

THE GOD-MAN
RELATIONSHIPS
TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Chapter One</u>	
Relationships Summary	3
<u>Chapter Two</u>	
Introduction.....	5
<u>Chapter Three</u>	
The Joy of Relationships.....	18
<u>Chapter Four</u>	
Lessons in Love.....	23
<u>Chapter Fifth</u>	
God Is to Be First	29
<u>Chapter Six</u>	
The Father’s Love	46
<u>Chapter Seven</u>	
Giving and Sharing	55
<u>Chapter Eight</u>	
Loved by God.....	66
<u>Chapter Nine</u>	
Absolute Truth & the 10 Commandments	79
<u>Chapter Ten</u>	
Great Love Story	92
<u>Chapter Eleven</u>	
Loving God’s Way	107
<u>Chapter Twelve</u>	
Response to God	123
<u>Chapter Thirteen</u>	
Vision, Goal, Plans & Purposes	141
<u>Chapter Fourteen</u>	
By Purpose, Principle, Potential	145

THE GOD-MAN
RELATIONSHIPS
TABLE OF CONTENTS
(Continued)

<u>Chapter Fifteen</u>	
Spiritual Principles.....	163
<u>Chapter Sixteen</u>	
Purpose, Principle, Promise	180
<u>Chapter Seventeen</u>	
Why God Hates Divorce.....	197
<u>Chapter Eighteen</u>	
Sanctity of Relationships.....	209
<u>Chapter Nineteen</u>	
God Is to Be First	221
<u>Chapter Twenty</u>	
Personal Integrity	233
<u>Chapter Twenty-one</u>	
The Love Test.....	250
<u>Chapter Twenty-two</u>	
God Loves Everyone	264
<u>Chapter Twenty-three</u>	
Sacrificial Love.....	273

THE GOD-MAN
RELATIONSHIPS
 Relationships Summary
 Chapter One

Signs of Weakness	Cause	Solution	Signs of Strength	Scripture references
Sense of not belonging	Dependency	Humble self under God and honor the Lord.	Loves God first, then others	Deuteronomy 6:4-9 Matthew 5:13 Matthew 5:38-42
Loneliness / self-reliance	Selfishness (wanting own way)	Desire to do God's will.	Loved, so loves others unconditionally	Matthew 7:1-5 Matthew 12:46-50 John 14:12-14
Jealousy or envy	Pride (self) – all about me	Receive God's love.	Position is in Christ, so no need for competition, jealousy, comparison	Acts 10:38 Romans 12 Romans 14 1 st Corinthians 7 1 st Corinthians 13:1-8
Anger	Fear and insecurity of man (looking to people for love and approval)	Love the Lord and love others as yourself.	Secure in Christ	Ephesians 4:1-16 Ephesians 4:17-6:9 Philippians 2 Colossians 3
Partiality	Playing God	Do to others as you want done to you (prefer them).	Loves everyone	1 st Thessalonians 4:1-12
Abused or abuses others	Demonic attacks	Allow the Lord to reign.	Not judgmental, but seeks mercy	1 st Thessalonians 5:4-15
Compete / compare		Value the Lord as your source, not people.	No vengeance or violence – seeks and promotes peace (ministry of reconciliation)	James 2 James 4:11-5:9 1 st Peter 2:11-4:19 2 nd Peter 1
Gossip or judge		Do not judge; show mercy.	.Repays evil with good	Read all of Proverbs
Rejected or rejects others		Be friendly.	Forgiven and forgiving	Read all of Ecclesiastes
Lying		Respect others and prefer them.	Befriends, promotes, encourages others	

THE GOD-MAN
RELATIONSHIPS
 Relationships Summary
 Continued

Signs of Weakness	Cause	Solution	Signs of Strength	Scripture references
Prejudice		Encourage self and others in the Lord.	Seeks the Lord's best for everyone	
Want attention		Bring heaven and best to others	Does not harm anyone	
Isolation)			Cares and helps as the Lord directs	
Demand rights			Enjoys privilege of life and relationships	
Unforgiving and bitter			Consistency	
Not generous				
Not friendly				
Thinking about yourself				

THE GOD-MAN RELATIONSHIPS

Introduction Chapter Two

God Loves and Cares

The greatest fear people have is the fear of being separated, or being alone, of not being loved. But the Lord says, *“My perfect love casts out all fear.”* (1st John 4:18) Your fear of being separated, alone, and not loved is cast out because He has set His love upon you – a love that will never go away, an everlasting love. It never changes whether you are naughty or nice. He always loves and cares about you, and He has a good plan for your life. He is saying to receive His love and enter into all that He has for you.

It thrills my heart when I wake up to know the Lord is right there, saying, “Good morning, son, I love you, and I have great plans for us today.” Then I look over at Diana, and if she is sleeping I just try to get out of bed quietly. If she is awake, I look at her and say, “Good morning; the Lord loves us.”

One of my fondest activities is doing devotions together with Diana. You have to have a relationship with the Lord first; then everybody else the Lord puts in your life is a blessing.

“But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it.” (1st Timothy 6:6-7) That is perspective. *“But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that.”* (1st Timothy 6:8) We have the Lord and we are content with that.

People have serious problems in our day and age because of the world’s economy. But God is on a different economy, and He has an entirely different way of thinking and dealing with things. It is not about how much you do not have, it is about what you do have and that God is with you.

“People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction.” (1st Timothy 6:9)

That does not say that God is not going to prosper you and make you rich. But you will know the riches are not your life.

“For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.” (1st Timothy 6:10)
It is not money that is evil, but the love of money. There is a poverty spirit on many people. It is better to have something than not, and if you have something you can give to somebody, and you can bless people the way God intends.

The Lord gives people the ability to acquire wealth, but that is not the goal and the purpose of being a Christian. That is what false teachers will teach you. When you get to know the Lord, He will give you whatever you need to do what He has given you in life to do.

“Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue...” (1st Timothy 6:10-11)

Pursue the Lord

Your pursuit in life needs to be of righteousness. You need to have godliness, where you start to take on God’s qualities because He is working in you.

“...righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.” (1st Timothy 6:11) No pressure or hardness on people; trusting that God has everything under control. God wants us to be working with Him. He loves that.

“Fight the good fight of faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. In the sight of God, who gives life to everything, and of Christ Jesus...” (1st Timothy 6:12-13)

“Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their

hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.” (1st Timothy 6:17)

I see so many of God’s people not having fun in their lives. They do not even know how to have fun. Every time I am doing what the Lord says, it gives me such great joy. I love what I do. If you do not love what you do and the One that you are doing it for, then you have a problem with your life. You have a wrong focus. *“Whatever you do, do it with all you heart in the name of Jesus to the glory of God.”* (Colossians 3:23) The Lord says pursue Him.

Abundant Life

You do not pursue somebody to love. You do not pursue somebody for what you think you do not have. You do not want to come needy into a relationship. You need to be a blessing to folks and bring heaven to them.

The world does not understand anything about bringing heaven to people. We go to them just to be a blessing and do not expect anything in return. We are being ambassadors of God’s love to others. When you meet somebody, you have the opportunity to do good to that person and not evil.

God richly provides us everything for our enjoyment. He gives us one another for our enjoyment. We should not want to bring pain to someone, but blessing.

“Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.” (1st Timothy 6:18-19)

We did not have a life before Jesus. We were living, but we were not really alive. We were selfish.

The Lord wants us to have an abundant life. Back in the year 1990 the Lord gave me a series of messages on blessing. He started by asking me, “When is it that people come to you?” I said, “They usually come because of relationship needs, financial needs, physical needs, mental needs, and spiritual needs.” This is where people live.

The Lord said it should not be that way. The order should be reversed.

The primary thing in people's lives should be the spiritual concerns. It should be having the Lord's love in place in your life so you have a life, an abundant life as the Lord promises.

The second thing is once your life is right with God being in a relationship with Him, then the Lord will give you peace in your mind. We are living in a society in which 65 to 70 percent of Americans are on antidepressants of some sort, and I may be on the low side of that figure. As I deal with people more and more, I am seeing that this is really true. They are on something.

The Lord says, "If you are right with Me, I will give you perfect peace in your life. I will take the depression out of you."

"Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things." (Colossians 3:1-2)

"Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." (Matthew 6:10) The will of God in heaven can be done here on earth, and in heaven there is no more pain, sorrow, suffering, sickness, death, famines, fear, depression, or poverty. You do not have to have that in your life, and you do not have to be afraid of it happening in your life if you walk with God and do what He says. He has laid out and set before you what He has, and it is easy to do if you want to do it.

"You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you." (Isaiah 26:3)

When your mind and your attitude is in a peaceful, joyful, positive place in a negative world, then God is able to do something in you. The kingdom of heaven, Jesus says, is within you. That is why you can bring heaven to people. You can bring peace to a troubled situation.

If God is for us, and God is with us, then I will not fear what people will do to me. I will not fear about the economic situation going on because God is with me. If you just read the Word of God, you will see what happens. God made the universe, He spoke it forth, and there is not anything too difficult or hard for Him. So what is your problem?

I was sitting in a Bible study one time when I started laughing hilariously. The Lord had spoken to me and said, "What mountain?" Have the godlike kind of faith and (Mark 11:22) you will say to the mountain (or the problem – the big issue in your life), "Move" and it will move if you do not doubt in your heart but believe those things which you say will come to pass. Then you will have whatever you say. It is a positive confession based on a positive God who is able to deliver the goods. He does not make promises He is not able to fulfill. He says, "I am not a man that I am going to lie. Have I not said it, will I not do it, have I not promised, and will I not fulfill?" In other words, it has got to happen. It is impossible that it not happen when you act on what God says.

God will keep you in perfect peace, and you are able to give perfect peace to people around you when you are in a right place. If you are not a giver, you will have the worst relationships in the world. You have to give of yourself to others. God wants your heart. When you have your spirit, mind, body, and finances in order, then it is time for relationships.

Principles for Marriage

Years ago a guy came up to me and asked, "What would it take to marry your daughter?" I looked at him and said, "I will get back to you." I went before the Lord and asked Him about it, and about three nights later I had a dream. In the dream the Lord laid out for me principles which I wrote down. One of the things on there was a freezer of beef every year for the in-laws. People do not think it is of God, but it is about respecting and honoring the wife's family. When you marry somebody, you get their family as well, and a fed family is a happy family.

If people are not ready to do some things on the list of principles, then they are not ready for that relationship. People enter into

relationships too quickly and they put their heart out there. Do not throw your body to somebody to get a relationship. If a person does not respect, honor, and prefer you more important than themselves, or they do not do little things that say they honor you and care about you by looking out for you, or if they are argumentative, stubborn, bullheaded, have to be right, finding fault so that it is like you are walking on eggs say, "Nice meeting you," and walk on by. Because those are surefire signs that you do not want to spend the rest of your life with that person.

Your body is the temple of God, and you are not throwing it out there on a chance that maybe the person will marry you. More than likely there will be an end of the relationship after they have sex a few times. In any case, it just brought a curse in your life to sin against your own body. You will have to go to God and ask His forgiveness and get it right. I tell folks, "If you have done that, then ask God's forgiveness and do not do it anymore, and go into the marriage blessed."

A guy told me one time, "Pastor, I think I am going to die." And I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "If I do not have sex, I am going to die." I said, "We need to cast that devil out of you because that is a lie."

Have you had a dysfunctional relationship in your life? Did you learn how selfish you were when you got married? Do not go into a relationship being needy.

A young woman who had just finished college came up to me one day and said, "Pastor, I really did not know how dysfunctional my family was until I met you and learned how a functioning family works." She said, "I always thought it was normal to be dysfunctional." The Lord has a better plan, but people have learned to accept and cope, and actually enable things to hold together even though they are dysfunctional. They do not want separation, and they do not want the fear of loss and not being loved.

People will pressure you to get you to conform to their image. That is scary, but people are trying to shape their little world and make it a comfort zone for themselves. How do you know that the way that

person acts is functional? It is dysfunctional to want people to act the way that you act. The only reason people will hang around on that one is if the person has money. Or they want sex so they put up with the dysfunction.

Have you ever gotten bitter and unforgiving and walled yourself up? You were going to protect yourself by keeping everybody else out of your life. Did you find that you cannot love anybody now because you are afraid to love them? If you love them and put your emotions out there, you are going to get hurt again – so you have walled in. Here are all these folk that want to love you and care about you and they cannot do it because you walled yourself in. The Lord says to forgive like He has forgiven you. If you do not, then you have just shut God out of your life too.

Have you ever violated God's commandments, and then you did not like to be around other people because you felt guilty and condemned? Many times the Holy Spirit will help you in that process to feel condemned because many do not feel condemned when they should. In other words, if you are doing wrong things you need to quit it and get rid of it. Then the Lord will take that out and heal you. Guilt will separate people and it will hurt relationships. Greed and selfishness will also hurt relationships.

I am going to write a book someday on the number one cause of relationship breakup. It will have one page with one word: SELFISHNESS. That is what breaks up relationships.

As the God-man or woman, our spirit is lined up with God, our mind is at peace with God, our emotions are settled down and we are bringing heaven to people.

The physical is in place. When you feel good, you are a little nicer around people. When you are hurt, messed up, stressed out, or angry, you should just go sit in the corner, pray, and ask God to help you get rid of that.

Finances will start to line up because you know you are content whether you have little or much. You are alright because you have

Jesus and somehow the Lord is going to make a way where there does not seem to be a way.

When all of that is in place, then we are ready for relationships. The only time the apostles ever asked for more faith was when Jesus was teaching them about relationships and forgiving people. It was not healing the sick, casting out devils, or raising the dead, it was living with people.

Attitudes of the God-Man and God-Woman:

1. Love God first, then others
2. Love unconditionally. When you know you are loved, then you are free to remove all the conditions that we put up in relationships. This does not exclude God's conditions. The Lord has conditions of relationship. When you are selfish, you are basically saying, "To hell with God. I am going to do what I want to do. I do not want anybody telling me what to do." That means you have an authority problem. A relationship in the marriage situation is to submit yourself one to another. Submission is not an evil term. It is submitting yourself to God and preferring the other person more important. Just think what would happen in a relationship where both people are preferring the other person more important than themselves.

