians passes down to their children the thinking that all Christians are bad, and God must be too. How we think can bind us in many ways, we have talked more about this in the chapter, *The Curse of Mental Bondage and the Promise of a Sound Mind*. These ways of thinking can be passed on to our children to actually become a generational curse.

There is another curse that we can be born into and carry to the next generation. That is the curse of a crippled self-esteem. It can destroy and separate from God. I have known scores of children either in split home situations or ones who were abandoned by one or both parents.



They often would grow up and develop a home and family life like the one that they had growing up. This would come because they didn't know about how to find security in those that they loved. Often they would pick a spouse that would abuse them, just like the abuse that they had come out of as a child. Then their children would grow up in the same bondage and later marry into the same type of bondage.

Another generational curse is the curse of lust. So many people today are bound by lust in a society that even uses lust as a tool to sell their soap bars. We really live in a sick world and the television pumps that perversion into our homes quicker than we can filter it out. Dealing with lust is hard enough, but especially so for those who have a generational curse. We had a little girl in school in kinder garden years ago. At age 6 she loved to sit on all the older high school boy's laps. It was a constant battle to keep her from acting in a provocative manner that was way beyond her years. It wasn't cute. You would have had to be there to believe it. As she was growing up she dedicated her heart to the Lord and was in a Holy Ghost filled, anointed church. You know, I could only discern a hint of that problem during those years. But she backslid on God during her teenage years. She is in her 20's now. I saw her the other day and cried after she left. She looked really, really old for her young age. She already had that blank, dead-eyed look that sin brings, especially to those that know better. I could tell why by the way she dressed. She was dressed like a walking street sign saying, "Pick me up please". Now where did this start? Did it start with how she acted in kinder garden? I knew her parents from before she was born. As long as I knew them their house was in conflict because of the infidelity of one or the other of them. This generational curse eventually stole the life out of their daughter.

Boy, by now you may be thinking that this chapter is really depressing. Hey wait, though. I have left threads of hope all through this. Let's just say for instance that this little girl had stayed in church, serving God, letting the Spirit of God and the Word of God have their fruits in her life? What if she would have let God convict her each time a weakness came up. What if each time this was so, she repented and put that weakness under the blood, claiming her new blood line? What if she would have stayed in church and let God lead her to find a young man who was serving God? Would her story have ended differently? Sure would have. Thousands of similar stories to hers with thousands of different generational curses do. The hope starts with this. When we are born into the family of God, saved, we are born again. We have a new bloodline. We have a new lineage, a new inheritance. John 1:12 tells us, "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."

We have a new sonship. We have a new parent. II Corinthians 6:17-18 tells us, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing: and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." Galatians 4:7 tells us, "Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." We have a new inheritance. We are an heir of a perfect family. How is all this so? Read this section of scripture. Galatians 3:13-14, 16,26,27,29. Also read please Colossians 1:20-22. Through the blood of Jesus we are made new. Through the blood of Jesus old things are passed away. We are made new in Him. We are born into the family of God. We are an heir to His righteousness. We have a new blood line that is curse free. Through God's Word we receive the knowledge that these things are true and that we no longer have to walk in the bondage of a curse. The power of the curse is broken. When we do so and we walk in the Holy Ghost, we can also break the curse that comes against our children. When we live in a way that shows our children victory over generational curses,

then they too know how they can break them in their own lives and in their children's lives.

I meant what I said that the best thing my Dad ever did was to marry my Mother. My Mom was a Christian while I was growing up and still is. She kept us at church whether we wanted to go or not. Not only were we at church, but we were involved in church. We were in whatever activity that we could become involved in. There were a lot of times when we wanted to stay at home with Dad, but we knew better than to even push the issue with my Mother. We grew up learning God's Word. It wasn't just on the shelf at our house. It was either being read by my Mother or by us. We knew about God and His ways. We were taught right and wrong and we couldn't push things over to be our way. When I was a teen, I backslid and chose no longer to walk in God's ways. That generational curse that gripped my family's bloodline got a hold of me. It hit me full force. By the time that I was 19, I was a fourth generation alcoholic. What chance did I have without God there? However, those teachings that I had learned when I was younger never left me. I couldn't get away from God's Word that had been sown in my heart and mind. It called to me until I eventually came back home to God's love. Proverbs 22:6 tells us, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old he will not depart from it." I left God's Word and refused to live in obedience to it. I even talked many times about how this was not real for my life. However, it never left me. When I finally returned to obeying the Word of God it was there to set me free. The blood of Jesus restored me and gave me a new blood line. When I repented, this time I gave it all to God. Didn't keep any closets full of junk like I had before. God cleaned it all out. I claimed my new bloodline. I buried myself in His Word. I received the Baptism of the Holy Ghost and the power to overcome that goes with this. Am I an alcoholic still 25 years later? Or am I, as the psychiatrists say, a recovering alcoholic because once an alcoholic always an alcoholic? I can say, praise God, that I haven't had a hint of a desire for that for over 25 years. Don't even remember what that felt like. That curse was broken. I can say too that it is true for all my sisters as well. Praise God, even my Dad was saved and God totally delivered him a few years before he passed away. What about our generation's children? That will be up to them. That will be their choice. I can say though that because of the victory in our lives, they know how it works. I can say that they too have grown up in church and know the Word of God. I can say that their homes have had examples of this Word put to practice.

Many times parents don't break the generational curses that have come against their children. First of all they don't recognize them. Secondly, they don't know how to deal with them. They haven't been taught how to plead the blood of Jesus. They don't know the power of God's Word in overcoming these. They don't know how to take authority over the enemy and claim deliverance. They are not standing firm, refusing to accept that this is anything but broken. They don't know these things so they cannot teach their children how curses are broken through the power of God's Word and the Holy Ghost. Or thirdly, they may not be walking where they should be in their relationship with God. They may not be walking in the Spirit. They may be following the Lord at a distance. They aren't committed, submitted, and obedient in their relationship with Him to allow Him to lead them in how to handle this problem. They are crippled to start with in helping their children because they need help themselves. If this is true there is only one hope for you and your children. Jesus. Run to Him and not from Him. He is the help that you need.

There is a fourth reason curses aren't broken. We have to turn lose of the old to walk in the new. We can't hold onto any part of anything connected to the curse that we are breaking. How can it break that way? When I left my life of sin, I left it all behind. I moved out of that.

I moved out of the old and into the new. I left it like a locust moves out of its shell. I didn't keep any remnants of it. There was nothing that I held onto in my heart or mind. God purged it all out. Until He does that, the curse cannot be broken. There is a fifth reason why we may not find deliverance and why our children definitely won't. If we compromise on what we believe, and if we do not stand firm in where we stand in God, the devil will overcome us instead of us overcoming him. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways and he won't receive help from God. (James 1:7-8 "For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.") If we don't stand our ground with the devil, he will take our ground. If we don't stand our ground with our children, what hope do they have?

OK. So here we are finally finishing what we talked about at the beginning of this chapter. Remember. Back to the conversation that I had with my friend who had made the statement that she could see her daughter reaping in her adult life from the mistakes my friend had made before the Lord had turned her life around, and reaping from the mistakes her own mother had made. In that conversation, I was trying to make her feel better and said that she couldn't blame all her daughter's weaknesses on herself because we all make choices. We choose what we want to be like. After that conversation, though I thought about this book that I had started at that time. I thought about generational curses and how right my friend was to be concerned, and how wrong my statement had been. I guess that this conversation was a great illustration on the difference in flesh and Spirit. If we don't walk in the Spirit and the Word of God it is easy to make excuses so that we don't have to feel so bad about what is going on. However, that won't bring deliverance into a situation. If we don't walk in the Spirit and the Word of God with our thinking, we won't even be able to identify curses that come against both our children and us. Let alone break them. Later though, as I thought about that conversation, I thought about the change in my friend's life that God had made in her. I thought about as long as I had known her, and that had been many years, she had been in love with Jesus. I thought about how serving God had been a priority. I thought about how she knew how to walk in the Spirit and daily she prayed in the Holy Ghost interceding for her children. I thought about how she buries herself in God's Word wanting His truth about things. I thought about how she is filled with the Holy Ghost, praying in tongues, which is a powerful prayer. I thought about how she allows the Holy Ghost to move in her life. I thought about daily how she is obedient to Him and lives this life in front of her children as well as when they aren't there. I thought of how she knows how to take authority over the devil in her own life and in the lives of others. I thought about how she doesn't compromise with what she believes. She is what she is with everyone and everyone knows her stand for God including her children because of her daily walk with Him. I thought about how the world's thinking, its compromise and its clutter are not a part of her life. What about her children? I guess you know the answer to that one too. Somehow you just know that they will be all right.

This is a good time in this chapter to talk about generational blessings. We've talked about generational curses, what about the blessings? We've caught a glimpse of several of these in this chapter including the one about my own mother, and my friend. Let me give another example. My great great grandmother was a prayer warrior. I remember my grandmother telling me how that her grandmother prayed for all her children. Then she would pray for her children's children, that generation would have been my grandmother's generation. Then she would pray for their children, which would have been my mother's generation. Then she would pray for their children, which would have been my generation. She did this daily. You may have already figured out the unusual thing about this. You see my great grandmother

died before my mother was even born. She definitely didn't know my generation. Yet daily she prayed for us. In all those generations the majority of us are serving the Lord. My grandfather had 18 brothers and sisters. You can imagine all the cousins that I have after two generations of multiplying. We fill up a whole county. The name Young as a whole has meant "good people" for generations. Both of these are things that my great grandmother prayed for. She prayed that we would serve God and that we would be upright people. Wow! What a generational blessing! That blessing went on down to my generation's children as well when we passed down to them what we knew of the ways of the Lord. I can see it being passed even further down as their children are growing up the same way.

When we serve God and we raise our children in His Word. When they see our light and hear our prayers. When they watch the power of the Holy Ghost and God's Word work in our lives and through us in to their own lives. Then we may never know or see the depth of the legacy that we leave behind in a generational blessing. We may never see the depth of it, but our great-great-great grandchildren surely will. We have God's Word for that. Can you through God's help turn a generational curse into a generational blessing? After reading this chapter what do you think? You sure can.

## Chapter 9.

### *The Curse of Spiritual Bondage and the Power of the Deliverer*

You might wonder why I put this chapter here in the middle and not nearer the beginning. Especially since it is the hinge that the whole book is hinged on. It is because I wanted you to read about the curses that the devil brings against us and get good and mad about them. I wanted you to get determined to stand against him before you read this chapter. I wanted you to begin to identify who and what the battle is and how it works.

A lot of times we will suffer from many things that is simply the devil coming against us. We don't have to do so. We first have to identify the problem. If we aren't walking in the Spirit, listening to God, submitted and committed, we won't even be able to do that. We can't spot the enemy in the natural. He isn't flesh and blood. Ephesians 6:12 tells us, "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." Our natural discernment of what is going on won't work. Our natural weapons won't work. We have to use discernment and spiritual weapons.

The number one battleground that the devil uses is our own minds. The devil can and does influence our thoughts. We have to learn how to recognize those thoughts that he sends. Just like we learn to recognize the voice of our Shepherd speaking to our hearts, we need to recognize the influence of satan against our minds. Then we can bind that influence before he is able to sow anything into our spirit. For example, let's go back to my illustration of how a lot of sicknesses start with fear. The enemy will cause us to hear something that causes us to have a seed of fear in our mind. If we allow that seed to grow, it can grow into our spirit and we begin to accept it as truth. Then it grows from there into our bodies and we begin to develop those symptoms. How do we stop that from happening? We know the Word of God. It is in our minds. We know that through the Word of God we don't have to be afraid of diseases. This binds our fear and stops the enemy's thoughts from taking root. We take our thoughts and hold them up to the Word of God. If the Word of God says that it isn't so, then it isn't so. Then we talk to God. He will tell us if we are battling something. If He tells us no, then we know that the enemy is behind this thought. We bind it and refuse to keep thinking that way. His plan to cause us sickness or whatever bondage he is trying to bring against us is broken.

