

AMBASSADORS TRAINING COURSE

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Class II *Daily Devotional*

Covenant
Challenge

COVENANT CHALLENGE

Daily Devotional

This Daily Devotional is designed to help you digest the information from the class and manual. As the information settles into your heart and mind, your entire life will be transformed by truth. The devotional should be read Monday thru Friday each week. The idea behind the daily devotionals are to read the information, then using the suggested prayers with the devotionals, begin a dialogue with God about His truth. May His Presence become a place of refreshing for your soul as you spend time with Him.

NEW CREATION *Day 1*

The first step toward building a successful life, as a disciple of Jesus Christ, is to clearly understand what happened to you when you were born of the Spirit. In **John 3:3** Jesus declares, ...*“unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God”*. And in **John 3:5** He goes on to say *“...unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God”*. These verses of Scripture define the necessity of a new birth, prior to *seeing* and *entering* the kingdom of God. Therefore, as disciples of Jesus Christ, we have received the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit enables our spirit to recognize and experience the reality of God in our lives. It is important to note, that without the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, it is impossible to see or enter into the Kingdom of God.

To explain this a little more lets go to **II Corinthians 5:17**. *“Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come”*. Before we received Jesus Christ into our hearts, we were literally in Adam; the first created man (Genesis 1:27). And because Adam sinned from the beginning, we were all born into his sin. However, when we received Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, we were placed in Christ. And because Jesus never sinned, we were born-again into His Righteousness. The point is this; because we are born of the Spirit we are no longer *in Adam*, but rather we are now *in Christ*.

PRAYER

“Father, I thank you for causing me to be born again. Fill me with Your Spirit and lead me into all the truth. Help me to be sensitive to Your Spirit and to recognize His promptings today.”

In Jesus Name, Amen!

NEW CREATION *Day 2*

To be in Christ is to be a new creation. This means we have a new nature. We no longer have to try to be good enough. We no longer have to struggle with a guilty conscience. And we no longer need to be afraid. As we allow the Holy Spirit to renew our minds with the Word of God, then our will and our emotions will line up with our new nature.

One of the greatest benefits of a new nature is that our old sinful nature has been put to death. That means old sins, bad habits, poor attitudes and negatives thought patterns are no longer part of who we *truly* are. The key to experiencing this new life is to abide in Christ through faith. When we develop our faith, then we begin to understand who we are in Christ. However, if we do not develop our faith in Christ, then we will become weak in Christ and begin to notice the symptoms of our old nature. Therefore, it is essential to grow in the knowledge and grace of God, then to apply what we learn in our lives.

PRAYER

“Father, I stand in awe of the miracle of being a new creation in Christ. I praise you for removing guilt, fear and shame far from me. Thank You for empowering me to enjoy the freedom of being myself.”

In Jesus Name, Amen!

THE BIBLE *Day 3*

In the book of Romans 10:17 the Bible says, “*So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ*”. Therefore, we can conclude that the **source** of faith comes from the Word of God. This means we need to continually expose ourselves to the Word of God.

Of necessity, we should habitually read the Word, study the Word, hear the Word and do the Word. Faith is the vehicle, which God has chosen to bring victory into the lives of His disciples. So, as we allow the Word to develop faith in us, then we are able to grow into mature disciples.

At the moment we are born-again through faith in Jesus Christ, God seals us with His Holy Spirit. This is a precious gift we have as God’s children. The Holy Spirit works together with the Word of God to form Christ in our hearts through faith. Therefore, a regular diet of the Word of God provides the Holy Spirit with the necessary ingredients to create for us a victorious life.

PRAYER

“Father, You are light and truth, Your word is established forever. Cause Your Spirit to greater form Christ in me as I hear and read Your word.”

In Jesus Name, Amen!

THE BIBLE *Day 4*

Developing a habit of investing time in the word of God on a regular basis has tremendous benefits. To really maximize the most out of your time in the word, meditating on what you read even after you’re finished reading is powerful. When we hear and receive the word it is possible that much of what we receive can be lost. However, when we learn to retain the word in our heart long enough for it to take root, then we will see the fruit of that word in our lives. The way we retain the word in our heart is to meditate on it. That means we ponder what we have heard, we roll it around in our mind and consider its application in our lives. This process helps us to appreciate the word, thus allowing it to anchor our soul and direct our life. So, when you spend time with God in His word, don’t be too quick to move on with your life without considering His word in your heart. Give place and time for His word to make a difference in your life.

