

# New Identity Evangelism

How God's Children Can Win the World

Danny M. Boyd

**New Identity Evangelism**  
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by

Danny M. Boyd

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*This book is dedicated to Mitchell Davis, whose witnessing fervor when he met Christ so many years ago has been used by the Lord ever since to show me the importance of sharing my faith.*

# Acknowledgments

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# 1

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## Introduction

These days, countless individuals grapple with questions about their identity. Behind all the pondering to discover who we are, or the striving to become who we think we want to be, is the yearning need of every human being to be truly special and loved unconditionally.

For Christians, these basic needs are met completely in Jesus Christ. That's not some feel-good, religious jargon intended to give us an emotional buzz while we contemplate more important avenues to fulfillment. It's the absolute truth. A deep, spiritual understanding and appreciation of who God really is to us and who we really are to Him—He is our fully-engaged Father and we are His nurtured children who lack nothing because of Jesus—is not only crucial to a successful Christian life but also talking about this reality can be an effective way to introduce an identity-challenged world to Him.

Whether we share our faith with individuals, through an evangelism outreach, in the pulpit, or in Sunday school class, we can focus on the reality of who we are in Christ as the primary

means to explain the gospel and its true rewards and benefits—not only in the next life, but the real blessing available to us in this one. Christians have literally been adopted into God’s family (Eph. 1:5)! We have a blood-bought right to be called children of God (John 1:12). Being a child of God isn’t just a name we give ourselves as believers, it’s an open door into a world in which God supplies our needs (Phil. 4:19), welcomes us into His presence, and hears us when we need help (Heb. 4:16).

We have literally been declared blameless before a holy God (Rom. 5:1) and are assured of God’s forgiveness when we fail (1 John 1:9). Indeed, it is impossible for believers to be separated from God’s active love (Rom. 8:35-39). Our status as Christians isn’t something we work to attain. It is given to us freely by God’s unmerited favor when we believe what Jesus did for us through His death, burial, and resurrection (Eph. 2:8-9). We can expect God to provide His power so we can live the life He desires for us. He also empowers us to serve Him (Acts 1:8). There are numerous other biblical references that explain the incredible richness of our new identity secured by Christ, administered fully by the Holy Spirit, and ignited by the Spirit-inspired, Spirit-empowered word of God. All that is required of us is to believe it, *really believe it*, not just pay it lip service on Sundays or engage in religious pretentiousness replete with a dishonest veneer of piety.

The Bible says if Jesus is our Lord—no small if—we are God’s children with a special purpose as God’s official representatives (2 Cor. 5:20), empowered by Him to tell a confused and hurting world the wonderful news that one simple act of faith can provide a certain identity that does not change with outward circumstances beyond our control. It doesn’t change when we mess up. It doesn’t change when a political opinion or leader contradicts it.



God is in us, with us, and for us, and those realities equip us to share the faith and expand God's family. It's about simply explaining a tremendous swapping of identities: Christ takes our sin, shame, isolation, and confusion, and in exchange provides us not only forgiveness, but a new identity in which we are loved, accepted, nurtured, called, and empowered (2 Cor. 5:21). We are spiritually complete, lacking nothing in our new identity in Christ (Col. 2:10).

If Jesus is your Lord and Savior, all these incredible truths about you are as real to God as they ever will be. If you spend time dwelling on them, they will be real to you, change the way you think, feel, speak, and act and, as a result, change the very course of your life. The only requirement is believing the spiritual reality of our identity in Christ. God wants you to know Him, walk by His power, and use your position to introduce others to Him.

Relying on these truths to win others to Christ is simple. There's nothing too complicated about it or so challenging that it's only for those who are naturally bold. You may feel inadequate in sharing your faith, but it's not a weakness of the Spirit Who raised Christ from the dead and Who, by the way, lives in you (Rom. 8:11). We are bold in Christ because God gives us a Spirit of power, love, and a sound mind (2 Tim. 1:7), not because we will it and make it happen ourselves. We walk by faith, not by sight (2 Cor. 5:7). Believe what the word of God says about your status as God's spokesperson, and the biblical promise that the Holy Spirit empowers you, because it's true. Then share your experience as God's child with others who don't know Him. The pressure is on God and on the person being convicted of their need for Christ, not you to perform God's work for Him. Your duty is to speak, not produce results.

God answers requests for things that are His will for us (1 John 5:14-15). It's God's will for the church to win the lost to Himself (Matt. 28:19-20). If you are willing to share, God will make you a fisher of men (Matt. 4:19). You may step into this slowly at first, but through your faith and obedience, the Spirit of God will transform you into an effective soul winner. God is working in you, fashioning you as His handiwork to win others to Him (Eph. 2:10). Our focus is on God's power and limitlessness, not our limits and shortcomings. Focus on God as the object of your faith and share.

You don't have to be a seminary-trained theologian. You're a child of God and a servant of the great King. That's all the qualification you need to lead people into a real relationship with a real, wonderful Lord. If you champion yourself as a person of faith, then step out and let God use you to wrap His loving arms around a dying world desperately in need of Him. He wants to bestow a new, right identity on hurting people, not bestow some fleshly political, religious, or social identity on them.

New identity evangelism is simply an approach to introducing others to Christ by talking about who God makes everyone to be when they accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. It is an easy, powerful way to lead people into a relationship with the living Messiah.

Included in this book is a brief review of what Christ did for us on the cross and the reality of our status as God's children because of it. Simple meditation and memorization strategies will help renew your mind to the reality of your place as a literal child of God. One of two appendices includes scriptures and confessions about who you are in Christ. You can use these confessions to build awareness of your spiritual identity. We will also look at

some growth impediments that distort our view of God and how we see ourselves in relation to Him.

You can review basics on how to start a conversation with someone and learn to transition into the gospel by offering to pray for someone's need. The gospel presentations are concise and easy to share. We also will review what to do when people receive Christ and what to do when they don't. Also included are FAQ, precautions, and a suggested class outline to teach the principles of this book to others. Altogether, this simple strategy will show you how to introduce your Lord, Friend, Provider, and Encourager to those around you. Let's get started!

# 2

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## Telling Who We Are

*They had power over him and won because of the blood of the Lamb and by telling what He had done for them. They did not love their lives but were willing to die. – Rev. 12:11, NLV*

Revelation 12:11 tells us how we can defeat our spiritual enemy. First, we win through the faith we place in the sinless blood that Christ shed for us on the cross so we can literally be given new spiritual life and a new identity. Secondly, we tell others what happened to us. We have been transformed because of Christ and can deliver the message that this transformation is available to anyone who wants it. Our primary message is:

*... to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. – John 1:12, NLT*

Because of Christ and our faith in Him alone, we are children of the one and only God whose incredible gift of new spiritual life

is the testimony of every Christian. It's the story all believers can tell. Certainly, sharing specific things God has done for us—liberation and healing from specific addictions, failures, shame, rejection, insecurities, emotional scars, diseases, and countless other challenges—are a vital part of the story we tell others in the hope they will receive Christ and experience the same freedom. Yet, despite different specific experiences, every believer can share the same remarkable story of the new spiritual birth that transforms us from being strangers and enemies of God to becoming His very own children.

Coupled with our individual experiences, the story is an amazing but true account that will attract those searching for a legitimate identity, one that allows them to truly belong and be valued. We can tell our story and know confidently that the Holy Spirit will use our word-of-God-based witness that we are God's real sons and daughters to show unbelievers that our great Savior loves them so much that He gave His life for them so they can share His.

If our identity in Christ is real to us, it will be evident to others. Our redemption and new spiritual life are more real than the breath in our lungs or the beat of our hearts, whether we always feel transformed or not. Feelings change, spiritual reality—truth—does not. I never wake up in the morning and ponder whether or not I am the son of my earthly father and mother because I know better, even if I feel groggy, ill, sad or momentarily experience some other negative emotion. Likewise, my sonship in Christ doesn't change. I am who I am. If you believe in Christ, your status as a real child of the living God doesn't change with fluctuating feelings or negative experiences.

In order to understand and proclaim our message of this new identity effectively, we need to review who we were without

Christ, what Jesus did that changed everything, how we picked Jesus for ourselves, and more about who we really are if Jesus is our Lord and Savior.

## **Who We Were**

The Bible states very plainly who we were before we received Christ—enemies of a holy, sinless God. Colossians 1:21 (NIV) states, “Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior.” Being called an enemy seems especially harsh, but the scripture says that’s who we were. People without Christ have an innate tendency to want to live independently of a holy God and effectively take a stand against Him, even if they don’t think that’s what they are doing. The natural human mind does not desire to pursue God or think His thoughts.

Without Christ, people are spiritually dead and bound for an eternity without God. Spiritual death is the natural human condition, but mankind didn’t start that way. God created our ancestors, Adam and Eve, to be like Him, holy and sinless, and in perfect unity with Him. God blessed them abundantly and commanded them to rule over the earth, and to be fruitful and multiply (Gen. 1:28-30). There was only one restriction:

*And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” –*

*Gen. 2:16-17, NKJV*

Despite the command, our forebearers ate of that tree (Gen. 3:6). Death means separation. As soon as they disobeyed God and ate, Adam and Eve died spiritually and became separated from

God, their new fallen condition evident when they hid from God (Gen. 3:8). Because of their choice, sin entered them. They were no longer pure, sinless, and in perfect union with their Creator. Consequently, all those who come after them—that’s everybody except Christ—are like them, spiritually dead with a natural tendency to reject God and His ways. In short, without Christ we are spiritual bone-brains without a realistic clue of who God really is.

*Sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned. – Rom. 5:12, NIV*

The biblical word describing that natural bent away from God and His ways inherited from Adam and Eve is flesh. Romans 8:7-8 states that the natural or fleshly way of thinking is hostile toward God because natural, fleshly people are God’s enemies whose minds are incapable of truly understanding Him. Without Christ, people chart their own course, call their own plays, and do what they think is best without the slightest concern of God’s will.

In his writing “Men Naturally Are God’s Enemies,” noted 18th century missionary Jonathan Edwards stated that the actions and attitudes of natural people demonstrate their lack of esteem for God Almighty:

*“Whatever honor and respect they may pretend, and make a show of towards God, if their practice be examined, it will show, that they certainly look upon him as a Being that is but little to be regarded. The language*

*of their hearts is, ‘Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice (Exo. 5:2)?’”<sup>1</sup>*

People without God don’t desire to seek Him. They pursue the things that make them feel and look good and effectively promote themselves to be their own god to be significant (I John 2:16). Often, their speech is imbued with bitterness, swearing and chatter about things that mock God and drag others away from Him (Rom. 3:11-18). Christians can certainly sin and live according to fleshly desires—I’ve done it—but for many without Christ, those desires mark their typical way of life:

*When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God. – Gal. 5:19-21, NLT*

We could ask some unbelievers who are decent people if they are God’s enemies and they will likely say they aren’t. They might recite some philosophical idea of God’s love and the need to love humanity in general, but in actuality, true spiritual understanding is non-existent. A child brought up with the virtues of being nice and respectful of others may become a courteous and well-liked adult, but without Christ, that same person—along with those whose

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<sup>1</sup> Edwards, Jonathan n.d., *Men Naturally are God's Enemies*. Edited by Tony Capoccia. Accessed April 13, 2021. <https://www.biblebb.com/files/edwards/enemies.htm>.



sinful lives are more obvious—will spend eternity separated from God.

Sin includes every thought, action, or inclination that is contrary to God, and God detests the way of sinful people (Prov. 15:9), although He loves the sinner. We come into the world without a relationship with God. Psalm 51:5 (NLT) says, “For I was born a sinner—yes, from the moment my mother conceived me.” We don’t work our way into hell. Without Christ, we’re headed that way already (John 3:18), although children get a reprieve until the age of accountability when they become responsible for accepting Christ for themselves. Without Christ, people miss out in this life before experiencing indescribable emptiness and anguish in the next.

*He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might. – 2 Thess. 1:8-9, NIV*

However, God loves everyone so much the He sent Jesus to pay the penalty of sin for us. Consequently, we can be forgiven and be given new life now if we choose Christ. Again, God the Father sent Christ just for you. God is a Trinity, including the Persons of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Trinity appears to be introduced in the first book of the Bible with the use of the pronoun “us” (translated from a plural Hebrew word Elohim):

*Then God said, “Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the*

*earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground.” – Gen. 1:26, NLT*

It may be difficult to grasp, but the Godhead is inseparable. While the natural tendency of humans is to divide and quarrel over differences, the natural tendency of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is to be together, work as one, and mutually submit, having the same character of love and holiness. These Three are One. I have heard it said that creation originated in the mind of the Father and was spoken into existence by the Son. The Holy Spirit then manipulated matter.

However it happened, Jesus has since commanded His followers to take the gospel to the ends of the earth, baptizing people in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19). The key is that God the Father sent Jesus to die for the sins of humanity so we can be forgiven of sin and be born again—our spirits made alive by the Holy Spirit—as children of God.

## **What Jesus Did**

The simplest explanation of the gospel is found in Christ’s own words. During His time on earth about 2,000 years ago, Jesus explained concisely to the Jewish teacher Nicodemus what His mission was from the Father:

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. —John 3:16, NIV*

Through God’s Son, Jesus Christ, people who are God’s enemies can have new life right now, be transformed into His very own children, and spend eternity with their heavenly Father after this brief life on earth. The issue of sin separating man from God

was resolved when Jesus offered Himself on the cross for our sins, died, and rose from the dead. As a result, those who choose Jesus are forgiven and instantly reborn spiritually. Sin came to the human race from Adam, but new life comes from Christ.

*Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous. —Rom. 5:18-19, NKJV*

Many were made sinners through Adam's sin and will be made right with God through Christ's perfect life and sacrifice. Notice the difference in wording, "were" vs. "will be." No human has a choice when it comes to inheriting the sinful ways of Adam, our earthly forefather, so we were made sinners because of him. However, we can choose Christ, although we're not forced to accept Him, and will be made righteous if we do so.

The scripture specifically targets Adam in the responsibility for the sin that corrupts humanity. The Bible says Adam knew He was sinning against God by eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; Eve was deceived (1 Tim. 2:14). Adam disobeyed God, and as a result, all people—whether male or female—inherit the tendency to live independently of God. However, Christ was born sinless. His mother, Mary, was a virgin and from her Jesus received His humanity. His fatherly lineage came from God, so Christ did not inherit Adam's – and humanity's – separation from God and sinful nature. The angel Gabriel explained what would happen during a visitation with Mary, who was a bit astounded that she would have a child without first being with a man:

*Then Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I do not know a man? And the angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.*

*– Luke 1:34-35, NKJV*

In addition to being born without estrangement from God and without a rebellious nature, Jesus also lived a sinless life and could offer Himself as the final sacrifice for sin. In the Old Testament, the high priest, at God’s command, continually sacrificed innocent animals, including bulls, goats and sheep to cover sin (Heb. 9:22). The animal’s life was made possible by the blood that coursed through its arteries and veins, and God required the shedding of the animal’s blood—the giving of the innocent animal’s life that the blood represents—to make temporary atonement, or payment for sins (Lev. 17:11, AMP). In contrast, the perfect, sinless Christ, who became High Priest in Heaven for those who follow Him, offered Himself as the perfect and final sacrifice that wipes away sin’s penalty forever instead of putting it off for a season.

*For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people’s, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. – Heb. 7:26-27,*

*NKJV*

Whether humans like it or accept it, God is holy (Lev. 19:2), which means He is separate and distinct in character. He is pure and undefiled by sinful thoughts, words, or actions. Consequently,

the Bible says God “cannot tolerate the sins of the wicked” (Psalm 5:4, NLT), and hates the wicked way, or the way that’s contrary to Him and His holiness and moral purity (Psalm 11:5). Indeed, “The LORD detests the way of the wicked, but he loves those who pursue godliness” (Prov. 15:9, NLT). On the other hand, the scripture says God is also love:

*Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. – 1 John 4:7-9, NKJV*

God sent Christ to pay the legal penalty we owed for sin to satisfy God’s holy requirement for justice, but Jesus’ payment is the ultimate demonstration of God’s love. 1 John 2:2 (NIV) says that Jesus is “the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.” The sin debt we—and everyone else—owed has been paid in full because God loves us and yearns for a relationship with us. For those who confess Christ as Lord, there is no condemnation, no possibility of facing a final judgment that banishes them from God’s presence forever (Rom. 8:1). On the legal side of Christ’s work, He became sin for us and gave us His right standing with God (2 Cor. 5:21).