We have been given armor to stand against the enemy and we have been given weapons. They aren't natural weapons. We won't be able to blow him up with machine guns. Don't you wish that it would be that easy? But our enemy isn't natural and he can't be fought in the natural. Yet often we try to fight him in the natural. We try to come against him our own way doing our own fleshly thing. It is as effective as trying to blow him away with a machine gun. We have to walk in the Spirit to overcome him and do things God's way according to God's Word. We can't come against him on our own just by trying to deal with the situation. We have to use the Spiritual weapons that God has given us. The number one weapon that we have to use is recognizing the Spiritual authority that God has given us.

One of the best illustrations that I can give to explain what it means to take authority comes from my years of being a teacher/principal in both the public and private schools. One of the lessons that I had to learn early in my teaching years was how to take authority. I learned it in a small public school that actually had grades K-12 in one building. All teachers were required to take turns doing hall duty after school, monitoring the halls while the buses were loading. I was new at teaching, and I was totally new at having to deal with teenagers.

I was new to them, and I was an elementary school teacher, which made things harder. It was beneath them to listen to me. I was nervous at having to tell them what to do, and I was a soft-spoken, mild mannered person. Often that doesn't mix with teaching older students. I had not learned to take authority. I barely had learned how to take authority in my classroom, but my hall duty time was a nightmare. Nobody listened. I was too unsure to take the authority that was mine as a teacher. Some of the teachers who had been there for years had no problem with their authority. They knew their place. They knew their rank and they knew how to pull it. Most importantly the kids knew, too. When they walked into the hall, the place would grow quiet. If there was something going on that wasn't supposed to, it stopped when they showed up. These older teachers walked in their authority. They were sure in that authority.

Later on as I grew in understanding my place and how to take the authority that was mine, when I walked in I had the same affect. It took some time. It also took a little help from God. One day I noticed a remarkable change in the respect that the older students had for me. I started asking around to find out what the change was. Now this was back in the days before teachers got too educated to use corporal punishment. We were allowed to paddle. I had paddled several of my second grade students. That whole class was an unusual group. It was a group that had been handpicked with the most discipline problems. When I asked about the change in attitude of the older students, one of the students told me that it was because they had heard about how I had taken authority over my own class and it had made an impression. (Before you get off on corporal punishment, bear me out and hear about my message in taking authority.) This was the jump in authority that I needed. When I saw that I could take authority, it became easier. When the teenagers saw that I had started taking authority, they listened when I told them what to do. It wasn't long before my presence had the same affect on these kids that the older teachers had.

Now you may ask what does this have to do with taking authority over the devil. The devil is just like an unruly teenager. You can talk to him all you want to, you can even quote scripture all you want to, it will have little affect until you take authority over him. This comes from knowing your place as a child of God and walking in it. As you grow in your relationship with God, and you grow in understanding of who you are according to God's Word, you will grow in the authority that you have over satan. Just as I grew in my authority with the teenagers on hall duty, you have to grow in your authority over the devil. You might say you are on permanent hall duty. It is your job to monitor the devil's behavior and see to it that he does not get into things that he isn't supposed to.

Now when I started teaching one of the main problems that I had as a newcomer to the school was that I didn't actually know what all the kids were supposed to be doing, and what they were not allowed to do. I didn't know their restrictions. It didn't help that they knew their restrictions, and they knew that I didn't. They were some of the best little con artists. They could talk me right into my giving them permission to do what they knew they weren't supposed to do. They could get by with doing things in front of me to break the rules, because they knew I didn't know the rules. As children of God, we face this same thing with the devil. We often don't know his limits. God has put strict limits on what he can and cannot get by with. For example, if you read the story of Job, you will find out in chapter 1 that for the devil to try Job, he had to get permission from God. Read the whole first chapter. Then reread Job 1:10-12. In this section of scripture the devil tells God that because of His protection, he can't touch Job. The devil knows the limitations that God has put on his work. The problem is that often we do not. The Bible is filled with teaching about our position as children of God and our spiritual

authority in that position. That is why it is so important to know the Word of God. We run everywhere to find all the answers, but never to the one true source. We spend time doing everything else, but never have time to read the scriptures like we know we should. (By the way, watching TV will not insure our soul's salvation, rather it steals from our spiritual strength. If you think you don't have time, start recording how much time you spend in front of the TV.) Through God's Word we will find out the rules and just what the devil can do.

Besides knowing what the rules are, to be able to take authority, you have to learn who you are and what rights and privileges you have as a child of God. This doesn't mean that these rights and privileges are based on who you are in the flesh. Many times we get this confused. We think that because we aren't perfect, or super-spiritual, or giant Christians, we don't have any rights as children of God. Now if we are not committed and submitted to God we lose many of our rights. For example, the Bible tells us that if we are double-minded, we won't receive anything from God (James 1:8). It tells us that if we are not obedient to God then we lose our authority over the devil. It tells us that if we submit to God, then we can resist the devil and he has to flee (James 4:7). Therefore we know that if we are not submitted then we cannot resist him and have him flee. There are certain conditions of heart and life that we have to have to be able to take the authority that God has given us, and to take our position as children of God. But many people are walking so far in condemnation of the flesh, that they can't see that their rights as children of God are not dependant in their strengths or weaknesses. As a teacher on hall duty, I was a lousy teacher, because I had not learned to take authority. However, my rights and the position I held as a teacher with all the authority that came along with it did not change just because I was a lousy teacher. I was still a teacher, and I had authority, even though I had not learned how to take it. That is the same way with you as a child of God. You just have to learn your position and walk in it. Then when you square your shoulders back and tell the devil to get off your premises, he has to listen.

Now the true test of my hall duty came one day when one of the teenagers had gotten hold of some bad drugs. He meant to do harm to teachers and students alike. Along with some of the other teachers, I was able to take authority over him. He left the premises. That is how it is with the devil. He will come with the soul purpose of doing harm to you and those you love, and those you serve God with. When you know the rules and you know who you are, you can take authority, and the devil has to leave the premises. It is my prayer that through these pages, you learn that you can put him to flight.

Now before I go on further, I want to take time to talk about casting out devils. This is our right as children of God to cast out devils. When people hear this they think of only one thing. They think of casting demons out of demon filled people. This is a genuine and very real ministry. I have seen this in our own ministry. There are people who come to the Lord as new Christians after a life filled with the occult and drugs, and they are possessed. I have seen these people delivered through the power of God. I want to say carefully though that this is not all there is to taking spiritual authority. Every day I have to take authority over the powers of hell who are trying to gain control of my life or the ministry that God has given me, especially in the ministry of working with young people. Especially if you are in some sort of ministry, you should know what I am talking about. We are in a spiritual battle and we had better learn how to take spiritual authority to be able to win this battle. The weapons that we have are not carnal, and we had better learn what they are and how to use them. If we never learn these things it will be easier for the devil to steal our day-to-day victory, and if we never learn them, he can eventually steal our soul. If we are in a ministry, that battle is compounded by the fact that not

only will the devil come against us personally, but he will also come against the ministry that the Lord has given us. He means to keep us from doing that which God intends for us to do. If you think that you are not in a spiritual warfare and you think that you don't really need all this, then you really need to beware. There is an old saying, "If the devil isn't fighting you, then he may already have you." The devil won't fight you if you are living a compromised life. He will blind you into thinking that there really is no warfare in your life. Look out. All of us are in this spiritual warfare, if we are children of God. Ephesians 6:12 tells us, "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."

I pray that through these chapters you learn to identify the battle, and you learn how victorious you are. Ephesians 1:18-23, "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 usward 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 fullness of Him that filleth all in all." Amen Amen Amen Amen.

The enemy uses the curses that we have mentioned earlier as spring boards to pounce on us to devour us. As an example, someone with a curse against them that has caused poor self-esteem is an easy target. The devil whispers, "You can't do that for God. You will only fail." They back up and do nothing for the Lord when God may have given them an astonishing gift if they would only break through that curse to use it. We have to learn to recognize these things to be able to break them and allow God to break them. We also have to learn that we have power over satan as a child of God. That power is not based on who we are in the natural. That power is given to us by the One in Whom we are walking in. God's Word gives this power to us. It is a promise. We don't have to be afraid of anything the devil has for us. We have more than enough to overcome him according to God's Word. We just have to learn to take God's Word for it. One day not long from now we will pass by a pit where God has chained the devil for a season, and then for eternity. We will barely glance into it and remark something like this. "Is that all there is to that?" The Bible tells about this in Isaiah 14:12-17. Read this. It is surely filled with victory. Half of the devil's battle is a bluff. He knows your authority that God's Word has given to you even better than you do. His job is to convince you that this isn't so. If you listen to him, he can do that. He often wins in this because we are ignorant of God's Word. Or he wins because of our failure to identify him. Or because of our failure to see our own authority and accept it as not being conditional to who we are, but it is a promise of God's Word. Or he wins because we don't stand up to him consistently and eventually we are wore down and give in. In other words, he doesn't win because he is so powerful that we have no alternative but to lose. But he wins because we let him.

Fear is another reason why the devil wins. Fear and dwelling on what he is doing makes him get even bigger and badder. They both give him power over us. Fear causes us to submit to him instead of rising up boldly in authority over him. Dwelling on what he is doing only adds fuel to his fire. We don't have to fear. We don't have to give him any glory at all by thinking about him or what he's doing other than to identify and pulverize. I was talking to someone the other day about a battle we had been through in the ministry. They shushed me up.



They said, “We don’t want to give the devil any glory for what he is doing.” That is so true. Don’t confess what he is doing. Don’t even give thought to it. Don’t dwell on it. Dwell on the praises of God. Dwell on His Word. Fill up your mind with good things. Philippians 4:8 gives us a good rule of how to determine what we spend our time thinking about. “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” Now I am not saying here that we need to hide from the devil in a little pretend world and never think about what he is doing to bind us and never deal with it. I am saying though that when we have identified it and done the spiritual things that we need to do to bind him, than refuse to think anything but victory regarding that subject. Take authority and stand ye therefore. But while you are standing, commit the battle to God and stand with victory in your mind.

When Jehosophat stood against the enemy, God gave him instructions to praise God. Their praise was what brought them victory. His story is found in II Chronicles 20. Read this. It will build your faith as well as teach an important lesson about the power of praise. They praised the Lord and through their praise their battle was won. This is so true when we face a battle with satan. Praise the Lord. Praise Him for the victory even though at the time you may not see it. Praise Him anyway in faith for what He is going to do. Above all else that moves the heart of God. You will see your victory. If all He hears is mumbling and complaining about the battle, your victory won’t come nearly as soon.

If you have read some of the curses that I have mentioned and this book does you like a medical book that is wrong. What do I mean by that? Have you ever read a book that detailed symptoms of illnesses and by the time you finished it you were convinced that you had symptoms of at least a half dozen of them? That is no good. Every chapter purposely is titled with a curse and a promise of overcoming. Every chapter includes pages that dwell on the promises of God to overcome that particular curse. The worst thing for you to do is to dwell on the curses and go away convinced that you were doomed with a half dozen or so of them and miss getting planted in your spirit the blessings, the promises, and the Word of God giving you victory. The focus of each chapter is God’s promises for victory. Dealing with the enemy works the same way. We can’t identify how he works against us and quit there defeated. We have to go on from there to the promises to overcome. We have to go on from there to the authority we have in God. We have to go on to lay hold on the promises in God’s Word. We have to stand up and take that authority and claim these promises. We have to literally do what the kids today call “kick butt.” If we settle half way, we’ll only have a half victory that can easily turn in to being no victory at all. If we lazily coast, we’ll be lazily coasting into defeat. What will it be? Will you walk in the victory God has for you? Or will you settle for defeat.

Here are more scriptures about our promises of victory. I am putting them below using a cross as a bullet to identify each one. This is to remind us that this victory was purchased by Jesus’ blood. I am writing them in bold print because we need to write these boldly in our spirits and boldly stand upon them.

- Psalm 34:7, “The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them.”

Psalm 91:4, “He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust: His truth shall be thy shield and buckler.”

- Psalm 44:5, “Through Thee will we push down our enemies: through Thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us.”
- Luke 10:19, “Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you.
- Romans 13:12, “The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.”
- Romans 8:35-37, “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.”
- II Corinthians 10:3-4, “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh; (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds”
- II Timothy 4:18, “And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

These are only just a very, very few of the promises that we have in God’s Word to overcome. This is only a short glimpse. Yes, we have a battle. Yes, we have an enemy. But, oh how sweet the victory. Oh, how wonderful the Victor.