Consider this...God created us out of His desire to love. Because of His great love for us, He will never push Himself on us. However, the bible communicates Gods heart toward us. As we yield our hearts to God and approach His word with a desire to know Him, then we soon discover an overwhelming love awaiting us. The bible renews our minds and transforms our hearts by revealing Gods love to us. The bible is literally a love letter from God. This is tremendously important to us because our greatest need in life is love.

PRAYER

“Father, I am so grateful that Your word teaches me that You love me unconditionally. I embrace Your love and ask You to perfect Your love in my heart.”

In Jesus Name, Amen!

PRAYER *Day 5*

Prayers can be frustrated by having a wrong motive. We learn this in James 4:2-3 “...*You do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask with **wrong motives**, so that you may spend it on your pleasures*”. It is true, if you ask God to do something in your life, that He said He would do for you in His Word, He will do it. However, there is a condition for receiving from God. And that condition is a right motive. In other words, you have to be sincere in your relationship with God. He will not permit us to relate to Him as a magic wand. He desires to demonstrate to us throughout our lives that He is faithful and worthy of our trust. When we are sincere in our relationship with God, as we ask Him for certain things in our lives, then when the answer comes it will strengthen our relationship with God.

Sometimes prayers are unfruitful because there is a lack of persistence. In Matthew 7:7-8 the scriptures says, “**Ask**, and it shall be given to you; **seek**, and you shall find; **knock**, and it shall be opened to you. For everyone who **asks** receives, and he who **seeks** finds, and to him who **knocks** it shall be opened”. The context of this passage of Scripture literally means to keep on asking, keep on seeking and keep on knocking. The essence of these two verses is to emphasize that he who is persistent with God will receive from God.

PRAYER

“Father, I desire for my life and my attitude to be pleasing to you. Search my heart and reveal to me if there is any harmful way. I will be persistent in faith as You work in me.”

In Jesus Name, Amen!

PRAYER *Day 6*

Ultimately, in the mind of God, He desires to reveal the knowledge of His kingdom in our hearts. This is the greatest cause for prayer. Jesus said in Matthew 6:33, “*But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you*”. The Kingdom of God is simply the way God does things. It is His government in our lives. Sincere prayer is a demonstration of humility before God. When we pray, we are subjecting ourselves to God's government in our lives.

As we allow God to work in our lives the way He desires to, then we begin to see ourselves the way God does, in His righteousness. God always views us through the eyes of Jesus Christ. As we mature in our prayer life with God, then we begin to see what God sees. This is how He establishes us in His righteousness.

The more we discover of God's government in our lives, the more established our lives become. This is the place where our heavenly Father is drawing us to. It is at this place of understanding that all the other things in life we need or desire are added to us.

PRAYER

“Father, it is exciting to think of the reality of Your kingdom in my life. Bring me wisdom and revelation of Your rule over my life and the joy that it brings to my soul.”

In Jesus Name, Amen!

WORSHIP *Day 7*

Listen to Colossians 3:1-4, *“If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.”* We learn from this passage that we should set our mind on God who is above. As we focus on Him in worship, then we begin to find our life in Christ. The way this happens is that the Spirit of God begins to open the *eyes of our heart* as we seek God in worship. It is only through the eyes of our heart that we can truly see God and discover ourselves in Christ. Many people, including Christians, try to find themselves in so many things other than God. The problem with this scenario is that only God has the capacity to give us life. Other things may give us momentary pleasure or temporary satisfaction, but only God Himself can give us life. Therefore, because of the need to live, we all have to find our life in Christ. Remember what Jesus said in John 10:10, *“...I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly.”* Let’s worship Him because our lives depend upon it.

PRAYER

“Father, I set my mind on You and the blessings that You freely give to me in Christ. I worship You because my very life comes from You. May Your Spirit cause me to fully come alive.”

In Jesus Name, Amen!