You need to respect, honor, and care about others more than you are caring about yourself, and when you do that it will cause God's best to come back.

3. Know your position is in Christ so no need for competition, jealousy, or comparison.

We are free to enjoy and accept one another where we are and allow God to work things out. There is no judging. The reason that marriages fall apart in the first few years is because of the power struggle that goes on between the wife trying to dominate the man, and the man trying to dominate the wife. I tell the women, "You do not wear the pants in the family. You are not the head." God says you are not the head. God is going to deal with the man who has that responsibility." If a woman wants to take all the responsibility, there

are many men who will let them have it. If the grass is 3 feet high in the yard and his responsibility is to mow the grass, then let him do it. I do not care if it is 8 feet high, do not dare go out and take his responsibility. If he sees you doing that one time, he will think, *Oh, good*. He can easily shirk that responsibility. It gives him time to do something else that he wants to do. If a woman is nagging him (telling him one time is making him aware of the situation and telling him two times is making him too aware of the situation), he does not want to hear it. *“Better to live in a desert than with a quarrelsome and nagging woman.”* (Proverbs 21:19)

On the other hand, there are many guys who are jerks who are not fulfilling their responsibilities. They are not being the man of the house, but that is not for the woman to determine. It is for God to work on him, and if the ladies would pray rather than nag we would see some good things start to happen.

4. Are secure in Christ

Stability, the shalom peace of God (Nothing lacking nothing broken). Wholeness. You are not a fractured, broken person. The Lord has made you whole.

When you are a fractured person, you go into relationships fractured, and what will you do with the relationship? Fracture it. Then you will wonder why it is happening. Well, you have been setting yourself up and are destined to fail. God has a better way.

5. A man or woman of God loves everybody. Not just the ones that love you and do nice things to you. God shows no partiality. He does not prefer the obedient over the disobedient. He can bless the obedient but He cannot bless the disobedient. If you fall into obedience, then you get the blessing. But He does not play favorites or give opportunity to one more than another.

The Lord gives everyone the same opportunity. If you are sitting there thinking, *Poor me, nothing good ever happens to me and all this good stuff is going right on by me because I am not entering into it*, or you do not feel like going there because nobody wants you there. That is a rejection spirit. Who knows, God may have somebody

there. On the other hand, maybe you need to get rid of the chip off your shoulder and show yourself friendly and be loving, kind, and show some good will. That will attract blessing.

6. A man or woman of God is not judgmental, but seeks mercy for others.

If somebody has a problem, ask the Lord to help them, or step in and help. Sometimes folk need somebody to come beside to help. I remember when my daughter was small, her room was about two feet deep in “stuff,” and I went in there and told her to clean up her room. She would just sit there. It was overwhelming to her. After a while I began to get a little angry, so I prayed. She was not being rebellious or disobedient. She had just gotten overwhelmed by what was going on, and the Lord spoke to my heart and said, “Son, go in and help her.” I went in there and started picking up a few things. The next thing I know I look around and she is busy doing that, and we got the whole room cleaned up.

Recently I was at my daughter’s house and my granddaughter’s room was two feet deep in stuff. I did the same thing, and the next thing I knew she was doing just like her momma did, picking everything up. That room became spotless and everybody was happy. But if I had not done that, it would have been a wrecked day. She would have had to sit in her room all day being overwhelmed and not getting anything done.

Some people work better with encouragement. Have you threatened others? Nobody has any fun and the whole atmosphere of the house is affected. God has a better plan.

7. There is no vengeance or violence

Have you tried to get back at somebody for what they had done? Then there is the “el Frigidaire” in the house, or the power game starts. There is no blessing in that.

One day Diana and I were arguing, and I had a Holy Ghost awakening. I said, “This is not any fun.” And she said, “You are right, it is not any fun.” Then I said, “Let’s go on a picnic.” So we went and

had some fun, and we kicked that spirit out of the house (and off each other) and went on.

8. Seek and promote peace
9. Repay evil with good, not “I am going to get them before they get me.”
10. Is forgiven and is forgiving. Because God forgives me, I am forgiving to others.
11. Befriend people. A friend loves at all times whether the folks are acting sane or insane. In other words, love covers a multitude of sin. I am not condoning what is going on in them or in me, but we need to deal with it and not treat them like they are the devil. People are not the devil. Somebody may be being used by the devil, but we know how to deal with that by binding the devil off of that person, get it out, and ask God to give life and blessing to them.

Many is the time I have said, “I do not want to fight. I do not need to fight. I love you, I care about you. We do not need to have this power struggle going on. Let’s kick the devil out of this place and let’s get back to what God would have for all of us. Let’s come back to our right minds.”

The God-man and the God-woman will always come back to the right place. The only time you want to be out of the mind is when you are in the Holy Ghost. Come back to that point of peace.

12. Seek the Lord’s best for everybody
13. Befriend, promote, encourage others
14. Does not harm anybody
15. Care and help as the Lord directs
16. Enjoy privilege of life and relationships

Having a relationship is a privilege. You are born into your family, but privilege is about relationship. In regard to relationships, we live in a throw-away society. People throw away relationships right and left over all kinds of reasons. It should not be so. As for me, I am going to be faithful.

17. Commitment

Love is commitment, accountability, and responsibility. It is not about warm fuzzes, or getting my way. It is in good times, hard times, hell or high water. I am going to be faithful, committed, and when the dust settles I am going to be there for you. We will not allow anything to separate us from the Lord or from one another. The Lord says, *"I love you with an everlasting love."* (Jeremiah 31:3) That is for keeps. If you want to turn your back on Him and walk away, that is your problem. The Lord is always there waiting for you with His arms wide open, waiting to receive you and embrace you when you come to your senses and ask for forgiveness and turn back to Him.

The Lord sought us out while we were His enemies. He pursued us. People think, *Well, I will just give them a lot of space and let them come to their senses.* Sometimes you need to be in their space so they can come back to their senses, and maybe it is a real good thing to say, "I am asking your permission for forgiveness in my part in what is going on." It's not, "Though you treat me bad, I forgive you. Though you kill me God, I will still praise you." No, it's not that. It is attitude. It is humbling yourself under the mighty hand of God and saying, "As the Lord has forgiven me, I need to ask your forgiveness." It is not, *I will forgive them when they forgive me.* It starts with you.

When I am right with God, then the Lord will make everything around me right. *"When a man's ways are right before the Lord even his enemies will be at peace with Him"* (Proverbs 16:7) because you are giving the grace, mercy, and love of God that is enabling the person to come out of the snare that they were in just like you were.

Early in marriage I would say, "Diana, you have an issue." And she would look at me and say, "You have got an issue." I had an issue: her issue. We both had an issue. The Lord taught me very quickly, not to be pointing the finger at her because when it is her, it is me and

when it is me, it is her. The two are one. He taught me about marriage and how it really works. He said, "If you talk badly about your spouse, you are knifing yourself in the back." So I quit that really fast.

I have taken enough "stuff" from folks. You still love them, you still care about them, and you still give yourself for them whether they like you or not (which is not your issue). "*The fear of man is a snare.*" (Proverbs 29:25) It will get you in trouble. You will sacrifice your principles and you might sacrifice the Lord for somebody. Do not ever do that. God, our First Love, and then people.

THE GOD-MAN
RELATIONSHIPS
The Joy of Relationships
Chapter Three

No Bad Days

Sacrificial love is the highest form of maturity in God. 2nd Peter, chapter 1, deals with that. To walk in a divine relationship as God would have it to be, you must be dead to your old self. The old way is where you think everyone should benefit you, and if you do not they are out of your life. That is how the world operates. We live in a throw-away society. People absolutely do not take relationships seriously, especially the sacrificial love where you are willing to lay down your life for somebody.

People who are bitter, unforgiving, angry and do not love everybody do not realize what Jesus did for them. They are not thankful for the love of God that was given at the cross. They have not seen that they were enemies of God and Christ died for them, in a total act of mercy, an undeserved kindness from God.

Love recognizes that we are all works in process. Love will always see Jesus in people, even those that are not believers. God is not willing that anybody should perish but that all should come to the saving knowledge of the situation.

You know yourself that if you have a problem with somebody that you will be less likely to go to them and talk to them. The Lord tells you to go to them. Somebody has got to bring heaven into the situation.

It should be that when you walk into a room, everybody is happy because there is peace and joy in the house. Rejoice in the Lord always! That means every circumstance, every situation, at all times, you are rejoicing in the Lord. That is what the God-man and God-woman does. There can never be a bad day. It does not matter what is said, what is done, what comes against – rejoice in the Lord, give thanks to God.

We are growing into that. We have not arrived yet, but we are being perfected by the Holy Spirit. It requires work, and we have to take ungodly thoughts captive to the mind of Christ. (2nd Corinthians 10:5)

Did you ever see Jesus having a bad day? The unbelief of the disciples did not discourage Him, nor did rejection, nor Peter denying him three times. The God-man does not hurt. He always understands what is going on with people and why the people are saying and doing what they are doing.

Get the Knowledge

One day Peter said, "You are the Christ," and Jesus said, "Only the Father could have revealed that to you." A day or two later Peter is saying, "Jesus, you do not have to go to the cross." Then Jesus looked at Peter, "*Get behind me, Satan. You desire the things of man and not the things of God.*" (Matthew 16:23)

The Lord says, "*My people perish for lack of knowledge,*" (Hosea 4:6) and it goes on to say that people do not want to get the knowledge they need to put them over the top.

Peter was not Satan, but he was under the influence of the thief when he did not want Jesus to go to the cross. He wanted Jesus to stay with them. I could just see Jesus coming and putting his arm around Peter, telling him, "Come on now." There was a reason why Judas went out and hung himself. Peter denied Jesus three times and then went on to be the head of the church of his day. Judas never learned about love and forgiveness even though he was with Jesus for three years.

The God-man and the God-woman realize they are to have mercy on others. "Lord, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing." They do not take it to heart, and when they are wrong, they will admit it and ask God's forgiveness. They will ask the person's forgiveness that is involved, and they will get it straightened out.

The God-man and the God-woman seek the Lord's best for everyone. They do not want to harm others. They care and help others as the Lord directs them, and they enjoy the privilege of life and relationship.

You do not have to act nasty nor say things that are derogatory, hurtful, and harmful. You do not have to run around being defensive. Relationship is a privilege, for people do not have to be with you.

Genuine Caring

What is common to one is common to all. You can be courteous and kind when you are with people. You can speak something nice. Busybodies are problem-bodies. Why cannot we encourage somebody? Why not take a good look at yourself and see that you are critical and negative, and you really do not care about others? You can have a conversation with some people, and they do all the talking. When you want to say something, they do not want to hear what you have to say, and "It's time to go." There are some people who get you on the phone, but if you put that phone down, an hour later they are still talking.

"Take heed what you hear." (Mark 4:24) You want to encourage and love folks, but to listen to the devil's spew is being a doormat. Set God-boundaries in relationships. The Lord genuinely cares, but people's idea of caring is not God's idea of caring.

There are different relationships you will have in life. You cannot be friends with everybody. You cannot expect from a person what God wants to do for you. The Lord is there 24/7, but you are not made for 24/7. Many years ago I tried caring for people that way, and it almost put me in the grave at age 24. I wanted to be the best, caring God-pastor that I could be for His people: accountable and responsible to God, but I could not do that.

The Lord came to me one day and said, "Son, what are you doing?" And I said, "I am killing myself about the ministry." And He said, "Son, I have already saved the world." He proceeded to teach me how to care for God's people His way. I told Him, "Jesus was in the ministry for three years," and He let me know that I was in it for the long haul. "I am going to teach you how to care for My people, and then I want you to teach others."

If you are about the ministry, caring for God's people, all your needs will be met. The Lord in these last days is getting people off

themselves and into God's work force. When we are out there loving people, everything that we need is coming back.

Fresh and New

Joy is something that will put relationships over the top. I have seen a lot of God's people who do not even know how to have fun. *"In thy presence is fullness of joy."* (Psalm 16:11 KJV)

"...fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart." (Hebrews 12:2-3)

When people lose their joy, they have lost their heart. The Lord told me one time, "Son, never lose the passion for the compassion" because the joy of the Lord is our strength. When Jesus was on the cross, He was considering the joy of us getting saved and becoming His family again. Mankind was lost, but now it is found through Christ Jesus.

What Jesus did on the cross was to establish, create, and empower relationship. With Jesus, your whole life with people will change. There are many folks that have known nothing but dysfunctional relationships, selfish, self-centered relationships. There is a whole new way with Jesus.

The Lord said, "I give to you a new commandment," and at the time I read that, I was thinking, *Alright, a new commandment!* I love finding commandments because I love doing them. I wanted to do what the Father said. Then I read the commandment: "Love one another." I thought, *That is not new*, but the term "new" means fresh. The only way you will ever be able to forgive somebody is to start with them like the very first moment you met. God's mercy is fresh and new every day.

I am going on over 40 years of marriage, and I start every day like the first day – fresh and new. People say to me, "Why do you call your wife your bride?" It is because it is today, she is my bride. God looks at us and says, "Hey there, good morning, we have a fresh new day

here, and I have exciting things planned for you. Come on, let's go; get up, rise and shine, give God the glory. Let's go out together and have a blast today in the name of Jesus."

THE GOD-MAN **RELATIONSHIPS**

Lessons in Love Chapter Four

You Can Forgive

Forgive and receive the Lord's forgiveness. Let the walls come down. Receive the Lord's love, and then you are able to give out that love. Even little children need to let go of things they hold against people. The Lord Himself loved us while we were still His enemies.

Love and faith and hope are active, they are not passive. They have to be put into motion. We cannot allow one moment outside the will of God, not loving people.

The Lord wants to give us peace and joy, but you cannot have it without Jesus. It comes in the blessing of relationship. The Lord Jesus provided it all for us at the cross with His blood. He gave us access to His life. Nothing can separate us from the love of God which is ours in Christ Jesus.

1st John 4:21 says, "...he who loves God must love his brother also." In Jeremiah it says that the Lord loves us with an everlasting love that never fades away or changes. He wants everyone saved and does not want anybody to perish. He wants everybody to be with Him forever.

The only way you can forgive people is to act as if it is the first day you met them (before the offense). In life there are going to be all kinds of offenses.