There are many reasons why we need to learn to take authority. One is so that we can have victory in our own lives. Another is so that we can direct others to do the same. If we don’t do that, we will constantly have to deal with the problems that brings when they don’t know how to keep the devil from messing in their lives. Another is so that we can take authority in our church so that the devil can’t destroy our church or ministry. Another is so that we can take authority in the church. If we don’t have authority in the church, then no one will pay attention to us. We will be a lot like I was when I was teaching. If you don’t take authority in the church, it will be a free for all. We have sung in churches where the people were talking and didn’t even pay attention to us. The children were running around. There was no order in the midst. No one was in authority. No one was in charge. The pastor was there, but no one was in charge. It was no surprise when the anointing of God was missing as well. God’s Spirit brings order. If there is no order, then God’s Spirit won’t be in the midst. Pastors, ministers, and teachers all need to be able to keep order. You have to learn how to do this in a right way. If you come across as a bully to keep order, then you won’t have people’s respect. You have to keep order in love. God can help you to have that right touch of authority that you need.

## Chapter 10.

### *The Curse of This World's Bondage and the Promise of a New World*

Israel was getting ready to go in against Jericho. It was the last day. The walls were scheduled to fall that very day. God spoke to Joshua in Joshua Chapter 6 in His instructions of how to overcome the city in verses 17-18. "And the city shall be accursed, even it, and all that are therein, to the Lord: only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent. And ye, in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed things, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it." The people inside of those walls didn't serve God. Their religion was filled with warped ideas that went along with it. Their ways of thinking were totally opposite to those of God's children. There were many times through the scriptures when God told the people to destroy everything. In some of these times they were to even kill the animals plus all the people. There were many times through the scriptures when the children of Israel disobeyed God's orders on what they were to do when they overcame an enemy. When they did, they paid the price for centuries and sometimes they are still paying the price for that disobedience even today. Those people who weren't destroyed would do one of two things. They would either mingle with God's people. The Israelites would wind up turning to them and their God's and away from God. God would have to put them through a time of severe punishment to get them to turn back in their hearts to serving Him. Or they would actually become so great that they would eventually come against Israel and make them slaves putting them in bondage. Or there would be times of great bloodshed. Some of these countries are still doing this today after a history of centuries of blood shed and violence. Yes, this seemed a little extreme to kill all those people, but God surely knew what He was talking about. In their own wisdom, I am sure that when they disobeyed God, they had a good reason. They talked themselves into being smarter than God as we often do.

I am sure that down the road they wished many times that they had not been so smart. There may have been many Israelites at Jericho that day that thought the same way. Why should they consider everything in the walls cursed, I am sure crossed the minds of more than one. I am sure that there were a few conversations that went like this. "What have those people done wrong. They just happen to be in the wrong place at the wrong time and in our way. Why should we wipe them out like they were accursed? Isn't that a little extreme? Hey, everyone is entitled to their own religion. Live and let live. We can get along with everyone even if they are different. Everybody is entitled to their own ideas. They may even have some ideas that we can learn from, that we can add to our own religion. We'll both become better for it." "What is right for me might not be right for you. What is wrong for me might not be wrong for you. Who are we to judge and say that anyone's religion is wrong? Why can't we just give and take. What will it hurt?" God knows what He is doing. He wasn't limited to that day. He saw all the way through time down even past today. He didn't set up His Word and His commandments to be jerked around and argued away. He didn't set them up to have them to become watered down and made void. Do any of those conversations sound familiar? Don't we do a lot of the same thing today? Some of those conversations are some that I have heard come out of today's churches.

Joshua and his army had victory. Joshua 6:27 tells us, "So the Lord was with Joshua; and his fame was noised throughout all the country." Then something happened in Joshua 7:5. They went to war and they didn't have victory. "And the men of Ai smote of them about thirty

and six men for they chased them from before the gate even unto Shebarim, and smote them in the going, down: wherefore the hearts of the people melted, and became as water.” In other words, they lost big time. Why? Because they had disobeyed God and lost His favor. Joshua 7:1 tells us how. “But the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing for Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed thing: and the anger of the Lord was kindled against the children of Israel.” They had touched the accursed things. They lost God’s anointing that had given them the power that they needed to win against the enemy. They lost.

How did they fix this? We know that they did fix it because Joshua and the people took over Israel. It stands today as a declaration that they did win. How did they turn things around? Joshua 7:13 tells us something that God told them to do, “Up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves against tomorrow: for thus saith the Lord God of Israel, There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel: thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the accursed things from among you.” What does it mean to sanctify yourselves? Sanctify means to clean up and set aside yourself for the Lord. God told them to clean up, set themselves aside for him, get the accursed things out of their midst. Then they would have victory. They did and God did. I read the story in Joshua 8 of the victory of the battle of Ai. They had victory back in their camp.

What does this all have to do with the bondages of this world? There is another world outside of God’s kingdom. The people there do not act, dress, talk, live, think, or be like we are as children of God. Today we live in an upside down world. It thinks backwards. Acts 2:40 says of this world, “and with many other words did he (Peter) testify and exhort, saying Save yourselves from this untoward generation.” Untoward means backwards. This world is backwards. It is backwards in everything it does. It is backwards in its thinking, its philosophies, its ideas of how things should be done. The devil wants to come along say that the things in that “city”, in that world, aren’t so bad. It is OK to compromise. It is OK to live and let live. It is OK to please the crowd so that we can get the people in even if we compromise with our standards. It is OK not to preach harshly so that we don’t offend someone and run them away. Their way might be OK after all. It’s OK to think that you don’t want to make anyone uncomfortable so we really don’t want to use the altars or let the conviction power of God fall. Or it is OK to fall into the thinking that there really is no need for repentance, we are all forgiven anyway. Or it is OK to preach that there really is no absolute wrong or absolute truth anyway. Or it is OK to stop God’s Spirit from moving in our midst because we don’t want things to get too emotional. We want things on an even keel to please everyone. It’s OK to touch the accursed things, the wrong ways of thinking, and the philosophies of this world. After all God’s Word isn’t true. There are some parts that don’t work for today. Does this sound familiar.

In the church world today we have opened our doors to the accursed things. We have opened our doors to Ai and we no longer have any victory over the enemy that is in its walls. We have embraced their ideas and intermingled so with the world that we are little more than a social club. No wonder our congregations are bound with sicknesses, emotional problems, strife, and division. Our churches no longer have victory. They are no longer standing as a light to the world. Matter of fact, sad to say, the church world as a whole stands as something that keeps the lost out of their walls because of the state that it is in. How many times have you run into those who have turned their back on God because they were hurt or disillusioned by the church? We need to leave alone the cursed things. We need to come out from among them and

be a separate people. We need to clean up our act, our thinking, and our heart's desires. We need to commit ourselves and submit to obey God in a daily relationship with Him. He needs to be Lord of our lives, both singularly and as a church as a whole. We need to allow the Holy Ghost to come into our midst and convict us and draw us back to Him. We need to get those altars back out of storage and fall on our faces and repent. We need to draw back to the Lord. When we do, we will once again see His victory in our midst both as a church and in our individual lives.

We are crucified with Christ. We have already talked about in an earlier chapter how that we are crucified with Christ in one sense. The old man is dead and we are made new. We talked about how we need to die daily to the things in the flesh. Let's talk about some other ways that we are crucified.

We are dead to this world. We are crucified to this world. Galatians 6:14 tells us, "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." Let me explain what I mean when I say the world. Down through the years I have watched those people whose priorities were in line with God's Word. I have watched those whose commitments were solid and sound, those whose relationship with the Lord showed by the fruits that were in their lives. I have watched those whose feet were firmly planted in the truth of God's Word. Of all those people, there were not many, if any, who had not come out from the world and become a separated people. Now what do I mean here? The Bible has this to say about the world. Of course there is the physical world, the earth and everything in it. But when the scripture talks about the world, it often means more than just that. Here are some verses that tell about characteristics of this world. Mark 8:35-37 tells us, "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the Gospel's the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" This bears out that we can't keep the world and keep our soul. Mark 4:18-19 tells us, "And these are they which are sown among thorns: such as hear the Word. And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the Word, and it becometh unfruitful." This bears out that the world can choke out the Word from us. John 8:23 tells us, "And He said unto them, Ye are from beneath: I am from above, ye are of this world; I am not of this world." This bears out that Jesus is not from this world. John 14:30 tells us, "Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." This bears out that the prince of this world is not Jesus. So if we become engulfed in the things of this world, then we will not have Jesus as our Lord. John 15:19 tells us, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." This tells us that if the world loves us, then we are not serving God for real. John 16:33 tells us, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulations: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

This tells us how we can overcome the world. Because Jesus has overcome the world. Here are more scriptures about the world. Romans 12:2, "And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that it may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." I Corinthians 2:6, "Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to ought." Galatians 1:4, "Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father." James 1:27, "Pure religion

and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” This last verse sums up what we’re saying. I John 2:15-17, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in Him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.” We can see through all of these scriptures that the world and God’s ways are totally separate. We can see that the world can bring destruction if we become entangled in it. We can see that satan rules this world. We can see that we are to come out of the world, be separate. We can see that it is very important to get a clear understanding of just what the Word of God means when it says, “the world”.

Here is an illustration that will help to understand this. I praise God for Godly grandparents. They taught me what it means to come out from the world. They lived on a farm up in a hollow in the hills of southwest Virginia. They lived a quiet life and a very peaceful one. They weren’t caught up in the pride of life. They weren’t caught up in the ideas and thinking of everyone else. They didn’t even bother to find out what those ideas were. They weren’t trying to be like everyone else, or have the things that everyone else had. They weren’t trying to be popular. They were just serving the Lord with all their hearts. The things that they had were only the things that they needed. My grandfather farmed and my grandmother was right by his side. They worked hard but at the same time they had plenty of time for fun and family. Their favorite pastime and recreation was going to church. They loved to go to church. They traveled everywhere they could to be in services. One of their main activities of the day was prayer. I remember as a child that we would always without fail close our day with prayer and devotion time reading together and studying God’s Word. Now as a young person, I rolled my eyes at this but no matter. We were gathered in for devotions whether we liked it or not and we really knew better than to say a thing about it. My grandparents didn’t own a TV set. It had gone out many years earlier. My grandparents didn’t have it fixed for several years. When they did get it fixed they saw that the programs had started showing people drinking and smoking. They didn’t like to watch that so they put the TV back up and never did get it back out. The main source of entertainment was the big piano. We’d gather around and sing for hours. There was never anything played there or sung but Gospel music. They had a radio, but it always stayed tuned to Gospel stations. For more than 50 years, the only sounds that came from that house was the sound of good Gospel music, and the sound of prayer and praise, and singing to the Lord.

When I think about what it means to come out from the world and be a separate people, I catch a glimpse of my grandparents. It’s a glimpse that guides me today in making the choices of my life. It is a glimpse that causes me to focus on the world to come, and not on the bondages of this present world.

As a contrast, I have watched the lives of many people today. Not only people outside the church, but also many inside the church as well. Sad to say, but even in the church you find more of the world than you find the Spirit of God. The pride of life is one of the bondages of this world. I have known people who wanted more and were never satisfied with what they had. If they thought it was stylish to own something, then they would go and buy it, no matter how deep in debt they were. If they thought that it left an impression on other people if they had or did this or that thing, then they would go after it. Or if it was the way to think that everyone else had, then they lined up their thoughts to that way of thinking. These people are never satisfied. Their mind is constantly in what they have or want. Their lives are focused on this world, and

not on the things of God. They go where the rest of the world goes, talk like the rest of the world talks, do what they do. They talk that talk and walk that walk no matter how funky it is. They have to be fashionable and up to date in their thinking no matter how against the Word of God that thinking is. They frown on and look down on those that aren't like they are and they control the popularity of others by this. These people are usually stressed out from running here and there because they lack a genuine focus for their lives. The world is cruel. Since they aren't focused on God and the things of God, the world gobbles them up. They are usually a nervous wreck, broken hearted, insecure mess. They have no real security because without God as their number one focus, they have no security. They lack peace and contentment that only comes when Christ is number one. Usually they are on all kinds of pills. They take medication because they are nervous, or depressed, or chemically out of balance. They have no idea that their problem is that they are out of balance themselves. Now I want to make a point here. I am not talking about sinners. Matter of fact there are many people who meet this description that sit on the pews of the church every Sunday. Maybe I have even been discussing you.