WORSHIP *Day 8*

The definition for atmosphere is *the surrounding influence or environment*. King David teaches us about the Presence of God in Psalm 16:11, *“Thou wilt make known to me the path of life; In Thy Presence is fullness of joy; In Thy right hand there are pleasures forever.”* David experienced the atmosphere of heaven through his relationship with God. He understood that life, joy and pleasure were experienced at the highest level only in and because of the Presence of God. When we observed the life of David we see a man whose highest priority in life was experiencing the Presence of God. This is why he was regarded as a man after God’s own heart, a man who worshipped his God.

Our adversary will fight us on this issue harder than anything else because he knows what happens to us when we experience the atmosphere of heaven. Nevertheless, as we worship our way *through* distractions, hurts, temptations and condemnation, then we can enter into the Presence of God and experience our souls being restored and our spirits being energized. Let us express our worship to God with instruments, songs, singing and with our very life. Then God will fill our hearts with His holy Presence and we will be continually satisfied with the atmosphere of heaven.

PRAYER

“Father, Your Presence is so amazing to me. Thank You for making a way for me through Jesus Christ to enter into Your Presence. I push every distraction aside, so I can experience the joy of Your Presence in my life.”

In Jesus Name, Amen!

RENEWING THE MIND *Day 9*

“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.” (Galatians 2:20) Paul teaches us in this passage a life changing truth about those who have come to faith in Jesus Christ. The moment we receive Christ into our heart, we become a child of God. By virtue of a spiritual birth we no longer belong to the kingdom of darkness, but rather the kingdom of God. This means our old, fallen nature that we received from Adam and Eve has been removed from us. That is why it is futile to try and get Gods approval through good works or religious activity. God wants to put to death our old rebellious nature and give us a new nature. This is what it means to be born-again. However, after becoming a child of God through the new birth, we still have to renew our minds with the word of God. God does give us a new heart and a new spirit, but we are required to renew our minds. This is where we develop a vital relationship with God. If we fail to commit ourselves to growing in our relationship with God, then our unrenewed mind will keep us defeated and frustrated. So, the real battlefield for the Christian is in the mind.

PRAYER

“Father, protect my mind from any harmful influences today. Help me to recognize and embrace your higher thoughts for my life.”

In Jesus Name, Amen

RENEWING THE MIND *Day 10*

“Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.” (II Corinthians 5:17) This verse of Scripture is absolute truth for every child of God, whether we feel it or not. After our initial decision to receive Christ, the primary purpose for the rest of our lives on this earth is about *growing* in Christ. In order to truly experience our new life in Christ daily, we have to nurture our faith in Him. As we learn to consistently trust and obey Christ we grow in our awareness of our new life in Him. We should continually seek God for the things He freely gives us in Christ. This is where the challenge comes for us. Our unrenewed mind will try to make us work for or earn the very things God gives us freely. Religious activity and church attendance is not how we grow in Christ. We will naturally grow in Christ as we serve Him in every area of your lives. Listen to what Jesus said in Matthew 7:24-25, *“Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts upon them, may be compared to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against the house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded upon the rock.”* The emphasis of this passage is to *act* upon the word of God. In other words, we need to literally practice our faith. It’s not enough to just hear the truth. If we desire what God desires for us, which is a new and abundant life in Christ, then we have to act like what God says is true. Only when we do this are we really going to experience this new life Christ has promised us.

PRAYER

“Father, the truth of Your word is an anchor for my soul. Show me how I can effectively practice doing what I know to be true.”

In Jesus Name, Amen

YOUR TESTIMONY *Day 11*

In Matthew 5:13-14 Jesus said, “You are the *salt* of the earth...you are the *light* of the world”. Because Christ dwells in our hearts, we now possess a very unique nature. The most effective testimony we can give anyone is a demonstration of the nature of Christ in us. Eventhough we may have struggles from time to time, we still have the potential to make a difference in this world.

The Holy Spirit who lives in us longs for us to step out of our comfort zone and touch people with Gods love. When we take courage and begin to seek opportunities to preserve **moral excellence** among our peers, then we develop effectiveness in our witness for the Lord. This is when our faith becomes an exciting journey, as well as a challenging mandate.

People are looking for hope everywhere. Therefore, it is essential for disciples to preserve and demonstrate life by being salt and light in this world. This role in many situations may be uncomfortable because of the risk it involves of rejection. You will not always be accepted when you stand strong in your faith. This is the place where salt and light are most effective. This is also the place where we as disciples of Christ discover our true potential.

PRAYER

“Father, You have called me to be salt and light in this world. Send someone into my life who needs to hear what You have done in my heart.”