In Philippi there were two women who were great women of God. They encouraged the gospel, the ministry, and they were a blessing to Paul and the church, but they had a disagreement with each other, and they kept going at it. One was a trouble-maker and the other was "too touchy," who would get offended at the drop of a hat.

Paul's letters were read in front of the entire congregation at Philippi. Can you imagine those two women when they heard that he wrote they should agree with each other in the Lord? Then he asked for

help with these women who had contended at his side in the cause of the gospel along with Clement and the rest of his fellow workers whose names are in the Book of Life.

Jesus says, "Do not rejoice that the devils have to bow and sicknesses and diseases leave when you speak, but rather rejoice because your name is written in heaven."

Those who are in the Book of Life are forgiven people and they are forgiving. They are not holding anything against anybody. In the beginning of Paul's letter he says, "*I thank God in every remembrance of you.*" (Philippians 1:3) Then he says, "*...being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.*" (Philippians 1:6 NKJV)

When you look at other people, you know that they are a piece of God's good work. When you have something against somebody the tendency is to talk badly about them. Then you hear a trite comment people think is superbly godly: "If you cannot say anything good about somebody, do not say anything at all." That is devil rationalization. You are saying you still hate them, but you are not going to talk badly about them.

However, I am going to talk about them like they are the best God-believing person on the face of the earth. I am going to speak faith and life. I am going to speak good, Godlike blessed things. "Lord, open the heavens and bless them." When you bless them, the curse goes off of you as well, and you get blessed. The Lord says, "Bless, do not curse. Love your enemies. Pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you." And after a while you are loving those people.

Then the shell of God goes over you, not the wall that you put up to separate you from them, thinking you are protecting yourself. The wall has to come down because it is from the devil and your old flesh. The shell of God keeps you under the Shadow of the Almighty and allows you to love people, receive love from God, and receive from them. You receive God's love and that helps you to love others like

God loves you. The next thing you know there are no walls of separation between you anymore.

One time I was praying over somebody, and I saw a tortoise. I told the person, "You have got to be like a tortoise. Tortoises have a thick hide where nothing penetrates. Likewise you do not take offense. You are tender inside so you do not give offense." Apparently this person had been involved in receiving offense and giving offense. Once you receive offense, you are going to give it. That has to stop.

Purpose to love everybody that God puts in your life. Do not qualify that by determining for yourself who God puts in your life. That is another devil rationalization. Do not think that the person was not sent from God, or that they were sent from the devil. God wants you to love everyone that He puts in your life. Be kind, be nice. Do not give offense, do not receive offense. *"Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing."* (Luke 23:34) So what if they did it on purpose. God in you is bigger than pettiness.

Dealing With Issues

As much as lies within you, live peaceably with everybody. However, there is a time when we have to speak the truth in love. There is a confrontation point where we deal with it and get the hidden hatred out. It says, *"Beware lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you and thereby many be defiled."* (Hebrews 12:15) A lot of folks have glossed over the root of bitterness, but it is like the princess and the pea. You may have 20 mattresses, but that pea, that irritation, is always there and sooner or later it is going to come up and explode. Everybody will wonder, *Where did this come from?*

It has been there a long time, it was just never dealt with. The Holy Spirit wants to get that thing out so there can be a freedom again in relationship with God first and then with one another. It is not going to happen until you have dealt with yourself. Whatever is that person's problem is your problem too.

I learned in my marriage that if I say something bad about my wife it is like stabbing myself in the back. The two are one and the Lord does not want any break of faith amongst His people. He wants total unity and openness.

If you love somebody, you have to search your own heart first and make sure you have gotten rid of anything you have that is out of line. Then with a gentle heart (Galatians 6:1) speak to them. Begin with, “I love you and I care about you and I know that what I am going to say may be initially offensive and hurt you, but I do not have that in my heart at all. I am not accusing you, condemning you, I just want to see God’s best for your life. I want you to have the best that you can have and that is why I am going to share what I am sharing.” They may reject you at first and get upset, but you have to say it. Speak the truth in love so that folks can grow up (Ephesians 4:15) into every good thing that God has.

Somebody has to care enough to love the people and seek to help them. I have had to say things that I never wanted to say or thought to say because the Holy Spirit wanted to accomplish something. Sometimes before a change happens there has to be a shaking of the mortar and the bricks in the wall that has been walled up. I come along and stick dynamite in it by the Holy Ghost and blow it up. I did not ruin your life. The Lord never tears something down except He intends to build something better in its place. The thief tears down, demolishes, and leaves folks laying out there, but God does not do that.

The Lord says to honor everybody – believer and unbeliever alike.

Ministers of Reconciliation

When you are trying to protect somebody, trying to change them, or to get them to conform to your image, you are using control. The relationship will explode. Sometimes there needs to be a big blow up before things can get repaired, blessed, and brand new. Do not blow up your bridges though. The Lord is always anticipating the day of reconciliation. We are ministers of reconciliation. That is what we are all about. We bring heaven. We bring people together with God, and with each other in God. The only way a relationship can really be blessed is coming together in Christ Jesus.

You need to do things God’s way, not your way or your friend’s way. Together in Christ you will have solid roots and will grow in God. You

have to keep working at it every day. This is ministry of reconciliation and love.

Sometimes we want people to do things that they do not want to do. You are wrong for wanting that. Only God can change people's hearts, minds, lives, and thoughts. Yes, we provoke one another to love and good works, but the end will be love and good works, not separation, division, heartache, or heartbreak.

Something can start out as a good God-idea, but people overstay their stay. Fish and family, four days. It does not have to stink, but people make it stink with their stink'n think'n because they start determining and leaning to their own understanding.

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." (Proverbs 3:5, 6 NKJV)

Sometimes the things we think are best for us may not be. The key in a relationship is that in love we do not control. Many times we will not even know the motivation of our own heart. *"There is a way that seems right to a man."* (Proverbs 14:12) *"I, the Lord, search the heart and examine the mind."* (Jeremiah 17:10) God's heart is always pure. His motivation is always perfect, and He will get His results down the road. We have to test our motivation, though. We have to ask the Holy Spirit, "Why am I doing, saying or wanting this? What is in me?" *"Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me."* (Psalm 139:23)

All Christians will say that they only want what God wants. Then they proceed to go off on their own and do what they want anyway. It is because we lean to our own understanding rather than trust in the Lord. We acknowledge Him in all our ways, but then we pull back, and we do not let God direct it when it is not working the way we think it should.

Once you are rooted down in your ways, it is very hard to move you from what you have decided you are going to do. Many times pride will not allow you to humble yourself and go back to the right situation.

One time a fellow said to me, “Pastor, the happiest days that me and my family have spent in this life have been there in church with you.” And I said, “Why do not you come back?”

You never have to justify, rationalize, or think you did the right thing, the wrong thing, or you were right and everybody else was wrong. This is all pride and self. What matters is that we get on with life.

If you forget every offense that happened to you today, you start fresh and new. Fresh and new every new day.

In relationships do not fault yourself or others. Humble yourself, make the adjustment and move on. God has a way of working everything out and turning everything around. What was intended for evil, God will turn around for good. He will get the glory, everybody gets happy, and we all live happily ever after together forever.

Get rid of the blame thing and all the other nonsense that goes on. Blaming yourself and others is devil stuff. It never helps to promote anything good.

“But one thing I do, forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. All of us who are mature should take such a view of things.” (Philippians 3:13-16)

THE GOD-MAN
RELATIONSHIPS
God Is to Be First
Chapter Five

The Lord Took the Initiative

Relationship is the most important thing in life. Your relationship with the Lord is first, then relationship with others. All relationships begin with the Lord. In Genesis the Lord said on the sixth day, “I will make man in My image.” The Lord created the first relationship outside of Himself. He had a relationship with Himself and He still does, but He wanted someone else to enter into His world. He started the process as He created man in His image. As He looked at man, He said, *“It is not good for the man to be alone.”* (Genesis 2:18)

I always wondered about that expression. Why would God say that man was alone? He had the Lord. But the Lord was saying that all of the rest of creation consisted of male and a female. He said, “Let’s give man a female too so that he can raise godly offspring and have a companion.”

The Lord knew that man could be alone because he had the Lord. Understand, man was created for fellowship with God. In the New Testament there is neither male nor female in Christ Jesus, so our company is with the Lord who says, *“Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things you have. For He Himself has said, ‘I will never leave you or forsake you. So we may boldly say, ‘The Lord is my helper, I will not fear. What can man do to me?’”* (Hebrews 13:5, 6 NKJV)

The greatest fear that people have is separation, being alone, being left out, being by oneself, not being loved. In Jeremiah the Lord also says, *“I have loved you with an everlasting love.”* (Jeremiah 31:3) And He will never leave us or forsake us. This has to do with the Lord taking the initiative for relationship. It was not us. God created man in His image and instituted relationship. Then He put people in family. In fact, all of creation He put in relationship. The animals have relationship, they have company, and they have family. That is the way God designed it.

Breaking Faith or Covenant

The most important thing to the Lord is relationship. But we note that problems happen. Eve broke relationship that was based on covenant. Everything in relationship is based on covenant. This is a mutual agreement, and God had set certain boundaries for relationship and for life. Eve decided to cross the boundary line when the thief asked her, "Well, is it true that God said you would surely die if you participate in this?" She answered, "Yes, that's what God said." But she went ahead and broke faith with God. At that point she entered into death, and it was not just death. She did not seem to die because she was still there. It was not a physical death, it was a spiritual death. That is why God hates divorce. (Malachi 2) He is not talking about marriage per se. He is talking about breaking faith one with another.

Eve broke faith with God, and her spirit died. Then Adam came along. Adam had a relationship with God, he had a relationship with himself, and a relationship with his wife. He broke faith with God to keep faith with his wife, and his spirit died also.

The greatest fear known to man came upon them. They did not have it before that time. Problematic relationships started to happen. In the example of Cain and Abel, the jealousy in Cain occurred because his priorities were not right. "*Am I my brother's keeper?*" (Genesis 4:9) Cain asked God about his brother whom he had just killed in the field.

"The thief comes only to steal, kill, and to destroy, but I have come that they may have life, and have it more abundantly." (John 10:10)

God had intended a love relationship with those folks forever. But people chose to go beyond His boundaries and break the covenant or relationship that was set down. Thus they separated themselves from the Lord. The Lord does not separate from anybody. He does not break relationship. He promised that He would never leave us or forsake us. He loves us with an everlasting love.

People should be in your life forever as long as they are not going to hell. God does not want anyone to perish. He wants everybody to be

blessed and be together forever. He does not want any separation. That is why God hates divorce because it is the breaking of faith. We are not talking about marriage. People divorce themselves from themselves many times. My nature now is of God. I am a God-man. You are a God-man or woman. In Christ there is neither male nor female, so we are either of God or we are of the devil.

If you act contrary to who you are, then you are divorcing the faith, hope, and love that is in you by not being who you are. We are not separated from God; we are one with God in Christ Jesus. The prayer of Jesus in John, Chapter 17, was that we all be one – one with the Father, one together, and one with each other. No division, no separation, no break of faith among us. *“Without pride there is no contention.”* (Proverbs 13:10) What breaks faith is pride – when people are thinking about themselves, and not caring about one another, and especially not caring about the Lord.

Adam could have changed the whole scenario if he had looked at his wife and said, “Come on, let’s get out of here.” A husband can cover the wife if she makes a vow or does something wrong. He can override it. We can also cover one another in the Lord and in the Word. It says, *“Love covers a multitude of sin.”* (James 5:20) It does not excuse it. *“Neither do I condemn you,”* Jesus said to the lady caught in adultery. *“Go and sin no more.”* (John 8:11) In other words, come on, get out of that and get on with what God has for your life. God has something better.

True Love

The Lord always wants our best in relationships. You can see what has happened from generation to generation since the fall of man, and why we need a Savior. God in His sweet love says, “I am not going to leave my people out there, separated from Me forever.” People do not really grasp cosmic plans.

Death came through Adam and Eve’s separation from God. Sin means separation from God – shooting the arrow and falling short of the target. Missing the mark. Unfortunately, it means forever separated from God. God in His love said, “I am not going to let my people be separated from Me forever.”

So He set forth a plan which immediately went into effect. God knew Adam and Eve were going to do this because He is God. People ask, "Why did not He step in and do something?" Because they had a choice. The thing about love is you cannot make somebody do it. They either will or they will not. It is either in them or not.

There is a saying, "If my love cannot bind your heart, there will be no ring to bind your hands." Love is freely given, and guilt cannot cause it to happen. Force cannot cause it to happen. Compulsion cannot cause it. When the Word says, "*God loves a cheerful giver,*" (2nd Corinthians 9:7 NKJV) it is not just talking about money. If God has our heart, He has our wallet. He has everything. You cannot do something to make somebody love you. People spend their entire lives trying to make somebody love them, trying to be loved. Their great fear is separation, rejection, isolation. The Lord says, "...*but perfect love casts out fear.*" (1st John 4:18) It casts out fear of separation, isolation, and rejection. It casts it out because what has torment? Fear has torment and people live tormented every day of their lives because they feel that nobody loves them, nobody wants them, and they are trying to do something about it.

Little children from day one start to interact, and they have something in them where they want to please. They want to be held, they want to be loved, and they want to be accepted. They want the attention and recognition, and they will do all kinds of things to get it. Then they grow up doing all kinds of things to be loved, to be accepted, to be wanted and needed. You do not have to do that. The Lord loves you with an everlasting love that never fades away or changes.

The Lord will never leave you. He will never forsake you. "*The fear of man brings a snare,*" Proverb 29:25 says. The fear of man is that the person will leave you or forsake you, not standing with you, not loving you or being there for you. So you think in your own reasoning that you have to do things to try to keep them, to hold them, to bind them. Our prayer is "Lord, bind us together in love" as it says in the Proverbs.

Loving faithfulness and kindness will bind the blessing of God. The Lord says, "*I will never leave you, I will never forsake you. I will love you with an everlasting love that never fades away or changes.*"

Whether you are naughty or nice, the Lord still loves you. Sometimes you are not nice.

It is His loving kindness that draws you back to Him. When we have love like that going to us, who wants to disregard it and go after something else? That is why the Lord says, "Be not covetous," wanting something else. He is the First Love.