The Word of God says to come out from among them and be a separate people. God knows what He is talking about. II Corinthians 6:17, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate saith the Lord..." God knows what He is talking about. If my grandmother would have come in all shaken up, popping pills we would have thought surely the world was coming to an end. They had a peace that was a light to me even now years after they have gone on to be with the Lord. They weren't caught up in the thinking of this world but in the ways of the Lord. They passed on those ways to us. We have passed them on to our children.

Now on the extreme end from those who are caught up in the world, there is another group of people that are holy in their own eyes. They walk in a rigid life that is made up of legal laws that they live by. These people say that it is a sin to wear pants, wear makeup, wear jewelry, cut your hair and do a whole list of things. Many of them believe it is a sin to own a TV. Many of them say that if you break these rules then you cannot go to heaven. If that is true then why did Jesus die? We could have earned eternal life by keeping these rules. My grandparents didn't live the way that they lived because they were keeping to those self righteous man made rules that others had set up for them. They chose that way of life simply because it was how they were in their hearts. They lived what they were. No rules were needed to make them be that way. Nobody was there to tell them that if they didn't do these things they were on their way to hell. They chose to do these things and they did them out of a genuine experience with God. When someone comes along and makes rigid rules and people keep these because they are afraid not to, then most of the time all you have is a man made mess. This kind of stuff comes because people do not have a genuine committed submitted relationship to God but they have a relationship with the people who have set up these rules and they are afraid to break them. That isn't a heart-felt commitment at all. Many times these people have a shallow experience with God and more of an experience with what other people think of them. This often leads to rebellion. Self is not crucified but squashed down in and bound up. When you do that, one of these days it is going to spring up and when it does it will be ugly. But there are some churches that believe these things and they are powerful, anointed lighthouses. How is that true? An older man was talking about how the church at one time was so legalistic with all the rules. He was talking about how this was hard. But he made the comment, "Boy, didn't we have a move of God back then. That was when we were committed." Commitment brings about a move of God. When you are committed enough to make changes in your life, God will anoint. Why isn't there a move of God in many churches? There is no more commitment.

Let me give you an example. My grandparents didn't own a TV. This was a commitment in their heart. Their church doctrine didn't teach it, but they chose to do this as part of their commitment to God. Now I have known some churches that teach a doctrine that you are not to watch TV. The first time I heard about this was from a guy that was really dogmatic about this. He was down on everybody that didn't believe it this way and was really self-righteous in how he acted about it. We found out later that he didn't own a TV but that his favorite past time was to run over his neighbors at certain times of the day to "visit" while his favorite shows were on. Do get the idea here of what I mean? There wasn't any heart commitment about his decision not to watch TV. Just a doctrine that led to a self-righteous attitude and his having to sneak around to do what he was going to do anyway.

Let's go from here to another extreme. The world has crept into the church in the form of many doctrines and ideas. One of those doctrines says, "We don't want to make people uncomfortable. Let's not bring up what is right and what is wrong. We want the people to know God's love, so let's not bring up any truth that is definite. Let's just stay in the gray areas, and then people will come back to church." Sound familiar? We took the altar out of many services. Sad to say when we took on this way of thinking, the Holy Ghost left our services and we didn't even realize that He was gone. Church began to be a social experience instead of a spiritual one. We stopped going by God's Word. We stopped obeying Him and letting His Holy Ghost guide us in services. Since God's Word and Holy Ghost were gone from our services, then it quickly became a thing of the past that we no longer had for our personal day-to-day lives. Then our children came along and grew up in this. Do you know that I have known many young people who honestly did not know that it was a sin to have extramarital sex? They really do not know right from wrong. Everything is gray to them. No wonder they live in such a violent world that is full of such turmoil. They have no handlebars, nothing to steady them. They lack guidance and the purpose that it gives. They don't even know that there is a way that is separate. I hope that through these examples you have caught a glimpse of what it means to come out from the world and be crucified to the world.

Being crucified to the world is one way that we have to become crucified. There is another cross that we have to look for in our own personal lives. It is the cross where we have to lay down our will and take up the will of God. That cross comes when we submit ourselves and commit our lives to God. When we do this there will definitely be a change in our lives, a change that obedience brings. For us to do the will of God, we have to lay down our own will. We have to let our self-will, our flesh be crucified with Christ.

There is another crucifixion that we personally have to experience. The first time that the word cross is mentioned in the scriptures is found in Matthew 16:24-26, "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me, For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." Jesus Himself is speaking here. It is interesting that the first time He mentions a cross, He is not talking about the one that He was going to carry, but the one that we have to carry. It isn't easy to follow Christ. Sure it is a breeze if we do it in a half baked way without submission or any commitment like that one group that we talked about just in the previous paragraph. But if we really get a genuine relationship with God and become obedient in that relationship we will face a lot of changes. For one thing we will face an enemy and he will try to destroy us. We will also make an enemy with those that are in the world. They will do everything that they can to pull us down and trap us just like they did Jesus. They won't do this because they hate us, but because they will be giving into the one who hates us.



Then we'll have the battle that goes on between our own flesh and the Spirit. No, it isn't easy. Praise God though that He has made a way for us to overcome. We've talked about the many powerful weapons that we have to be victorious. To do so, we have to put ourselves, our will, our flesh, on that cross at Calvary. We have to become crucified from the world. We are crucified with Christ. Galatians 2:20 tells us, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet 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."

In closing, this section of scripture sums things up. The Corinthians in Paul's day had a lot of the ways of looking at things that were prevalent in that society that are a lot like what we see today. In this section of scripture, II Corinthians 6, we see this. Now things are harder for us than it was in those days. I am saying this because we don't actually have idol worshippers going to their separate temples bowing down to their little gods. It is much more subtle today. We have the idols of humanism, the corruption of compromise, the sleep of non-commitment, the acceptance of sin that we turn aside to worship today. All kinds of things have crept in to the church from the world. These are false beliefs. These are the false god's, the idols, of today. This scripture we're talking about comes in II Corinthians 6:16-18. "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols; for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." Church, we need to be a separated people. When those outside of our doors look at us they need to see something different that draws them to the One that we serve. We need to be the sons and daughters of the Lord almighty.

I want to add in closing that the price that we've had to pay for our compromise with the world has been the precious anointing of the Holy Ghost. If you have anointed services where sinners are saved, the bound are delivered, sick are healed, then cherish it. There aren't many that you can find. We need to get back to the place where we find favor with God and His Spirit is in our midst. When we do, there will be a change. We'll once again become a light. A city set on a hill. Matthew 5:13-16 tells us how we as a church and as individuals should be, "Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven."

**Chapter 11.**  
***The Curse of Those Around Us***  
***How to Overcome an Unevenly Yoked Household***

The best example that I can use to illustrate what I mean by this chapter is my own testimony. If you read it carefully and take it to heart, you will find how to overcome an unequally yoked marriage, or an unequally yoked household. Helps to leading an unsaved spouse to salvation. Helps to raising children in an unequally yoked home. Helps in dealing with children who have decided to go their own way and not God's. Let me explain first what I mean by an "unevenly yoked household". In II Corinthians 6:14 we read, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness?" One of the major bondages or curses that can come against a home is when one parent is not a Christian. There are a lot of families that aren't strong enough to overcome that uneven yoke, and all in the family wind up not serving God. I was fortunate to have a family that not only overcame it but also went on to victory in spite of it. Now not only are all my sisters and myself serving God, but as their children are starting families of their own, so are they. This is my story.

My Dad was a very special man. He had a heart to help everyone he met. He was a hard working man and very smart. He was a chief engineer for a government defense corporation designing machines to be able to manufacture whatever new things that the government needed for defense from air plane noses to camouflage covers to hide tanks etc. They would fly him around the world to set up plants and design whatever machinery that factory would need to produce these. I can remember once when I was a kid he flew to Australia to help set up a plant to manufacture self contained hospital units that could be carried on trucks and set up to make a pre-fabricated hospital unit. He had served in the Navy in World War II and he did his job with a patriotic heart to serve his country and protect freedom as sincere in heart as any military person though he was no longer military. He also loved his family. He had a weakness though. He was an alcoholic.

Now in my Dad's defense I can say that he was a third generation alcoholic. Doctors, counselors, psychiatrists, all argue whether or not that is because of heredity or environment. The Bible points toward heredity, but not in the way that they say. We've talked about this in an earlier chapter. Someone, somewhere along the line in my Dad's heritage took an attitude that it didn't matter what they did. It wouldn't hurt anyone but them. That didn't work like they planned.

I talked about in an earlier chapter how my Dad's story and the story of my family for three generations and further in the future would have been totally different if it had not been for my Mother. She had been raised in a very dedicated Christian home. You read about my grandmother's home in Chapter 10. I've never asked her if she had been a Christian when she married my Dad. I am not sure if she was or not. I know that if she was, then she married into an unequally yoked marriage. As a family we all paid a price for that. But because of my Mom's dedication to the Lord we were all victorious.

From as long as I could remember we had a Christian home. We prayed. We had devotions. The Word of God was a present force in our home in more ways than one. While some parents just give time out for bad behavior, my Mom would stick us in a chair with a Bible. I won't say anything more here about that except I did a lot of Bible reading as a kid. We were always in church whenever the doors were open and involved in all activities they had.

There was no need to argue. There were a lot of times we'd want to stay home with Daddy. After all, he didn't go to church so why should we have to. It didn't fly too far though. We knew better than to push it. We knew we had to go and that was that. My Mom lived what she taught us and what she made us do, she herself did. Because of that it was at a young age that we started doing it out of our own dedication to what we knew we should do. My Mom didn't send us to church while she stayed home with my Dad. She took us with her. She didn't tell us how we should live while she compromised with my Dad's way of life. She lived what she taught. We knew where she stood. So did my Dad. There was never a hint of compromise on her part. She loved my Dad. She put up with his hard times that he'd often put her through. She was there when he needed her in his weakest times. Through the years there were a lot of weak times. She relied on God's help to get her and us through the rough times. God was a present and real part of our home. Just as real and present was the pain of alcoholism. But God overcame.

By age 21, I was a terrible alcoholic. When your college buddies worry about your drinking problem, then you know you have a bad problem. There was one thing that I remember clear. That was what I had learned from my youth. The Word of God did not depart from me. I couldn't leave it either. Proverbs 22:6 was true for me. It says, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old he will not depart from it." I know that we all know that every child growing up in a Christian home has not died a Christian. There have been many that have chosen to go a different path with their lives. So what gives? Is this verse true or not? Here in that verse we have to notice that it says, "He will not depart from that training." Even in the darkest days of my sin, there was one light that shone. That was everything that I had learned as a child. It would not leave me alone. It would not leave my mind. It had been grafted in my heart. However, if I had chosen to ignore it, I would have died in my sin. I thank God that I ran to the light and not away from it.

During that time of my rebellion, my mother and my grandmother and others prayed. The Godly part of my heritage stayed faithful to the place where their prayers were powerful on my behalf. They were living in a place where they had confidence in their prayers. If you compromise in your faith, if you mess with sin, if God is not a number one priority in your life then you do not have that confidence. Forget praying a prayer of faith for your children. If you have children that are not serving God then the best thing that you can do is to draw so near to God that you know your prayers are heard. If you have children in your home who are tearing your home apart, draw near to God. You can have the victory that keeps your home together with God's help. You can be that light that your lost child or spouse needs to see that will direct them to home. Don't drive them away. It is easy in our human flesh nature when things are tense to say all the wrong things at the wrong time and lose your cool. You have to walk in the Holy Ghost and not in the flesh to overcome this. God will win this victory in and through you if you let Him. Hold onto faith. Don't entertain the thoughts of anything but total victory for your child, or your spouse, for your household as a whole. Most important, learn this lesson from my mother. I have heard her say many times that when she finally came to the place where she totally surrendered me to the Lord I was saved. When we stop hanging onto something and struggling in the flesh with it, God can take control of it. When we give it up and let God, He will take it. It will be done then.

I can remember the first time that I asked my Dad to go to church with us. I remember crawling up on his lap and asking him to go with us. He was saved when I was in my late thirties. There were a times during those years that the devil tried to get me to stop praying.