In Jesus Name, Amen

YOUR TESTIMONY *Day 12*

As disciples of Christ we need to assume an offensive approach toward life. Reason being, we are a threat to the kingdom of darkness. Therefore, the very principle of evil itself will challenge the faith of everyone who believes in God for eternal life. It is critical to understand the spiritual **WAR** between the forces of good and evil has already been declared finished. Listen to what the bible says in I John 3:8, “...*The Son of God appeared for this purpose, that He might destroy the works of the devil*”. The works of the devil are the fruits of sin. When Jesus went to the cross He destroyed sin through His righteousness. Therefore, Jesus now has all authority in heaven and on earth (Matthew 28:18). However, even though the **WAR** has already been won, there are many **BATTLES** yet to fight as His disciples in the earth.

After Jesus defeated the devil, the devil was left with no authority. The only weapon our enemy possesses now is deception. In Revelation 12:11 the bible says, “And they overcame him because of the blood of the lamb and because of the word of their testimony...”. When we sense the enemy bringing accusations or temptations to us, then we can overcome him by *remembering* the blood Jesus shed for us and by *testifying* of the victory we have through Jesus Christ. The more we exercise our faith in Jesus Christ, then the more battles we win. This exercising of faith develops within us the ability to recognize that the war has already been won.

PRAYER

“Father, I thank You for the blood that Jesus shed for me. I give You praise for giving me victory over the accusations of my adversary and the temptations that would break my fellowship with You.”

In Jesus, Amen

FELLOWSHIP *Day 13*

The challenge for disciples is to live in the world but not let the world live in them. When I say **world** I'm talking about the way people live their lives ignorant of the knowledge of God. It is literally the influences of the culture in which we live. These influences can summons the residue of our fallen nature into active duty. So, as disciples the potential always remains for sin to creep back into our lives through the memory of a fallen nature that Christ put to death. With this in mind, the bible teaches us how to be cleansed from the influences of the world. Listen to this passage in I John 1:7, *"...but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin."*

God is in the light and we are called to walk in the light with Him. However, darkness does exist in the world and in the memory of our fallen nature. Therefore, we need to be released from the pull of sin and this world so we can walk with God in the light. One of the processes God uses to release us from the things that weigh us down in this world is godly fellowship. When disciples get together and share themselves with one another the anointing which resides in them is released. This anointing applies the redeeming blood of Jesus to our souls and sets our minds free. This is the love of God at work.

PRAYER

"Father, it is such a blessing to me knowing that I have the privilege of spending time with other followers of Christ. Help me remember to make time to fellowship with other Christians."

In Jesus Name, Amen

FELLOWSHIP *Day 14*

We all possess hidden ability and power that is waiting to be released into our lives. However, the right ingredients need to be mixed into our lifestyle to ensure the realization of our potential. Fellowship is one of the major ingredients that makes this awakening of potential possible. Getting to the place in life where we are consistently walking in obedience to the will of God is the greatest blessing of life. Fellowship was a common practice among the first disciples in the bible and is also the will of God for our lives. As we engage in fellowship with other disciples, then we begin to see what we can truly become.

Galatians 5:14 says, *"For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, **You shall love your neighbor as yourself.**"* Jesus gave this new commandment to us, which is essentially the nature and practice of christian faith. God is very interested in His children interacting with one another. Our potential in Christ is linked together with other disciples. When we get together in faith we can literally provoke one another to good works (see Hebrews 10:24). One spark of light coupled together with another spark of light inevitably creates a fire. Then, this fire begins to spread among the people and the environment becomes an all consuming fire. This type of environment, created through fellowship, produces a zeal in people which results in good works. This is what God is after and what we were truly made for.

PRAYER

"Father, it brings me so much life when I share my faith with other believers. May Your Spirit inspire our times of fellowship with a zeal to do Your will in our lives."

In Jesus Name, Amen

SERVING PEOPLE *Day 15*

The apostle Paul received a wonderful revelation from God about the body of Christ. This is what he says in Ephesians 4:15-16, *“but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.”* Every individual member in the body of Christ has an important role to fulfill for the spiritual growth of the collective body of Christ. Joints hold different members together in the body. The joint is literally the place where life is experienced. The joint represents the relationships we share with each other in the body of Christ. Through these relationships the life of God is released and experienced.