It is because He loved you first and He saved you from going to hell that you now respond to Him in love. But you do not love Him just because He saved you from going to hell. I do not love Him just because He blesses my life with every good thing, or because He is faithful to me. It is not about what He can do for me.

There are situations where people leave somebody because their circumstances have changed. The person got sick and now you cannot do things with them so you leave. Or their money goes down the tube. I can safely say my wife did not marry me for my money. She always says I married her for her car. But I look at her and say, "A Nova? Come on."

People's love is not anything but conditional. *As long as you treat me nice, I will be good to you. You buy me things, I love you.* That is not what love is about. God's love is unconditional. No strings attached. And it is His loving kindness that leads me to repent, to change, to come back to Him. He always remains faithful even when I am not. He remains the same.

When the God-man and the God-woman understand this and have received that love, then they no longer have a need to be loved. God has fulfilled their need for love. When you are not looking to be loved, then you are free to love, and you are not needy.

Continue in Faith

Many people go into marriage needy. They are looking for that person to meet their needs. They cannot meet your needs. Only God can meet your needs. The whole relationship is selfish and all about you. The Lord says in Philippians, Chapter 2, to prefer the other person more important than yourself. That is what God does.

He prefers us more important than Himself. He knew He was the only one that could save us.

If we were God, many of us would not have left the heavens to come down and save us, but that is what He did. He humbled Himself. (Philippians 2) He left His position as Lord of lords and King of kings, the Lord of the universe. *“What is man that thou art mindful of him?”* (Psalm 8:4 KJV) Why should God care one moment about us? If God were like a lot of folks, we would all be going to hell in a handbag.

But the Lord says, *“God is not a man that He should lie, nor the son of man that He should repent [break faith].”* (Numbers 23:19 KJV) Lying is breaking faith. It is breaking covenant with people. This is why it is such a serious thing. The devil is a liar. He has broken faith with God, is forever breaking faith with Him, and he is trying to get everybody else to break faith with God. But God in His love set about to establish a covenant with His people where He says, “I am the Lord, and you are My people, and I will do this for you and that for you. You do this, and I will be doing this,” and there is relationship.

Every relationship has boundaries. It has agreements. Our agreement is that we are together forever. Come hell or high water, good times, hard times, no matter what is going on we stand committed to the Lord, to ourselves, and to others. We are not going to do something to hurt anybody and cause them pain.

Jabez’ prayer was, “Lord, let me not be a pain, and let me not experience pain.” If you are not being a pain, you have less chance of receiving pain. If you run around being nasty, you are going to get nastiness in return. But if you are a blessing and you love folks, there is a good chance that some of that is coming back. When Jesus died on the cross, the fulfillment of God’s plan to save us was not “Okay, now be nice to me.” Folks still had a choice.

“...I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing, choose life.” (Deuteronomy 30:19)

A covenant is based on what Jesus has done for us on the cross. In the Old Testament, the covenant centered around the

commandments of God, and in the New Testament it centers around the grace of God in Christ Jesus. Now I am able to fulfill the commandments of God through the grace of God that is in Christ Jesus. He gives you the ability. The Ten Commandments are not on the outside, they are written on your heart as it says in the book of Hebrews.

So the God-man and the God-woman love people; they do good. Jesus of Nazareth went around doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil for God was with Him. (Acts 10:38)

We are not needy anymore. Look at your life. You can be a Christian sitting in church and still be selfish. But if you are, you are experiencing a low life, not a high life. Not the God-life. As long as you are thinking about yourself, you are going to have a pretty poor relationship with God, with yourself, and with others. You are not going to have a happy life. You will never experience the abundant life. You will always have a pathetic life even though you are a Christian. How sad.

“My people perish for lack of knowledge.” (Hosea 4:6)

Priorities and Principles

When the Lord was teaching me about blessing back in the early 90's, He gave me a teaching for over one year. What started it all out was a question: when people come to you, what do they come to you for?

The number one thing was relationships. Number two was financial situations. Number three was physical situations. Number four was mental and emotional situations, and the fifth thing was spiritual. The Lord said, “That should not be so!” and He flipped the order around saying the spiritual should be first; second, mental and emotional; third physical; fourth financial. Interestingly all four of those deal with the people themselves. It is all within themselves. Dealing with relationships now causes people to step out of themselves to interact with somebody else.

I have the relationship with God in place. That gives me peace in my mind which gives me peace in my body, which gives me cents in my

finances to make it dollars. Every dollar starts with a cent. And I need some cents to get some dollars. Then I may be ready to meet the public. What am I meeting the public with? Heaven. I am bringing heaven to people. I am not needy. These are principles we use in helping folks, getting them ready for marriage, for long-term relationship.

Quite frankly, many are not ready for relationship. If you treat your puppy badly, the Proverbs says, you are an evil person. If you are not getting things together, how are you ever going to deal with another person? We just do not get married for sex. You do not get married because you are alone and you want somebody to share your misery. What you would bring into that relationship is your misery, and the constant fear that they might leave you, which is right on the tip of your happy thoughts (which are not really so happy). Many people just try to cover up their pain.

What has to be first and foremost is my love response to God's love. Even though I may think I am so wonderful, *"all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God. There is none that doeth good, no not one,"* (Romans 3:23 NKJV) God says.

You might be able to pull something over on yourself, deceiving yourself about how good you are, and you may be able to pull it off on somebody else, but sooner or later it is going to show. But the Lord says, "I love you anyway. While you are an enemy of mine, I still love you and I am going to come and save you. Save you from yourself because your nature was separated from Me."

Children are born in that separation from God. That is why Jesus says you must be born again. You must be born again of God's Spirit. God's Spirit is love. (1st John) God is love. People are always talking about love, love, love in the world. It is not love, though. It is basically selfishness: you pat my back, I will pat yours. You do something good for me, and I will do something good for you. That is not love because it is not coming from a heart of love. It is a counterfeit. God says, "I love you, and you do this, you will be blessed, you do this you will be cursed. When you do what I say you will be blessed," but it is coming from a pure heart.

Has somebody said, “You do this for me and I will do this for you,” and you did it for them, but they never did it back for you. They broke their word. They lied. That is not love.

When my son was small and went to preschool, about the third day a little kid walked up to him and punched him in the face. From what I understand from the teacher, he looked at the kid and said, “You are not of God.” He was four years old, just a little guy but he knew that punching folks was not of God. It was intended to harm, not bless.

Why do people do things? You have to explain to the little guys, “Well, those little girls really like you when they are doing all those nasty things to you” (negative attention). They like you and they want your attention, but that is not the kind of attention that is good.

Power and Control

Are you in a marriage where the way you get attention is to throw a little fit or tantrum? Little kids lie on the floor, turn blue, and stop breathing to get their way. I told a couple once, “Just let him lay there and turn blue.” (They would always go and grab him, coddle and cuddle him.) Besides, I knew something: there is a little valve in the body that will trip the breathing mechanism to the certain point. When a child acts like that, it is about power.

Power and control is not loving somebody. Although the Lord has all power in the universe He does not exercise it to manipulate and control us into a point of love. The first thing that happens to people in relationships many times is they try to wield power and control over the other person.

I do not know what the interaction between Adam and Eve was that day. But there was something seductive going on. Adam relinquished the power and dominion to Eve and to the devil. God had just said, “I give you all dominion over everything and you are going to manage it for Me.” He had stipulations about how things were to be run, how the operation was to work. They took it on themselves to violate those operations, knowing full well what they were doing. Eve was deceived by the devil, but Adam went in with eyes wide open. Adam dropped his love for God in exchange for his love for his spouse.

Moses said, *“These are the commands, decrees and laws the Lord your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess, so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the Lord your God as long as you live by keeping all his decrees and commands that I give you, and so that you may enjoy long life.”* (Deuteronomy 6:1) To fear the Lord is reverence, respect, honor, and worship. When you hear the term “fear” you think it is negative, but this is positive. When fear comes in, there is going to be separation.

Work God’s Principles

As Jesus puts it, *“If you love Me, keep My commandments.”* (John 14:15) However, what He is *not* saying is what many a spouse has said: “If you love me, you will do what I want.” Note, the motivation is completely different. Doing what you want may be selfish. God is not selfish. He has absolutely no degree of selfishness in Him. Love is giving all the time; day in and day out, never looking for anything back.

This is why we cannot talk about giving enough. Greed and the love of money is why people cannot give tithes and offerings. That is why they cannot help somebody else as God directs. That is evil. Greed in the Bible is called idolatry. Idolatry is having another god before God.

“Hear, O Israel, and be careful to obey so that it may go well with you and that you may increase greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, just as the Lord, the God of your ancestors, promised you.” (Deuteronomy 6:3) In other words, God is going to keep His Word. They were going to enter into the land, and God had all these good things for them. This is why the commandments of God are set down so that people will have life and have it abundantly. They are the principles of God. They work to bless us spiritually, mentally, emotionally, physically, financially, and in relationships.

When we do what God says, He never steers us the wrong direction because He loves us. It ends up as an increase with God’s kingdom and glory, and us to be blessed. There are no hidden motives or agendas involved.

“All the ways of a man are clean and innocent in his own eyes [and he may see nothing wrong with his actions], But the Lord weighs and examines the motives and intents [of the heart and knows the truth].” (Proverbs 16:2)

Jeremiah says the heart is deceitful beyond measure and a man does not even know what is in his own heart except the Holy Spirit shows it to him. I have seen that so many times as we are working with folks. We ask the Lord in Jesus’ name for truth, and something pops up out of the people. They say, “Oh, I did not know I had that. I did not know that is what I was thinking.” But it was the truth down deep. And God reveals it by His Spirit.

“There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.” (Proverbs 16:25 NKJV) There it is. Separation: spiritually, physically. There was not any of that in the original creation of the Lord. No sickness, disease, poverty, or lack.

What happened? Man brought it in because they loved doing their own way rather than God’s way. All uncertainty, instability, and insecurity came in. Fear came in, confusion and every evil work came in because man left the shelter house of God, the safe place of God, and chose to go out where the lions and tigers and bears are.

There were relationships in the first generation with Cain and Abel. Murder and violence came in, and it has been going on ever since. God intends a place where the lion and the lamb lie down together. All the creation became chaotic because the ones running the creation, the ones who had been given dominion over all the creation, chose to abandon God’s principles which unleashed in the whole creation all of this nonsense. Famines, pestilence, earthquakes, tsunamis, all the horrible things that are going on out there came from man, not from God. The whole creation is groaning, awaiting the return of the Lord so things can be set right. (Romans 8)

The Lord says, *“Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one.”* (Deuteronomy 6:4 NKJV) He is not divided which means pure love, pure faith, and pure hope. He is 100% for us, not against us. The devil is 100% against us. He wants us destroyed with him. He wants

us to enter into his separation from God. He does not want us to receive Jesus or the abundant life that God has. He is always whispering in people's ears, "Hey, do your own thing. Has God really said that you will surely die if you participate in this?"

Yes. Why would you want to go into something that is going to separate you from God and separate you from others? Think about it. The Lord has done everything to save us. He is not going back up on the cross, doing it all over. It is already done. It is all supplied and provided. We just need to receive it, accept that love, and respond to it.

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength." (Deuteronomy 6:5 NKJV)

With your full, complete, undivided attention and love on the Lord. This is the key to relationship that the God-man and God-woman understand. Loving God is first before anybody or anything else. *"These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home, when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up."* (Deuteronomy 6:6-7) Talk about the Lord and the commandments of God. Talk about the things worthy of praise. Think on the things that are true, just, beautiful, things of virtue, things worthy of praise. Those are not things about God, those are the Lord. Talk about the Lord's faithfulness, who He is, what He is about, what He has done for us. Do not just talk about it, enjoy it. Enjoy it with one another.

This is communication. Communication is not sitting down and talking about all your thoughts and how you feel. It is not talking about yourself and your needs. It is talking about God, God in you, working through you. When you speak, you are speaking something that is edifying to the hearer according to their needs.

Think and prefer others more important than yourself (Philippians 2) starting with God. This is being one in the spirit. If the Lord is not the Lord of the relationship, then we do not have a relationship.

This is why it says in 1st Corinthians 10 not to be unequally yoked. “Unequally yoked” means a person is with someone who talks about the world. They talk about everything but God, and do not want to hear about God. One time when I was being bothered because I was not invited to a gathering, the Lord told, “Son, if you were of the world they would love you. But you love Me.” And because I love God, I talk about Him and what is going to be edifying to the hearer according to their needs.

Take Correction

Many times people want to talk about themselves, but they do not want to hear the truth in love about themselves to help them to come into all that God has. They do not want to change, for they like it the way it is.

If you like the way you are, then you are in trouble because the Lord is changing each and every one of us into His image. He is restoring His image in us. He is moving us along out of ourselves into Him. *“Write these things down on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates and then when the Lord your God brings you into the land He swore to your fathers [Abraham, Isaac, Jacob] to give you, a land with large flourishing cities you did not build, houses filled with all kinds of good things you did not provide, wells you did not dig, and vineyards and olive groves you did not plant...”* [This was God’s supply and provision. You had nothing to do with it.] *“Then when you eat and are satisfied, be careful that you do not forget the Lord, who brought you out of Egypt [bondage to self, the world, the devil], out of the land of slavery. Fear the Lord your God, serve Him only and take your oaths in His name. Do not follow other gods, the gods of the peoples around you; for the Lord your God who is among you is a jealous God and His anger will burn against you and He will destroy you from the face of the land.”* (Deuteronomy 6:9-15) You may think, *Oh, my God, I did not sign up for that.*

Understand this; it is not the Lord that destroys anybody. *“For God did not send His Son to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him.”* (John 3:17) Jesus corrected His disciples, James and John, who were called the sons of thunder. (Later they were called the love disciples) They were trouble makers. They liked to fight. They wanted to call down the fire on the people of Samaria because

they did not listen to Jesus and follow Him. Jesus said, “*Know ye not of what spirit you are?*” In other words, do not you know who you are? You are a God-man. He did not come to destroy, He came to save.