He tried to get me to stop believing. He'd say that there was no use to keep praying, that my Dad would never be saved. My Dad gave his heart to the Lord a few years before he died. By that time, the prayers of my sisters and me joined the prayers of my mother who had stayed faithful to God and to my Dad through those years. We were all serving God at the time. We'd all been through our times of rebellion and our battles and struggles with alcohol, this world and sin in general. But God's Word and the faithfulness of my Mother's Godly heritage prevailed. The prayers of my sister's children then eventually joined our prayers. We all loved my Dad. We didn't preach at him. We let God deal with his heart. We didn't condemn him. We didn't get "religious" with him. We loved him and prayed. And we believed. We stayed true to what we believed. We lived what we professed. My Dad finally ran to that light that had been shining for him all those years. God is good.

I am reminded of a section of scripture in I Corinthians 7:12-16, "But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman who hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean: but now are they holy. But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace. For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? Or how knowest thou O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?" My Mom chose to stay with my Dad. My Dad stayed faithful to my Mom. That is what made my story possible. If my Mom hadn't stayed faithful to God I don't know how my story would have ended or my families' story. Or my Dad's story. It wouldn't have been good. If my Dad had departed, that would have been a different story as well. If you have an unbelieving husband that leaves, then you are no longer bound to him. Also, if an unbelieving husband is not faithful to you and you have proof that he is running around on you then you aren't bound to him. I think too that if a husband or wife is being abusive to you or your children, then you are not under an obligation to stay. If someone is ill and mean and spiteful, that isn't really the kind of abuse that I am talking about. Sometimes we have to put up with some things. However, there is a place to draw a line. If you or your children are in danger from an abusive husband then I believe that it is against God's Word for you to stay with him. Why? You are commanded to take care of your children. You are commanded to take care of your own body, which is the temple of God. If you allow someone to hurt you or to hurt your children, then you are disobeying God's Word. You are precious to God. You are His child. Your children are precious to Him. If someone is hurting you or your children, then He hurts. He is your Father. Do you want to see your own children hurt? Neither does He want to see you hurting. If the abuse is physical or mental to the place that you can't take it, you are under no obligation to stay with that spouse. God will direct you in knowing when enough is enough. Also, don't allow that spouse to bind you into thinking that you have stay with him, that you deserve that kind of treatment, or that you can't make it on your own if you leave him. In God, all those things are done away with. God can and will set you free. You have to make up your mind, though, that you want freedom. Just don't wait until it is too late. Even if that abuse is too much, you can still have faith. Still pray. Even if you have to leave your husband or wife, God is a big God. I remember someone whose husband refused to let her go to church. He would tear her church clothes to shreds so that she would have nothing to wear so that she wouldn't be able to go. When she went any way, he would beat her when she got home. She kept going. She stayed faithful to what she believed. He would even go into the church after she got there.

He would go in and literally, physically drag her out. Today they are serving God together. God is a big God. It is important though that while you are believing for that miracle, that change in your spouse, that you are not putting you or your children in jeopardy.

It is also important to do spiritual warfare. Know that when the devil is controlling someone, a door is open to let the devil waltz into your home. You can still take authority. Stand against the enemy who is coming against your spouse or children. Physical battles that we see the end results of are won first in the spiritual realm. Plead the blood of Jesus. Anoint your home. Anoint your spouse's or your children's pillow. Pray in the Holy Ghost and intercede. Walking in the Spirit will be the only way that you will win this battle. How much you give into the devil can determine how much the devil wins.

A divided family is a curse. Stay faithful to God. Don't compromise. Learn the wisdom found in Proverbs 15:1, "A soft answer turneth away wrath; but grievous words stir up anger." Don't preach and don't whine. Be a light not a waterspout. Keep your faith. Claim God's Word. Your reward will be one that, like my Mother's, will last for generations.

## Chapter 12.

### *The Bondages of the Heart and the Release of God's Love*

There are many bondages of the heart that can happen. Some of them come when we live in unequally yoked households, like we talked about in the last chapter. There are also many others. These can bind our relationships with others, our self-esteem and even our faith in God and our relationship with Him. These come in many forms. Condemnation, unforgiveness, contentious spirits, jealousies, fear, low self esteem, fear of rejection, fear of failure name just a few. Some of the enemy's most careful tactics to destroy God's people involve attacks against our hearts. When we put up shields or walls around our heart because we have been hurt or rejected or we have been through a battle that made us calloused in our heart, if we aren't careful we will also put up a shield or wall that separates us from God's love. Also, when we are hurting in our heart it is easy not to trust God. A breach in your faith can happen. The devil can come in and cause you to have all kinds of defense mechanisms that separate us not only from others, but God as well. Many times people who have been hurt protrude things on the outside that act almost like the quills on a porcupine. These things keep people at a distance. Inside what they need is a lot of love. But that love can't reach through all the defenses that they have erected. Often people who are hurting become totally opposite on the outside than they are on the inside. They do this without even meaning to and often without their identifying what is going on. They can't understand why no one can understand them. Then they often become hardened and calloused around that hurt. Bitterness creeps in and all kinds of other nasties. They become bound in a prison of hurt.

I would like to say there that you as a child of God will not have to endure the kinds of hurt that would cause all of this to happen. You and I both know that this is not true. I would like to say that because you are God's child He will shield you and protect you like a spoiled child from being hurt in any way. You and I both know that isn't true. Why isn't this so? We have already talked about earlier how this world isn't a perfect place any more. How there is a curse and that curse against it brings about pain. We have talked about how people in this world don't obey God. Sinners don't care and often God's people fail to walk in the Spirit. Flesh hurts. Too, we live in a world where there is sickness on every hand. So many people have terminal illnesses and they are suffering. Hardly any family hasn't been touched with cancer. Or other diseases. We are part of this world. The rain falls on the just and on the unjust. We were not taken out of this world when we got saved. Jesus prayed in John 17 a powerful prayer. In verse 15 He says, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." That means that we have to suffer in this imperfect world with imperfect people. That means that we will hurt. That also means that we will probably wind up hurting others whether we mean to or not.

Why did Jesus pray such a prayer? Do you remember being in the world before you came to know God, His ways, His Word and His people? Do you remember how dark it was even though at the time you didn't realize it was so dark? Do you remember how His light started shining through? It might have been kind of dim and far off at first. But it kept on shining. Brighter and brighter and closer and closer until you could see. That light was Jesus. How did that light start shining? For me it was remembering the days of my youth. It was remembering the Word of God that I was taught as a child. It was glimpse of love in someone's eyes. It was a hand out and a lift up when I needed someone to care. It was a teacher that stood up and taught God in a classroom where that wasn't allowed. It was a sermon preached that I

heard over the radio. It was a youth leader who took time out for me. That light was shone in a hundred different ways all reflecting Jesus. My world was full of sin and the battles of sin. Of course we were all convinced at the time that we were having a good time. But in reality my world was full of fear and death. Drugs and alcohol put you in that kind of world. Still that light shone in. Now, praise God, years later I carry it to others.

What am I saying here? When Jesus saved us, if He took us out of this imperfect world, who would have been that light for me? Who would have been that light to you when you were in that darkness of sin? No, Praise God, He doesn't take us out of this world. He gives us power to overcome it and shine like a light. Matthew 5:14 tells us, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid." How are we to be that light? In that same prayer that we talked about earlier Jesus read in John 17:11, "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou has given me, that they may be one, as we are." Read on through the rest of this chapter. We can overcome this world. We can shine like lights. Even when we are hurting. Even when the enemy has waged a war against our heart. Even when this world's sadness is so hard to take. Even when those we thought were with us turned and left and proved that they really weren't with us after all. Even when the wickedness, bondage, sickness, and sin of this world reaches out and snatches those you love. Even when someone close to you turns out not to be who you thought they were after you had already given your heart to them. Even when your children are waging a war in your house and against you because the devil has painted a pretty picture of how things look on the other side of the fence. Even when you feel like your heart has been yanked out, chewed up and spit out somewhere and you are so numb you aren't even sure where it is. Even when. Even when. We could go on. You can still overcome. You can still shine. Matter of fact, you can shine the brightest when all of these things are going on, if you will let the Lord shine through you. When everything is going fine and you are faithful to God, that won't make much of an impression on someone who is lost. However, if you go through hell on earth and you are still serving God and praising Him, then those who are lost will know without a doubt that God is real and that this thing works. If it works for us then they know it will work for them.

One of the most amazing stories that I have heard to illustrate how to overcome hurt is a true story. It was a story about a woman whose son had been murdered. It was a senseless killing. The murderer was convicted and sent to prison. This woman's hurt turned into bitterness. This bitterness slowly consumed her whole life. She shut herself away from everyone who loved her. She alienated her husband and other children. Hebrews 12:15 tells us how bitterness spreads. God began to convict her. At first she shut up his voice. Finally she listened. He told her to visit the man in prison who had murdered her son and that she was to forgive him. She was also to witness to him. That would be hard. But no matter how hard the thing is that God tells us to do, we can always remember that putting up with what we have to put up with for forever is worse. Often if we want freedom from bondages of our heart, God will require an act of obedience so that we can be delivered. He will give us a task. That will be an act of obedience that will unlock us from that prison of our hurt. The woman went. How did the story end? The young man was saved and his life was miraculously changed because of God's love that he saw through her. Now he is working in the prison, witnessing, leading others to the Lord. Not any less miraculous was the change in the life of that woman and in her family's lives. That prison of her own bitterness was broken.

What is the key to escaping the bondages that satan puts around our heart?

Forgiveness is one. Even when we can't forgive, we have to remember that Jesus is in our heart. He will give us the power and strength to forgive when we can't do it on our own. We have to know that we have to and we have to allow Him to work. Love is also a key. The love of God isn't like our love. Jesus died for me while I was yet a sinner. He loved me and gave Himself for me because of my sins, not because I deserved it. Then He said to forgive with the same merit that I have been forgiven in Matthew 6:14-15. And He requires us to love as we are loved. The whole chapter of I John 4 tells us this. Yes, this means even when we have been hurt. Read that chapter and all these verses please.

How do we do all those impossible things? The Bible talks about the fruits of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23. This is a passage that I am sure you learned when you were a kid. I knew that I was supposed to act that way but nobody explained how I was to get to that place where I could be all those things. Sometimes that list seemed like a chalkboard with marks by my name of the times that I failed God. Love 1111 Faith 111, and so on. Until I noticed the little word "of" one day with God's help. The fruits **OF** the Spirit. I started to realize that these weren't traits that I was to muster up on my own, but they were traits **OF** the Holy Spirit. The same Holy Spirit that was in me. Then I understood. In order for the fruits of the Spirit to operate in us, we have to crucify the flesh and live in the Spirit and walk in the Spirit. That wasn't nearly as hard as trying to do it on my own. We have to say, "All right old flesh, old man. You are not ruling me. Your hurt, your bitterness, your anger, and all those other things are not controlling me. God crucify my flesh. Let **your** Holy Ghost rise up in me and take control. Be my love. Be my forgiveness." Then you have to live there and walk there. Why? Because you are a light.

We have to walk in love and walk in God's Word and the Holy Spirit to be able to overcome bondages of our heart. First, we have to recognize that we need to do this. We have to recognize the bondage that we are in with God's help. We have to identify this without allowing the enemy to condemn us. Then we have to allow that inner man, Jesus Christ, through the power of the Holy Ghost to rise up. We will overcome.

Love is the greatest key that there is. We read about love in I Corinthians 13. Please read the whole chapter. Love covers a multitude of sins. Stay close to Jesus. Let His love fill your heart so that it even splashes out on your enemies. Then you will truly know that you are a child of God. I John 4:7, "Beloved, let us love one another for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." I John 4:16, "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in Him." Jesus Himself told us in Matthew 5:44-48 how to love our enemies. Please read this section. I am putting here only verse 46, "For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye; do not even the publicans the same." Verse 44 tells us, "But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; Verse 45 tells us, "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven..." After all, you have within your heart the One who forgave from the cross. He is surely able to help you forgive. We have the promises that we can overcome bondages of the heart. God can renew our heart and we can rise up victorious to be a light.