*But there is a great difference between Adam’s sin and God’s gracious gift. For the sin of this one man, Adam, brought death to many. But even greater is God’s wonderful grace and his gift of forgiveness to many through this other man, Jesus Christ. And the result of God’s gracious gift is very different from the result of that*

*one man's sin. For Adam's sin led to condemnation, but God's free gift leads to our being made right with God, even though we are guilty of many sins. For the sin of this one man, Adam, caused death to rule over many. But even greater is God's wonderful grace and his gift of righteousness, for all who receive it will live in triumph over sin and death through this one man, Jesus Christ. –*

*Rom. 5:15-17, NLT*

In addition to having sin and its penalty removed and being given right standing with God, we are given new life and are literally born of God the moment we confess Jesus as our Lord and Savior (1 John 5:1). We become alive in our spirits, in that deepest part of ourselves where we commune with God. Spiritual rebirth is not a religious event but rather a real experience of being made new within our core. We become like our heavenly Father, who is a Spirit (John 4:24). Jesus said we cannot enter God's kingdom unless we are born of the water—our natural birth—and the Spirit (John 3:5). The Bible says Adam became a living being when he was created, but Christ became a Spirit Who restores life to spiritually dead people (1 Cor. 15:45 AMP).

We may not always feel spiritual, but our emotions are not our gauge. In addition to having spirits and physical bodies, people have a soul that includes our minds that think, emotions that feel, and free wills by which we make choices. In 1 Thessalonians 5:23 (NLT), the Apostle Paul points out the distinct aspects of us when he prayed “may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ comes again.” Altogether, this is how we are made. When we choose Christ as Lord and Savior, our spirits come alive by an act of the Holy Spirit and we are literally born again of God with new spiritual life.

*Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. – 2 Cor. 5:17, NASB*

New things have come, not will come, or might come. If you have confessed Christ, they have come. Period. We are new. We have been reborn as God’s literal, spiritual children. That’s our new identity. It’s our right (John 1:12). The Bible says God chose us—before the world was formed—to be holy and blameless before Him, and because He loved us so, He determined in advance that we would be adopted as His children through Jesus (Eph. 1:4-5).

Again, during His conversation with Nicodemus, Jesus spoke of a distinction between physical and spiritual birth when He told the Jewish teacher, “that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit” (John 3:6, NKJV). When you hear the gospel and receive Christ, your spirit, the center of yourself, is made alive:

*for you have been born again [that is, reborn from above —spiritually transformed, renewed, and set apart for His purpose] not of seed which is perishable but [from that which is] imperishable and immortal, that is, through the living and everlasting word of God. – 1 Pet. 1:23, AMP*

In Adam, everyone experiences spiritual death—and ultimately physical death—but those who receive Christ experience life and a reconnection to God now, and eventually life in His presence forever. The Bible says, “In Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive” (1 Cor. 15:22, NKJV). We didn’t earn our way into this new life by being religious, highly educated, athletic, attractive, or by any human effort to be good enough. It’s

impossible to work our way into Heaven, much less into being forgiven and having our spirits brought to life. Forgiveness and new life are free gifts of God for those who ask Jesus to be their Lord and Savior:

*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—  
and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not  
by works, so that no one can boast. – Eph. 2:8-9, NIV*

Jesus said He is the only way to God (John 14:6). We can't get to God with our best efforts, social connections, or goofy attempts to be pious or self-sacrificial for the sake of trying to earn salvation. Our spirits are made alive, but our minds—including our intellects, emotions and free wills—are not dramatically altered when we receive Christ. Changing how we think, feel, and act involves a lifelong process of ridding ourselves of habits, emotional scars, and ways of thinking and speaking that are contrary to God. For believers, our spiritual food is the word of God (1 Pet. 2:2). We cooperate with God to allow the truths of the word to be built into our minds to change how we think, feel, and act. Our walk becomes increasingly spiritual if we focus our thoughts and study on God and His word and do what it tells us.

First, if you choose Christ you are forgiven, made alive, and made a literal child of the living God. That's what Jesus did for us on the cross. The Romans Road is a concise explanation of the gospel used often in presentations that helped so many of us understand how to invite Christ into our lives, become righteous before God, and be reborn in our spirits. Here's how:

1. We realized we had sinned and fallen short of God's glorious perfection (Rom. 3:23).



2. We learned that the payment of sin is death (separation from God), but the gift of God is unending spiritual life in Jesus (Rom. 6:23).
3. God showed His love for us when He sent Christ to die for us, pay the penalty for sin, and open the door to new spiritual life when He rose from the dead (Rom. 5:8).
4. We declared aloud that Jesus is our Lord and believed in our hearts that God raised Him from the dead (Rom. 10:9-10).
5. We experienced forgiveness and new spiritual life instantly when we called on Jesus to be our Lord and Savior (Rom. 10:13).

# 3

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## Who We Really Are Now

*“Don’t cling to me,” Jesus said, “for I haven’t yet ascended to the Father. But go find my brothers and tell them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” – John 20:17, NLT*

On that first Easter morning outside the tomb, the risen Christ specifically told Mary Magdalene that He wasn’t just ascending to His Father, but to her Father and the Father of His other followers as well. Their faith in Christ not only saved them from sin, isolation, shame, and wrath, it made God their Father. This applies to every person who hears the gospel, confesses Christ as Lord, and experiences new spiritual life. God is our Father because we are born spiritually of Him. There are numerous scriptures in the New Testament that state who believers in Christ really are:

*But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name. –John 1:12, NKJV*

*For you are all children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. – Gal. 3:26, NLT*

*I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the LORD Almighty. – 2 Cor. 6:18, NKJV*

*For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. – Rom. 8:14, NIV*

*And because we are his children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, prompting us to call out, “Abba, Father.” Now you are no longer a slave but God’s own child. And since you are his child, God has made you his heir. –Gal. 4:6-7, NLT*

*God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure. – Eph. 1:5, NLT*

*Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. – 1 John 3:1-2, NKJV*

*Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. – 1 John 5:1, NIV*

We are children of God. We are born of Him. He is our Father. His life is in us. We are one with Him, united in a way that only children can be with a parent but deeper because we have His spiritual life in us. It's not religious thinking. It's truth! It's not magic or some goofy cinematic fantasy that we can ponder. We don't have to pretend we are superheroes. We don't fly or leap tall buildings in a single bound. Our status is real, not religious emotionalism or pretentiousness. We live our lives in Him as we go about seeking Him, obeying Him, working, playing, and living life on Earth in Christ. Let your Father define what being His child is like. He has birthed you and has big plans for you. The Bible states plainly that there are benefits to being God's children. Those include living in the security of knowing He can do more than we can imagine and that He will always be with us, provide for us, listen to us, understand us, heal us, and give us purpose:

*Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. – Eph. 3:20, NLT*

*Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." – Heb. 13:5, NKJV*

*And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. – Phil. 4:19, NKJV*

*For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the*

*throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. – Heb. 4:15-16, NKJV*

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. –Luke 4:18-19, NKJV*

*Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen. – Matt. 28:19-20, NKJV*

God loves us infinitely and the promises in the Bible are ours as His children. Indeed, there's more available to us than we can imagine, and the scripture says He will freely give us all things we need from Him (Rom. 8:32). We have been made complete in Christ (Col. 2:10). Everything we need to be whole spiritually, have a relationship with God, and be considered worthy is ours in Christ. We don't need anything else to be accepted and enjoy God's person and provision. The New Testament includes numerous other verses that point out our worth in Christ and God's willingness to provide for us and make us more like Christ as we pursue Him throughout life.

In short, who you are in Christ is established. It's ultimate reality. If you don't believe what the Bible says about who you are because of Christ, it's still the truth. You can't achieve it or work yourself into an emotional frenzy to make it real to God. If Jesus is

your Lord, it's a done deal that you are a child of God. In his book, *Victory Over the Darkness: Realize the Power of Your Identity in Christ*, Neil T. Anderson writes:

*“Because you are alive in Christ, every one of those characteristics is completely true of you, and you can do nothing to make them more true. You can, however, make these traits more meaningful and productive in your life by simply choosing to believe what God has said about you. You will not be prideful if you do, but you may be defeated if you don't. One of the greatest ways to help yourself grow into maturity in Christ is to continually remind yourself who you are in Him.”*<sup>2</sup>

## **A New Collective Identity**

Who we are now because of Christ applies to all believers. We are brothers and sisters regardless of race, ethnicity, or any other category humans use to classify people and separate them.

*There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus. – Gal. 3:28,  
NLT*

We are connected spiritually and functionally in the body of Christ. The scripture says we are all a part of Christ's body and the effective inner workings of the parts of the body are essential for the success of God's kingdom. We have different callings and gifts from God to contribute to His work, but we all have the same mission: to win the world to Jesus Christ.

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<sup>2</sup> Neil T. Anderson, *Victory Over the Darkness: Realize the Power of Your Identity in Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2013), 53, Kindle edition.

*For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. For in fact the body is not one member but many. – 1 Cor. 12:12-14, NKJV*

The passage goes on to describe how essential each member's mission is, just as each part of our physical body has an important role that contributes to the whole body's ability to fully function. We love God and serve Him, and we love others, especially those in the body of Christ. Our love for other Christians is proof that we are followers of Christ (John 13:35).

## **Growing in Who You Are**

Since your status as a child of God is established by Him, why don't you join Him in deepening your understanding of who you are as His beloved child? It's a process of changing your mind and thought patterns so your life reflects how God thinks and acts (Rom. 12:2). We grow spiritually by feeding on the truths of God's word. Hebrews 4:12 says that the word of God is alive and actively changes us as we expose ourselves to its life-transforming power. We also are obligated to obey its directives, and we demonstrate our love for Christ when we do so (John 14:23). Indeed, we are commanded to renew our minds instead of pondering whether we should or not. Focus on who Jesus has made you to be.

Jesus Christ established who we are as believers. We are new, spiritually clean, blameless, and loved unconditionally as children of God. We simply need to believe what Jesus has accomplished for us. His love for us is secure and never ends:

*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 Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who 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 created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. – Rom. 8:35-39, NKJV*

Nothing separates us from the love of our Father in Heaven. Nothing. If our love for our children means we would give our very lives for them, then how much more is God attached to us? He gave Jesus, and as Jesus taught, if we humans being evil compared to God can give good gifts to our children, then how much more will God give great things to His children (Matt. 7:11). Our Father has never been calloused spiritually by sin or wounded irreparably by heartache or rejection, nor is He hindered by the natural inability of fallen humans to comprehend the true reality of the spirit world. He never changes (Heb. 13:8). Among those great things, our Father wants to provide a deeper understanding of Himself to us and who we are to Him.

God's unconditional love is more intense and purer than any love we possess in our humanness. He loves us with a love that is unwavering and deeper than anything our natural minds can comprehend. We are made new as children of God, regardless of past failures or poor choices. Oftentimes, our negative experiences stem from the lies we believe about ourselves. For example, we may think we are weak losers who are of little use to God, but as



we just read, the Bible says we are more than conquerors through Christ (Rom. 8:37). A conqueror is a vanquisher or subjugator of others, a victor, winner, hero, master, and champion. We vanquish and subjugate sin and the enemy because of what Jesus did for us and who He has made us to be. If we aren't conquering, it's because we fail to believe He delivered us from the power of sin and declared us blameless (Col. 1:22). Believe and experience blessing beyond what your mind alone can imagine!

We should be honest about our hurts and struggles and not try to bury our imperfections under a phony religious face. I've done this and it accomplished nothing. Knowing who Jesus has made us to be helps pave the way for our emergence from the sins, personal defeats, addictions, feelings of inadequacy or rejection, and countless other challenges that distort our view of God and how we perceive our relationship with Him. We win and have power over sin and evil forces because of God's love for us expressed through Jesus. Because of Jesus and His shed blood, we are clean, justified, loved, and truly special. Knowing the reality of who we are will propel us to greater faith and confidence in a Father who loves us. We will be able to truly think of God the Father as Abba, or Dad. We will seek Him more often and understand Him more clearly.

Shortly, we will explore some impediments to a clear understanding of the reality of God, but be encouraged, it is God's will for you to experience life as His child and to know this reality in the deepest part of yourself. Let's get started building these new identity truths in us. Let's get that vision of who God says we are. Let's discard the false image based on an old way of life that the Bible says is gone. In addition to blessing us with Himself, God uses these truths and strategies to equip us to tell others about His glorious provision for them through Jesus Christ.

## **Preparing Ourselves**

Every Christian has a testimony about how Jesus made them new. Sharing your status as God's child and pointing out who the Bible says you are because of Christ can be enhanced by disclosing your personal experiences with God. But if your explanation of the gospel focuses exclusively on who the Bible says you are because of Jesus, your testimony is just as valid. It is your real experience with God as well. All you have to do is share, but you have to understand first your place in Christ.

Once we are established more fully in the understanding of our true status in Christ, the Holy Spirit can use us more effectively, not only in personal evangelism but in any endeavor the Lord commands us to undertake for His kingdom. Rely on the Holy Spirit daily to help build your perception of your relationship with God.

Start building your understanding of who you are to God by asking the Father in Jesus' name to give you wisdom and understanding that leads to right thinking and living. Sincere, honest, strongly-felt prayers to know God's will and understand the depth of our identity as His children are powerful prayers that make tremendous power available to us (James 5:16, AMP). The Bible says God answers prayers made in keeping with his will:

*This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him. – 1 John 5:14-15,  
NIV*

It's our Father's will to reveal the depths of truth and understanding to us, not for the sake of knowing something in our minds and being smart, but to understand its reality in our core,

and therefore have truth be the guiding force in our faith, thoughts, attitudes, speech, and actions. If we pray the word, which is God's will, He will grant our requests. A good place to start is praying according to Paul's Spirit-inspired petition in Ephesians:

*I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. – Eph. 1:16-21, NIV*

Our glorious inheritance in this life and the next is Christ. In Christ, we are accepted, loved, and live with purpose. Therefore, we pray continually for God to show us who we already are in Christ and to give us an awareness so real and deep that it draws us to Him and causes us to walk as Christ walked—ministering to others in power and authority. When we pray, we can praise God, and thank Him continually by faith, believing that He is granting us the answer because it is His will for us to know who we really are. The Bible explains the will of God for believers. As we have seen, there are numerous scriptures about who we are to God if we have been born again. Don't waver in believing and pursuing this crucial path to peace and purpose, but remember, it is God's power

working in us, not us doing the work in our ability, willpower, or emotional fervor. Keep pressing in. God is renewing our minds to His truth as we do.

A crop starts out with just a few seeds. If we sow time into dwelling on who we are in Christ and who He is in us, we will reap a rich and lasting return of understanding and spiritual empowerment. The reality of our relationship with God will grow. As we grow in grace and the knowledge of the real transformation that Christ has brought about, it will replace a defeatist mindset. The amount of study, time, and attention we give to these truths will make a huge difference.

*Then He said to them, “Pay attention to what you hear. By your own standard of measurement [that is, to the extent that you study spiritual truth and apply godly wisdom] it will be measured to you [and you will be given even greater ability to respond]—and more will be given to you besides. For whoever has [a teachable heart], to him more [understanding] will be given; and whoever does not have [a yearning for truth], even what he has will be taken away from him.” – Mark 4:24-25, AMP*

## **Implanting Truth**

Here we build a foundation in our minds about who we really are because of Christ by memorizing, thinking about, and confessing these truths. Personalize the scripture. For example, memorize John 1:12 (NIV), and make a confession of the scripture:

*Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. –  
John 1:12, NIV*

**Confession:** I am a child of God because I have received Jesus into my heart and believe in Him.

In addition to memorizing the scripture and personalizing it with a confession, record yourself reading the scripture and confession. Listen to the recording during your quiet time in the morning or at bedtime, or throughout the day if you are able. It will help establish the reality of the truths in your mind.

When recording scriptures, use a version of the Bible you prefer. Supplementing your scripture reading with the Amplified Bible will enrich the experience because the Amplified Bible elaborates on the meaning of key words in the original languages. Let's look at 1 John 1:12 again in the classic edition of the Amplified Bible:

*But to as many as did receive and welcome Him, He gave the authority (power, privilege, right) to become the children of God, that is, to those who believe in (adhere to, trust in, and rely on) His name. – John 1:12, AMPC*

A personalized version of the scripture could read: “When I received Jesus, He gave me the authority, power, privilege, and right to be a child of God, simply because I believe in Him. I cling to Him, trust in Him, and rely on His name and everything He is.”

An appendix at the end of this book includes a suggested list of scriptures and confessions for you to memorize, vocalize, record, and playback. You can use the scriptures as prayers to your heavenly Father as you worship and thank Him for adopting you as His child. If a word in the scriptures impresses upon you, perhaps the Holy Spirit wants you to look up the meaning of it and dwell on it as you review the passage.