Being a disciple is not a spectator sport. However, it is engaging, interactive, challenging and rewarding. It requires nothing less than a total commitment of your whole person. If we hesitate or become double-minded, then we risk missing out on what God really has for us. When we make the decision to be committed to the process God has us in for transforming our lives, then we begin to see the need we have for faith-filled relationships. It really is a double standard with relationships. We have as much a need to *give* in relationships as we do to *receive* from relationships. We are all interdependent within the body of Christ. Relationships serve as a vehicle for love to be experienced. And without love it is impossible to grow in God because God is love.

PRAYER

“Father, I desire to do my part in the body of Christ to cause it to grow. Help me to see clearly how I can be a blessing to the body.”

In Jesus Name, Amen

SERVING PEOPLE *Day 16*

We all have a desire deep within our hearts to know that our life matters, to know that we made a difference. This longing is actually the heart of God for our lives. It is true that God desires to see our lives blessed spiritually, emotionally, physically and financially. However, these blessings do not satisfy the longing we have to make a difference. Listen to what Jesus said, *“It is more blessed to give than to receive”* (Acts 20:35). It’s not healthy to spend all of our time as Disciples trying to receive from God or from people. On the other hand, it is healthy to look for opportunities and to create opportunities for blessing God and for blessing people.

As we begin to make a difference in the lives of others, then we will recognize the value God has given every human being. We will start seeing areas of criticism, judgment, unforgiveness and distrust literally melt away from our hearts. Many times because people sense shame, guilt or even fear in their hearts they will not even try to serve people. This is due to a belief that says I am unworthy to be a blessing to someone. The truth of the matter is that God has established the art of serving as a means for us to draw from the redemption we have in Christ. In other words, it’s a great way to adjust our attitude if it becomes negative. This is important to understand because the greatest impact we have on people is our attitude.

PRAYER

“Father, I know every person has been created in Your image and possesses tremendous value. I commit myself to be a blessing to people in how I treat them and my willingness to serve them.”

In Jesus Name, Amen

YOUR MONEY *Day 17*

Financial freedom does not happen over night, but it will happen through the process of applying ourselves. It is important to develop a plan of action and to have someone hold you accountable to that plan. It is also important to note that as we make the decision to attain financial freedom *we will face strong resistance from the world system, possibly from other people and even our own minds.* This is the place where we need to renew our minds to think differently.

Many people constantly struggle to just earn a living. The problem with this scenario is that God has called us to live a destiny. When we have the *just earning a living* attitude, then we put ourselves in a survival approach toward life. However, when we have the *living a destiny* attitude, then we put ourselves in a conquering approach toward life. There are many things we have to conquer before we will enjoy financial freedom. Some of the issues to conquer are; developing self-discipline, faithfully holding ourselves accountable, resisting indulgent spending and developing patience.

As we develop and practice a detailed plan of action for attaining financial freedom, then we will begin to see our circumstances change and we will notice the favor of the Lord in our lives. Living our lives in a way that we actually become *a burden to none and a blessing to all* is the essence of financial freedom.

PRAYER

“Father, I believe I’m here on this earth to live a destiny. Give me guidance and understanding, so I can develop the best possible financial plan for my life.”

In Jesus Name, Amen

YOUR MONEY *Day 18*

The way we handle money has a significant effect on the quality of life we experience and the level of trust the Lord gives us. Listen to the following verses, *“He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much. If therefore you have not been faithful in the use of unrighteous mammon (money), who will entrust the true riches to you?”* From a human standpoint money has the potential to create positive circumstances that can promote our quality of life. From Gods standpoint money is a *tutor for spiritual success.* In other words, when we develop trustworthiness in our handling of money, then we begin to understand the true riches of God. Every disciple of Christ is designed by God to have good spiritual success. However, this success only comes through our faithful stewardship. With this in mind, it is essential to be found faithful in our management of money. The principles for managing our money with a biblical perspective are (1) earning an income, (2) honoring God with your tithe, (3) creating a budget (spending), (4) investing money (saving) and (5) sowing money (giving). When you diligently practice these five principles, then you will find good success. (see Joshua 1:8)

PRAYER

“Father, You have called me to succeed in my journey with You. I understand my view of money is important concerning my spiritual growth. I commit to be disciplined in my management of money.”