As pastors, teachers, and ministers you are targets for hurt. You will experience the hurt that the enemy will bring against you through those you love, and those who are closest to you. You will experience the hurt that comes when those you try to minister to turn and rend you. You will experience the hurt that comes when you fail to reach some, and make mistakes, because we are all imperfect and we will do that. You will experience the hurt that comes when it seems that God has literally hung you out to dry and has forsaken you, those times in between



His blessings when He tries your faith and teaches and grows you in His furnace of affliction. How can you keep this hurt from destroying your love for God and your love for those that you minister to? How can you keep this from destroying your faith in God? Keep your eyes on Jesus and not on others around you. Don't let others and what they do be your God. Keep yourself filled up with the Spirit of God, daily refuel. Don't dwell on the wrong people have done. Don't allow yourself to get bitter. Don't sit around and discuss all the bad people have done to you. Give it to Jesus. Let the fruits of the Spirit evidence themselves in your heart. Be willing to let go and let God take care of the situations. I am not saying that you don't need to take authority over junk that the devil tries to bring against you, but after you take authority and deal with it, then give it to God so that it can't bring a root of bitterness into your heart.

### Chapter 13. *The Curse and the Blessing in the Tongue*

Have you ever heard the old saying, “What you say, you get”. There is a lot of truth in that. There is power in the tongue. In many ways this is true. Proverbs 18:21 tells us, “Death and life are in the power of the tongue....” What does this mean? Let me illustrate. Our former pastor’s wife was a good teacher on the subject of the power of the tongue. She had learned that lesson much earlier in her ministry in a dramatic way. She told us that she had learned it while the church was in a building program. As she was watching a bulldozer working outside the church, she said, “Watch that. That bulldozer is going to go right into that building.” She made that statement several times. Guess what. It did. What we say is what we get. This statement is true regarding many aspects of our lives. If you constantly confess that you are worthless and you know that you will amount to nothing, you will talk yourself into believing it. If you constantly confess that you are a failure, you will be. If you constantly nag those around you telling them that they can’t do anything right, they won’t be able to. If you tell your children, that they won’t be able to achieve, they won’t. On the other hand, if you confess the Word of God, that you can do all things through Christ, then you will be able to. If you constantly say that you are a child of God and that you are precious in Him, then you will be. If you lift those around you up telling them that they are wonderful, they will be. If you tell your children that they can achieve anything that they put their mind to, they will.

Proverbs 15:4 tells us, “A wholesome tongue is a tree of life; but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit.” We can use the tongue to build up ourselves and those around us to the place that we actually become a tree of life to them, or we can speak destruction. My husband worked at a job in a glass plant running a beveling machine for over 10 years. That was until his supervisor took on the attitude that to get his workers to function better, he would stand them up in front of others cursing them and ridiculing them. My husband tried to tell the company that was no way to encourage people to do better. When you belittle people, they can’t achieve. He actually got so that he couldn’t function, running the same machine that he had run for over 10 years. He couldn’t make productivity. He requested to be moved to another department and does great there. Needless to say, that department that he used to work in has one of the lowest yields in the plant.

I can also use an illustration from our Christian school program. As a teacher, I try to encourage the kids. Every time they leave for the day, I tell them that I am proud of them. One of my students started making all A’s. She had been in a special ed program in her former school. She told me that she had never made A’s mostly D’s and F’s. She told me that when I had started encouraging her, she began to believe in what she could do. She made the A-B honor roll for the year. The tongue can be a tree of life. Another area in which our tongue can be a curse or a blessing is in our health. Think for a minute of the people that you know who are always complaining about something wrong in their health. They constantly complain over every ache and pain. What kind of victory do they have in their health? I know if we aren’t careful, what we say over and over will be what we get. However, on the other hand, this is also true regarding our positive things and the blessings of the Lord. One example may be in healing. If you are waiting for a miracle of healing, start confessing it. Put God’s Word that promises healing up on little index cards around your house where you’ll see them daily and read them. Read them often. Don’t allow negative words to come out of your mouth. Don’t even confess them in your mind. Stop negative thoughts in their tracks.

Philippians 4:8 tells us how we ought to think. Think positive. Concentrate on good things. Keep your mind on all those good things so that you don't have time for negative thinking. If you are going through a financial crisis start confessing verses about prosperity. If your children are not serving the Lord and catastrophe is coming to them, start confessing Joshua 24:15B, "...As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." If a spirit of fear and confusion has come against you in some areas of your life start confessing II Timothy 1:7, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power and of love, and of a sound mind." This list can go on and on. That is why it is so important that your Bible is not a book on the shelf at your home. That you only carry it to church on Sunday. It needs to be engraved in your mind and in your heart so that you know what your promises are. So that you know what to confess.

James 3 tells another way that our tongue can bring a curse against ourselves and others. Please read the whole chapter. I am putting here just the highlights in verses 2,4,5,13. "For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth. Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom." How many times have you seen people's entire lives destroyed by the tongue? I think that in some localities there is actually a spirit of gossip that is worse than others. Our small town is one of the worse. We don't need a newspaper. News travels faster than the local paper can get it. We only need to read it if we want to find out the truth, but most people aren't interested in that, just in knowing all the gossip. I personally know many people whose lives have been destroyed by this. One of the worst cases was a young boy who shot and killed his brother in an accident. He was trying to take a gun away from his younger brother who was playing with it. The gun accidentally went off. They were both under 10 years old. The next day news had already traveled around town that this little boy had murdered his brother on purpose. Can you imagine how hard it was for him? The tongue can start a fire that destroys the lives of others. If your church is eaten up with a gossip spirit you will have flare ups of problems, and strife and dissention and contentions. Get them to the altar. Let the Holy Ghost convict and do His work. Don't number yourself with the gossipers. Our pastor has a unique way of dealing with talebearers. When someone comes to him with a complaint about someone else, he gets on the phone right there in front of the person to call who they are complaining about. He tells them to come over to discuss things with both people there. Most times though he only has to pick up the phone before the gossipers excuse themselves. Refuse to hear gossip. Refuse to spread it. If you do, remember that the next time the gossip goes around, it may be about you.

We can't leave this section of scripture in James 3 without discussing verses 9-11. "Therewith bless we God, even the Father and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren these things ought not so to be. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?" A woman called me. She told me that God was leading her to start a Christian school and the Lord had shown her that I was to help with the project. Since we have a school extension program in our ministry that helps start Christian schools, I listened to her to see if I had a witness that the Lord had indeed led her to call me. I tried the spirit. That was until she got off on the subject of public schools. She started cussing a blue streak. She cursed the school system, her local principal. She cursed the teachers naming them all. After that I dismissed her.

I knew that God wasn't leading her. She wasn't even allowing God to convict her of sin let alone lead her or she wouldn't be what we in the south call "cussing a blue streak". How can bitter and sweet water come out of the same fountain? When I was a sinner I was a master at cussing. My crowd had it down to a fine art. When I got truly saved, my "cuss" left me. God took it. I lost my swearing. When I did slip one out, God would convict me. I had a new way of talking. I had a new Lord of my tongue and His name was Jesus. Through the power of the Holy Ghost in me I was not bound. So I knew that woman couldn't be led by the Holy Ghost. There is something that really bothers me. I would like to say that woman is the only person that I've talked to that was like that. Sad to say, I have talked to several. There is a feeling in today's churches that anything goes. That God wants us to be free to express ourselves in whatever way that we choose. That is not God and that is not His Word. Matter of fact that kind of thinking is born out of an ignorance of God's Word. It is born out of being so far removed from the Holy Ghost that God can't convict you. It is not acceptable behavior for a child of God. If you want to know what is accepted behavior, get into God's Word and find out. Draw near to God and find out.

There is power in the tongue. It can bring life or death. It can be a curse that brings about defeat or a spring bringing life and victory to you and to those around you. It is your choice. Let your tongue bring victory.

## Chapter 14. *The Curse Against Finances and the Promise of Prosperity*

If you are in a ministry or you help to support one through your tithes and offerings then you know first hand the curse the devil tries to bring against finances. One of the key places that the devil strikes against is finance of a church or ministry. Through that he can cripple the work that is being done for the Lord. This has been true across our country. Even nonprofit groups have gone through financial turmoil since then. When you look at who caused all this you know the devil had a plan that was bigger than just one city. He meant to cripple the United States and the work of God across this nation. He forgot one thing though. That God's people are not dependant on the nation's economy to be victorious in their finances and in their work that they do for God. They are dependant on the promises of God's Word. They are dependant on the power of the Holy Ghost to keep them. They were built on the foundation of the solid rock of Jesus Christ and this is not shakable even when the world's foundation is crumbling. Church, we need to keep our eyes on these things to be able to overcome this curse and any curse that comes against our finances or anything else. This is true for the church as a whole and for each of us as individuals. We are not dependant on the world. If we look to what is happening in the economy of our country then we'll be like Peter. When he took his eyes off the Lord, he sank. We will do the same financially.

We need to do spiritual warfare to release our finances from the curse of satan. We need to claim God's Word. God has made many specific promises regarding prosperity. Here are some of them. These are only just a few.

Deuteronomy 29:9, "Keep therefore the Words of this covenant, and do them, that ye may prosper in all that ye do."

Joshua 1:7, "Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the laws, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest."

Psalms 1:3, "And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

Psalms 122:6, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee."

III John 2: Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."

You have God's Word that you can prosper. Accept it. Believe it. Live it. Refuse to accept anything to the contrary.

There are also some "do not's" regarding prosperity as well. If you have a good concordance like a Strong's Concordance that indexes all the words in the scriptures, look up "prosper". You'll see lots of promises of prospering. But you will also see some "shall not prosper". These are things that God decrees will cause you not to prosper. Numbers 14:41 tells us sin will cause us not to prosper. Deuteronomy 28:15 tells us, "But it shall come to pass, if

thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and His statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come up on thee, and overtake thee.” One of these curses is financial poverty. Proverbs 28:13 tells us that if we cover up our sin we will not prosper. It is important to remember that if we do not obey God’s Word, if we fail to live by it in Its guidelines, then the promises will not work in our lives. God will prosper the righteous. God will not prosper the unrighteous. In other words, God will not prosper those that live far from Him and His Word.

We have God’s Word that we can prosper. It is His will that we be financially able to help support His work. It is His will that His work prosper and not be hindered by a lack of finances. The devil will surely fight in this area. One of the main things that he has used through the years to come against our finances has been a failure of people to obey God. They fail to commit and submit to Him in their giving. That is one of the hardest things to overcome. We have also had times when to hinder the church he would come against the congregation’s finances individually. Especially those that paid tithes. With God’s help we would discern this out and do spiritual warfare and bind this up. The devil will cause equipment to break, vehicles to break down, sickness, anything he can to drain your finances. Stand against him and declare God’s Word. You have a promise of prosperity.

One of the reasons the devil comes against God’s people with financial problems is because often we let financial problems stop us. If every time you have a financial problem the first thing that goes without being paid is your tithes, he will continue to fight your finances. If every time as a church the first thing that goes during a financial crisis is your outreach ministry, the devil will continue to fight your finances. If you want to do something for God but you are waiting on financial prosperity so that you can do this thing, you will stay broke. The devil can stop you because you are dependant on finances instead of faith in God to get you going and keep you. We have to have faith in God to keep us instead of faith in our own check book or pocket book. We have to trust God, not our own ability to make if financially. Especially if we want God to use and bless our finances. For this to work, though, we must be obedient to God. We must go when He says go and stay when He says stay. There is a way that our finances can actually be cursed of God. The scripture says to give God a tenth of your first fruits. That doesn’t mean paying your tithes at the end of the month on what you have left. It means paying them on what you start the month with. Why? Malachi 3:10 tells us, “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.” If you want a blessing on your finances, pay tithes. If you want a curse against them don’t pay tithes. I have learned the blessing of giving. If you give, you will prosper. That is God’s Word. Sure the devil will fight this. He will try to convince you that you can’t give. If you go ahead, the tide of blessing that will overtake you will be bigger than the battle. I have tried to out give God. You can’t. What you give, whether it is finances, time, talents, or whatever. He will bless and multiply it back. We serve a mighty wonderful God.

I do want to give a word of caution here though. There is little preaching on TV that I listen to. Why? If I can hear a preacher that can go 15 minutes of preaching without mentioning that how to prosper is by giving them money, then I might listen to them. But those preachers are few and far between. It is all about money. God’s Word works. It isn’t by giving to them that people prosper, but is by giving period. It is by obeying God that we prosper. It is much better for people to give to ministers who are around them, ones they can see what they

are doing, than giving to a preacher who is raking in millions. Most of these are rich off of people's weaknesses. What is going on behind the scenes is enough to make you throw up. Don't give thousands to someone you don't even know for real. Give to those who are working around you every day to help those in your area.