People condemn themselves and destroy themselves by not following the Lord. The Lord has it all laid out for blessing if you walk on the path, the straight and narrow one, and you will have the life of God. You will have one wonderful life, with persecution, which comes from the ones who do not have a wonderful life, who refuse to receive God’s wonderful life. They will hate you because you are taking a different path, and you are not fitting in.

Having to Do with Love

“*The fear of man brings a snare.*” (Proverbs 29:25) If you start to want their love more than God’s love, you are going to lose everything. When you give up God, those folks that you want to love you are not going to be around, and you will be left with nothing. That is exactly how it works.

The Lord is saying, “I love you, and I have a good plan, and I speak the truth.” We live in a day and an age where people have been burned so often that they wall up and harden up. They cannot give love and they cannot receive love because they do not want to be hurt anymore. They are tired of it. The Lord says, “All the walls have to come down, and I need to be the First Love.”

When Adam and Eve hid from God because they discovered they were naked, it was not about nakedness. It was about being uncovered from the blessing. They did not have the blessing anymore and were naked before God. They tried to clothe themselves but the Lord got rid of the leaves and gave them some animal skins, which required a blood sacrifice.

Throughout time that was the type of sacrifice that gave the forgiveness of sins, but it was temporary. The blood of bulls and goats was temporary (Hebrews 10:4). Only the blood of Jesus could pay the price forever for what separated us from God. Everyday people would have to be doing that.

There was a movie year's ago that got into the world's main frame of thinking with this quotation: "Love means you never have to say you are sorry." Understand, if you really love somebody you are not going to receive offense no matter what they say or do. You are loved by God whether that person loves you or not, and it does not matter to you. When you know you are loved by God, you do not look to the other person for your love. That frees you to be able to understand what is going on in you. That would cause you to have a problem or offense. You become part of the solution rather than part of the problem because you are not taking an offense. As soon as you take an offense, then the problem has just gone where the devil loves it, going over to somebody else. You gather all your friends and talk about so and so who has an issue and the problem magnifies and the separation goes on and the hurt and the pain increase. The next thing you know nobody is talking to anybody, and, *God, here comes Thanksgiving dinner and we all have to sit down together.*

A God-man and a God-woman do not take offense, they do not give offense, and they do not get defensive because they know they are loved.

When you break faith with God, there is no way you are going to have a blessed relationship. The next think you know your finances will be messed up, your body will get sick, you have no peace, no joy, and you cannot sleep at night because you are out of sync with God.

Then people say, "I do not have a problem with God. I love God." And God says, "If you do not love your brother or your sister, whosoever they may be, then you do not love Me either." (1st John 5) (The first relationship is with God, and then you are able to love others.)

The Lord is basically saying, "Without Me in that relationship, you have no relationship. Without Me in your life, you have no life." Jesus said, "*I have come that you might have life and have it more abundantly.*" (John 10:10_ The Lord says, "If you are mine, then you will do what I say." He is the head ox and we yoked up with Him.

God wants us to love our family. Yes, Jesus said, "Who is my mother, my brother, my sisters? My mother, my brothers, and my sisters are those who believe Me and are following what God has." People think He was separating from His mother. No, He was just drawing near to God. He was making a statement: "I do not look for my love from my family. I do not look for my love from anybody except my Father in heaven." *"See what great love the Father has lavished on us that we should be called children of God."* (1st John 3:1)

While Jesus was going through the suffering on the cross, He looked down and saw the joy set before Him. His body may have been suffering, but He had the joy of the Lord. He knew that what He was doing, hanging on the cross and dying for people, was going to save them all. He was there to fulfill what God had called Him to do.

At that moment He put aside all His God-position for us. He became a full man to save us. He looked down from the cross, thinking about his mother, and He said, "Woman, behold your son" and He looked at John. He said, "John, behold your mother." He was looking out for them in the love of God.

"Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing." (Luke 23:34) They did know what they were doing, and yet they did not know what they were doing. He says, "Father, forgive them all." We cannot hold anything against anybody. If you love God, and have received the love of God for you, you cannot hold anything against anybody without exception. It does not matter how miserable they have been or what they have done.

When you are bitter and unforgiving, you are no different than the person who caused the offense because you have just caused an offense against God. You just stepped out of covenant with the Lord who loves you.

There was a man in Matthew, Chapter 18, who owed a debt he could never pay. He was forgiven the debt but went right out to somebody who owed him just a little money and had him thrown into prison. When the master heard about that, he called him out and said, "I forgave you a debt you could never repay, and you went out and

treated this person like that!" Then he had him thrown into the prison forever.

Gnashing of teeth refers to being in hell.

THE GOD-MAN
RELATIONSHIPS
The Father's Love
Chapter Six

Receive No Offense

Peter asked Jesus in Matthew, chapter 18, "How many times, Lord, should I forgive?" and he gave a number. Jesus basically said, "No, I say unto you 'seventy times seven.'" (Matthew 18:22 NKJV) Peter thought seven was good, but you can do seven in a matter of moments.

People that take things at surface level think, *Okay, I will forgive 490 times.* But if somebody sins against you, there is only one on the record. You forgive, and then there is nothing on the record. They do it again, which is one. You forgive, and it is zero again.

"O Lord, if thou shall mark iniquity who shall stand?" (Psalm 130:3) In other words, if you are going to keep a record of wrongs, who will stand? *"But there is forgiveness with thee that thou mayest be feared. My soul waiteth upon the Lord and in His Word do I delight."* (Psalm 130:4-5 NKJV) I count on His Word to help me, to forgive me because He is faithful and just. The Lord says that is how He is to you, so you do likewise.

If you remember you have something against somebody while you are praying, forgive them and get it out of you. If you have something against them, then you have stepped out of the God-realm and into the devil realm. It is just as bad to have an offense as it is to give one.

Abused people abuse others, and they cut love off from everybody else because they are afraid of getting hurt again. That has to stop. There has to come a point where you stop it and do not receive offense. You can hold back love, walling yourself in because you think they cannot hurt you, but you cannot love them and they cannot love you either. At that point you have walled out God as well.

It does not matter what the whole world does, whether they love you or not. God is my source, but God put me in relationship with others. I tell folks, "If I am in your life for 30 seconds, I am in your life forever, unless you are going to hell because I am not going there." God put us in relationship. We cannot say we do not need anyone. We are together, dependent on God, interdependent with each other, and independent of the world.

Stand Together

The only way that you can really forgive people is to start fresh. *"I thank God in every remembrance of you."* (Philippians 1:3) *"I am confident that the good work that God has begun in you He is faithful to perfect and to complete."* (Philippians 1:6) You may be having some issues today, but you need to pray for others and stand together, and nothing in hell will separate you from one another in the name of Jesus. We take our stand, and having done all to stand, we are going to stand some more and overcome in the name of the Lord.

We will not put up with petty nonsense that tries to separate and divide. *"Little foxes spoil the vines."* (Song of Songs 2:15 NKJV) Never believe what people say when they are in rage or they are in depression. Do not listen to what they say, for a depressed person knows absolutely nothing.

"Why art thou cast down, O my soul? Hope thou in God, for I will yet praise Him." (Psalm 42:5 KJV) In other words, David was saying he would not be concerned even though Saul hunted him down every day of his life. He had to look over his shoulder because Saul was trying to kill him. "So what!" is what David was saying, "God reigns on high."

Jesus did not receive praise or criticism from people because He knew people's hearts. But He loved them. He was with them. He had a thief for a treasurer, and His Father had told Him what to do with Judas Iscariot. When you are obedient to the Heavenly Father, you are in His perfect will and nothing can harm you.

Jesus laid down His life for us. They did not kill Him on the cross. There is a big difference. Nobody stole His life.

God's love never fails. It believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. *"See what great love the Father has lavished upon us that we should be called children of God."* (1st John 3:1)

Many people have such a poverty mentality they cannot really receive love. It is a hard thing for them to have somebody look in their eyes and tell them they love them. They cannot accept it and their head drops, their eyes drop down because it is hard for them. In many cases people have said, "I love you," but then turned around and did something nasty. Just because somebody has done something nasty does not mean everybody is nasty.

The Lord says He loves us with an everlasting love that never fades away and never changes. (Jeremiah 31:3) That loving kindness (God's goodness, tolerance, and patience) changes me and turns me around. (Romans 2:4)

The Lord makes sure a good foundation is laid, and then He starts to build accordingly. It is all going to be good. Just as in the creation the Lord ordered the steps every day. Everything was planned in sequence, in order. Nothing was ahead of itself. After each day in the creation, God looked at what He had done and said, "It is good."

People have so much negativity put into them by what has gone on in the world and by what is all around them. Have you made a bad choice, and you kicked yourself every day about it? You cannot go back and undo it, but you can start fresh today. That is what Jesus is all about. The only way you can forgive folks is to go back before you first met them and meet them again, fresh and new. Brand new, like they have never ever done a thing to you.

I wake up in the morning, and I look at my bride, and it is a brand new day, just like the first day. Then I get into the day and little things start to kick up, but what have I got to do? Put them down in the name of Jesus, enjoy the day that the Lord has made, and enjoy the people that God has given me the privilege to have in my life. Relationship is a privilege. It is nothing to be taken for granted.

It really irks me in the spirit when I see people show up at funerals but never bother to show up when the person was alive. I am just spunky

enough in the Holy Ghost that I have actually told people that. Not to condemn them, but to tell them they have people right now in their life, so make the most of it. This time on this earth is very short, and God certainly does not want it spent in fussing, fuming and fighting, and not ever talking to each other. *“The thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy. Jesus says, ‘I have come that you might have life and have it more abundantly’.*” (John 10:10)

The First Relationship

All the other things people are running after is not the most important thing.

When the Lord taught me about blessing back in the early 90’s, I did a 50 plus week series on it. He was ordering it out. He asked me before I started the series, “What is the number one thing that people come to you about?” I said, “Relationships.” Number two was finances, number three was physical health, number four was mental and emotional things, and number five was spiritual. The Lord said, “The order is backwards. It needs to be reversed.” People need to be right with God and receive the love of God first, for that is the first relationship. Then God will give peace, which will bring peace into your body, which will bring peace into your finances, and then you are ready to meet the public. When you are at peace within yourself, then you are a blessing.

You do not go into marriage being needy, looking for the other person to do something to fulfill your life. You come in fulfilled in Christ Jesus and then you go out and you are a blessing to your spouse. It is not: *they are not meeting my needs*. I have heard that so many times over the years. No man or woman can ever meet your needs, only Jesus can. You cannot even meet your own needs.

You need to fall on your face and humble yourself under the mighty hand of God, and in due season He will exalt you. Start to realize that the relationship you have, this friend, this spouse, or this family (that you were born into that you did not choose), God put into your life. It is amazing how many people grumble about their family. They think, *Oh, I wish I was born into a rich family*. I have seen rich families and I have seen poor ones, and they are all families. It is not the “stuff” that makes the difference. It is better to live in a shack out

back than in a house with quarreling. It goes on in rich houses and poor houses alike. It is all about what is in you that makes the difference.

In Jesus you are rich. The more you think about that, the richer you get. You will never succeed in business, you will never succeed in relationship in life, and you will have all kinds of physical ailments, issues, and emotional problems if you do not get rid of the strife. People need to realize they cannot be at strife within themselves. They need to know how much God really loves them.

In Ephesians, chapter 3, Paul prayed a prayer (coupled with another prayer in Ephesians, chapter 1) for the church. He prayed that we might get to know who the Father really is. He talked about coming to know what is the height, depth, width and breadth of the love of God that is ours in Christ Jesus. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit come to dwell with us. "Emanuel: God with us." That is why I love Christmas time; they always bring back "Emanuel, God with us." To me Christmas is 365 days a year. I believe God is giving gifts out all day long every day, and He is loading us down, as the psalmist puts it, with blessings to pass out to everybody else.

"Seek first the kingdom of God" (Matthew 6:33) and you do not have to worry about anything else. Wish others well and the Lord's best for their lives. Good will and peace on earth.

The world is never going to have peace on earth until love somehow gets ahold of them. *"From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not of hence, even of your lusts? (James 4:1)* You want something and you cannot have it so you fight for it."

The only thing I am going to fight for is to stand, *"and having done all, to stand,"* (Ephesians 6:13) and love somebody. I am going to fight for that marriage. I am going to fight for that friendship. I am going to fight for the rights of the poor and the downcast. I am going to stand up for what is right in the earth and stand up for God. I am going to believe God and tell the devil to get out of here. I cannot tell the devil to go to hell because it is not time yet, but he knows he is going there and he wants to take as many as he can with him. I say, "No, you are

not; you are going to let them go in Jesus' name." We will take back what has been taken captive. That is what the love of God does.

"Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. 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." (1st John 4:7-9)

"The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have a life and that they may have it more abundantly." (John 10:10 NKJV)

Abundant Life

The Lord told me years ago, "Son, teach the abundant life in Me. My people are saved but they do not have abundant life. They are not living like they are saved. They are still thinking about themselves. They are still rooted and grounded in the earth rather than seated with me in the heavenly places." (Colossians 3:1, 2)

As a result they are poverty-minded: spiritually, mentally, emotionally, physically, financially, and in relationships. Still thinking they lack. *"See what great love the Father has lavished on us that we should be called children of God?"* (1st John 3:1)

He says to tell them to come up from there. Come out of the world, be separate, be supernatural. Do not be natural and normal. Be supernatural. (That is normal in the spirit realm.) Do not be like the world. You are different. You do not have to look out for yourself. That is what separates you from the world. The world says to be your own person, do your own thing, if it feels good, do it. It is into "me, me, me." But when you are supernatural and born again, it is all about God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus. Whoever believes in Him will not perish but will have everlasting life.

People are perishing every day. They are walking around, but they are dead. Are you a Christian walking around like you are dead because you do not have any joy or peace?

The Lord is your source and all that the Father has for you will come to you. What He does not have is not coming. The Lord says nobody should be taking a care about themselves. He says, *“Cast all your cares on Me.”* (1st Peter 5:7) But to do that you have to humble yourself under the mighty hand of God. (1st Peter 5: 6) And get about God’s business, loving folks and doing good.

“This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.” (1st John 4:10) Sin is separation. The greatest fear that people have is of separation, of not being loved. That is the devil’s fear. He is separated forever from God, but he will not humble himself to go back.