In Jesus Name, Amen

THE LOCAL CHURCH *Day 19*

Matthew 18:20 says, “*For where two or three have gathered together in My name, there I am in their midst.*” When we come together in the Name of the Lord, we are facilitating an opportunity for experiencing the work of redemption in our lives. We are all called by our heavenly Father to rise above the limitations, distractions, irritations and speculations of our time. He desires to see us assume our place in Him where the life of Christ flows freely through us. However, this desired place of purpose and power does not happen simply because you are a disciple or because you really want it. Our adversary the devil will most certainly use every evil scheme and deceitful weapon imaginable to keep us from the truth. Furthermore, the worldly cultures in which we live are always competing for our attention and our affections. Even more, the memory of our own flesh nature will wrestle with Christ for control of our lives. Understanding these enemies of our faith and the real danger they represent helps us to realize just how much we need to be actively engaged in redemptive community.

Through participation in redemptive community we are empowered to overcome our past, our weaknesses and our enemies. Furthermore, we are empowered to discover our purpose, develop our potential and fulfill our destiny. Listen to Psalm 133:1,3 “*Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity...for there the Lord commanded the blessing-life forever!* The Lord Himself values us coming together in His name so much, that He commands the blessing of eternal life in that place.

PRAYER

“Father, thank You for my church community and the strength I receive from it. May Your Spirit continue to empower us.”

In Jesus Name, Amen!

THE LOCAL CHURCH *Day 20*

It is essential to our growth as disciples of Jesus Christ to have Intimate Allies in our lives. Intimate Allies are those people who we share a deep sense of trust with, who we share our deepest concerns and struggles with. These are the few people who have access to our heart and have the ability to influence us in our decision-making. Jesus modeled this for us in the Gospels. We learn from His life that He selected twelve men to be close to Him. And from these twelve men He selected three of them to be His intimate allies.

The most evident characteristic of Intimate Allies is that they will **fight for your heart**. Listen to what Jesus said in the Gospel of John 13:34-35, “*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.*” When we observe how Jesus loved, then we soon discovered that He fought for the heart of every human being. That is what He communicated so clearly when he willingly went to the cross and died in our place. He did not give up on us, but instead He fought for our hearts even to the point of His own death. As we accept the responsibility to sincerely fight for one another’s heart, then people will recognize that we are truly disciples of Christ, including ourselves.

PRAYER

“Father, I take courage to fight for the hearts of those closes to me. I ask for Your wisdom to know how I can be most effective in fighting for my intimate allies.”

In Jesus Name,

FORGIVENESS *Day 21*

It is true that authentic forgiveness begins with a decision. However, the decision is only the beginning. There is a process to work through in order for forgiveness to reach its full expression, which is reconciliation. This means there has to be an *emotional release* that takes place in our heart and mind. If we decide to forgive someone who has hurt us and even confess that we have forgiven them, but fail to release the *pain* they caused us, then we are not allowing forgiveness to be fully expressed. The uncured pain from the offense will remain as a wedge between us and the other party, which means there is no true reconciliation. Even though the other party involved may not desire to be reconciled, we still have to resolve the issue for ourselves. In other words, we forgive people as much for ourselves as we do for them.

Emotional pain is very dangerous and can destroy lives. It literally produces anger, bitterness and isolation. There is much medical evidence indicating that unforgiveness is the cause for many sicknesses and diseases. We as human beings do not have the capacity to hold onto pain, anger, bitterness and unforgiveness for very long. Eventually these dangerous emotions will begin to cause our spirit, body and mind to breakdown. What God commands us to do when someone offends us is to respond with compassion rather than insisting on revenge. This is a difficult lesson to learn, but an attitude we must develop. We all possess the ability to give compassion and when we do God is glorified and we are released to live and enjoy our lives.

PRAYER

“Father, it encourages my heart to know that you heal the broken hearted. Show me how and make me willing to release any hurts I may have in my heart.”

In Jesus Name, Amen!

FORGIVENESS *Day 22*

Listen to I Corinthians 15:45, *“So it is written: The first man Adam became a living soul, the last Adam, a life-giving spirit.”* When we come to faith in Jesus Christ we become a life-giving spirit. This means that giving life is essential to who we are and how we function. This is so important to understand in relation to forgiveness. When situations and circumstances occur that hurt us emotionally, the natural response is to hold on to the hurt, shut down part of our heart, live in fear of being hurt again and become angry because we aren't fully living. Not only does everyone lose, but we are not able to be ourselves as well.