## Chapter 15. *God's Curses*

This may seem to you to be an odd title for a chapter. What can this mean? We have talked just a little about this in earlier chapters about curses that God will actually send. One was the curse that comes against sin. One was the curse that comes against our finances when we fail to tithe. Why are these things true? Does God have a split nature, an evil side that curses us? To understand this let's talk about God's nature. Today's church world often presents God as being a loving God with all love and no judgment or righteousness. Many have even started teaching that God is such a loving God that He would never send anyone to hell. Everyone gets to go to heaven. This is partly true. It is not God's will that we perish. However, God does not send us to hell. If we refuse to accept the gift of salvation, we send ourselves to hell. If we fail to obey His Word and His will, we send ourselves to hell.

God is a righteous God. God is a just God. We read about this in Psalm 48:10, Psalm 97:2, Psalm 119:137. In all these we find that God is a just and righteous God. We are all too guilty as humans in "watering" God down. We make Him weak. We make Him to be a compromised God that winks at sin and excuses all we do. We forget that he is the same God that sent the serpents to punish the murmurings of the children of Israel in Numbers 21. He is still the God that sent the fire to judge Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 13. He is still the God that sent the flood. Some people might argue that God was different in the Old Testament than in the New. What then do we do with these verses? Malachi 3:6 tells us, "For I am the Lord, I change not...." Hebrews 1:12 tells us, "And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." James 1:17 tells us, "Every good gift and very perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." God is not a God that changes. He is compassionate, yes. He is merciful, yes. Even so full of mercy that He sent His own Son to die so that we could receive forgiveness. But there is a power in His love that is just and right. There is a power in His judgment that is just and right. There are things that by His very nature He hates. The scripture is full of them. There is a line for each one of us that we had better not cross. If we do, we will face His judgment. That line is not a thin line. Neither is it so thick that it blurs out so that the boundaries are not clear. It is a righteous line. There are certain things that God hates to the extent that He curses those that do them. I don't mean cusses them here. I mean that if we cross these lines it has an automatic extreme punishment guaranteed.

Here are some of these things (please read each of these scriptures):

1. Robbing God. Malachi 3:8-12. When we fail to pay tithes we bring a curse against our finances. When we pay them we bring a blessing.
2. Our heart departing from the Lord. Jeremiah 17:5-8. If we leave God and forsake His ways it would be better that we had never known Him. But oh what a promise in verses 7 and 8 if we stay faithful and put our trust in Him.
3. Coming against God's People-Genesis 12:3. Yes, this is talking about the Jews. But aren't we by adoption God's people as well. Before you begin to gossip or do harm to your brothers and sisters in Christ, remember this verse. Lift them up and you will be blessed.



4. Touching God's anointed-I Chronicles 16:22. "Throughout the scripture God's judgment has been against those who come against God's anointed people. Especially preachers, pastors, etc. that have set themselves aside to obey God. If they are anointed of the Lord they have God's favor. Don't touch that.
5. Adding to or taking away from the Word of God-Revelations 22:17-19. Before we water down the Word of God and teach or preach a compromised version (or live one before those we teach) we need to remember this section of scripture. Before we dwell in that gray area where God becomes to us nothing but love without righteousness and judgment we need to read this scripture.
6. Disobedience-Isaiah 1:18-20. Disobedience in itself brings about a curse.

When we look at most all of these curses we always find a blessing near by. God is a just God. He is a wonderful. There is always mercy around the judgment. However, it is a right and righteous mercy.

Here are the blessings found in each of the scriptures above.

1. If we pay our tithes we are promised a blessing that we can't contain.
2. If we don't forsake God we will be like a tree planted by the waters.
3. If we bless God's people we are guaranteed to have a blessing.
4. There is a blessing that comes when you even give God's anointed a drink.
5. Drink for the thirsty from the river of life.
6. Reaping of the good of the land when you are obedient.

Too often today we have lost the fear of God. I don't mean fear as "being afraid of" but I mean an awesome respect because of His power and might and His righteousness. God won't be mocked. He won't change His Word. He won't water it down to fit our needs. The truth is the truth. God's Word is His Word. It is forever settled. There is no changing in God. He doesn't change like the seasons or blow around like the wind. He is sure and constant. There are scores of "fear nots" in the Bible. If you look up the word "fear" in a good concordance you'll come up with over 100 references just that say fear not. But at the same time you will see a lot of commands to fear God. Yes, there are blessings, but we need to always be mindful of the curses as well.

## **Chapter 16.** ***On This Side of Jordan***

We first see this side of Jordan in Deuteronomy 1:1. “These be the words which Moses spake unto all Israel on this side Jordan...” The children of Israel were on the blessing side of the Jordan. For 40 years they had wandered in the desert trying to capture the blessing that God had promised them. Can you imagine how many times that their mind had imagined the wonders of their Canaan land while their feet trudged the dusty rocky soil of the desert. They could only imagine the place that God had set aside for them and their generations to come. They may have heard stories from others that had been passed down from those who had lived there. I imagine as the generations had passed those stories got better and better. Canaan land. The Promised Land. The place where there would be no more curse. The place outside of Egypt and the bondage it represented. The freedom and blessing of God.

There is not one of us that don't have our own personal Canaan land that we are longing for. My first Canaan land that I remember walking in was my new life that I found after my salvation. My eyes were opened. It seemed like things were brighter so much that everything even looked new. Life was full of promises ahead instead of broken dreams behind. God's love renewed my heart and mind and I could feel things with a right heart and think so much more clearly than I could before with a renewed mind. Do you remember those days? God's Word with its promises became alive. Not only did it start suddenly to make sense, it became personal as God's Spirit began to reveal it to me. Yes, there were battles but oh how strong was the hand that held us. Remember how it felt when you first realized that you were not alone. That you were God's child and the battle was His. His Word full of promises that became true. It was true personally for you. Remember that first Canaan land when you first crossed that Jordan of salvation.

We have all had many Jordans to cross since then. Remember that terminal sickness. Everyone was preparing themselves for the worst. God had the last say so. Healing came and your tired body that was soon on the edge of giving up was renewed. Or the body of your loved one was restored. God broke the curse of sickness. Remember the Jordan of healing.

Remember the Jordan that you had to cross that nearly brought financial ruin. Only a few days down the road you faced losing it all. When you put it all in God's hands and released it to trust Him, you found out how big those hands were. Remember when He stepped in miraculously and released you from that curse of financial bondage. He blessed and multiplied what you had given according to His Word.

Remember that Jordan that you had to cross when you realized the bondages coming against your mind and heart were caused from bondages your parents had faced. Maybe it was a life bound by fear. Maybe depression. Maybe a negative way of thinking that had kept you bound. Maybe sin that you felt chained to. On this side of Jordan there was victory over generational curses. Remember when you stepped out of the waters edge onto the green grass of your promised land and claimed the promises of God's Word. You found a new blood line. You found a new life in Christ Who was crucified to give you the power to live victoriously.

Maybe you faced your promised land when your eyes were opened to see the curse of this world. When you realized that you have to come out from that and be a separated people. When your feet became planted firmly in a stand for God's righteousness and His Word. When the curse and hold that this world's thinking was broken and you were set free to obey God's Word.

Maybe your promised land came when you finally got committed to listen and obey and go in the direction that God led you. You found out that all those times of dreading to obey were a whole lot worse than the obeying. When you obeyed, you learned the truth that when God sends you He always sends you with the tools that you need to get the job done.

All these are Jordans that we might have crossed to get to our promised lands. If you have not gotten there yet but you are crossing your desert still, keep walking. Keep believing. Keep claiming the promises of God's Word. There is a promised land. God will keep His Word for you. Obey Him. Bury yourself in His Word. Keep looking ahead, not behind you. All through their trek in the wilderness Israel kept getting into trouble because they looked behind them. Instead of keeping their mind on what was ahead and keeping their mind on the promises that waited for them, they would always start looking back toward Egypt. They would start longing for the bondage that they had left behind. They would start doubting the promise that was ahead of them and they would concentrate on the hardship of the journey. When the promise of why we're doing what we are doing gets dim, the day's labor is a lot harder. When we forget why we're traveling, the journey gets unbearable. Proverbs 29:18 tells us, "Where there is no vision, the people perish...."

There is a lot of truth in this. We are not supposed to look back. We are not supposed to look at all the hardships. We are to keep our eyes on the prize. Get a vision of your promised land in your mind that will propel you through that rocky desert. One that will guide your heart and keep it through the hard times. There is a promised land just on the other side of that Jordan that you are going through. You may think that the journey was really rough. Just beyond where you can see though there was a strong hand that was holding back those waters from overcoming you. There was that fire that guided and warmed you at night and that cloud that cooled and kept you by day. When you thought that you would surely be destroyed, there was the hand that guided you out of harms way. There was that hand that kept you when you couldn't stand any more. There was that strength that came when you had none left of your own. When the footprints in the sand showed one set of prints instead of two, then you knew that it was then that He carried you. That other side of Jordan is a place where we find the blessings that came when we trusted God. We know on the other side that He is big enough. We also learn that we can trust Him to keep us and we learn how to keep pressing on because we know that on the other side of Jordan there is a promised land.

When Moses and the children of Israel stood on the other side of Jordan, Moses gave them God's commandments. He told them in Deuteronomy 11:26-32 these commands. Please read them. God told them that He had set before them a blessing and a curse. There were many times that we read that Israel as a whole went toward the blessing. There were times when as a whole the nation went toward the curse. When that happened everyone suffered. But they did have a promise. Let's read it again in verse 31. "For ye shall pass over Jordan to go in to possess the land which the Lord your God giveth you, and ye shall possess it and dwell therein." We know that even today, thousands of years later, they possess their land. You too can possess your promised land. Only if you choose the blessing and not the curse. God sets both before you. Obey His Word. Keep His commandments, and you will be blessed.

Then one day we all have a promise, the greatest promise of all. That is a promise of the land where there will be no more curse. Revelations speaks of it in chapter 22 verse 3, "And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve Him." We will one day dwell in that perfect land where there will be no curse, no sadness, no flesh. Only the perfection of God. That perfect world that we talked about

at the beginning of this book will return. We will live as perfect people in this perfect world. It will be like it was when God first made it and declared that “it was good”. As it was before the curse. We will have all the best that God in His wonderful love has for us. We read about it in these verses.

Luke 12:37, “Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when He cometh shall find watching; verily I say unto you, that He shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.”

John 14:3, “And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”

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

Romans 8:18, “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”

One day we will live as perfect people in this perfect world. We will have all the best that God in His wonderful love has for us. Here are some more verses to read. Please read them for a blessing: Luke 12:37, John 14:3, Colossians 3:4.

One day we will walk in that Promised Land with the One who kept His promise and sealed it with His own blood. What a wonderful day that will be. Who knows when and how it will come? It might come tomorrow when we step from life, through death, into life eternal. It might come when we see Him in the clouds and rush to be with Him, becoming like Him. However that Promised Land comes it will come. We can trust God’s Word for that. Those that are already there beckon us on. We have to keep our eye on the promise and not behind us. We have to keep our eyes on the promise and not the battle. It is as surely to come as tomorrow.

James 1:12, “Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him.”

I Peter 5:4, “And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.”

Matthew 13:43 “Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father, Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.”

God has set before us a promise and a curse. It is up to us to choose. We can’t choose the blessing while our hearts are looking back toward Egypt. We have to set our priorities in line. We have to make our commitment sure. We have to dedicate our heart to that single goal of reaching our promised land. We have to choose. Choosing is definitely an active, not a passive activity. We won’t casually drift aimlessly into a state of making a choice. It is something that has to be decided and acted on. Choose today which one you will possess. Go and possess your promised land. When you do, all the curses that the devil sets against you won’t stop you. Through the power of the Word of God, through the blood of Jesus, through the name of Jesus, through your obedience, through the Holy Ghost within you, you can break those curses. Go in and possess your land. Victory is yours.