You can record one scripture at a time and its corresponding confession, or a group of related scriptures with one confession. In each segment of confession/scripture, record it over and over. When you record a segment of confession/scripture, stop speaking while you record for a moment so when you listen to it later, there is a natural pause that allows you to contemplate the confession and scriptures before listening to each segment again. You can vary the length of the pauses as you go. Listen to the segments repeatedly during your day or enjoy them in your quiet time. You can record a scripture from several versions of the Bible in a grouping and conclude it with a confession. Again, John 1:12 is an example:

*But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave  
the right to become children of God. – NLT*

*But to as many as did receive and welcome Him, He gave  
the right [the authority, the privilege] to become children  
of God, that is, to those who believe in (adhere to, trust  
in, and rely on) His name. – AMP*

**Confession:** I am a child of God. My Father God gave me the right and privilege to be His child when I received Jesus as my Lord and Savior.

Be aware that opposing thoughts will come during this exercise because you have spiritual enemies. Demonic forces will try to influence you to give up your pursuit of a deeper awareness of God and your true self by feeding you negative or sinful thoughts that produce negative emotions. You may think these thoughts are coming from your mind, but the enemy feeds us thoughts in first person voices so we think it's us when we are beset by temptation, old offenses, past failures, feelings of worthlessness, fear of rejection, and the like. These thoughts can stimulate corresponding imaginations in which failures and conflicts—real or imagined—play over and over on the big screen in our minds to influence us to give up. Don't stop. Instead, combat demonic forces by standing on the truth of Scripture and proclaiming the verses aloud. Stand up to the enemy with the name of Jesus. You have authority over evil spirits (Mark 16:17). We will cover more on our authority in Christ later. Remember, we are children of God because of what Jesus did for us, not because we earned it, and we have His authority over the enemy because of Jesus, not because we have to muster up any power of our own. The power and authority are His.

Essentially, we choose what we mediate on—truth or lies. What we think on will influence how we think, talk, and live. Does the reality of your life resemble Christ, or do you show the world a troubled, confused person with little self-worth? Stand on the truths of who you are in Christ and who He is in you, confess the word about the new you often because it's true. Overcoming challenges and temptations is made easier by a massive dose of

truth on a consistent basis. You will win the battle because the word of God is mightier than the enemy's lies. Your place as God's child is as real as it ever will be to your heavenly Father, and the discipline of meditating on these truths, confessing them, and praising God for them will make them more real to you.

Talk about these realities with other believers. Start a discussion group in which you all challenge each other to memorize and confess these truths as you move together into the spiritual riches of your new identity. Pray and praise together. Group members can choose a scripture a week to pray on, think about, confess, and discuss.

Building these truths into our lives doesn't make us instantly rich or popular. It doesn't change our personalities overnight, but over time it will transform us. Trust God for the change in your outlook and focus on Him. Being constantly attentive to these truths helps us move into a new, stronger awareness of our security in Christ and the benefits and duties of being God's real children. We don't earn our status as God's children, but being cognizant of who we really are in Him empowers us to walk as Christ walked—committed to a Father Who never left Him and Who worked mightily through Him.

In response to Philip's request for Jesus to show the disciples the Father and Philip's assumption that it would be enough, Christ responded "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father" (John 14:9, NKJV). The scripture says Jesus is the exact representation of God in a human being (Heb. 1:3). You are not Christ, but you reflect Him to a dying world headed for hell. Is the world seeing your Father in you? Paul wrote in Ephesians 5:1 for believers to imitate God. Focus on who you are because of Jesus and the world will see God in you.



We dishonor Christ by failing to take into full account all that His death, burial, and resurrection mean to us. God has established the order of the world and the course of our lives, but knowing who we are in Christ—experiencing the result of why Jesus went to the Cross—will help us hear God and obey Him. That’s what it’s all about, doing His will and following in Jesus’ footsteps. And winning the world to Him.

# 4

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## Removing Impediments

*Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect. – Rom. 12:2, NLT*

Knowing our true identity in Christ is crucial for us to truly understand God's love for us. With that understanding, we possess an abiding, real awareness down in our spiritual bones of who we really are instead of pondering some worldly idea of who we think we ought to be. That way, we can hear God and obey Him as He perfects His work in us and charts a course using our lives to introduce Himself to others who are struggling to figure out who they are.

Lies and misconceptions can prevent us from understanding our Father God and impede our understanding of who we are. To be as effective as we can be and allow the Holy Spirit to move

through us, we need to clear away spiritual and emotional clutter. We clear away the clutter and replace false concepts with the ultimate truth that God loves us so much He sent Jesus so He can have a relationship with us as His children.

Struggles can include:

- outright sin
- failing to grasp faith with our hearts instead of only knowing about God with our minds
- uncertainty about our salvation
- ignorance of spiritual warfare
- bitterness and unforgiveness
- emotional wounds
- personal failures
- shame
- fear of rejection
- religious pretentiousness
- failing to truly understand that our flesh has been crucified
- refusing to fully surrender our will to the Father, and
- failing to rely on the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Pursue God and get free. If needed, avail yourself of counseling opportunities, freedom ministries, and broken heart ministries at your church or in your community. God wants to uproot lies and implant transforming truths, beginning with the truth that He loves you and you are His very own child if you have invited Jesus Christ to be your Lord. If you pursue freedom in Christ, He will make sure you experience it to the fullest.

## **Sin**

Focusing on who we are in Christ and getting these truths down deep will help us live free from habitual sin and failure that distorts our understanding of God and blunts our sensitivity to the Holy Spirit. In the parable of the sower in the fourth chapter of Mark's gospel, Jesus spoke of the sower sowing seed on various types of terrain. Seed that fell among thorns, the Lord said, represented those who "hear the word; but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful" (Mark 4:18-19, NIV). The worries of this life, the lie of wealth, and the desire for things other than God are distractions that choke God's word out of our lives and stunt our sensitivity to the Spirit.

That pretty much sums up the essence of sin: us going our own way and stubbornly attempting to meet our own needs apart from God, essentially committing idolatry by relying on carnal selfishness and following money, illicit sex, immoral thinking, drugs and alcohol, acute self-centeredness, status, fashion, over-attention to education, misplaced dependence on others, or a host of other things.

Sin distracts us by conning us into thinking we don't need God, or we need Him only for a quick spiritual fix and we're off again doing our own thing. In its wake, sin leaves a callousness that hardens us against God and His overtures as we suffer from a self-imposed ignorance of His love and holiness. Sin causes us to avoid God the way Adam and Eve hid from Him in the garden after they sinned (Gen. 3:8). We are distracted when blatant sin keeps us from giving our full attention to God. He wants our full attention and devotion; He gives us His. Evil spirits want to distract us because they hate God and by association us. Jesus Christ wants us to experience the freedom He purchased for us so

we can obey Him, walk with Him, and experience a genuine, deep relationship with our heavenly Father. Don't let sin clog up your relationship with God. Jesus went to the cross to set us free so we can be free indeed (John 8:36).

The first thing we do to be free from sin is confess our sin to our Father. 1 John 1:9 (NKJV) says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Why faithful? Because God keeps His word and abides by His covenant with believers in Christ. Why just? Because Jesus has paid the penalty for sin. As a result, forgiveness is the right thing for God to do, so we need to confess, be forgiven, and learn to walk in obedience.

Secondly, if we have wronged someone in the process of sinning, we need to ask them to forgive us, although it's a good idea to talk this over with a spiritually mature person beforehand in order to do it right. Whether the person you wronged forgives or not is up to them, but you have to do what you can to set things right (Matt. 5:23-24). If restitution needs to be made, make it.

Also, we need to realize that willpower won't defeat sin. I tried relying on willpower to deliver myself from dependency and other impediments, but willpower didn't do it for me. I confessed sin, sinned again, confessed sin, sinned again, etc. As we have seen, the sin of Adam made all humanity—except for Jesus—sinners (Rom. 5:18). After Adam's decision to sin, God eventually gave the law through Moses to show us what sin is, but the law, although righteous, actually caused people to sin more. As a result, it brought about spiritual death (Rom. 7:9-10). In Romans, the Apostle Paul goes on to explain the dilemma that we face when trying to live up to the law when humanity's nature is against God and all that He is:

*And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can't. I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway. But if I do what I don't want to do, I am not really the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it. I have discovered this principle of life—that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. I love God's law with all my heart. But there is another power within me that is at war with my mind. This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me. Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death?*

*Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord. So you see how it is: In my mind I really want to obey God's law, but because of my sinful nature I am a slave to sin. —*

*Rom. 7:18-25, NLT*

The answer for sin is Jesus and what He did for us on the cross. He removed sin's power. Through Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, we have access to the Holy Spirit's presence and power. As we submit to the Spirit, we live in freedom:

*So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death. The law of Moses was unable to save us because of the weakness of our sinful nature. So God did what the law could not do. He sent his own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have. And in that body God declared an end to sin's control over us by giving his Son as a sacrifice for our sins. He did this so that the just requirement of the law would be fully*

*satisfied for us, who no longer follow our sinful nature  
but instead follow the Spirit. – Rom. 8:1-4 NLT*

We have access to the Spirit through Christ because just as Jesus was crucified, we were crucified with Him and are given new life and power that comes from God alone. As a result of what Christ did for us, we are to walk in the Spirit all the time.

*This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill  
the lust of the flesh. – Gal 5:16, KJV*

Walking in the Spirit is a way of life, not just an infusion of power to escape a momentary temptation. It may not make sense in our heads, but the old sinful life's power over us is broken, and if we walk in the Spirit all the time, we will experience this incredible freedom, perhaps suddenly, perhaps subtly over time, but the freedom is real. It is God's power in us, not our willpower, that gives us freedom and victory. Remember to preemptively submit to God. Walk in the Spirit as a way of life and sin's appeal will diminish. Consider these truths from the word of God on how He has set us free from being slaves to sin:

*Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him,  
that the body of sin might be done away with, that we  
should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died  
has been freed from sin. – Rom. 6: 6-7, NKJV*

*For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus:  
that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all,  
that those who live should live no longer for themselves,  
but for Him who died for them and rose again. – 2 Cor.  
5:14-15, NKJV*

*My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. – Gal. 2:20, NLT*

Jesus set us free from the power of sin, although at times we may not feel free from sin. Sin is certainly appealing and we're subject to temptations, but through the power of God, we can be free if we want to be as we walk in the Spirit each day. James 4:7 says to submit to God. Move toward Him when you are tempted and when you're not. Tell Him the truth about any struggle. Seek Him and focus on His word when you don't want to. God gives us a way out if we are willing to follow Him and not the allure of sin.

*No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it. – 1 Cor. 10:13, NKJV*

When we are faced with temptation, the anointing of the Spirit can remove sin's appeal and deliver us from sinful desires. When tempted, we have a choice to make: Do we trust Him and press in through prayer and focus on truth or do we transgress? At first, it seems laborious to pray when we don't feel like it and place our attention on the scriptures when temptation seems to be screaming in our inner ear, but the feeling of labor diminishes as we go to God. His anointing breaks the yoke of sin (Isa. 10:27). He is faithful and will do His part. It is our responsibility to draw near to Him. Also, sin starts with a thought. Decide beforehand to obey God instead of dwelling on a temptation.



After we submit, James 4:7 says we resist the devil. We resist by quoting the word of God like Jesus did when He was tempted (Matt. 4:1-11). What does the word say about your situation or the stronghold of sin that holds you back? For starters, as we have considered above, we are dead to whatever it is. Our old selves were crucified with Christ, although it may seem that our old selves are alive and well and have all power. The truth is, we hung on the cross with Christ and are dead to sin. Declare it.

In addition to thinking on and confessing what the word says about victory over sin, mediate consistently over what it says about who you are—God’s child. You are one with Him, He will never leave you or forsake you, you are more than a conqueror in Christ. This is truth that will set you free, and the appeal of sin will diminish. Focus on all this more than the sin.

A practical way of escape may also be to get away—and stay away—from certain people, places, or things that draw you into sin. For example, 1 Corinthians 6:18 tells us to flee fornication. We flee by getting away from anything that influences us to think or act immorally. As we draw close to God, He will draw close to us (James 4:8). Another key to overcoming sin is to develop a relationship with someone you trust and talk to them about your struggles.

*Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results. –James 5:16, NLT*

When you are tempted, call a friend, pastor, or counselor. Get together with them periodically. Pray together. Sharing struggles is one of the reasons that so many people have found relief from addictions through the 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous®. The

12 steps themselves were inspired by the teachings of the Oxford Group, a Christian ministry that emphasized dependence on God, the need to take a moral inventory, confess shortcomings, make restitution and reach out to help others. Churches conduct a Christ-centered 12-step program called Celebrate Recovery® that includes scriptures showing the Biblical truths behind the steps.

Remember, if you know Jesus, you are God’s child. He wants you to be free. Again, being free isn’t about focusing on sin from now on; it’s about clearing away impediments and distractions so you can develop a deeper relationship with your Father, who empowers you with His Spirit through Christ. He cares more about you and your well-being than anybody else is capable of caring. He has provided the way of escape—pursue Him.

## **Ignorance of Spiritual Warfare**

Continuing in sin opens the door for demonic influence in our lives. We must close the door to sin and know that as a child of God, we partake of His nature, position, and power. It’s God’s will for us to walk in the victory that is rightfully ours over dark forces bent on preventing us from having an intimate relationship with our Father and accomplishing His will for our lives. The key to successful spiritual warfare is knowing that, because of Jesus, we have already won. Some Christians either don’t believe in the reality of spiritual warfare or fail to understand how they can wage it successfully. The Bible is clear about the reality of spiritual warfare and about the truth that victory is ours in Christ.

Through His death, burial, and resurrection, Jesus defeated Satan and his cohorts and took the keys of death and hell (Rev. 1:18). Remember, we were crucified with Christ and raised to new life with Him. We are God’s children seated with Christ right now

in heavenly realms, far above any other authority and power (Eph. 2:6).

In his book, *Shadow Boxing: The Dynamic 2-5-14 Strategy to Defeat the Darkness Within*, Dr. Henry Malone points out that because of who we are in Christ, the victory Jesus won is as much ours as His:

*“In Him, when He subjugated the troops of darkness and left them unarmed and disabled, we who believe were participants in that triumph. When He seized the keys of death and hell from Satan and burst forth from that dark prison, we shared that victory. When He ascended on high and took His seat in the heavenlies, we were exalted with Him. Even now we are so much a part of Him that we are called the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:27).”*<sup>3</sup>

Evil spirits lie, and we give them power in our lives when we embrace their untruths. The first lie is to sow doubt about God, the way the serpent influenced Adam and Eve to doubt in the Garden of Eden.

*The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the LORD God had made. One day he asked the woman, “Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?” – Gen. 3:1, NLT*

After that seed of doubt came an accusation—a lie—designed to assassinate God’s good character by declaring that He was keeping something good from them.

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<sup>3</sup> Henry Malone, *Shadow Boxing: The Dynamic 2-5-14 Strategy to Defeat the Darkness Within* (Lewisville, TX: Life Publications, 2008), chapter 3, Kindle edition.

*“God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil.” – Gen. 3:5, NLT*

They ate, died spiritually, and came under the control of Satan. They didn’t become like God. They became slaves of sin and the devil. Jesus changed all that. The scripture says, “Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it” (Col. 2:15, NKJV). The devil and his cohorts lost. Jesus’ victory resulted in Him having all power. He in turn gives us His authority to use against the hosts of hell and supplies the spiritual armor we need to secure the victory for ourselves.

*And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen. – Matt. 28:18-19, NKJV*

*Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. – Luke 10:19, NKJV*

*Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons – Mark 3:14-15, NKJV*

*For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not*

*carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled. – 2 Cor. 10:3-6, NKJV*

We have authority to cast down the lies of hell in our lives. We are commanded to use this authority. Our spiritual armor protects us in a fight that is not against members of one political party or another, against obnoxious people, or against some supposed intellectual elite out to undermine us. Our battle is with hell itself (Eph. 6:12). And our armor is God's armor:

*Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. – Eph. 6:13-18, NIV*

Our weapons are: the truth found in God's word, righteousness that comes from God and not ourselves no matter how good we try to be in our strength, the gospel we take to others,

faith to believe God regardless of the challenges or circumstances we face, salvation that puts us in union with the risen Christ both now and forever, and the word of God as a weapon we wield by declaring the truth in the face of the enemy's lies.

What are some of hell's lies? Unholy thoughts of temptation, judgment of others as hell accuses them in our thoughts—chiefly that people are out to undermine or reject us—lies that God is shortchanging us, emotional condemnation and the accompanying lie that we are estranged from God when we're not, emotional heaviness, a thought that God isn't real or that He keeps His distance at best, and the lie that God is holding us back. There are many others, all lies.