When we learn to forgive from the heart, then we become more sensitive to what's really important in life. After overcoming a hurt we put more value on the things that make us come alive to God. Experiencing true forgiveness teaches us to manage the issues of our heart with more diligence. We begin to steer our hearts in a direction that leads us out of dangerous emotions and into positive emotions. The abundant life Jesus was talking about in John 10:10 is connected to our *emotionality*. As we observe the life of Jesus in the four gospels we find a very personal Jesus who expressed powerful emotions. It is critical to our maturity that we manage our emotions well, but we also need to learn how to express them appropriately. As we obediently exercise the habit of forgiveness, then we can expect to grow in the fruit of the Spirit. The more we live out of this place the more we will want to live out of this place. This is the abundant life that belongs to us in Christ.

PRAYER

“Father, I value the new life I have in Christ. Teach my heart to mature in the healthy emotions you have planned for my life.”

In Jesus Name, Amen!

REPENTANCE *Day 23*

As important as it is to understand the requirement of repentance *before* salvation, it is as equally important to understand that repentance is a habit that we should exercise on a regular basis *after* salvation. Listen to what Paul said in Philippians 2:12-13, “*So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.*” We learn from this passage that we are to *work out* our salvation. This means there is a process for us to walk through in order for us to *experience* our salvation. When we become a new creature in Christ God begins to teach us how to live out of our heart. This is where the life of the Spirit resides.

Becoming a disciple of Christ does not mean that the *world* changed, it means that *we* have changed. Furthermore, even though we changed when we repented and accepted Christ, we still have the *capacity* to become carnally minded and sin. Because of this reality repentance becomes a necessary habit we need to practice. When we sin or when we are sinned against the experience has an affect on our heart. Our heart can be hurt, hardened, embittered, angry or fearful. When these things happen to our heart, then we can't *experience* our salvation. When we do stumble and find ourselves in darkness, then repentance is the answer. Listen to Romans 2:4, “*...the kindness of God leads you to repentance?*” We could not repent if the goodness of God did not lead us to it. Even in the mist of a mess God will speak to our heart about restoring our life. As we heed His promise of restoration, then we will ultimately repent and allow God to bless us.

“Father, Your goodness is a compass for my heart. If there is any place in me in need of repentance, reveal it to me today”

In Jesus Name, Amen!

REPENTANCE *Day 24*

Experiencing repentance is a process as well as instant. When repentance has been fully exercised, then there is an instant freedom as a result. Whether it is the first time we come to the Lord in repentance or at any other time, *the goodness of God* has already been working on us for a period of time. It works this way because God is dealing with our free will. He has to work in a fashion that causes us to be won to Him. God will always *honor our free will* before He does anything else in our lives.

Because we still have the potential, even as disciples of Jesus Christ, to have sinful attitudes and behaviors, we can find ourselves in a place that the bible refers to as a stronghold (see II Corinthians 10:3-6). A stronghold identifies a place in our heart where we have made an *agreement* with an evil thought or idea. In other words, we saw something of an evil nature and yielded our heart to it. As long as this agreement with evil exists in our heart, we will be stunted in our growth, limited in our intimacy and experience many struggles in our life. This is a very frustrating and depressing place to exist.

Praise God for the gift of repentance. There is no stronghold too powerful for God to pull down as we exercise repentance. Strongholds can have varying degrees of influence in our heart. Therefore, the amount of time will also vary concerning how long it will take to fully exercise repentance and pull down a stronghold. It is more than worth the fight to pull down a stronghold, so that we can experience the intense joy and freedom that we were made for.

“Father, I believe You want my mind and heart to be completely free from oppression. I resolve to exercise my right and will to be free any time oppression may try to affect my heart and mind”

In Jesus Name, Amen!

DESTINY *Day 25*

Listen to the definition for **Inherit** - *to come into possession of or receive especially as a right or divine portion.* There is a treasure God desires for us to come into possession of while we still live here on earth. That is why Jesus proclaims to us “*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*” (Matthew 4:17). He desires to see us experience heaven on earth.