## *In Summary*

The purpose of this book is to discuss the victory that we have over the curses of satan. The purpose of this book has **not been** to discuss the curses so that we begin to think that we have all of them and begin to accept them. It hasn't been written so that we read about the bondages and settle for them. Yes, these pages are filled with bondages that the enemy brings against you. However, more importantly than that, this book is also filled with victory and how we can overcome those bondages. Many times we are bound by satan because we don't identify his lies and the traps that he has for us. Other times we are bound because we don't realize the authority that God has given us through His Word, His blood, and His name. More often than not, though, we are bound because we simply settle for bondage. It is my prayer that this book helps you overcome all of those.

Here we have read about the victory that God has for us to overcome. One of the most important things to remember is this. Bottom line, concerning the enemy and his bondages, we will get what we settle for. His number one job is to talk us into settling for less than the victory that God has for us. He will do that by causing us to be complacent in our spiritual guard. We cease to be active in our spiritual welfare and we begin to settle for things. Our complacency opens a door for the devil to bring in his bondages. It is my prayer that this book stops that from happening to you.

The devil also will talk us into settling for less than what God has for us by causing us to think that is what we deserve. That is all that there is for us. He may do that by condemnation and making us feel that because of past sin we don't deserve any better. Or he may make us think that this bondage is unavoidable and in the flesh we just accept it. For example, someone with cancer in their family might easily be convinced that they have to accept cancer because in the flesh it is something that is unavoidable. However, in the Spirit we know that we have a new bloodline through Jesus Christ. We know we don't have to settle for less than His promises. If we accept satan's lies, then we accept his bondages. That is why it is so important to walk in the Spirit and not in the flesh. When we walk in the Spirit, God will help us to see the traps and lies of satan. His Spirit in us, when we are tuned into it, will jolt us when we are in danger of accepting a lie of satan as being the truth. God's Word will help our mind to be tuned in to the truth so that it is easy to spot a lie. So we are not likely to accept satan's lies and the bondages they would bring against us when we are in the Spirit.

Another important thing to remember is that we have authority over satan. Ephesians 6:12 tells us, "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." I pray that through these chapters you learn to identify the battle, and you learn how victorious you are. James 4:7 tells us, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." Psalm 44:5, "Through Thee will we push down our enemies: through Thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us." Luke 10:19, "Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you." Romans 13:12, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light." Romans 8:35-37, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we

are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.” II Corinthians 10:3-4, “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh; (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds).” II Timothy 4:18, “And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.” How long will we have victory over satan and authority to overcome him? How long will we be preserved by the hand of God? For ever and ever. Amen. Amen. Amen. What do we have to fear? Nothing but fear itself.

The authority that we have over satan was purchased for us at Calvary. It was passed down to us as sons of God. It was passed down to us as the body of Christ. Ephesians 1:18-23, “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 usward 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 fullness of Him that filleth all in all.” Amen. Amen. Amen. That is your authority. You are part of the church, His body. That authority is not dependent on how righteous we feel like we are, or how small in our own eyes we seem. That authority is not dependant on who we are in the flesh, but who we are in the Spirit of God. We have a God-given right to rebuke satan and tell him to flee. We have a right to resist him. In the end result of things, he can only get by with what we let him get by with. Yes, there will be a battle. Yes, we have things to face that we have to overcome. Yes, there will be days when it seems like there is no end to the struggle. But if we walk in the Spirit and obey God, there will be a victory and we will be the victors. Guaranteed.

However, the devil has a way to talk us out of that victory. He’ll cause us to lose that authority that God gives us. He’ll do that in many ways. One is by causing us to accept his lies. If we begin to listen to his voice instead of the voice of God and His Word, he can trick us into accepting the bondage he is trying to bring against us. A simple example would be this. Let’s say you’ve been around someone that has the flu. You get a little snuffle, which is barely even a snuffle. The devil says, “Oh look out. You are coming down with the same flu that the other person has.” You say to yourself, “Oh, I am getting sick.” You open up your spirit to accept that sickness that you might not have even gotten if it hadn’t been for the “suggestion” that the devil put into your mind. Well, that little opportunity, like the other person being sick and that timely little snuffle, is just the kind of thing that the devil is looking for. He’ll use things like that to make you sicker than you’ve ever been. This kind of thing will usually happen when it is important for you to be well because of something that you are doing for God.

How do you avoid these kinds of things? We stay so busy here at our ministry that we just don’t have time to listen to the devil’s suggestions. We don’t have time to stop and consider being sick. We just refuse to accept it and keep on running. So we seldom are. Hey, that is saying a lot. I work around teenagers all day long. It is not a teenage thing to keep a tissue handy, if you know what I mean. Sure there are times when our immune system may be down. Maybe we haven’t taken as good care of ourselves as we should. During those times, we are susceptible to catch things. Just as real are the things we catch when we let our spiritual immune system get run down. Those times when we walk more in the flesh than in the spirit and we become susceptible to catch the devil’s lies. The devil sees his chance and he’ll come in with a lie that

we catch in our spirit just like that “bug” that we caught in our flesh. Then we start to dwell on the symptoms that his lie can bring against us. Then we begin in the flesh to dwell on the symptoms like the snuffle. Then we get down with whatever “virus” the devil has for us. We have to walk in the Spirit and let God make us sensitive to be able to discern the lies of satan before they can catch in our minds. Then we won’t have to worry about any further symptoms that they might cause.

Walking in the flesh can cause us to be susceptible to lose our authority over satan. We’ve discussed this many times in this book how the battle with satan is a spiritual battle. It has to be fought in the spirit. Our authority over satan is in the spiritual realm. That spiritual authority can’t be taken in the flesh. We can’t even see the battle if we are walking in the flesh, let alone take authority over it and win. If we are walking in the flesh six days out of seven and the only time that we walk in the Spirit is Sunday when we are at church, how can we expect to be walking in the Spirit when the battles come. Walking in the Spirit is not an occasional thing that we do. It has to be a way of life for us to be victorious in our everyday walk. If you want to stay victorious and take authority over satan not only for yourself, but also for those you love, you have to practice that way of life.

Doublemindedness is another way that we can lose our authority. If the devil can buffet us to the place that we literally don’t know which side is up, then we can’t stand firm ourselves. If we don’t know which way to turn, or which way we are going, then we can’t stand firm against satan who is trying to get us to go in the wrong direction. If we have one foot going in one direction, and the other headed in the opposite way, then it is hard to stand firm enough to brace yourselves against an attack of the enemy enough to knock him out of your way. If you are being double minded in an area of your life, let God convict you and help you to overcome. Then you can take the authority God has given you. Sometimes double mindedness can come because we simply aren’t sure about which direction we should go in. Sometimes double mindedness comes because the devil has buffeted us so in a battle that we literally don’t know which direction is up. Sometimes we can become double minded because we are becoming complacent in our spiritual attitudes and we are starting to settle for things that we shouldn’t settle for in our lives. God can help us get out of double mindedness.

A lack of faith is another thing that causes us to lose our authority. Especially if we have been in a battle, sometimes it is hard to see the light of day. It is hard to keep focused on a victorious outcome. It is hard to see all the things God is doing for all the things that satan is throwing against us. It is hard to concentrate on holding onto the “unseen things” for the things that we see. It is easy to lose hold of our faith during those times. When we do, we lose the authority we have. Also, we can lose our faith when the devil brings condemnation against us and causes us to concentrate on our flesh and our shortcomings. When he is condemning us it is hard to remember that we have authority over him. That is when we have to remember that our faith is in God and not in ourselves. Our authority was given to us by God and by His Word, and through Jesus who shed His blood to give us that authority. That is when we can rise up over condemnation and send that devil back where he belongs. Another thing that causes us to lose our faith is when we just simply don’t know God’s Word regarding our authority. The Bible says in Romans 10:17, “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.” When we don’t know the Word of God, how do we know what we are to believe? That is why it is so important to study God’s Word for ourselves and let God’s Holy Ghost write it on our hearts so that it becomes a part of how we think and act. When our faith grows weak, then we start to lose our authority. That authority is founded in faith in God and faith in His Word.

When we find that our faith for whatever reason is growing weak, that is when we have to pray like the disciples did in Luke 17:5, “And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.”

Fear is another key thing that the devil will bring against us so that we lose our authority against him. Sometimes the devil will say “boo” to scare us into backing up. Then we lose our authority. Remember, fear comes from satan. Like the old saying goes, we have nothing to fear but fear itself.

Sin is the biggest thing that causes us to lose our authority. If we have unconfessed and unrepented of sin in our lives, then the devil just laughs at us. When we try to come against him, a condition of our authority according to the scriptures is submission. James 4:7 tells us, “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” If we aren’t submitting to God then the devil doesn’t have to flee. If we aren’t walking in obedience to God then that leaves a hole in our spiritual hedge or wall that the enemy can just walk through. It also leaves a hook in your jaw that the devil can just reel you in with. It brings you under his authority instead of him being under yours. How do you fix it? Get real with God. Let Him convict you. Repent and stop it. Then it will be the devil’s turn to run.

We have authority over satan. We don’t have to settle for his curses. We don’t have to accept his bondages. We need to be able to identify them. And we need to identify how to stand against and resist them. That is the purpose of this book. The pages have been filled with promises of the victory that is ours in Christ Jesus. That victory is our right as children of God. James 4:7 tells us, “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” Psalm 44:5, “Through Thee will we push down our enemies: through Thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us.” Luke 10:19, “Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you.” Romans 13:12, “The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.” Why am I repeating these same verses over and over? For the same reason that you need to. So that they become a part of your mind, heart, and spirit. We need to rise up and take our position as declared by the Word of God. We are not to run from the enemy in defeat. Satan is under our feet. He is under our heel. The victory is ours. There is no curse that he brings against us that can endure if we refuse to accept it and bind it.

So what is left after all this? What do we do now? I guess that a good finale to reading this book would be to stop a moment. Get to a place where you can make a lot of noise and do a few things that may look ridiculous to someone whose in the flesh. Now start praising God for the victory that He has given you. Get that head up and get those hands up. The Word of God promises us that His Holy Ghost will arrive on the scene. The Bible tells us that God will inhabit our praise. (Psalm 22:3, “But thou art holy, O thou that inhabits the praises of Israel.”) In some of the worst battles that I have faced in my life I took the story of Jehosophat to heart. You remember how the Lord told them to get the best singers up front. They sang and the people praised the Lord going into battle. They didn’t even have to fight. The Lord inhabited their praises and the enemy ran. When we praise the Lord, the enemy ambushes itself. Start praising God for the victory that you have over the curses that the enemy has tried to put against you. Start rejoicing for the victory that is coming. It is as sure as God’s Word. After you have spent time praising God for the victory, then give notice to the devil that your days of bondage are over. Notify him that his place is under your heel. Do a little stomping. Identify those curses that he has tried to bring against you. Call them by name. Declare that the blood of Jesus, in the name of Jesus, through the power given you by the Word of God and His Holy Ghost



Then start rejoicing from there out as a new person in Christ Jesus. You are free. Then as each new day comes with each new battle, declare the same victory. Start by praising God for the victory. Then notify the devil. When the devil tries to sneak some of the old bondages against you (and you can be sure that he will. He will work overtime to convince you that none of this did any good. Take it from God's Word, it did.), declare that same victory. Don't stop to consider it. Don't allow him to tell you that what victory you declared today didn't work. Tell him that according to God's Word, yes it did. Refuse his lies. You are delivered. You are set free.

You are precious to God. God is love and His love for you is greater than you can even comprehend. Read this passage of scripture. It is long, but it is important. Take this into your heart, mind, and spirit. Romans 8:31-39, "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? 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? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is He that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again who is even at the right hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long: we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Keep in mind that Paul wrote these words during the time of one of the greatest persecutions that the church has ever known. How bad was that persecution? He himself said about this persecution in II Corinthians 11:24-27, "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness." I know that whatever you have been through hasn't been all that bad as all of this. Even though at the time it might have seemed like it was. Paul went through all of this and still declared in Philippians 3:8-10, "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death." Paul had gotten close enough to Jesus to feel His touch. Close enough to know that wonderful love that He has for all of His children. He definitely is a testimony that the scripture that he wrote in Romans 8:31-39 is true. When we are so swallowed up in the love of God the devil has a lot less of a chance to bring bondages against us. When you are walking day to day in that love, then you know that nothing can separate you from that wonderful love that God has for His children. What does the devil have that can stop you? You have the Word of God that is filled with promises that God has for His children. Promises made in that love for you. Yes, we will have battles. Yes, the rain falls on the just and the unjust. But always remember that the victory is yours. You have God's Word for that.