Hell lies to us, but we need not major on lies but on the truth. We major on the truth by focusing on the fact that we are God's children because of Christ, not hell's slaves. Authorities are trained to detect counterfeit money by thoroughly studying what legitimate money looks like so they can readily spot what is fake. Know the truth and, thus, equip yourself to detect the lie. If hell entices us through the obnoxious, disrespectful person, we need to focus on God's love and the knowledge that hurting people hurt other people. The scripture says Jesus didn't retaliate when He was threatened but He "left his case in the hands of God, who always judges fairly" (1 Pet. 2:23, NLT). We should constantly go to God and be honest about what is bothering us, and we remind Him that we are relying on Him to empower us to live as He commands, not relying on our religious efforts or willpower. If God is for us, who can be against us successfully? (Rom. 8:31). Again, know the truth and put it into action by obeying it. The lie will be apparent if you do. We submit to God first and foremost and the devil flees from us (James. 4:7).

The passage 2 Corinthians 10:3-6 mentions strongholds, which are thought patterns and corresponding actions from lies we have embraced and followed over time. Strongholds can be overcome by truth ignited by God's power and put into action when we obey the truth consistently. Replacing lies with truth is a process. Get direction from God, ministers, and others and work through it. There are a number of good, Bible-based books and studies on spiritual warfare and eliminating strongholds. Despite the devil's lies, God is good and wants better things for us than we want for ourselves (Matt. 7:11).

Learn about spiritual warfare and the freedom and victory that are yours; the Lord wants you to know what is yours in Him. Do so by believing what the scriptures say about you if Jesus is your Lord and Savior: You are God's literal child who is cherished, loved, and forever His. 1 John 3:8 says that Jesus came to destroy the devil's works. Believe the victory that Christ gained is yours as well. Know what He accomplished for you. Believe it and live it. It's your Father's will for you.

## **Uncertainty About Salvation**

Learning about who we are in Christ is crucial for new believers who battle doubts about their salvation. Doubt, as we've seen, is a major weapon used by hell to get us to question God's character and motives and can hinder us from gaining a fuller understanding of who we are in Jesus. New believers should be encouraged to study God's word and understand that we walk by faith, by believing, and not by sight (2 Cor. 5:7). Or our feelings. We gain faith for salvation—and everything else that is available from our heavenly Father—from the word of God, not from ourselves (Rom. 10:17). Embrace the word, read it, study it, think about it. The power in the word of God is His, not ours. Pursue the

word, expose yourself to it consistently, and let it change and empower you (Isa. 55:11, 1 Thess. 2:13, 2 Tim. 3:16-17, Heb. 4:12, 1 Pet. 1:23). Pray for wisdom from God and He'll give it (James 1:5). Ask your Father in Jesus' name for divine insight (Eph. 1:17-20). We belong to Jesus, Who gives us eternal life that no one can take from us.

*I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one can snatch them away from me, for my Father has given them to me, and he is more powerful than anyone else. No one can snatch them from the Father's hand. The Father and I are one. – John 10:28-30, NLT*

If you have recently received Christ as your Lord and Savior, remember that God loves you more than your natural mind can grasp. Look up scriptures on the love of God, personalize them and think about them.

*The LORD has appeared of old to me, saying: "Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you. – Jer. 31:3, NKJV*

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. – John 3:16, NIV*

*This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. – 1 John 4:9-11, NIV*



The enemy wants new and old believers alike to doubt that God keeps his word and is good, but the truth is that our Father has our best interests at heart. The Bible says all things work together for good to those who love God (Rom. 8:28). God is so good (Psalm 27:13, Psalm 145:5-9, Matt. 7:11, Mark 10:18, James 1:17). He has designated wonderful things for those who love Him (Psalm 31:19, 1 Cor. 2:9), with the most important thing being a close, loving relationship with Him.

The enemy loves to heap condemnation on new believers who are just learning about their freedom. Hell will attempt to beat down new believers with emotional heaviness and mental torture over sin and mistakes. However, those who belong to Jesus are free from condemnation (Rom. 8:1). God is not punishing us, neither now nor in eternity. If we have sinned and need to turn from it and ask God to forgive us, that is called conviction. Conviction has a solution. It's turning to God. Demonic condemnation offers no solution. Hell wants to relegate us to utter despair, depression, loneliness, and a host of other negative emotions that reinforce the lie that God doesn't really care after all. However, it's nonsense. Confess sins and turn toward a heavenly Father Who loves you. Depend on the Holy Spirit to comfort you and teach you. Cling to the truth of God's word that if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us (1 John 1:9).

Remember, salvation is free. If you're a new believer, you heard the gospel and believed that God offered Christ to pay for your sins. We are brought into right relationship with God and given real spiritual life by believing in the unconditional love and provision of God (Eph. 2:8-9).

## **Bitterness Toward God and Others**

For years, I heard about who I was in Christ, and who He was in me, but I didn't fully get the reality of it. I heard teaching about believers being in Christ, but my "faith" consisted of a lot of head knowledge about God and a lot of religious thinking. Adding to the confusion was a deep-rooted sense that something in me was amiss. I knew a lot about the Bible, but I still had plenty of emotional hang ups, including fear of rejection and habits and addictions that wouldn't go away.

The glue that held this religious nonsense together was an abiding bitterness toward God. If you had asked me whether I held a grudge against God, I would have said no, and I would have thought that I was telling the truth. I had to face the fact that bitterness about God over how I was made—I was born with a cleft lip—and disappointment about my perceived "place" in life, blocked my view of the reality of God.

Do you struggle with constant negative thoughts about how you look, how overweight or underweight you are, the fact that you have big thighs, small lips, ugly feet, hair on your ears, or you don't speak eloquently? We can be fixed on our perceived inadequacies because our culture feeds us the nonsense that physical beauty is one of the keys to fulfillment. However, constant attention to perceived physical inadequacies could also be a sign that we are bitter against God. The spiritual reality is that God sees your physical appearance and life much differently than you do. For one thing, you are wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14), but perhaps a larger point is that God looks on the heart (1 Sam. 16:7). He doesn't value or devalue us based on our physical features. Ask your Father to show you if you are bitter toward Him. Ask for revelation and healing. Confess your fault in this area to a believer you trust (James 5:16), who is good at listening and

not quick to judge or offer sermonettes. Ask the Father to give you a heart for Him and for deliverance from self-centered thinking that is at the core of our willingness to cling to bitterness.

My heavenly Father, through His grace, ministries, and fellowships did a work in my life, but I had to face and be honest about inadequacies and humbly ask Him to heal me. The healing didn't happen overnight. Indeed, I am very much a work in progress, but I thank God by faith for healing me—and He continues to do so.

Ask God to show you why He doesn't seem real to you and why the truths of who you are in Christ sound great but don't really sink in. Ask Him if you're bitter. Ask Him for forgiveness and let Him take you through the process of healing. Remember, Jesus came to heal the brokenhearted and set the captives free (Luke 4:18). God's desire is for you to experience inner healing and be truly free. If you are bitter toward God or someone else, you are a captive and you need healing from a deep hurt. Asking God for inner healing and freedom is praying according to His will and, remember, if you pray that way He hears you and grants your request (Heb. 4:16).

## **Unforgiveness Against Others**

Unforgiveness is one of the primary ways we open up our lives to demonic assault. Holding a grudge against someone leaves a door open for evil spirits to torment us and keep us captive to bitterness and resentment that skew our view of God, others, and ourselves. The Apostle Paul in the book of 2 Corinthians pointed to the reality of a giving Satan's forces an avenue to defeat us when he addressed the need to forgive.

*When you forgive this man, I forgive him, too. And when I forgive whatever needs to be forgiven, I do so with Christ's authority for your benefit, so that Satan will not outsmart us. For we are familiar with his evil schemes. —2 Cor. 2:10-11, NLT*

Satan schemes against us by influencing us to hold a grudge against someone who has done us wrong. He works to outsmart us. We are foolish to think we can stew in unforgiveness and avoid consequences that include a warped personality and a distorted view of what happened in the first place.

Christ told the parable in which a servant pleads to his master for forgiveness of a huge debt. After the master forgave the debt, the servant refused to forgive a comparatively minor debt someone owed him. After hearing about the servant's refusal to forgive, the master turned the wicked servant over to torturers until his debt to the master was repaid. The Lord concluded: "This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart" (Matt. 18:35, NIV).

Unforgiveness brings torture aided by demonic forces. Our minds play the offense over and over. We become worn down emotionally and are sapped of physical strength. We can experience health problems and exude an attitude of bitterness, self-pity, hostility, and even entitlement. These things block our ability to understand we are God's children, capable of extending forgiveness and love to those who have offended us—just like our Father.

Earlier in my life, I lived several hundred miles from my family and became bitter against my dad for not coming to see me. I saw him in trips back home, but the level of bitterness had grown over the years, exacerbated by alcohol and drug abuse that will

turn any emotionally troubling molehill into Mount Everest. After I got away from the party lifestyle, I still was upset about it, but knew it was wrong. I asked God to forgive me and help me forgive my dad, who, as far as I know, was unaware of the offense, although I suspected he sensed something was wrong.

After I prayed and asked God to forgive me, I forgave my dad. I would periodically battle with the deep bitter feeling, but I continued to ask God to help me. At some point—I don't know exactly when—the bitterness was gone. I realized one day that I no longer felt the way I had. My dad and I grew closer after that. He started coming to visit. We went on vacations together. I thank God for the privilege of being closer to my earthly father in the latter years of his life.

My experience may not be an example of textbook faith, but I know that if you want to forgive others, you can rely on your heavenly Father to help you. He is faithful and His Spirit will come to your aid. God will uproot bitterness and set you free. Be honest with Him about what's going on inside you, even though He knows. Ask Him to forgive you for resentment of Him and the grudges you are holding against others. When you have thoughts of bitterness, thank God for helping you.

Demonic forces may continue to hound you about your failure to forgive, but they are liars. Command them to get away from you in Jesus' name (Mark 16:17). When they stir up bitter emotions, respond by proclaiming your forgiveness and your thankfulness to God. Unwanted feelings will fade and you will experience freedom.

You may need to ask that person to forgive you for holding a grudge and being rude and retaliatory. Clean up your side of the street (Matt. 5:23-24). If you have wronged others, systematically make it right by asking them to forgive you if that's needed. You

will be free of a major hindrance to fellowship with God and a detriment to walking in love and faith. You are a child of God—experience it!

One of the toughest people to forgive is yourself, but setting things right includes forgiving yourself too. If you have set things right with God and other people, set it right with yourself. Specifically list whatever you are holding against yourself, ask God to wash it away in Christ's name, and use the name of Jesus to declare your self-forgiveness to the hosts of hell. After confessing and turning from sin, hell has no right to condemn you. You aren't perfect but you are a work in progress by a God who considers you His masterpiece (Eph. 2:10). You are a work of God. You are His child. Follow Him for life.

*For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him. – Phil. 2:13, NLT*

## **Shame, Rejection & Emotional Wounds**

A common lie that plagues Christians in varying degrees is the untruth that plays over and over in the inner voice: You are defective and worthless. This saturating sense of utter shame originates from our fallen state but is reinforced by our experiences in life.

In his book *Free Yourself, Be Yourself*, Alan D. Wright says shame is the feeling of being inwardly flawed and striving to measure up in order to feel accepted by others only to know that you won't measure up. However, you can be free from the debilitation of shame:

*“I can't promise you that this freedom from shame comes easily or automatically, but I can promise you that real freedom is available. And that it's sweet. Sweeter than*

*anything I've ever tasted. You know how you feel after you've been successful? Everyone smiles and applauds your performance. No one berates you, no one shames or pressures you. Isn't the bliss of pure acceptance sweet? Can you imagine feeling like that all the time? Would you be shocked if I told you that's what life is supposed to feel like?"<sup>4</sup>*

For starters, we are made worthy by Christ, not by what we achieve or fail to accomplish in this life. In Him, the Bible says there is no condition or required performance necessary to attain what God has freely bestowed on us—incalculable value as His sons and daughters.

*And in Him you have been made complete [achieving spiritual stature through Christ], and He is the head over all rule and authority [of every angelic and earthly power]. – Col. 2:10, AMP*

*God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure. So we praise God for the glorious grace he has poured out on us who belong to his dear Son. He is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins. – Eph. 1:5-7, NLT*

We have arrived. Period. We need not labor to become someone special or reach some self-achieved pinnacle to free ourselves from the weight of having to prove our worth. We don't

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<sup>4</sup> Alan D. Wright, *Free Yourself, Be Yourself* (Colorado Springs, CO: Multnomah, 2010), chapters 1, 19, Kindle edition.

have to wallow in the falsehood that we are what we achieve, how we appear, how socially established we are, etc. Being special comes through the Person who truly makes us special.

The goal of our enemy is to distract us with nonsense. He tells us we are lacking and that we need to pursue certain things or statuses to overcome this lingering sense of being flawed. When we fail to achieve what we need—and we will fail—we will be bitter toward God, who already has provided status and value that makes the striving cease. The enemy continually whispers ever so subtly—as our own thoughts—that we need to be our own god because the One we’ve picked isn’t getting the job done. God has shortchanged us. He isn’t enough.

Feelings of worthlessness also can be attributed to a spirit of rejection which makes us feel as if we can never be accepted, so we shrink away from people and close relationships. Suffering rejection from divorce, a breakup, physical or emotional abandonment or abuse, and any number of experiences can be compounded by lies of the enemy designed to beat us down. If we believe those lies, we doubt that we are valuable enough to be loved. We can become unable to take constructive criticism and suffer from chronic discouragement, anxiety, and even anger. Consequently, we battle lusts and addictions that we use as salve over our wounds and attempt other forms of emotional gymnastics to avoid suffering more rejection. Fear of rejection makes us people pleasers who engage in various forms of subtle dishonesty to gain approval.

Regardless of how we have suffered debilitating rejection, God’s will is for us to know His love and be whole emotionally and relationally. Jimmy Evans writes in his book *The Overcoming Life* that the first way for us to overcome rejection is to focus on God’s perfect love for us:



*“God promises that He will never leave you and never forsake you. Physically, He will never leave. Emotionally, He will never turn His heart away from you. There will never be a moment for the rest of your life that God is not emotionally connected to you and thinking about you. There will never be a moment in eternity that God leaves you physically.”<sup>5</sup>*

Emotional wounds become avenues for demonic forces to build strongholds of wrong thinking and reacting, but God wants us to know His love and be healed. And we have a healer: Jesus.

*He heals the brokenhearted and bandages their wounds.  
– Psalm 147:3, NLT*

*The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” – Luke 4:18-19, NIV*

The Holy Spirit – the Spirit of Jesus – can heal us, deliver us, and set us on a right spiritual path to growth in God. God’s Spirit can free us from impediments and wounds the enemy uses to lie about our heavenly Father, what He’s like, and who He has made us to be. Again, identify your hurts and be honest about them, and pursue ministries that can guide you through the process of allowing the Spirit to heal you deeply and set you free. Start by allowing God to reveal His love for you and focus on who you are as a believer in Christ: a real child of the real, living God. Jesus

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<sup>5</sup> Jimmy Evans, *The Overcoming Life* (Southlake, TX: Gateway Press, 2018), chapters 1, 17, Kindle edition.

gave Himself to secure spiritual and emotional freedom. It's our Father's will to give us good things (Matt. 7:11).

Giving attention to emotional issues and traumas is a part of our quest to renew our minds and walk in the freedom Christ purchased for us. The cohorts of hell use emotional traumas to defeat us and block the reality of God's love for us. We must eliminate inner conflicts that contribute to false perceptions of our heavenly Father and influence us to keep our distance from Him, even though we may not think we're actually doing that.

Again, I have faced issues and learned – and in some cases relearned – to be honest with myself, God and others. Healing usually didn't happen overnight, but with the help of the Holy Spirit and others, I continue to work out my salvation. I encourage you to do the same.

## **Religious Pretentiousness**

Sometimes, believers quote scripture to effectively cover up sin and weaknesses they have not acknowledged, trying to whitewash shortcomings with a version of religious pride. We are to think on scripture, personalize it, and speak it, but if we use confession of scripture to divert our attention from a weakness or unconfessed sin, we misuse the word. The Bible is full of warnings about using scripture for deceptive ends (Rom. 16:17-20, 2 Tim. 4:3-4, 2 Pet. 3:16).

Confessing the word is very important and powerful. Romans 10:10 says our confession of Christ saves us. When we confess the truths of God's word, we not only agree with God on what is true, we also simultaneously build the truth into our understanding. If Jesus is your Lord, you have a right to be called a child of God. So, call yourself that. Say it out loud. It's true. Agree with the Bible.