After we receive the forgiveness of sins through repentance, we are now qualified to come into possession of the kingdom of heaven. This experience takes place in our heart as we *align* our attitudes, habits and lifestyle with the will of God. This is where we are to commit to the process of being transformed by renewing our mind. Listen to what Romans 12:1-2 has to say about our minds, “*I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*” We have to invest time and energy into hearing, reading and studying the bible. The bible reveals to us the will of God. As we receive revelation of the will of God, then the Holy Spirit will energize us to do the will of God. It is through this process of *doing the will of God* that we come into possession of the kingdom of God. It is only in possessing the kingdom that we will experience true fulfillment and lasting joy. The reason being is because the kingdom of God is what we were created for. Anything less than experiencing the kingdom will frustrate our potential for fulfillment and joy in life.

“Father, lead me into the possession of all that is freely given to me in Christ. Empower me to be renewed in my mind as I present my body to You as a living sacrifice”

In Jesus Name, Amen!

DESTINY *Day 26*

God has hidden our destiny in our *journey of faith* with Him. A framework was established for the purpose of man and God to develop a vital relationship. Ephesians 2:10 gives us some insight into this truth, “*For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*” The word workmanship in this verse means poetry. Therefore, when we are living in obedience to what God shows us in our heart through meditation and prayer, then our lives become like a poem or a song. We are destined to create harmony with our life in Christ. Every step of faith is like hitting a musical chord for a song. As we learn to live our life by faith in Christ, then we will sense our life coming into harmony with Gods song for our life. The key to experiencing this harmony is to *seek* the purpose of God for our life. God has things already prepared for us that He desires for us to discover. He gets so excited when we engage Him in pursuit of our destiny.

The last part of the verse teaches *that we should walk in them.* The reason why this verse says “should” is because there will be many things that will try to distract, discourage and disqualify us from fulfilling our destiny. The apostle Paul encourages us on this matter in Colossians 3:2-3, “*Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.*” Fulfilling our destiny requires a mindset that is focused on the intangible things in life. As we practice this, then we will more clearly see the reality of our destiny in God.

“Father, today I’m seeking the rhythms of Your grace for my life. I set my mind on things above and resolve for my lifestyle to become like poetry to Your heart”

In Jesus Name, Amen!

NEW LIFE *Day 27*

God has called every one of His children to greatness. Listen to Colossians 1:27, “...*which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.*” The greatness we are talking about here is not greatness according to the world standard, but greatness according to the God standard. There is expectancy in heaven for every disciple to fully manifest Christ in their lives. It is a priceless treasure we have of Christ in us. We all possess the potential to become consumed with the life of Christ, but we have to practice these vital habits so we can overcome our flesh, the world system and the schemes of the devil.

It takes tremendous *courage* to truly experience our new life in Christ. However, “...*If God is for us, who is against us?*” (Romans 8:31). God knows better about the life we are capable of living than we do. Reason being is because it is the life of God that we are called to live. In other words God knows Himself better than we know Him. Therefore, God has given us instruction in His word that can equip us to serve Him successfully.

“Father, Your word is absolute truth and sets me free when I believe it and practice it. I commit to be a doer of the word, show me how to be effective at doing the things I learn from Your word”

In Jesus Name, Amen!

NEW LIFE *Day 28*

The desired outcome of becoming a **new creation** in Christ is to come *fully alive* to our **new life** in Christ. The previous twelve habits we have discussed, when sincerely practiced, will cause us to experience a completely new life. It is God’s job to *supply* us with the Spirit; it is our job to *walk* in the Spirit. Walking in the Spirit simply means to *yield* our heart to the grace of God, then to live under the leadership of God. It is through the *activity of faith* that God supplies us with the Spirit and we walk in the Spirit. These twelve habits represent the activity of faith we are talking about.

An appropriate verse of Scripture to conclude this class is found in Hebrews 11:6, “*And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a **rewarder** of those who seek Him.*” May we all embrace these twelve habits of a disciple as a means to seeking God, then we will discover rewards that come straight from the One who created us all.

“Father, I desire to come fully alive in Christ. I am motivated to obey You because of the rewards You have waiting for me. I am excited about my new life in Christ and resolve to do my best to practice these twelve biblical habits I have learned about. Thank You for the power of Your Spirit to make me successful”

In Jesus Name, Amen!