Have you seen that in your relationships? You will not humble yourself to go back to make the relationship whole. I remember back in the early 90’s God gave me a series of teachings about blessing. He had me doing some things in relationships because the thief got into the camp and a root of bitterness sprung up. People got defiled and believed lies, and the Lord had me go to everyone to seek to reconcile.

I welcome people. I do not blow up or burn bridges because those same folks are coming back today. To me, they have never gone. If you allow yourself to think about being separated, or you allow yourself to be in lack, which is separated from the Father, then that is what you are going to have.

I do not lack, and there is not anybody in the earth that I do not love or care about. When I stand before God someday, I am going to have to give an account for my life. I do not want Him to say, “What about that person?” And I would stand there like Cain and say, “Am I my brother’s keeper?” I would stand there and say, “They did not love you, they rejected you.” NO! *“As much as lies within me I live peaceably”* with everyone because I know that at any moment I may stand before my Maker.

“Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.” (1st John 4:11-12)

He Gave in Demonstration

"This is how we know that we live in him..." (1st John 4:13) You have to know that. Do not be thinking about your life because you do not have a life apart from Jesus. People are often more accessible to others than they are to God because they do not make themselves accessible to God. They are so busy talking about their life and about others that they forget about what is really important.

If you are going to have an abundant life, you have to hear the Lord. Everybody is trying to have a great life, but the only way to have a great life is to know the Lord, talk with Him, listen to Him, and do what He says to do.

"This is how we know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us his Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world." (1st John 4:13-14) Evidence: demonstration of the love. Love has to be demonstrated. A gift has to be given. It does no good kept in the closet all wrapped up ready to give, but never given. An offering needs to be given. You cannot give unless you are going to receive, and you cannot receive unless you are going to give. They go together. You cannot expect to receive if you are not giving.

"God so loved the world He gave..." (John 3:16) God wanted us to be one with Him, the way it was before the fall of man when they separated from God. He wants to bring everything back together again.

"If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them and they in God. And so we know and rely on the love God has for us." (1st John 4:15-16) We know it and we rely upon it. We are not coming in empty. This is growth. The Holy Spirit of God is the only one who can go down deep in a person's heart and pull all the crap out of there. It is waste, and people are wasting their lives because they are not loving.

It says to make the opportunity, take the opportunity. Many folks do not have anything. They do not have any friends, and the Word says

if you are going to have friends, you have to show yourself friendly. We have to demonstrate.

“A soft answer turns away wrath.” (Proverbs 15:1)

“God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them.” (1st John 4:16) We are God’s good workmanship. If you do not like what is going on in your life, you are not acknowledging what God is doing in your life. If you are not acknowledging what God is doing in your life, how are you ever going to rise up to experience all that He has and wants to do and is doing because you cannot be thankful for what you have?

Look in the mirror, go by it and what should you do? Look at what God is doing and be in awe. Fighting and quarreling is a wasted life. It is wasted time. Galatians talks about people fighting within themselves. Your spirit and mind need to get together in Jesus’ name.

Your spirit wants to, but your mind does not know. The spirit, mind, and body have to be in sync for health and blessing to flow in your life. Otherwise something is going to break down. Jesus will set us free from that.

Stay with people. Do not ever give up on anybody. With man it is impossible, but with God nothing is impossible. He is talking about relationship.

THE GOD-MAN
RELATIONSHIPS
Giving and Sharing
Chapter Seven

Walk by Faith

When we pray, we do receive what we ask. We may see it right away, or we may see it down the road. The point is, many times we “see” it before we see it. *“Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not yet seen.”* (Hebrews 11:1 NKJV)

If we go by sight, we miss what the Lord is doing. Many times our lives are run by our own understanding, and that is based on what we are perceiving. How do we perceive? Most of the time through our senses: sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, previous things that have happened, other information, people’s opinions, or thoughts and desires. We often shape our thinking on what is going on all around us; what we have experienced or what somebody else has experienced, and as a result the Lord is left out of the picture.

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding, in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct your path.” (Proverbs 3:5-6 NKJV) What we need to understand is He already has a path out there. He says He has already prepared it. *“The steps of the righteous are ordered of the Lord.”* (Psalm 37:23) The Lord says it is a godly path that He has for each of us. A good life, and it is all in Christ Jesus.

He will make the crooked way (like a crooked path that winds around) straight, for we wander in our own understanding. Some people get the wanderlust. They do not really want to stay on the path, and they want to go off-roading and adventuring. The Lord says, “Do not go there. Do not go to the left and do not go to the right.” He says, “Stay straight ahead in the plan.”

Preparing the Way

Have you had the Lord direct you to do something, but you did not really understand what it was about until farther down the road? Then all of a sudden you understood. The Lord prepares the path.

He prepares the way. We are preparing the way of the Lord's return, for He is coming back, and we are getting people ready for what lies ahead. Preparation time is just as important as the actual happening. If things are not prepared properly when it comes time, there you sit. There were five virgins whose oil ran out. Five still had some, but five were not prepared. (Matthew 25)

Throughout the Bible, the Lord is always preparing His people for what comes up next. He said, *"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."* (Joshua 1:9)

The Lord has already been in your future, the world's future, and is preparing the way for what lies ahead. That brings great comfort to me. I know that my heavenly Father is out ahead, He is the scout getting everything all together.

Then He says to us, *"I know the plans I have for you."* (Jeremiah 29:11) He has already prepared them ahead of time. In spite of you, God is working His plan. When you lean to your own understanding that is where the "in spite of you" comes in. It is going to happen with or without you. The Lord wants you to be with Him.

He says not to be afraid because that will put you on the crooked path. Do not get discouraged, faint and give up because that will slow you down from receiving what He has. He says to be courageous, for *"I, the Lord himself goes before you and will be with you."* (Deuteronomy 31:8)

When you know that every day, regardless of what is going on, and your focus is to *"Keep your eyes fixed on Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith,"* (Hebrews 12:2) you will see the blessing of God. That is His promise.

"I know the plans I have for you, plans for good, not for evil." (Jeremiah 29:11) Evil means anything out of the will of God. The Lord does not tempt us or test us with what is out of His will. He says, *"My plans for you are to prosper you, to give you a hope and a future."* (Jeremiah 29:11) Prosperity is knowing the Lord.

Your part is to draw near to the Lord, to pray, praise, give thanks, listen to His Word, and get godly counsel. God never says you are to seek Him out there by yourself because you can get picked off. It is important that we draw near to the Lord. That way the Lord can hone us right in. If we are out drifting around, He will bring us back. That is why it is so important to come together in fellowship in the Holy Ghost.

Givers Honor God

In 2nd Chronicles 31, Hezekiah was bringing reform to the country. In every reform (whether it was Nehemiah, Hezekiah, Josiah, or Jehosaphat), the people returned in two areas to the glory and the will of God. One was in tithes and offerings, which the people usually had gotten away from. When folks are not walking with God, they do not give to God. They do not care about God's stuff. The second was the Sabbath of the Lord; bringing back the time that is God's. He said that is His holy day. He said, "Delight in Me, call it holy and set apart your own things and be about the kingdom of God." Those two areas were usually central to the reform, getting the people of God back on track, worshiping God, giving to Him, and honoring Him.

"Hezekiah asked the priests and Levites about the heaps; and Azariah the chief priest, from the family of Zadok, answered, "Since the people began to bring their contributions to the temple of the Lord, we have had enough to eat and plenty to spare, because the Lord has blessed his people, and this great amount is left over." (2nd Chronicles 31:9-10)

There was surplus because when the people started to bring their contributions to the temple of the Lord, the Lord blessed them. When the people started honoring God, and got back to taking care of the kingdom of heaven, then the Lord blessed the people. When the Lord blesses the people, then the ministry of God gets blessed. Jehovah Jireh, I am the Lord who supplies an offering, and He supplies seed to the sower.

When He blesses the people, then the ministry of God gets blessed because the givers will honor God who blessed them. They are going to realize, yes, the Lord gave me all of this and now there will not be any lack in the kingdom. There will be no lack in the ministry

of God. The Word goes out to the nations, buildings get taken care of, things get done to the glory of God, and the people get service. The buildings are for the people.

“Are you the one to build me a house? the Lord says.” (2nd Samuel 7:5) In other words, He spreads forth the canopy of heaven. The house is for the people. Your body is for you. The Lord comes in and fills the house and makes everything come alive. Without the glory of God you are just a clay pot. All creation is groaning, waiting for the Lord’s return.

All the promises in God are “Yes” for everyone who believes in Jesus. He just wants folks to have what He has and be His children. That is good news. It needs to be with demonstration of love. It cannot just be words; it has to be shown in deeds.

Have some people told you that they loved you but acted like they did not? That creates confusion. The Lord loves us with an everlasting love that never changes. Some days we have a tendency to love people more than other days, depending on how we feel and how they feel and act. God made you loveable because there was not anything in you that was loveable before the Lord came into your life. The Lord says, *“There is none that doeth good, no not one.”* (Romans 3:12) Until Jesus comes into our life, it is all about ourselves, and we are not able to love or do good.

Blessed are those that give. Blessed are those who receive, but it is more blessed to give. I love to receive, and I will continue to receive as long as I keep giving. I buy things that we do not have any use for so that I can give them away. I also pray and ask the Father what kind of gift I can give to my bride.

Have you asked the Lord for what you need to give or do for somebody else? Did He give you something to do, and when you did it the relationship got even better? It is not just about the shopping or the activity. It is about doing something together.

True Joy

All of a sudden a new enjoyment of life happens when you give and do things, preferring others. Then you have a purpose, and you get so excited about it.

The Lord wants us to enjoy our lives, and people have not begun to realize that the enjoyment is not in the new car, the house, or a money gift. It is in each other (and God working in each other) and experiencing the adventure of the Holy Spirit and the joy that God gives. That is where the true joy is found.

To me the Bible is an adventure. I enjoy it every time I pick it up. The Lord speaks to me and gives me something. It is food; it feeds my spirit. *“Man does not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds forth from the mouth of God.”* (Matthew 4:4)

“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life.” (1st John 1:1)

The Word of life is the greatest gift you can give to anybody. Spiritual gifts are the best gifts. However, a natural gift, many times, has to be given to people before they will receive the spiritual ones. A relationship involves time and working with people. Then you can sow the seed of life.

Sharing with Others

The churches got together in a nearby city; 2500 folks came out to the park for a hot dog, and we sowed the word. It was an event, but you cannot live off of an event, although many do. They go from one event to the next event to the next one. But there needs to be growth inside. It starts with a physical touch and then people open up to something.

“The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us.” (1st John 1:2)

That is what you are going to share with people – the eternal life that has appeared to you that you have, and if you have it then you are

excited about it. It is a sad thing when Christians sit around like bumps on a log when they have the most fascinating good news of life to share with people. They act like they do not have anything.

“Silver and gold have I none,” Peter and John said to the cripple, *“but what we have we give to you. In the name of Jesus, arise.”* (Acts 3:6) They took the guy by the hand, and strength went into his body and he stood up. Money cannot buy that. Nothing can do that except the goodness of God. They had the power, and we have the power of God and the love of God in us. It is activated by the compassion of God that cares about people.

The fruit of the spirit is for the other people. I am the branch connected to the vine. The power is there to produce the fruit, but it has to be given out and let loose. Too often we get capsulized in our own little life, world, and thinking, and we walk on by. The Lord is saying, “I have got this.”

Paul talks about how he poured out his life for the people in the furtherance of the ministry of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus poured out His life for us, and He wants all His people who are His disciples to pour out their lives about the ministry of God. When we do that we will never lack for any good thing.

“We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us.” (1st John 1:3)

I do not have fellowship with an unbeliever.

Pray about what to give to somebody. Do not give something just because you like it. When you speak, do not speak things that you like to hear. Speak what will be edifying to the hearer, building according to their needs. (Ephesians, chapter four). That is ministering and giving a gift. It is not saying what they want to hear. It is saying what the Lord knows that they need to hear. The person will thank you for sharing it because they will know that it was something they needed even if they did not want to hear it. They know it was good for them.

If you feel a person needs to hear something, you had better not say it if that is just you thinking they need to hear it rather than the Holy Ghost.

Have the life of God, and your heart should want everybody to have the life of God. Your heart wants everybody to be blessed: spiritually, mentally, emotionally, physically, financially, and in relationships. You want everybody to have God's best.

Sometimes people do not know what God has for them because they are ignorant. *"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."* (Hosea 4:6) Or maybe they do not understand what is theirs in Christ Jesus and they need somebody to help explain it to them.

A guy wrote in from the east coast. We had aired a program where a blind lady who had dead optic nerves received her sight. He saw the whole unveiling of the happening. We were not running cameras that day, but somebody quickly ran a video cam so that we would have it, and we put it together. People said that we could not air it because it was not a quality picture. But let me tell you, it was quality. It was something the Christian world and the whole world never has seen happen. It was a true miracle of God. The guy wrote and said, "Pastor, I am so thankful that you aired that. All my life I have believed to see something like that and I have never seen it anywhere. I saw it that day and God just blessed my life." He was so excited about it.

If you keep hidden what God has done – what you have seen, heard, and know is true, nobody will know about it. Nobody will know that God does that today because in their churches they are taught God does not heal anymore; that was just Jesus and the apostles.

When the man saw the video, he said, "God is alive today. He is real today."

Some in the church do not think that kind of thing is happening today, and that is the kind of disciples that have been made. They have not been made like Jesus would make them. They have been made like man has made them through his unbelief.

“Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.” (John 14:12)

Jesus told us that whatever you ask in His name, He will do. Somebody needs to start asking and believing, talking, sharing, praying and working the works of God.

“And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our joy complete.” (1st John 1:3-4)

For the person who shares the good news, gives the gift, and the person who receives the gift, their joy is complete. Then they take it and they reach somebody else.

If you have a need, give. Job had a need, and God told him to pray for his friends. Get it out of your head that the only time we pray is when there is an issue. We need to talk to God all the time, just like we are talking with our friends. The best fellowship is when we are together and talking about God. That is when it really gets good. Everybody is encouraged in the faith, hope, and love. When you leave the house, you are pumped up, ready for action and ready to deal with whatever is out there.