A bad confession is when a believer says something that is unscriptural. For example, a Christian might say something like “I’m just an old sinner saved by grace,” but the truth is you are in Christ and part of a holy nation and a royal priesthood (1 Pet. 2:9). Christians are saints, or holy people (Rom. 1:7, 1 Cor. 1:2, Col. 1:2, Eph. 1:1, Phil. 1:1, Jude 1:3). Believers can choose to sin but are free to choose not to do so.

Confessing a sin or weakness so we can be healed (James. 5:16, NIV) is not a bad confession. In fact, the scripture in James concludes with the statement that the “prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.” Certainly, that’s a reference to those praying for healing and weaknesses of others, but it also refers to prayers for forgiveness and healing made by righteous people afflicted by the same conditions. If Jesus is our Lord, we have right-standing with God because of what Jesus did for us. We acknowledge shortcomings and sin in order to remove their power to block our relationship with God, and in doing so we liberate ourselves from demonic influence. If we confess our sin, God is faithful to forgive us (1 John 1:9). Confessing sin and weakness is just that, acknowledging a shortcoming or error. It’s not confessing an identity or a statement about our worth—which is established by God and is a gift. If Jesus is your Lord, you are not defined by the sin in your life or your personal failures. You are a child of God. However, expose the dark things in your life to the Light by acknowledging them, then watch the cockroaches of hell scatter.

The Apostle Paul wrote that because of abundant spiritual revelations he had received from God, a demon was sent to torment him (2 Cor. 12:7, NLT). He pleaded for God to remove it, but the Lord answered and said “My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness” (v. 9). Paul then concluded he would readily acknowledge his weakness so that the power of

Christ would remain with him. When we confess weaknesses and sin, we open the door for the power of Christ in our lives. When we try to cover up weaknesses and pretend we don't have any, we engage in religious pretentiousness and open the door to deception.

Admitting a weakness and relying on God's power in our lives is an expression of honesty. Confessing our weaknesses does not demonstrate a lack of faith. Failure to acknowledge them is an expression of relying on ourselves and our ability to know and "get it" instead of relying on God's strength and ability.

### **Failure to Truly Surrender**

We must examine whether we really are open to surrendering our lives to God. Are we motivated by selfish desires—wanting chiefly to be seen and heard—while wanting to possess the rewards that come only from truly walking with God? The real experience of knowing who we are in Christ isn't pie-in-the-sky or the key that unlocks a treasure trove of worldly wealth, phenomenal intelligence, or enviable social standing. So often, we fantasize that in the blink of an eye we will tap into some hidden insight and magically have all our struggles disappear or suddenly experience an avalanche of material or social blessing.

Don't get me wrong, I believe God enjoys blessing His children materially and promoting them in jobs and ministries, but God blesses our lives materially and in other ways as we follow Him. The desire expressed in 3 John 2 is that we may prosper even as our souls prosper. The primary issue is a prospering soul, which comes from sustained commitment—not just a one-time, feel-good experience.

Our Father's greatest blessing is to shape us into the image of our Lord as we walk through this life (Rom. 8:29, Rom. 12:1-2, 1 Cor. 11:1, 2 Cor. 3:18, Gal. 2:20, Eph. 2:10, Phil. 1:6, 1 John 2:6).

As part of this shaping process, God empowers us to do His will. Blessings result from being sold out to Him, although material things aren't necessarily proof that we are clinging to Him as a way of life.

So much of the scrambling for status, intelligence, and spiritual growth in our own effort is simply a reflection of works and self-justification—spirituality on our terms—rather than accepting that Christ already justified us and made us worthy. Salvation is a gift (Eph. 2:8-9), but some, through pride and the accompanying deception, still want to work it out and be who they want to be instead of who God made them to be. I've been guilty of this. There was a time in my life in which I wanted to work to be who I wanted to be and do what I wanted to do while hoping to have God's blessing during the process. As I heard one minister say, we use God as spiritual window dressing to hide a sweatshop of self-indulgence. We want to be spiritual on our terms and indulge our flesh while keeping up an appearance that we are walking with God. We can't use God to do what we want and be who we want—admired, sought after, and even worshiped—as we sit on the throne of our lives.

The fleshly mind thinks of instant success and admiration instead of commitment. It clings to self-righteous thinking that sounds godly but isn't. We need to know our Lord, not just know about Him. If Jesus is your Lord, you are God's child. Pursue Him, let Him show you what He has for you, and follow Him as He opens doors to make His will happen in and through you.

## **Relying on the Holy Spirit**

We need to rely on the Holy Spirit throughout the process of renewing our minds to the truth about who we really are in Christ, replacing error in our thoughts and actions with God's truth, and

being empowered to share the gospel. In the gospel of John, Jesus explained the mission of the Spirit in the lives of believers:

*“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn’t looking for him and doesn’t recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you.” – John 14:16-17, NLT*

*“But I will send you the Advocate—the Spirit of truth. He will come to you from the Father and will testify all about me. And you must also testify about me because you have been with me from the beginning of my ministry. – John 15:26-27, NLT*

*“But now I am going away to the one who sent me, and not one of you is asking where I am going. Instead, you grieve because of what I’ve told you. But in fact, it is best for you that I go away, because if I don’t, the Advocate won’t come. If I do go away, then I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will convict the world of its sin, and of God’s righteousness, and of the coming judgment.*

*The world’s sin is that it refuses to believe in me. Righteousness is available because I go to the Father, and you will see me no more. Judgment will come because the ruler of this world has already been judged. There is so much more I want to tell you, but you can’t bear it now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the*

*future. He will bring me glory by telling you whatever he receives from me. All that belongs to the Father is mine; this is why I said, ‘The Spirit will tell you whatever he receives from me.’” – John 16:5-15, NLT*

First, the Holy Spirit is our Advocate or Supporter. The Greek word in these passages is *paraclete*, which also can be translated as Comforter, Counselor, or Encourager Who is with us to strengthen us. The Spirit is always with believers and will never leave them (John 14:16). He is with us to advise us on what to do and when, in ministry and in our lives, through the word of God and inner direction. He often comforts us through scripture when we face tough times and encourages us to put our faith in God, move forward, obey, and do what He tells us. He breaks the chains of sin and its appeal and power. According to a commonly used illustration, the Spirit guides us through the maze of life.

The Spirit testifies about Christ through us to unbelievers (John 15:26-27). He empowered the disciples to preach the gospel on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) and will empower us to share the gospel today. He will give us boldness to carry out the ministry to which He appoints us (Acts 4:29-31), if we ask.

Through us, the Holy Spirit will convict unbelievers of their need for Christ. He will guide believers—new and old—into righteous living, a leading that comes only from God and not ourselves. He will show us the truth and teach us how to walk in it (John 16:13). If you want to know the truth and implement it, seek and depend upon the Spirit’s direction and power. As mentioned earlier, pray the word and seek insight from God (Eph. 1:15-21). Allow the Holy Spirit to reveal God to you and the richness of who you are in Him.

The Holy Spirit will direct as we seek to share Christ with others. He directed Paul and his ministry team by forbidding them to preach the gospel in Asia Minor and instead leading them to preach in Macedonia (Acts 16:6-10). Jesus said the Spirit will show us the future (John 16:13). He showed Paul the corrupt character of people in the last days (2 Tim. 3:1-5). He will show you what you need to know when you need to know it, for ministry and in your personal life.

We are commanded not to quench or restrict the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives or in ministry (1 Thess. 5:19). We hinder the Spirit's work when we fail to submit to Him and deny Him access to others through our ministry. We are commanded not to grieve the Spirit with our lifestyle.

*And do not bring sorrow to God's Holy Spirit by the way you live. Remember, he has identified you as his own, guaranteeing that you will be saved on the day of redemption. – Eph. 4:30, NLT*

We belong to God. Trust. Seek. Follow. The Holy Spirit is with you always to show you truth and put it to work in your life and ministry.



# 5

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## Tell It to the World

*And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. – Mark 16: 15-16, NKJV*

As you arm yourself with the truths of who you are in Christ, it's time to step out and share your faith. Have you ever noticed that the Lord's statement about going to all the world is actually a command? Sharing our faith should not be considered optional. It should be at the top of the list when it comes to Bible topics that stir the believer to obedience and service.

When the topic of sharing our faith comes up, many people cringe. This fear is partly spiritual in nature. Satan and his minions don't want us to share our faith. Evil spirits use fear to tell us we'll be rejected and shunned by family, friends, and strangers and that sharing our faith is incredibly difficult and only for those who are naturally bold. However, the scripture says God's people are

destroyed by a lack of knowledge (Hosea 4:6). Knowledge is this: We have the mind of Christ and don't have a spirit of fear (1 Cor. 2:16, 2 Tim. 1:7).

In terms of sharing our faith, we are deterred by our failure to realize who we are in Christ. Also, fearing people is a trap (Prov. 29:25), but God gives us power through the Holy Spirit to step out in faith as children of God and share (Acts 1:8, Acts 4:23-31). Pray for the Holy Spirit's boldness often, believe God, step out in faith, and share about the love of Christ to a dying world. God is faithful. He will empower you.

The more we draw near to the Lord and understand the reality of who we are in Christ, we will discover that sharing our faith—telling our story—is easy. All you have to do is be willing to tell someone simply and succinctly what the Bible says about becoming a child of God.

## **Intercede**

Before you share, be praying for the person or people with whom you want to share. Take authority over the works of hell in their lives that keep them from believing the gospel. In addition to asking for courage from the Holy Spirit and believing God gives it to you, pray for your Father to tear down the lies that blind people to the truth. The scripture clearly states that the minds of people without Christ are shrouded in darkness:

*But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. – 2 Cor. 4:3-4, NKJV*

Interceding for the lost may sound elementary, but it is profound. Recall that God is moved by the prayers of the saints (1 Pet. 3:12, Jer. 29:12-13, Psalm 66:19). Again, if you pray according to His will, He will hear you and grant your request (1 John 5:14-15). It's His will for the lost to be saved, for you to tell them about Jesus, and for you to know that you have the authority in Christ (Matt. 28:18-19, Luke 10:19, Mark 3:14-15) and supernatural power from our Father to help get the job done (2 Cor. 10:3-6).

We put it all together by praying for the people who need to hear the gospel and by taking authority over the works of darkness. Jesus said we, His followers and the children of His Father, have authority to bind the enemy, essentially handcuff him, and prevent him and his imps from blocking people's ability to hear and understand the gospel.

*Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. – Matt. 18:18, NKJV*

Declare in the name of Jesus that the devil and his legions are bound from distracting or otherwise wrongfully influencing the people for whom you are praying. Name the person or people and declare them free from demonic confusion. In the name of Jesus, loose God's influence into their lives and declare that whomever He uses will speak truth that will block the darkness from clouding their understanding. Declare that they will be able to see the truth and believe. Pray in the Spirit extensively as you intercede, trusting that the Holy Spirit knows exactly what to pray through you.

Pray for the light of the gospel that comes from your lips to shatter the darkness in the lives of people who need Jesus. Always target prayer for someone you know is lost. As an outreach group,

pray for your city or whatever portion of it you are pursuing for Christ. Keep praying. Learn how to stand in your authority in Christ. And tell people about Jesus.

## **Presenting the Gospel**

Below are seven sample gospel presentations that focus on how the hearer can become a child of God through Jesus Christ. Read through them and start your new identity-sharing adventure by learning and practicing the one that appeals to you the most. Just as you record scriptures and confessions on who you are in Christ and play the recordings back to feed your heart and mind, record the presentation that appeals to you. Memorize it and practice it. Learning it is easy and can be done quickly. After you have the presentation down, share it with someone. You can start with a family member or friend who already knows the Lord, but believe God for courage, step out, and share it with someone who needs Jesus.

The presentations are simple and include summary points with scripture references if people ask where truths can be found in the Bible. Later, we will look at how you can lead up to a presentation by engaging in basic conversation and offering to pray for people before sharing the gospel with them. We also will discuss leading someone in a salvation prayer and providing pointers to new believers.

### **Presentation #1**

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These days, so many of us struggle with questions about our identity. We're all trying to figure out who we are while we search for love and meaning. There is a way to know that you are loved and significant, and that's by asking Jesus Christ to be your Lord.

It's not some feel-good idea to give you an emotional buzz that wears off.

When you ask Jesus into your heart, your spirit is made alive forever. It's a real experience. You are reborn as God's child in the deepest part of yourself. The Bible says if we choose Christ:

- We have a right to be called God's children, and we're adopted into His family (John 1:12, Eph. 1:5).
- We are made righteous before a holy God because Jesus paid the penalty we owe for sin (2 Cor. 5:21).
- We have an open door into a world in which God wants our company, hears our prayers, and meets our needs (1 Pet. 3:12, Phil. 4:6-7,19).
- And we can experience emotional healing as we walk through life with Him (Luke 4:18-19).

Become a child of God by praying this short prayer right now. Repeat after me:

*Jesus, I need You. I accept that You died on the cross to pay the penalty I owed for sin. Because of what You did, I can be God's child and be spiritually alive. I accept You now, Jesus. You are my Lord and Savior. Thank You for forgiveness and new life. Thank You for making me God's child. In Your name I pray, amen.*

## **Presentation #2**

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We've heard that all people are children of God, but you can really become God's child by inviting Jesus Christ to be your Lord and Savior. When you ask Jesus in, He immediately gives you God's real life in the deepest part of yourself—your spirit.

We have physical bodies and we have minds that think, decide, and feel emotions, but because of sin, we are spiritually dead without God's life in the very center of us. God loves us and did something about it when He sent Jesus to the cross.

By asking Jesus into our lives, God washes away sin that caused spiritual death in the first place. He also immediately makes our spirits come alive and causes us to be reborn as His very own children. It's not a philosophical idea to make us feel good—it's truth that never changes.

- Jesus went to the cross over 2,000 years ago to fully pay the penalty everyone owes for sin and separation from God (John 3:16)
- Jesus took our sin and gives us His right-standing with God (2 Cor. 5:21).
- He gives us a living spirit and makes us God's literal, adopted children (Eph. 1:5, 1 Pet. 1:3).

You can experience forgiveness and new spiritual life as a child of God right now. Pray this short prayer aloud after me:

*Jesus, I need You. I accept that You died on the cross to pay the penalty I owed for sin. Because of what You did, I can be God's child and be spiritually alive. I accept You now, Jesus, as my Lord and Savior. Thank You for forgiveness and new life. Thank You for making me God's child. In Your name I pray, amen.*

### **Presentation #3**

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If you feel like you don't belong, you can choose to be part of a family that will always cherish you, no matter how alone or worthless you feel. You can be a new person right now by letting

God adopt you as His child. That happens when you ask Jesus Christ to be your Lord and Savior.

When you invite Christ into your life, the Bible says the very center of yourself, which is your spirit, comes alive by the power of God. Our spirits are as real as our bodies and minds. Your spirit is reborn, you are forgiven of sin, and you are accepted by God when you invite Jesus into your heart.

- With Christ, the Bible says we become God’s real children (1 John 1:12, Gal. 3:26).
- With Christ, we are loved unconditionally, and we can depend on God to meet our needs and give us purpose and peace (1 John 4:7-8, Phil 4:19, Rom. 5:1).
- With Christ, we become God’s real representatives to a hurting world that needs Him (2 Cor. 5:20).

Receive Christ by praying this simple prayer aloud right now with me:

*Jesus, I need You. I ask You to be my Lord and Savior. Forgive me of sin and heal me of shame and worthlessness. I declare right now that Jesus is my Lord, I am forgiven and I am united with my Father God forever. In Your name I pray, amen.*

#### **Presentation #4**

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If you feel empty inside and don’t know who you are, God’s love can give you an identity of peace, purpose, and belonging beyond anything you can imagine.

The Bible says when you invite Jesus into your life, God makes your spirit come alive. He puts His life in the very center of yourself. Without Christ, people are dead spiritually because of sin.

Jesus went to the cross to pay the penalty we owe for sin. When we choose Jesus, God forgives us and makes our spirits come alive. By choosing Jesus:

- We are forgiven and made right with God (Rom. 5:1-2).
- We are made God's children and friends of Christ (1 John 1:12, John 15:15).
- We are adopted into God's family (Eph. 1:5).

Become God's child and experience His peace and forgiveness by praying a brief prayer right now. Repeat after me:

*Jesus, I need You. I accept that You love me. I believe You died on the cross to pay the penalty I owed for sin. I want to be God's real child and be spiritually alive. Jesus, I accept You as my Lord and Savior. Thank You for Your forgiveness, Your love, and new life as God's child. In Your name I pray, amen.*

### **Presentation #5**

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Are you looking for a love that never ends and stays with you even when no one else does? You can experience it right now by asking Jesus into your life. When you invite Jesus in, God becomes your Father and you are God's literal child. The Bible says He will never leave you or forsake you, even if other people do.

God's love is real and when God becomes your Father, He immediately makes you come alive in your spirit. Your spirit is as real as your body and your mind, but the Bible says without Christ we are dead spiritually. The Bible says when we ask Christ into our hearts:



- We are born again and our spirits are made alive (John 3:13, Rom. 6:23).
- We are adopted into God’s family, forgiven, and accepted forever (Eph 1:5, Col 1:14, Heb. 13:5).
- We are united with God and belong to Him (1 Cor. 6:17).
- We can receive strength and help when we need it (Phil 4:13).

Experience God’s unending love and new life right now by praying this prayer out loud with me:

*Jesus, I ask You to be my Lord and Savior. Forgive me of sin and fill me with Your wonderful life. I declare right now that Jesus is my Lord, I am forgiven, healed and united with my Father God. In Your name I pray, amen.*

### **Presentation #6**

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Do you feel incomplete, like something is always missing, that you’re different from other people and you always think something is wrong with you? What is missing in every person is spiritual life that only Jesus Christ can give us. If you ask Jesus to be your Lord and Savior, the Bible says He gives you a sense of wholeness you can’t find anywhere else.

The Bible says we are made complete when we ask Jesus into our hearts. People are dead spiritually and living in sin without Him, but God forgives us and makes us spiritually alive when we receive Jesus.

When we ask Jesus to be our Lord and Savior, the Bible says:

- We are made complete (Col. 2:10).

- We become united with our Father God and we're one spirit with Him (1 Cor. 6:17).
- We are forgiven of sin and failure and are free from condemnation (Rom. 8:1, Col. 1:14).
- We will spend eternity with Christ (John 14:2-3).
- We can experience inner healing in this life from the things that make us feel inadequate (Luke 4:18).

Experience forgiveness and new life right now by praying this prayer aloud after me:

*Jesus, please come into my heart and be my Lord and Savior. Forgive me of sin and give me Your life and make me complete and whole. Thank You for new life in my spirit. Thank You for loving me, guiding me and giving me peace and purpose. In Your name I pray, amen.*

### **Presentation #7**

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Do you feel like you don't have a purpose in life? There is a way you can experience great purpose and live your life to benefit yourself, your family, friends, and others. This purpose is available by asking Jesus Christ to be your Lord and Savior.

The Bible says those who receive Jesus are made children of God. They become the light of the world, showing others what Christ is like. With Jesus you are adopted into God's family. The penalty you owe for sin was taken care of when Jesus went to the cross. God gives life to your spirit.

The Bible says if you believe in Christ:

- Your inner person is a temple where the Spirit of God lives (1 Cor. 6:19).

- You are a special messenger who can lead others to Jesus (2 Cor. 5:20).
- God enables you to know Him and become more like Jesus (Eph. 4:22-24).
- Your heavenly Father has a special plan just for your life (Jer. 29:11).

Experience real purpose in life by asking Jesus to be your Lord and Savior right now. Repeat this prayer out loud with me:

*Jesus, I want my life to have meaning and purpose. Please forgive me of sin and come into my life right now. I declare that You, Jesus, are my Lord and Savior. Thank You for coming into my heart and making me God's child and helping me follow You. In Your name, Amen.*

## **The Appropriate Presentation**

Learning several presentations can equip you to use the appropriate one in a conversation. Start with one that appeals to you, but also learn Presentation #1 or #2 at some point, which are a bit more general. Others open with a specific reference to a shortcoming or issue someone may have shared.

For example, if people talk about their lives lacking purpose, you could use Presentation #7 to discuss how receiving Christ provides ultimate purpose. If people talk about being different and feeling less than others—both expressions of shame—use Presentation #6 to tell them how God makes them complete as His children. As you are talking, someone may express how they feel like they don't belong. In that instance, you can use Presentation #3 or #4.

## **Getting Started**

How do we start a conversation that allows us to easily transition to a presentation? Well, how do you start a conversation now? If you can answer this, you are well on your way to knowing how to start a conversation that will lead to a sharing opportunity with someone. The only difference is getting to the presentation smoothly.

Conversing with a family member or friend is probably fairly easy, although you can begin a conversation with anyone by talking about something as simple as the weather:

- How much rain did we get the other day?
- What's the weather supposed to be like next week?
- Man, it's been a hot summer/cold winter, hasn't it?

You get the point. The weather is something everybody has in common. It's hard to get it wrong. You can also start a conversation by talking about your family and theirs. Show them pictures of your kids or grandkids, parents or friends. Ask them about their job and talk about yours. Talk about the local athletic teams, your hobbies, cars, movies you've seen, etc. In other words, converse. Don't complicate it.

Do your best to stay away from political conversations and arguments, especially with someone you don't know and with whom you hope to share Christ. Political discussions can ruin sharing opportunities, which are far more important than winning a debate that opens the door for strife in a conversation. The next chapter includes a basic list of questions you may be asked and answers you can provide after you share your presentation. Many questions people might bring up can be answered from information

earlier in the book on our condition before Christ, what He did for us, and what changed when we accepted Him.

## **Pray**

After talking for a bit, mention your church and tell them they are always welcome there. Then ask if they need prayer for anything, whether it be a material, personal or family matter. Even those who don't believe in Christ can be surprisingly open to letting someone pray for them. In fact, prayer is likely the best conversation starter during a community outreach in which you and other believers approach people to witness to them but have limited time, except to identify yourselves and your church. In these cases, don't worry about coming up with some elaborate transition to the presentation. You can follow up the prayer request by saying "We want people to know how much God loves them." Then go ahead and give the presentation if they will listen.

Certainly, outreaches can also focus initially on inviting people to church. If someone already attends a church, offer to pray for their church and pastor, in addition to lifting up personal needs. You can still transition to a gospel presentation if you aren't sure they know Christ.

In whatever circumstance, whether in outreach or everyday life, point out that you believe in the power of prayer and that God loves them, is concerned about their lives, and wants good things for them. Lift up the needs of those open to prayer, petitioning your heavenly Father in the name of Christ. Stick to praying for the specific issue and be brief. Don't allow the prayer to be a sermon in disguise that unintentionally belittles them or makes them uncomfortable or defensive. Don't shout and make a spectacle of the person for whom you are praying and yourself. You're talking to an unbeliever who needs Christ, even if they don't know it yet.

End the prayer by asking God to open up the person's heart so they can know His love for them:

*... and Father I ask in the name of Jesus that You will open up (person's name) heart to know the truth of Your marvelous love for them. Thank You, Father, for showing how precious they are to You and how much You want them to be Your child forever. Amen.*

Then give the gospel presentation you have memorized. It's easy to launch into a presentation after praying for someone, certainly after asking God to open up someone's heart to know His love for them. It's God's will for people to know that He loves them. He heard your prayer and will grant your request in keeping with His will (1 John 5:14-15).

At the end of the presentation, have the person repeat the salvation prayer after you. Go slowly. Say the prayer in shorter increments so the person can follow along easily. The prayer below from Presentation #1 is an example:

*Jesus, I need You (Pause and let the person repeat it) I accept that You died on the cross (Pause) to pay the penalty I owed for sin (Pause). Because of what You did (Pause), I can be God's child and be spiritually alive (Pause). I accept You now, Jesus (Pause). You are my Lord and Savior (Pause). Thank You for forgiveness and new life (Pause). Thank You for making me God's child (Pause). In Your name I pray, amen.*

## **When They Accept Christ**

After the person receives Christ, provide the list of scriptures and confessions from Appendix A in this book. Copy it and have it ready to distribute. Encourage the new believer to read over it

daily, memorize the scriptures and confessions and say them aloud. Encourage new Christians to get this book. Encourage them to pray and avoid worrying about trying to be religious but to thank God for His gift of salvation. Remind them they didn't earn God's love. God is love (I John 4:8) and wanted a relationship with them from the start. Instruct them to talk to their Father about any issue in their lives.

Ask them to attend church with you, and if needed, offer to give them a ride. Provide service times if they want to come on their own. Give them your contact information first if they don't have it and then ask for theirs. Invite them to call you whenever they need to talk to someone. If they provide their contact information, call them the next day and ask how they are doing. Don't preach a long sermon when you call, but encourage them and ask them if you can pray for them. Remind them they are God's children, regardless of feelings and trials in their lives. Whatever happens, pray for the person from then on, asking God to help them grow in their knowledge of Him, His love for them, and the victory over sin and despair that is theirs if they follow Him.

If the new believer comes to your church, the best thing you can be is a friend who is willing to listen and pray for them. Introduce them to church leadership and other believers. Friends are above all else honest with each other. Share how God has ministered to you through your personal walk with Him, the ministry of the church, and other Bible-influenced programs. If you trust the new believer enough, talk about recent issues you have faced and how you are continuing to rely on God to help you through them. That will influence the new believer to open up to you and talk about issues in their lives.

Help them connect with your church's program for new believers—one centered in the new identity of the believer as a child of God and a friend of Christ. The class should also instruct new believers that they are free from condemnation and loved by God, Who will never leave them or forsake them (Heb. 13:5). As we discussed earlier, new believers also need to know that sin is forgiven if confessed. Any program should include an introduction to daily Bible reading, freedom ministry, and ministry that focuses on the reality of spiritual warfare.

New believers need to know that our enemy will use condemnation, fear, and shame over past and present failures to discourage them from following God, essentially by telling them they are unworthy and unacceptable. Remind them that we are saved by grace through faith, not our religious works (Eph. 2:8). We didn't earn salvation in the first place; God loves us, period. Our salvation is a gift. New believers need to cling to this when the enemy hurls lies of unworthiness at them.

When you call after they accepted Christ and get no answer, leave a short voicemail inviting them to church again, reminding them of service times. If you have a physical address go by with someone. If not, call again a couple of days after the initial phone attempt. If you don't get them the second time, wait a week or two and leave a voicemail that you hope they are doing well and that you and your church are always available to them. Leave your number again. Be careful to avoid calling daily and getting categorized as a nuisance. If they get the message and want to call back, they will.

In an outreach, your church could keep a follow-up list and try back a month or so later. If you don't have the opportunity to talk to them again, pray for them and trust that God is working in their lives.



## **When They Say No**

What if people don't want prayer in the first place? If they say they are not interested when you ask if they have a prayer need, transition to the gospel presentation anyway. If they cut you off and are dismissive of you and the message, offer a gospel tract or church flyer and be respectful. If you are sharing during an outreach, move along to others who may want to receive Christ. If you are sharing with a family member or friend, let them know you are available to answer any questions they may have later.

If you have the opportunity to provide the entire presentation and the person declines to accept Christ, ask if you can clarify any point in the presentation. Otherwise, provide a tract or flyer and thank them for listening. While you can be assertive, don't be pushy. Don't assume it will be last time that person will hear the gospel. Pray for them later and trust God to send others their way at the appropriate time. They may read the tract later and receive Christ on their own.

## **Dealing with Feelings of Rejection**

When someone says no, even if accompanied by criticism of you and other Christians, don't get mired in feelings of rejection. The devil's cohorts will make sure you feel castigated, either through criticism from those who reject Christ, or through lies in your mind bent on making you feel guilty for sharing the gospel in the first place. Demons want you to feel like you have wrongfully intruded into someone's life and that you should quit sharing. Don't.

As we saw earlier, Proverbs 29:25 says the fear of man is a snare, or trap, but whoever trusts God is kept safe. Trust God to keep His word. He will keep and encourage you. Your purpose when sharing your faith is to share your faith, not grovel to get

some kind of approval or sense of worth from others. Don't get me wrong, being rude, condescending, or demonstrating a know-it-all attitude to an unbeliever will ruin your presentation. Any negative reaction to a negative attitude from you is understandable. However, you shouldn't feel guilty about giving, or attempting to give, a candid presentation of the gospel.

When you experience rejection of others and demonic assault, choose to cling to the truth that you are a child of God, not an outcast or object of shame. Reject shameful, fearful feelings out loud, but not in front of the person with whom you are sharing. Remember, you don't have to make a spectacle of yourself in front of others, but speak to fear in the name of Jesus. Replace it with the truth that God is your Father and that you are an ambassador telling a lost world about God's love. It's your calling. Remind yourself and the enemy that you are about your Father's business fulfilling the Great Commission. Then move on to others who need to hear the truth.

If a family member or friend is offended and rejects Christ and you, kindly tell them you love them and God loves them and Jesus gave Himself for them. Then pray for them later. Don't wear them out. Trust God to work on them. Don't act standoffish or awkward around them at family or community events. Continue to be a friend and family member. Let them see Jesus in you.

## **Personal Testimony**

In addition to using your general testimony as a child of God, you can talk about specific experiences when sharing Christ. A simple approach includes sharing what you were like before Christ, how you came to know Him, and how your life has changed since then. You can do a simple exercise in which you write specific explanations in these three areas:

- Write 2-4 sentences on what your life was like before you received Christ. Were you lonely, beset by a fear of rejection and worthlessness, battling an addiction or disease, consumed with selfishness, insecurity, anxiety, depression, purposelessness, etc.?
- Write 3-5 sentences on how you received Christ: Did someone share their faith with you individually, did you answer an altar call after a sermon, did you see a minister on TV, did you read a gospel tract? What specifically did the minister, other person, or tract say about receiving Christ?
- Write 2-4 sentences on what your life has been like since you received Christ: How has your faith grown generally since receiving Christ? How has being a church member helped you grow spiritually? What issues in your life has the Lord helped you with since you became a Christian?

Although the number of suggested sentences is brief to get you started, you can elaborate during this exercise. Work on your testimony presentation extensively and prayerfully, then condense it to 3-to-5 minutes and practice it aloud. Remember when you are sharing your experience get to the point and avoid long,

meandering accounts that influence people to tune out mentally and begin looking for ways to end the encounter.

If God has done a work in several areas worth noting since you became a Christian, be prepared to share what He has done for you. Be concise and be honest. Healing is usually a process. Explain that. Healing also can be instantaneous. Point out the miraculous in your experience. Either experience is legitimate if God has worked in your life.

Although you should be thorough and to the point, be free to share candidly instead of being overly concerned with woodenly reciting a prepared testimony. The purpose of the exercise is to get you to think through your experience, condense it, and be able to adequately share it. Be open to direction from the Holy Spirit on what to say and when to say it.

An opportunity may arise to share your personal testimony when someone mentions a struggle or issue in which God has healed you or given insight. Talk about your experience immediately after you pray or just before you pray if that's when the opportunity arises. Tell the person what your struggle was like, how you came to know Christ, and how He healed you. After prayer, or after any personal testimony right after the prayer, transition into the brief identity-based gospel presentation and lead the person in a prayer of salvation.

Perhaps the opportunity to share your testimony is after the gospel presentation and the person is reluctant to receive Christ. Share your experience as a way to reinforce the presentation with a first-hand account of what God does for His children—He heals them and gives them purpose. Again, prepare to talk about your experience and follow the Spirit's leading. You are Christ's sheep and you hear His voice (John 10:27-28).

## **Review**

Remember, these are the steps to presenting the gospel:

1. Start a conversation.
2. Offer to pray.
3. End the prayer by asking your heavenly Father to open up hearts to His wonderful love.
4. Transition into a gospel presentation.
5. Lead a salvation prayer.
6. Provide follow-up material, exchange contact information and invite them to church.
7. Call the next day to ask how they are doing and offer to pray for any needs.

# 6

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## Questions and Precautions

At some point during your gospel presentation and your invitation to prayer, people may have questions or may decline to pray with you, citing an issue they have with evil in the world, suffering, and so on. Answer these concerns, but do your best to get back to the gospel presentation quickly and avoid debate. Below are some answers to common questions or comments and a brief look at some do's and don'ts when you are sharing. Many unanticipated questions can be answered if you know the basic information in this book about who we were before Christ and what happened after we received Him.

### **What if my family members and friends don't like my decision?**

*What to say:* Share your decision with them anyway. Then go on and live your life, attend church, and pursue your relationship with God. Let them see the difference Christ is making in your life. You don't have to be overbearing to others. Share and let God work on them.

**Don't all religions lead to the same God? Isn't heaven available to everyone who believes in some kind of religion?**

*What to say:* Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6, NLT). The thought that all religious roads lead to the one true God is false. Jesus is the way to a relationship with God. Accept Christ now and know for sure that you are right with God.