Look to God

The first four of the Ten Commandments deal with loving God.

- 1) Loving no other gods before Him.
- 2) Not taking the name of the Lord in vain, which means you are not using the name of Jesus in faith. It is not so much about cussing and swearing, although that is part of it. It has to do with not believing when you use the name of Jesus that heaven and earth is moving.
- 3) Not making any graven images. You cannot make an image of God. It is ignorant for anybody who says He has. Even Moses only saw His backside, for you cannot see His face and live. The pictures of Jesus you have are somebody's idea. It is alright to be a little symbolic, but, understand, it was Jesus the man on earth, not Jesus the Lord of lords and King of kings.

- 4) Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shall a man work, and the seventh declare holy to the Lord and do no work, or do your own pleasure but spend it honoring God. Man changed the Sabbath to Sunday. But it is not about the day, it is about 24/7 to the Lord. Time off from doing your own work and your own pleasure.

The next six of the Ten Commandments are all about loving your neighbor as yourself. Jesus summarizes it in the New Testament. The things that you really need to pursue are “How, Father, can I love my neighbor? What do you want me to do for my neighbor? How can I allow your love to flow through me to touch and bless the people around me, every day, 24/7?”

About 30 years ago, I had just come into a church where there had been all kinds of problems before. (The Lord uses me many times to clean things up.) I said to those people, “Why cannot we all just praise the Lord? Why cannot we just get together and thank the Lord? Why do we have to get together and everybody speaks his opinions and grievances?”

We do not have any suggestion boxes around here because I have found over the years that it becomes a cesspool for issues and problems. You do not give issues and problems a platform.

In some counseling sessions people sit down and the counselor asks each party to give their grievances. That is not healthy. That is where the problem is. The people are talking about their grievances: *write down 10 things you do not like about the person*, and they are quick to write them down. Then when asked to write down something they like about the person, they have trouble thinking. It should be that we can write out those ten, plus a bonus, faster. It should be that you cannot even think about what the grievance is if you are healthy. It is always the person with the grievance that thinks he is the healthy one. That is an issue. It does not help anybody to think about grievances, problems, and issues.

Many people pray like that to God, and God is not even hearing that prayer. He already has a solution and He is waiting for you to shut up so He can tell you what you need to hear. Read Philippians, chapter

2. The Lord says that He hates complaining, grumbling, and grievances. There is no solution in it. A person that is doing that will never get anything resolved in his life.

Unfortunately grievances are usually not about the car or the house, although things may be going on there. Grievances are always expressed to either God or to the people in your life. What you have done is ruined your day.

If you want a blessed relationship, make the other person more important than yourself. The Lord has given all for you and He says, "You are My people now," and He wants us to love Him with all our heart, all our mind, and all our soul with all that is within us.

The miracle happens when you give everything to the Lord. He will then give everything to you. He first gave everything to you and that is what giving Himself enables us to give everything to Him. That is why I say I have nothing of my own. My life is not my own, nothing I have is my own because He gave everything to me, and I came into an understanding and an appreciation of what I have. Everything I have has come from the Lord, and it is all His, and I give it back to Him.

Not Needy Anymore

That means I am not needy anymore. When you give it all back to Him, then you do not come into life and relationships needy. God has everything, and you have everything in Christ Jesus. And so, you are not looking for your love from people, you are not looking for anything from people. Therefore, nobody can steal from you, nobody can hurt you. You are invincible in Christ Jesus and are able to love others freely with no strings attached, not for selfish ambition or promotion, not using people for your own business or endeavors. You do not show favoritism or partiality because you are not looking to get something from anybody. You are not begging.

The problem in many marriages is the people come in looking for somebody else to meet their needs, which is destined to fail because nobody can meet your needs. When you start obligating and compelling people to do what you want, trying to control and manipulate them for your purpose, it all comes undone and you have

nothing to show for it. Everybody gets hurt. God can put everything back together again, but it all starts with giving.

The world is needy. Their ways are needy. The devil is needy. Anybody that has to steal to do something for himself is needy. He is no different than a beggar. God has a better life than that for us.

Diana and I did not have much when we first started the ministry together, but we thought we had everything because we had everything. Then the accountant told us we were eligible for food stamps. That did not bother us. We never did go down and get food stamps because we were perfectly happy. It is all about what you think you need.

THE GOD-MAN
RELATIONSHIPS

Loved by God
Chapter Eight

God's Perfect Blessed Love

The old self has to die if you want to walk into the life that God has for you in Jesus Christ. There is no resurrection except there be a crucifixion: you have to die with Christ to be raised with Him.

To enter into the God-man or God-woman place, we need to see our Father in heaven as He is. He loves to have fun. He loves to bless His children. He loves to do good to His people. *“Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.”* (James 1:17) God finds no fault in us if we come to Him needing wisdom.

“If You, Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with You that You may be feared. I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in His word I do hope.” (Psalm 130:3-5)

It is not that you are going to be struck down. God hates evil (1st Corinthians 13) and it is against His will, but God is love. (1st John 3, 4, John 3) *“...His banner over me was love.”* (Song of Solomon 2:4) People have not grasped nor understood the reason that negative things happen to them is because God's will has not been done, not because of God. People have chosen to go another way, believing another voice, which was either the devil or self.

“Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.” (Exodus 20:3 KJV) All the commandments of God were given out of total love to bless us, to show us how to love God, how to love one another, and to live in relationship with one another.

God hates evil because it is separation from Him. There is no evil in Him. There is nothing but perfect, blessed love that wants relationship, gives relationship, and makes relationship happen. He calls us ministers of reconciliation, reconciling the world to God in Christ Jesus and to one another. The Lord is all about: unity,

harmony, and oneness. There is no division, no corruption, no poverty, no weakness, no sickness, and no disease. Death has no power over us in Christ Jesus. *“Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?”* (1st Corinthians 15:55) There is none because we go from life to life. God is a God of the living, not of the dead.

Some people tremble and fear God, but you cannot have a relationship with somebody you fear and tremble about. You will not want to come around them.

If you had a parent like that, you could not talk to them, you could not relate to them. They would not have any time for you. That is not like the Lord. He says, *“I will not leave you. I will not forsake you.”* (Hebrews 13:5) He says it in Joshua, chapter one, and Hebrews, chapter 13. *“Therefore you can boldly say, ‘the Lord is my helper. I will not fear what man shall do to me’.”* (Hebrews 13:6)

Some of the worst examples of the Lord’s love come from people sitting in churches. They do not know they can turn the corner if they would just get rid of themselves. The Lord says, “I do not want you to take a thought about your life.” He says, “I will take care of everything because I love you. I care about you and that is my plan and purpose.” He says, “Go out about My business and I will take care of yours.” Take no thought for your life, nor for anybody else’s. Give them to God. People have problems in their relationships because they do not have a model to follow. The Father is saying, “I am your model. Father knows best.”

When Jesus approached His heavenly Father, He called Him Abba Father, dear daddy. There was no separation between them. At Lazarus’ tomb he said, *“Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You always hear me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me.”* (John 11:41-42) You can come with bold confident assurance of faith because of the blood of Jesus before the throne of grace.

Bring in God’s Environment

Jesus loved being with the disciples, but He loved being with His Daddy. He would go off and talk with Him for hours upon hours. He

loved the relationship. He loved to get together. Being a God-man and God-woman has made you loveable. People will love to get together with you. They are not going to be afraid of you. People are only afraid of you when they are out of sorts with God and themselves. They feel uneasy coming around.

We need to make ourselves easy to come around. That does not mean we accept false beliefs or false lifestyles which are evil and not the will of God. Jesus came for people in those kind of situations and He was available and gave Himself for them. The Lord died for them while they were yet His enemies about their own selfish ways.

Many Christians are judgmental and negative. People do not want to come around them because they feel judged as it is. They already feel condemned. They do not need somebody condemning them. They need somebody to say, "The ways that you have been living are condemned. You have separated yourself from God, but God has a good plan for your life – one that will really make you blessed and happy all your days, and not just you, your children's children."

What causes separation in relationships? Jealousy, envy, greed, selfishness, pride, and comparisons. There is no comparing and there is no competition with God as our Father. The God-man and God-woman do not lack for any good thing; spiritually, mentally, emotionally, physically, financially, or in relationships. You cannot be looking at lack because your Father does not look at lack, and there is no lack in Him.

1st Peter 5:6 *"Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God."* The church folks have been taught 1st Peter 5:6 means you are a poor, miserable, wretched sinner saved by grace. The worm, earthbound.

Just think what could happen in a relationship where your only purpose is to bless the other person, not according to what they think they need, but according to what the Father in heaven has for them. You can bring peace and joy to people's lives. You can set the environment of the Holy Ghost. You can bring in God's environment all around you, and loose God's love, joy, and peace.

"I am the vine, you are the branches." (John 15:5) The fruit is on the branches for you to enjoy. Have you ever been around somebody who is grumbling, complaining, and negative? Nobody is enjoying anything. We have it in us to bring heaven to people. The Lord says you are the apple of His eye. That means you are His beloved. *"My beloved is mine and I am his."* (Song of Solomon 2:16) *His banner over me was love."* (Song of Solomon 2:4) That is his covering. The Lord in heaven is covering us with His love and protection. He is covering us with His blessings, and all the goodness of heaven.

Under the shadow of the Almighty. *"A thousand may fall at your side, and 10,000 at your right, but it shall not come near you."* (Psalm 91:7) God has given His angels charge to keep you in all my ways.

People are going to behold the glory of the Father in us because Jesus is in us. It is His glory coming through. We need to love what is good passionately and we need to pursue righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. We need to pursue the things that are profitable to God. Things that are beneficial to help people grow into what God has for their life.

You Are Loved

The Lord will never tell you you are a loser, a failure, or that you will never amount to anything. He may say, "What you are doing is losing, what you are doing is failing and it will never work." God is not going to demean His children. The Bible says, *"Fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath."* (Ephesians 6:4 NKJV) That happens by demeaning them, belittling them, beating on them and acting like the powerhouse of the family to show them who is boss. When you are the boss, you do not have to show that you are the boss. When you are honored, you do not have to show folks who is honored.

You are honored and you are loved. You do not have to grovel, begging for love. You are loved. God loves you and nothing separates you. When things are right with you and the Lord, then things will be right with people. The reason people have problems in relationships is because they are trying to overpower somebody (the battle of the wills). Love people unconditionally, for God's love is unconditional.

The church has forgotten that God's love is unconditional, but then the church will use the unconditional love concept to condone evil. That is not the Father. The Father never condones or permits evil. He has our best at heart, and evil will separate us from Him.

“Then I realized that it is good and proper for a man to eat and drink, and to find satisfaction in his toilsome labor under the sun during the few days of life God has given him—for this is his lot. (Ecclesiastes 5:18)

David said that God laid out His lot before him, and it is a pleasant path. (Psalm 16:5-6)

“Moreover, when God gives any man wealth and possessions, and enables him to enjoy them...” (Ecclesiastes 5:19) If God does not have fun, and church is not fun, and life with God is not fun, then somebody is plugged in wrong. This is where the devil has a counterfeit, a religious spirit, and in that life there is no fun. It is no fun being with God and in church or anything else. It is like slavery and drudgery. The religious spirit quenches the Spirit of God.

The law of God brings liberty to people. It does not bring bondage to them. When you are doing what God wants you to do, blessing comes into your life.

No Lack

It has been taught in the church that God does not want anybody to have money or possessions. That is a poverty spirit which has nothing to do with God. However, if you do not realize all that you have has come from God and you are simply a manager of it, then you are always thinking that somebody wants what you have, or you want what somebody else has. You feel you have to preserve yourself and make sure you always have enough. That is why greedy people cannot honor God. They are always holding on to everything, thinking that they are going to lack when God says, *“Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over...” (Luke 6:38 NKJV)* God says He is going to give you more than you ever had before so you can give more out and increase the harvest of your righteousness.

God gives the ability to enjoy these things. Without God giving the ability to enjoy wealth and possessions, you will spend a miserable life, and having wealth and possessions will be a curse rather than a blessing. Relationships will be destroyed by money grubbing or thinking somebody is money grubbing.

Do not ever become one of those older folks who dangle their money in front of people to get them to take care of them. This goes on every day. There will always be somebody who is a sucker and falls for the bait. It has ruined more relationships. I have told people, "If you are going to do that, keep your house and your money. (It is your money to do whatever you like with it.)" I am not saying this out of spite, but out of clarity.

All that the Father has for me will come to me with no strings attached. People may do something out of a happy heart, but then the next week their heart is not happy and they think, *Oh, man*, and they want to get it back. They make you the bad guy because they have given to you and they want it back, and you are now standing in the way of their getting it. Then again, if they have not given it, you would not have it. That explains this expression: "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush."

Money destroys relationship when it is not about God managing it, when it is about people doing what they are doing when they are not like the Lord. The Lord says in Malachi, chapter 3, "*I am the Lord and I do not change.*" (Malachi 3:6 NKJV) The God-man and the God-woman start to come into being like God, and they do not change. When they give their word, they keep their word. They do what they say they are going to do. They are not hot one day and the next day cold in relationships.

If God loves with an everlasting love, a God-man or God-woman loves with an everlasting love. They are not going to change no matter what people do or say. No matter how they feel they do not run their life on their feelings. They run their life on the Word of God.

"...to accept their lot and be happy in their toil—this is a gift of God." (Ecclesiastes 5:19) If you have work, it is a gift from God. Work

takes on many forms. Recently a man of God who is out of work told me that this is the first time he has had time with his wife for many years.

What Is Work?

I say marriage is work. Relationship is work. Work is fun and enjoyable. *“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord.”* (Colossians 3:23) There is a purpose. God is doing something. If you do not work, you do not eat. That is not just talking about physical food. Anything of value comes through work. Work is not a nasty four letter word. There is a purpose, there is something coming out of it, and it may be that God is working on a relationship. You are God’s good workmanship created by God to do good faith works that He has prepared in advance for you to do.