**I don't believe in hell, so I don't need Jesus.**

*What to say:* There are numerous scriptures that address the reality of eternal punishment for unbelievers, whether we like it or not. For example, in Matthew 25:41, Jesus reveals that those who are without God will be condemned to everlasting fire prepared for Satan and his demons. Also, 2 Thessalonians 1:9 states that those who don't obey the gospel of Christ will suffer eternal punishment away from the presence of the Lord. Revelation 20:15 says those whose names are not found in God's Book of Life will be thrown into the Lake of Fire. Eternal punishment is real. Accept Christ and ensure your future in God's glorious kingdom and not an eternity in torment away from Him.

**Why would a loving God condemn people to hell?**

*What to say:* The reality is that people choose hell by refusing Christ. Human beings are sinful by nature and do not have a relationship with God, but God intervened and sent Jesus to the cross to pay the penalty we owe for sin. Salvation is a gift available to anyone who wants to believe (Eph. 2:8-9). Every human being can believe. Many simply choose not to. Choose Christ now and know His wonderful love just for you.

**I know plenty of Christians who are hypocrites. I don't want to be around hypocrites.**

*What to say:* During His time on earth before His crucifixion, Jesus clearly condemned hypocrisy among religious leaders of the day who pretended to walk closely with God but who were arrogant and self-centered (Matt. 15:7-9, Matt. 23:27-28, Luke 20:46-47). Christians can commit acts of hypocrisy as well as anyone else by pretending to walk with Christ but not doing so. However, Jesus was no hypocrite. He was sinless; He is God. We are called to follow Him, not spend our time and energy upset by the hypocrisy of others. That's their problem and God will judge them for it. You can choose Christ and follow Him now.

**I have doubts.**

*What so say:* The Bible says in Ephesians 2:8 that we are saved by grace through faith, or believing. The Bible also says we get faith by hearing the word of God (Rom. 10:17). You have now heard the truth of God's word and have sufficient faith to believe and be saved. Our minds may doubt some at first, but when we hear the good news of Christ, we can choose Him, even if we don't understand everything at the beginning. Through the teaching ministry at church and our personal pursuits of God, He answers questions and causes us to grow spiritually. Pray to receive Christ now.



**I am a good person. Isn't that enough?**

*What to say:* The Bible says no one is good compared to a holy God (Mark 10:18, Luke 18:19). We have all sinned and come short of His glorious perfection (Rom. 3:23). We may treat others well and live honest, decent lives, but as commendable as honesty and decency are, we cannot be saved by our good works—only by faith in what Jesus did for us on the cross (Eph. 2:8-9). Receive Christ today and partake of God's wonderful goodness for you.

**I feel out of place at church, and I don't think I'm good enough to become a Christian.**

*What to say:* Becoming a Christian has nothing to do with how good you are. It's about God's goodness, love, and mercy toward you. He loves you beyond what you can imagine and wants you to experience His love. The Father God proved His love when He sent His only Son to the cross so that, through Jesus, we can become God's children and have life that never ends (John 3:16). If past experiences at church were negative, please know that God wants you to thrive spiritually and socially as a valued member of a local church. Accept Christ today and come be a part of our fellowship.

**I want to wait.**

*What to say:* We can't see the future and don't know exactly what tomorrow brings (James. 4:14). The Bible says our days are numbered (Psalm 139:16). Receive Christ now because we may not have the opportunity tomorrow.

### **What about all the evil in the world?**

*What to say:* Mankind, not God, is responsible for the evil in the world today. In the beginning, Adam and Eve sinned and attempted to be their own gods. Everyone born after them is like them. We are all sinful. For some—whether cruel dictators, murderers, slave traders, or others—that means making choices that ruin and end the lives of other people, in some cases millions of other people. Simply put, evil is awful, but just as our ancestors chose sin, we can choose to receive Christ and have the gift of righteousness that He offers. Through Jesus, we can be delivered from our personal evils and allow our Father God to heal our hurts and set us on a course to better lives. Receive Christ now.

### **The Bible is inaccurate and outdated.**

*What to say:* Despite countless efforts throughout history, no one has disproved the timeless truths in God's word. The Bible is God's word, His love letter to humanity. It is the word of Truth (2 Cor. 6:7, Col. 1:5, 2 Tim. 2:15, I Thess. 2:13, James. 1:18). Jesus said God's word is truth that can set us apart from sin and a sense of worthlessness (John 17:17). God's word will accomplish what He intends for it to achieve (Isa. 55: 11). Failure to understand a passage in the Bible doesn't make the passage inaccurate.

The accuracy of the Bible is supported by the fact that New Testament manuscripts were the most widely copied of any other ancient writings. What we have today are writings that were first made available to new believers almost 2,000 years ago. Recent counts place the number of ancient Greek manuscripts of the New Testament at more than 5,000. The New Testament was written in Greek, which was spoken widely in the world at that time, similar to English today. There are tens of thousands of other ancient

manuscripts of the Old and New Testaments. The Bible is accurate and enduring. The word of God gives us faith to know Jesus. Receive Him now.

### **If God is love, why is there so much suffering?**

*What to say:* On one hand, we suffer because of poor choices we make. The Bible says we will experience a harvest of decay and death if we live according to our sinful, selfish desires, but we will have a harvest of everlasting life by choosing Christ (Gal. 6:7-8). On the other hand, we also can suffer in the sense that we are criticized or ridiculed by those who refuse Christ. However, Jesus said those who are persecuted for Him will inherit His kingdom (Matt. 5:10). Suffering can result in good. Jesus suffered rejection from religious leaders and others during His time on the earth and was crucified. His crucifixion and resurrection now give everyone who chooses Him a relationship with the Father God. Personal suffering should drive us to seek God and live for Him and reject sinful, self-centered ways. The Bible encourages us to believe God exists and that He rewards us if we consistently seek Him (Heb. 11:6). Accept Him now, seek Him, and be blessed.

### **Faith is for the weak.**

*What to say:* The fact is everyone leans on something. There are no self-made men. The addict depends on drugs and the atheist intellectual depends on arguments for a false sense of comfort and purpose. Others work to get attention and be admired, to become rich, to be smarter, or have other experiences intended to provide fulfillment that is only truly available through Christ. The Bible says when we are weak, we should trust in God to be our strength (2 Cor. 12:10). Indeed, for believers God is our strength and help

(Psalm 46: 1-3). Experience God's strength today by asking Jesus into your heart.

## **Get Help**

There are a number of in-depth works on Christian apologetics that will help believers be prepared to answer a host of questions and counter arguments to refute the validity of the gospel. However, during a gospel presentation to an unbeliever, do your best to avoid arguments and stick to the gospel and let them know that their doubts will fade if they take a step of faith and receive Christ now.

## **Do's and Don'ts**

- **Do** pray before you share. Ask God for boldness (Acts 4: 23-31), and for Him to tear down the lies that Satan has built into people's thinking that prevent them from understanding the gospel and receiving Christ (2 Cor. 4:4). Keep praying for them whether they receive Christ or not.
- **Do** pray for the person as a way to transition from conversation to the gospel presentation.
- **Do** have the person pray aloud with you to receive Christ at the end of the presentation.
- **Do** provide your contact information first to new believers if they don't have it. Kindly ask for theirs. Give them follow-up information, invite them to church, and call them later to see how they are doing.
- **Don't** argue. Again, argument can ruin a sharing experience. Avoid contentious topics such as politics while you converse prior to sharing. If a person begins talking about politics, you can say "It's certainly important to do our civic duty" then get back to the presentation. If

someone wants to argue extensively contrary to the gospel, say something like “I just want to share Christ with you because He means so much to me. I want to give you this gospel tract. Perhaps you might want to read it later. Thanks for letting me share with you.” If you are participating in an outreach, move on to others who need to hear the gospel. If you are sharing with a family member or close friend, suggest instead that you both do an activity together, if appropriate, such as go to a movie, or go shopping, and so on.

- **Do** ask why someone refuses to pray with you after you give the gospel presentation. That’s not an argument. If they respond with something addressed in the questions listed above, answer them, then kindly ask again if they would pray with you. If instead they sternly decline, give them a tract or church flyer, thank them for letting you share, and move on.
- **Don’t** quickly dismiss a question in an arrogant manner, or smirk when you get asked a question you think is ridiculous. You, hopefully, have knowledge based on your personal growth. Unbelievers don’t. Be kind and accepting. Take every question and concern seriously.
- **Do** answer questions and address comments as completely and briefly as you can. Look into in-depth works on Christian apologetics if you want to know more, but keep your presentation as simple and to-the-point as you can.
- **Don’t** avoid talking about the reality of eternal judgment if someone asks or brings it up. Sin is certainly real, as is the ultimate consequence for those who reject Christ, which is an eternity of torment without God.

- **Don't** be afraid to say you are unsure about something or lack a quick answer. Simply let the person know that you will find the answer and get back to them, if you have a way to contact them.
- **Do** share at work if you have the opportunity to talk to a co-worker during the course of a day when you would normally talk, perhaps at break or lunch. However, don't let sharing at work get in the way of doing your job. At work, work comes first. God will provide an opportunity to share with someone at the appropriate time, which may be after work.

# 7

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## Class and Outreach Basics

In addition to being suited for self-paced, individual learning, New Identity Evangelism can be taught in a classroom setting in which topics are reviewed weekly. Below is an outline for an eight-week course with each class lasting an hour. The schedule can be shortened easily to six weeks. Have the class read the segments being reviewed in Week #1, **Introduction** and **Telling Who We Are**, ahead of time.

### **Week #1**

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Cover the **Introduction** and **Telling Who We Are**, including who we were before Christ and what Jesus did to give us a relationship with God. Save 20 minutes at the end of the class for people to get into small groups of about three persons and discuss this segment by addressing the following questions:

- What was your life like before you met Jesus?
- How did you come to receive Him as your Lord and Savior?

- How does the fact that you are a real child of God impact your thinking now?

**Homework:** Pray daily for the Lord to make participants fishers of men (Matt. 4:19). Read **Who We Really Are Now**.

## **Week #2**

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Review **Who We Really Are Now**. During the 20-minute small-group segment, discuss:

- How do you prepare yourself now to have a deeper understanding of who you are in Christ?
- After reading some of the scriptures and confessions from **Appendix A**, which means the most to you and why?

**Homework:** Have participants pray daily for the Lord to give them a deeper understanding of who they are in Christ. Read **Appendix A** scriptures and confessions and begin to record and listen to them. Thank the Lord daily for making participants fishers of men. Read **Removing Impediments**.

## **Week #3**

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Review **Removing Impediments**. Use this as an opportunity to introduce freedom ministry, spiritual warfare classes, counseling services, accountability partner programs, or whatever the church or community offers to help people heal and be set free from hindrances. 20-minute small group discussion:

- What hinders you now from a deeper understanding of who you are in Christ?



- What should you do about it?

**Homework:** Stress the need to continue recording and listening to the scriptures and confessions and ask participants to pray about any hurt or hindrance that the Holy Spirit reveals to them. Discuss hurts and needs privately with pastors, class leaders, friends, or fellow small group members. Thank the Lord daily for making participants fishers of men. Read **Tell It to the World**.

## **Week #4**

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Review **Tell It to the World**. Instruct participants to choose one of the presentations to memorize. 20-minute discussion:

- Have participants take turns reading the selected presentation to the small group.

**Homework:** Memorize the selected presentation. Continue to meditate on scriptures and confessions and thank the Lord daily for making participants fishers of men. Review **Tell It to the World** segments on conversation, praying, and giving a presentation.

## **Week #5**

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Review information in **Tell It to the World** on how to start a conversation, pray with someone, give the gospel presentation, and lead a salvation prayer. 30-minute discussion:

- Get into groups of two and practice the entire process of conversation, prayer, presentation, and salvation prayer.

**Homework:** Practice the entire process at home daily and continue to meditate on scriptures and confessions. Thank the Lord daily for making participants fishers of men. Read and review **Tell It to the World** on follow-up and dealing with rejection.

## **Week #6**

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Review the sections in **Tell It to the World** on follow-up, what to do if people pray to receive Christ, what to do if they don't, and dealing with rejection. 30-minute discussion:

- Pair up and practice going over the entire process: prayer, presentation, salvation prayer.

**Homework:** Practice the entire process, meditate on scriptures and confessions, and review follow-up. Thank the Lord daily for making participants fishers of men. Read the **Personal Testimony** segment.

## **Week #7**

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Review the section on **Personal Testimony** and how to include it in the presentation at the beginning as a transition to the gospel presentation or when someone is hesitant to pray the salvation prayer with you. 30-minute discussion:

- Develop your personal testimony.

**Homework:** Continue practicing the entire process, meditating on scripture, and practicing the personal testimony. Thank the Lord daily for making participants fishers of men. Read **Questions and Precautions**.

## **Week #8**

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Come together, pray, quickly review **Questions and Precautions**, and go door-to-door in the neighborhood near your church, or go to a park or other public place to invite people to church and conduct a prayer outreach that includes:

- Praying for people
- Sharing your faith
- Inviting them to receive Christ.

Return to church at a specified time and talk about your experiences. An alternative could include a time of prayer and praise, followed by an exercise in which participants share their entire presentation with at least three people in the class.

### **Customizing the Classes**

The curriculum can be condensed by two weeks or more. To have a six-week course, consider asking participants to review follow-up information and the chapter on **Question and Precautions** as homework for Week 5.

Then combine weeks 6 and 7 by conducting the personal testimony exercise, followed by each participant sharing an entire presentation with someone at least once.

There are certainly other ways to condense the suggested class outline. Do what is best for your group.

### **Community Outreach**

Churches that conduct periodic evangelism outreaches in public, door-to-door, or through service outreach provide members with very rewarding ways to develop their calling as the Lord's ambassadors to a fallen world. I have participated in evangelism

outreach at various churches over the years and have been challenged and rewarded with a deeper awareness of God in my life and the lives of others.

The New Identity Evangelism curriculum can be used as part of an outreach. Initially, consider conducting the program as outlined above with class sessions, practice, and homework. If the outreach is beyond six-to-eight weeks, include refresher training during outreach sessions. This includes practicing the entire routine, including when and how to include a personal testimony, how to answer questions and comments, and knowing basic do's and don'ts. If the outreach is to be perpetual, with perhaps periodic breaks, consider conducting a separate session of New Identity Evangelism training for newcomers while they also participate in the outreach. Whatever the situation, lay believers should embrace pastoral oversight and direction.

While organization can vary, the following basic guidelines and principles will help churches and interested groups establish and conduct vibrant outreaches:

- **Conduct a prayer meeting** to seek God's direction for an outreach, including days and times for an outreach and the duration (six weeks, eight weeks, 10 weeks, etc.). For example, a weekly outreach could be conducted on a Saturday morning or evening, or on a weekday evening with two hours set aside for each session, including 45 minutes for worship, prayer, and brief training. Allow an hour for sharing and 15 minutes to review the experiences of each outreach team.
- **Encourage believers to make a commitment** to attend for the entire duration of the outreach. Having a defined duration will help participants honor their commitments.

While shorter durations may prove better in some circumstances, longer durations work well if the outreach includes a week break in the middle of the overall period, or just after initial training sessions and a session or two of sharing.

- **At each weekly session**, include worship time, prayer for God to open up hearts and tear down strongholds that prevent people from receiving Christ, and a brief training topic. Continue to review what to do and not do when witnessing.
- **Pair up believers experienced at sharing with those who have less experience.** Do not allow any participant to share alone. While one participant is witnessing to someone, the other participant should be praying silently for the hearer to understand the gospel and accept Christ.
- **Teams should emphasize that it is a prayer outreach** and ask to pray for needs before transitioning to a presentation and invitation to receive Christ. If teams are on private property and are asked to leave, do so. Outreach participants have no right to violate the law in any way, including disrespecting property rights.
- **End the outreach at the designated time**, leaving ample time for teams to return to a designated location to talk about their experiences.

# Appendix A

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## Scriptural Confessions

Below are segments that include a confession supported by a scripture or several scriptures. Scriptures from the Amplified Bible are included since the elaboration of key meanings helps clarify or reinforce the confession. Consider recording each segment multiple times. Recite the confession several times before continuing with the scriptures that support it.

As we discussed earlier, while recording these confessions, recite the confession and supporting scriptures but pause before moving on. The pause will allow you to contemplate the confession as you replay it.

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**I am a child of God. My Father God gave me the right and privilege to be His child when I received Jesus as my Lord and Savior.**

*John 1:12*

*But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God (NLT).*

*But to as many as did receive and welcome Him, He gave the right [the authority, the privilege] to become children of God, that is, to those who believe in (adhere to, trust in, and rely on) His name (AMP).*

---

**Through faith in Jesus, I have been born spiritually from above as a child of God, set apart to live for Him and do His will.**

### ***Galatians 3:26***

*For you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus (NLT).*

*For you [who are born-again have been reborn from above—spiritually transformed, renewed, sanctified and] are all children of God [set apart for His purpose with full rights and privileges] through faith in Christ Jesus (AMP).*

### ***John 3:3, 6***

*Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God . . . That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit” (NKJV).*

*Jesus answered him, “I assure you and most solemnly say to you, unless a person is born again [reborn from above—spiritually transformed, renewed, sanctified], he cannot [ever] see and experience the kingdom of God . . . That which is born of the flesh is flesh [the physical is merely physical], and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit” (AMP).*

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**God is my Father, and I am His very own child.**

***2 Corinthians 6:18***

*“I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the Lord Almighty” (NKJV).*

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**I am a child of God led by the Spirit of God.**

***Romans 8:14***

*For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God (NIV).*

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**Because I am truly God’s child, my heavenly Father has sent the Spirit of His Son into my heart and I can call out Daddy, Poppa, because that’s really who He is to me. I am no longer a slave to the old life, but I am God’s child and I am now an heir because of what Jesus did for me.**



***Galatians 4:6-7***

*And because we are his children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, prompting us to call out, “Abba, Father.” Now you are no longer a slave but God’s own child. And since you are his child, God has made you his heir (NLT).*

*And because you [really] are [His] sons, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying out, “Abba! Father!” Therefore you are no longer a slave (bond-servant), but a son; and if a son, then also an heir through [the gracious act of] God [through Christ] (AMP).*

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**What an awesome love my Father God has given me by calling me His very own child! It doesn’t matter if others understand this about me or not. I am a child of God at this very moment because Jesus is my Lord.**

***1 John 3:1-2***

*Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is (NKJV).*

*See what an incredible quality of love the Father has shown to us, that we would [be permitted to] be named and called and counted the children of God! And so we are! For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, we are [even here and] now children of God, and it is not yet made clear what we will be [after His coming]. We know that when He comes and is revealed, we will [as His children] be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is [in all His glory] (AMP).*

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**Because I believe that Jesus is the Christ, I am born of God, spiritually new, and set apart to accomplish His purpose for my life.**

***1 John 5:1***

*Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well (NIV).*

*Everyone who believes [with a deep, abiding trust in the fact] that Jesus is the Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed) is born of God [that is, reborn from above—spiritually transformed, renewed, and set apart for His purpose], and everyone who loves the Father also loves the child born of Him (AMP).*

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**Because I am now in Christ, I am a new creation. The old life before Christ is gone. I am a new spiritual being, born of God as His very own child, and He has made me a minister to bring others to Him.**

**2 Corinthians 5:17-18**

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation (NKJV).*

*This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun! And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him (NLT).*

*Therefore if anyone is in Christ [that is, grafted in, joined to Him by faith in Him as Savior], he is a new creature [reborn and renewed by the Holy Spirit]; the old things [the previous moral and spiritual condition] have passed away. Behold, new things have come [because spiritual awakening brings a new life] But all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ [making us acceptable to Him] and gave us the ministry of reconciliation [so that by our example we might bring others to Him] (AMP).*

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**I am united with the Lord and I am one spirit with Him.**

**1 Corinthians 6:17**

*But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him (NKJV).*

**I am a temple of the Holy Spirit Who lives in me.**

***1 Corinthians 3:16***

*Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst? (NIV).*

*Do you not know and understand that you [the church] are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells [permanently] in you [collectively and individually]? (AMP).*

***1 Corinthians 6:19***

*Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? (NKJV).*

*Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is within you, whom you have [received as a gift] from God, and that you are not your own [property]? (AMP).*

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**God chose me, made me holy and cherishes me.**

***Colossians 3:12***

*Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering (NKJV).*

*So, as God's own chosen people, who are holy [set apart, sanctified for His purpose] and well-beloved [by God Himself], put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience [which has the power to endure whatever injustice or unpleasantness comes, with good temper]; (AMP).*

***1 Thessalonians 1:4***

*Knowing, beloved brethren, your election by God (NKJV).*

*Brothers and sisters beloved by God, we know that He has chosen you; (AMP).*

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**I am a child of the Light and live in the Light. I do not dwell in spiritual darkness and sin.**

***1 Thessalonians 5:5***

*You are all children of the light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness (NIV).*

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**I am a part of the body of Christ and have a special purpose.**

***1 Corinthians 12:27***

*Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it (NIV).*

*Now you [collectively] are Christ's body, and individually [you are] members of it [each with his own special purpose and function] (AMP).*

***Ephesians 5:30***

*And we are members of his body (NLT).*

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**I am a fellow citizen in God's family with all the saints of God.**

***Ephesians 2:19***

*Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God (NKJV).*

*So then you are no longer strangers and aliens [outsiders without rights of citizenship], but you are fellow citizens with the saints (God's people), and are [members] of God's household (AMP).*

---

**I am a chosen and special person, a royal priest and a member of a holy nation, possessed by God.**

***1 Peter 2:9-10***

*But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a*

*result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light (NLT).*

---

**I am Christ's friend, and He reveals God's truths to me.**

***John 15:15***

*No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you (NKJV).*

---

**I am a slave of righteousness.**

***Romans 6:18***

*And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness (NKJV).*

*And having been set free from sin, you have become the slaves of righteousness [of conformity to God's will and purpose] (AMP).*

---

**I am a slave of God.**

***Romans 6:22***

*But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life (NKJV).*

*But now since you have been set free from sin and have become [willing] slaves to God, you have your benefit, resulting in sanctification [being made holy and set apart for God's purpose], and the outcome [of this] is eternal life (AMP).*

---

**I am a joint heir with Christ, sharing His spiritual blessing and inheritance.**

***Romans 8:17***

*And if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together (NKJV).*

*And if [we are His] children, [then we are His] heirs also: heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ [sharing His spiritual blessing and inheritance], if indeed we share in His suffering so that we may also share in His glory (AMP).*

---

**I am hidden with Christ in God.**

***Colossians 3:3***



*For you died [to this world], and your [new, real] life is hidden with Christ in God (AMP).*

---

**I am a partaker of Christ and share in His life and all that He has for me.**

***Hebrews 3:14***

*For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end (NKJV).*

*For we [believers] have become partakers of Christ [sharing in all that the Messiah has for us], if only we hold firm our newborn confidence [which originally led us to Him] until the end (AMP).*

---

**I am a saint, selected and set apart as holy by God Himself.**

***1 Corinthians 1:2***

*To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours (NKJV).*

*To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified (set apart, made holy) in Christ Jesus, who are selected and called as saints (God's people), together with all those who in every place call on*

*and honor the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours  
(AMP).*

***Ephesians 1:1***

*Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, To the saints  
who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus: (NKJV).*

*Paul, an apostle (special messenger, personally chosen  
representative) of Christ Jesus (the Messiah, the Anointed), by the  
will of God [that is, by His purpose and choice], To the saints  
(God's people) who are at Ephesus and are faithful and loyal and  
steadfast in Christ Jesus: (AMP).*

***Philippians 1:1***

*Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, To all the saints  
in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:  
(NKJV).*

***Colossians 1:2***

*To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are in Colosse:  
Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus  
Christ (NKJV).*

---

**I am holy and part of a heavenly calling.**

***Hebrews 3:1***

*Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, (NKJV).*

*Therefore, holy brothers and sisters, who share in the heavenly calling, [thoughtfully and attentively] consider the Apostle and High Priest whom we confessed [as ours when we accepted Him as Savior], namely, Jesus; (AMP).*

---

**I am the salt of the earth.**

***Matthew 5:13***

*You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men (NKJV).*

*You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has lost its taste (purpose), how can it be made salty? It is no longer good for anything, but to be thrown out and walked on by people [when the walkways are wet and slippery] (AMP).*

---

**I am the light of the world.**

***Matthew 5:14***

*You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden (NKJV).*

*You are the light of [Christ to] the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden (AMP).*

---

**I am a branch of the true vine of Christ. I live in Him and get my life from Him and bear fruit because of Him only.**

***John 15:5***

*I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing (NKJV).*

*I am the Vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in Me and I in him bears much fruit, for [otherwise] apart from Me [that is, cut off from vital union with Me] you can do nothing (AMP).*

---

**Christ chose me and appointed me to bear fruit that endures, so whatever I ask my heavenly Father in Jesus' name will be given to me.**

***John 15:16***

*You didn't choose me. I chose you. I appointed you to go and produce lasting fruit, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask for, using my name (NLT).*

*You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you and I have appointed and placed and purposefully planted you, so that you would go and bear fruit and keep on bearing, and that your fruit will remain and be lasting, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name [as My representative] He may give to you (AMP).*

---

**I am God’s work of art, His handiwork, reborn spiritually in Jesus Christ to do the work He has planned for me.**

***Ephesians 2:10***

*For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago (NLT).*

*For we are His workmanship [His own master work, a work of art], created in Christ Jesus [reborn from above—spiritually transformed, renewed, ready to be used] for good works, which God prepared [for us] beforehand [taking paths which He set], so that we would walk in them [living the good life which He prearranged and made ready for us] (AMP).*

---

**I am righteous and holy because God created me that way through spiritual life provided by Jesus Christ.**

***Ephesians 4:24***

*and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness (NKJV).*

*and put on the new self [the regenerated and renewed nature], created in God's image, [godlike] in the righteousness and holiness of the truth [living in a way that expresses to God your gratitude for your salvation] (AMP).*

---

**I was raised from the death along with Christ and I am seated with Him right now in heaven because I am united with Jesus.**

***Ephesians 2:6***

*For he raised us from the dead along with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus (NLT).*

*And He raised us up together with Him [when we believed], and seated us with Him in the heavenly places, [because we are] in Christ Jesus, (AMP).*

---

**I am a citizen of heaven where my Lord Jesus lives, and I eagerly wait for Him to return for me.**

***Philippians 3:20***

*For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, (NKJV).*

*But we are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives. And we are eagerly waiting for him to return as our Savior (NLT).*

*But [we are different, because] our citizenship is in heaven. And from there we eagerly await [the coming of] the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ (AMP).*

---

**I died to this world and its unholy affections, and my new, real life is now hidden with Christ.**

***Colossians 3:3***

*For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God (NLT).*

---

**Jesus is my life and I live for Him.**

***Colossians 3:4***

*And when Christ, who is your life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all his glory (NLT).*

*When Christ, who is our life, appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory (AMP).*

**I am a living stone and a vital part of a spiritual house God is building.**

***1 Peter 2:5***

*you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ (NKJV).*

*You [believers], like living stones, are being built up into a spiritual house for a holy and dedicated priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices [that are] acceptable and pleasing to God through Jesus Christ (AMP).*

---

**I am a temporary resident of this world and abstain from its sinful desires and ways.**

***1 Peter 2:11***

*Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul (NIV).*

*Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers [in this world] to abstain from the sensual urges [those dishonorable desires] that wage war against the soul (AMP).*

---

**I am an enemy of the devil.**



***1 Peter 5:8***

*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour (NKJV).*

*Be sober [well balanced and self-disciplined], be alert and cautious at all times. That enemy of yours, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion [fiercely hungry], seeking someone to devour (AMP).*

---

**I have been justified by faith and I have peace with God because of what Jesus did for me. By faith I stand in God's grace, and I rejoice in His provision for anything I need.**

***Romans 5:1-2***

*Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God (NKJV).*

*Therefore, since we have been justified [that is, acquitted of sin, declared blameless before God] by faith, [let us grasp the fact that] we have peace with God [and the joy of reconciliation with Him] through our Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed). Through Him we also have access by faith into this [remarkable state of] grace in which we [firmly and safely and securely] stand. Let us rejoice in our hope and the confident assurance of*

*[experiencing and enjoying] the glory of [our great] God [the manifestation of His excellence and power] (AMP).*

---

**I have been justified by the blood of Christ and I am saved from God’s wrath. I am reconciled to God because of Jesus and I am saved by His resurrection life.**

***Romans 5:8-10***

*But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life (NKJV).*

*But God clearly shows and proves His own love for us, by the fact that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Therefore, since we have now been justified [declared free of the guilt of sin] by His blood, [how much more certain is it that] we will be saved from the wrath of God through Him. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, it is much more certain, having been reconciled, that we will be saved [from the consequences of sin] by His life [that is, we will be saved because Christ lives today] (AMP).*

**I have received the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness through Christ and I reign and rule in my life through the power and person of Jesus.**

***Romans 5:17***

*For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ (NKJV).*

*For if by the trespass of the one (Adam), death reigned through the one (Adam), much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in [eternal] life through the One, Jesus Christ (AMP).*

---

**I was buried with Christ through baptism and was raised from the dead with Him to walk in the new life He has purchased for me.**

***Romans 6:3-4***

*Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life (NKJV).*

*Or are you ignorant of the fact that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We have therefore been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory and power of the Father, we too might walk habitually in newness of life [abandoning our old ways] (AMP).*

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**I was crucified with Christ and the old sinful life is dead and gone. I am no longer a slave of sin because I am free from it.**

***Romans 6:6-7***

*Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin (NJKV).*

*We know that our old self [our human nature without the Holy Spirit] was nailed to the cross with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin. For the person who has died [with Christ] has been freed from [the power of] sin (AMP).*

---

**I am a slave of righteousness.**

***Romans 6:17-19***

*But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were*

*delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness (NKJV).*

*But thank God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient with all your heart to the standard of teaching in which you were instructed and to which you were committed. And having been set free from sin, you have become the slaves of righteousness [of conformity to God's will and purpose]. I am speaking in [familiar] human terms because of your natural limitations [your spiritual immaturity]. For just as you presented your bodily members as slaves to impurity and to [moral] lawlessness, leading to further lawlessness, so now offer your members [your abilities, your talents] as slaves to righteousness, leading to sanctification [that is, being set apart for God's purpose] (AMP).*

---

**I am free from condemnation because I am in Christ and walk in the new life of the Spirit.**

***Romans 8:1-2***

*There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death (NKJV).*

*Therefore there is now no condemnation [no guilty verdict, no punishment] for those who are in Christ Jesus [who believe in Him as personal Lord and Savior]. For the law of the Spirit of life [which is] in Christ Jesus [the law of our new being] has set you free from the law of sin and of death (AMP).*

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**Nothing—no person or event or circumstance—can separate me from God’s love.**

***Romans 8:37-39***

*. . . we are more than conquerors through Him who 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 created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (NKJV).*

*. . . we are more than conquerors and gain an overwhelming victory through Him who loved us [so much that He died for us]. For I am convinced [and continue to be convinced—beyond any doubt] that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present and threatening, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the [unlimited] love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (AMP).*

# Appendix B

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## Gospel Sharing Outline Example

Below is a sample script that includes steps for sharing with someone. Included are a prayer for a need, followed by Presentation #1 and the accompanying prayer of salvation.

### **#1 – Have a conversation.**

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Talk about things you have in common.

### **#2 – Offer to pray for a specific need. Complete the prayer this way:**

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“... and Father I ask in the name of Jesus that You will open (person’s name) heart to know the truth of Your marvelous love for them. Thank You, Father, for showing how precious they are to You and how much You want them to be Your child forever. Amen.”

### **#3 – Provide a gospel presentation:**

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These days, so many of us struggle with questions about our identity. We're all trying to figure out who we are while we search for love and meaning. There is a way to know that you are loved and significant, and that's by asking Jesus Christ to be your Lord. It's not some feel-good idea to give you an emotional buzz that wears off.

When you ask Jesus into your heart, your spirit is made alive forever. It's a real experience. You are reborn as God's child in the deepest part of yourself. The Bible says if we choose Christ:

- We have a right to be called God's children and we're adopted into His family.
- We are blameless before a holy God because Jesus paid the penalty we owe for sin.
- Because of Jesus, we have an open door into a world in which God desires our company, hears our prayers and meets our needs.
- And we can experience emotional healing.

Become a child of God by praying this short prayer right now. Repeat after me:

*Jesus, I need You (Pause). I accept that You died on the cross (Pause) to pay the penalty I owed for sin (Pause). Because of what You did (Pause), I can be God's child and be spiritually alive (Pause). I accept You now, Jesus (Pause). You are my Lord and Savior (Pause). Thank You for forgiveness and new life (Pause). Thank You for making me God's child (Pause). In Your name I pray, amen.*



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# About the Author

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Danny M. Boyd has participated in evangelism outreaches at churches over the years and also has served as an outreach leader. He has a heart to see the lost come to a saving knowledge of Christ. During his writing career, Danny has been a reporter at daily newspapers and the Associated Press, a corporate communications manager, a copywriter for ministry, and a freelance writer on energy industry topics for both trade press and business. He is a graduate of Rhema Bible Training College and the University of Texas at Austin.