In all aspects of life: spiritually, mentally, emotionally, physically, financially, in relationships, or business; whatever we are doing, we do it with all our hearts in the name of Jesus to the glory of God because God has put His glory in us to work His works. Jesus asked, *“I ask you, which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil?”* (Luke 6:9) What were they going to say? They could not deny that. And He said, *“I must work the works of Him who sent Me...”* (John 9:4 KJV)

“How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.” (Acts 10:38)

Just think what could happen in relationships. Yes, people have issues, but we are changing into God’s image and that is the work of the Holy Spirit.

If God is working His good work in us, then He is working. He is doing something that is going to accomplish a purpose that will bless people. Any blessed business will be serving people. It will make the world a better place for you and me.

Wherever we go we bring heaven to people. We are to make this community a better place. We are to make this world a better place because God is in us effectually working His good workmanship.

“They seldom reflect on the days of their life, because God keeps them occupied with gladness of heart.” (Ecclesiastes 5:20)

Give God the Glory

Philippians, chapter 4, says to think on the things that are true, just, beautiful, things of virtue, things worthy of praise. Where there is no striving, bitterness, competition, comparison, poverty, superior or inferior nonsense going on, there is fun.

Have you ever wondered about the fact that both ball teams are praying to God to win? I watch this and say, “Man, it is not about the game.” It is about giving God the glory and the praise because God does not care who wins. He rules.

Glory and praise is a good thing when you are not trying to give it to yourself. That is why it says to let somebody else praise you. We should give it right back to where it belongs. Let the Lord receive all the glory and the praise because it is He doing it, and the God-man and God-woman realize that. They do not want any glory or praise going to them. It is going to God. But I am not going to turn it down. I realize who heals the sick, certainly not me. Let the people give God the praise and the glory, and let people honor the vessel through which it came. But do not let the vessel keep any of it. This is encouraging. Your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

Is God occupying your time with gladness and joy? The only way that can happen is for the envy, jealousy, greed, and pride to go. Otherwise you cannot enjoy your life, you try to make your own life, and when you are trying to make your own life Jesus says, *“He who finds his life will lose it and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.”* (Matthew 10:39)

“And Now I will Show You the Most Excellent Way.” (1st Corinthians 12:31)

- *“Love is patient.”* (1st Corinthians 13:4) God is patient.
Romans 2:4 – It is God’s loving kindness that leads people to change.

Have you tried to change others (or even yourself)? You cannot change yourself without God's help. It will only last a little while. Until you purpose in your heart and are committed to it, you will not stay with it. Relationships should not be a one night fling.

The Word and the Holy Ghost will judge people that call themselves Christians. It will show our sin so that we can remove it. God's loving kindness is His gentleness, His tolerance, and His patience that lead us to change.

Tolerance is not condoning what is going on, but it is understanding that what is wrong is going to change over time, and it is God's goodness that supersedes it all.

- *"Love is kind."* (1st Corinthians 13:4) God is kind. We are patient and kind.
- *"Love does not envy."* (1st Corinthians 13:4) Envy and jealousy is all about lack. You want something that somebody else has. That will create chaos in a relationship because you are measuring yourself with another person, and you come up wanting and lacking. Then you get bitter, and you want to do something to get that.

Have you ever tried to finagle something out of somebody? Children are really good at this. Each will have a toy. One looks over there and wants the toy that the other one has, so they either try to get it by force, or they try to make theirs into something really neat so that they will want to switch.

Love does not envy. Envy and jealousy ruin and destroy relationships. Love has everything it needs. Love is content. Godliness with contentment is of great gain.

- *"Love does not boast."* (1st Corinthians 13:4) When people boast in the flesh, it is intended to make them superior to somebody else. They are also trying to make somebody else inferior. Let your boast be in the Lord. I am boasting about God, my Father, my daddy. You will hear me say, "My Daddy can do anything." I am boasting in the Lord. That is

permissible because it is love. It is understanding, and it is truth. God is about love and truth, and no fear. The Holy Spirit brings light into darkness so that people can have God's best.

- *“Love is not proud”* (1st Corinthians 13:4) about self. God says, “I am the Lord. There is none like unto Me.” That sounds prideful, but it is the truth. Pride is always trying to become something you are not. The Lord is the top and everything else is underneath. When Satan tried to presume that he was on top, he was deceived because God is number one. *“There is none like Me,”* (Isaiah 46:9) said our Creator. When pride comes in, people try to make themselves more important than they ought to be, and they think they are more important.

“By pride and insolence comes only contention...” (Proverbs 13:10 Amplified Bible) the Proverbs says. In relationship when somebody starts thinking about himself and trying to promote himself, it is always at the expense of another person. When that happens there is contention, fighting, quarreling, separation, and division.

The Lord says, *“I am the Lord, and there is none like Me.”* (Isaiah 46:9) That is the truth. When you are the best, you are the best. But He does not use that as arrogance to put Him over everybody. It is not a power thing. Instead, there is nothing like unto Him: The Lord, who is the best, who is over everything takes the servant role to His people to save His people.

When Jesus was asked who is the greatest, He said the one who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven must become the servant of all, not the lord of all. The one who is the lord, who is the best, becomes the servant of all the rest. Then everyone can be blessed because He has the power and the ability. He is the Lord and He lacks for no good thing. And He now in turn takes that and gives it to those who believe and trust in Him. That is who He is. He is not concerned about Himself because He has everything, He is everything and lacks for nothing.

“What is man that You are mindful of him, or the son of man that You take care of him? You have made him a little lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, and set him over the

works of Your hands. You have put all things in subjection under his feet." (Hebrews 2:6-8) The Lord said that is what He wanted to do. He wants to have a people, and He wants to bless His people. He is a benevolent dictator. He is the Lord of lords and there is none like unto Him, the King of kings. Everything He does is from perfect love, perfect justice, perfect truth, and a perfect heart to do good for everyone without exception. It is not God's will that anybody should perish.

- *"Love is not rude."* (1st Corinthians 13:5) Rude pushes one's own way and one's own self on others, even one's teaching. You can have the truth, but if you are pushing it on people, you are not honoring their right to disbelieve it.

I read about a major Christian ministry that wanted to kill all the people that were not like Christians. There are other belief systems that do that as well. If you are not of their belief, they will kill you. Where does love and tolerance dwell? Where is patience, kindness, and goodness?

The way the Lord set up America there is freedom of belief, for all beliefs. As soon as we start to promote one belief over another, our religious freedom is being undermined. The next thing you know there will not be any religious freedom for anybody. Then comes the persecution like in Rome.

- *"Love is not self-seeking."* (1st Corinthians 13:5) Jesus' example is He humbled Himself and became a servant. He says, "Do likewise." He was not seeking any glory for Himself. He was about His Father's business. He just lived a happy, blessed life, and He never lacked for anything. He had control over everything. By the way, they did not kill Him. He laid down His life to save us. He was the perfect sacrifice.

It has been taught that Jesus was killed. He was not. It was all in the plan of God. He was the Pasqual lamb, the lamb without blemish, to be sacrificed for our sins (our separation from God).

- *"It is not easily angered."* (1st Corinthians 15:5) If God was easily angered, that would be the end of us. Have you ever

said you would not talk to or see a certain person again? Drop the “never.” That is what is wrong in relationships. God is not into never, He is into “always.”

Never has to do with the impossible, saying it is not possible, and it cuts you off from somebody. When you get back in a relationship with a person where you are friendly and nice, you have fun and good comes out of it. Everybody gets blessed. That is God’s will. His will is that we all live happily ever after together. Since we are going to be together forever, we might as well get along now. Let’s get rid of whatever is hindering that. Forget about your opinion. Your opinion does not matter.

- “*Love keeps no record of wrongs.*” (1st Corinthians 13:5) God does not keep a record of wrongs. That shreds the theology of the church. What could happen in relationships if we are not keeping a record? We start brand new every new day like the first day we met that person, for God’s mercy is fresh and new every new day.

The only way you can forgive is to live each day fresh and new like you never met that person before. It has to be brand new. Just think, you wake up in the morning, and it is the first day with your spouse and that relationship.

Little children have the ability to have fun with their life until their parents mess them up. We were born again to have fun. I tell people, “Do not rain on God’s parade, let’s have fun, and let us enjoy it.”

Keeping records of wrongs will ruin your life. How can you say like Paul in Philippians 1:3, “*I thank God in every remembrance of you,*” when you are remembering other stuff?

God gave me an uncanny ability when I hit a bad shot on the golf course. I do not remember it. That can lead to creative scoring. So for accountability I tell my son, “I want you to count my strokes for me.”

God remembers my sin no more, and He has a good mind. The wisdom of a king is to cover the sin – not to excuse it, but to remove it. When my sin is covered with the blood of Jesus, it is removed. He remembers it no more. And He will give me the power not to do that again because I hate evil.

Some Christians do not hate evil enough, and they do not love what is good enough. If you would love what is good enough, you would not even be messing with the evil. You would not even be thinking about it or going there.

- *“Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.”* (1st Corinthians 13:6, 7)

This is who God is. This is what He is about. This is our Father in heaven. He is none of the nonsense. We can come boldly before the throne of grace because of the blood of Jesus.

In relationship God wants His folks together. We are together with all the believers around the earth, standing in agreement for the glory of God, awaiting Jesus’ return. But in the meantime we are loving the people and doing good, with the Holy Spirit as the comforter.

Love the children and do good to them. Point out what is evil and what is God’s best. People only do what they know to do. It is in them for better or for worse, and the love of Christ will drive away all the nonsense.

THE GOD-MAN
RELATIONSHIPS

Absolute Truth & the 10 Commandments
Chapter Nine

Rise Up, Church

Was it hard to give your tithe for the first time? Did you find it hard the first time you spoke in tongues? You should never be afraid of giving, nor should you be afraid of the Holy Spirit.

We live in a world where people are afraid of the supernatural, they are afraid of the miraculous. They are afraid of stepping out and believing God to do something that He already said He would do. It is important to give back what the Word says and not lean to our own understanding

God knows each of us and how willful we can be, so we yield ourselves to Him. When we are willful, then we are cutting off God's best. The Lord knows each of us and He is getting rid of that willfulness.

Somebody came up to me and said, "I think I am going to die." And I said, "Hallelujah." The old you has to die before the resurrection power of God can come in, where you are yielded to the Lord and not thinking about yourself anymore.

The Lord says, "*Honor your father and your mother so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.*" (Exodus 20:12) That is a promise. Honor means respect. One of the key things in relationships is respect. God is talking about authorities because your parents are the first authorities in your life, but you need to respect everybody.

"Will there be faith found on the earth when I return?" The whole church around the world has fallen into a watered-down belief, but God's Spirit is separating His church from man's church. We will get back the same life and power that was present with Jesus, the disciples, and the early church. God is bringing it back before His return because He is not coming back for a lukewarm church. "So,

because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth.” (Revelation 3:16)

We have to stir the fire back up. It is not just emotion. The things of the Spirit are solid. God has love, joy, peace, and patience in us and they need to be exercised. You have the faith to move mountains, but you need to exercise it and act on it.

Stretch your faith. Peter walked on the water because Jesus was walking on the water. None of the other disciples even ventured out there. Whatever we need will be there when we need it, to do whatever it is that God wants us to do. There is a saying – nothing ventured, nothing gained. If you do not stretch out, you are not going to do it. Every journey begins with the first step. You have to start.

Two philosophies operating in the world are 1) relativism (a fancy word for doing away with truth so there are no absolutes) and 2) narcissism (selfishness) that is affecting the world and the church. God has given a moral law, the Ten Commandments. He has given it out of His love.

Who Operates Out of God’s Love?

If you are going to have blessed relationships, there has to be absolute truth. There has to be respect. There has to be honor and integrity. There can be no selfishness. As soon as you are listing your rights, then problems begin.

1st John tells us about God being love. All that He is and does comes out of His love. The God-man and God-woman operate not by might or by power but by God’s Spirit which is love: total self-giving, self-sacrificing love. That is how we are going to operate because God is in us working in us and through us. His purpose is being accomplished.

John 3:16 *“God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him will not perish but will have everlasting life.”* This is the gift of God.

The Ten Commandments are basically: love God; love your neighbor as yourself. Someone asked Jesus which was the greatest of the

commandments and He said, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, your mind, and your soul, and love your neighbor as yourself.” In psychology circles today, it is all about self-esteem and self-image. In the God-man and the God-woman it is about God-esteem and God-image. Self is dead, and God is alive in you and through you. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is working in you.

Start to realize that the power works in accordance with the will of God. So you cannot just decide, *Today I am going to do this or do that, and I am going to give a word of knowledge, or work a miracle today.* It is as the Spirit wills, where the Spirit moves in you and through you.

We have the power to do good. Selfish people never do good because they are all about themselves. They never help anybody else and even the good they think they are doing is only for personal gain. *“All the ways of a man are clean and innocent in his own eyes [and he may see nothing wrong with his actions], but the Lord weighs and examines the motives and intents [of the heart and knows the truth].* (Proverbs 16:2 Amplified)

We need to ask ourselves why we want to do certain things, or why we are saying what we’re saying. Start to question and challenge your motivation to see that it is truth and love working at the same time.

The world does not want the Ten Commandments around. The church has also said they are not “under the law” either. That is why sin is not talked about anymore. You get a bunch of nice, happy thoughts and happy talks, but nobody is looking at their lives and seeing what is going on because they want to feel good. We live in a feel-good society which has crept into the church.

The church is like a boat in the water (the world). We are in the world but not of it. When the water gets into the boat, the boat will sink. As a result, divorce is allowed, divorce rates being over 60% in the Christian community, let alone all the people that are bitter, unforgiving, and separated. They have not talked to some people for 10 years, and it is all permitted.

It is not permitted here because I want to see you with me when we stand before God someday. He says that if you hold ought against anybody, you need to forgive them and get on with your life with them. You cannot have anything against somebody because that is not love.

Part of the problem is that the people do not know the Word of God, and they are not getting it either. I like to read it and see exactly what it says. 1st John 5 is talking about the people who say they love God, but He says, *“Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands.”* (1st John 5:1-2) This has been done away with. People that say they are not under the law are not understanding what the law is. The moral law of God will be in the new heaven and the new earth. Love is what it is all about: loving God and loving your neighbor as yourself.

This is how we know that we love the children of God by: loving God and carrying out His commands. *“...this is the love for God, that we keep His commandments. And His commands are not burdensome...”* (1st John 5:3) They are not a problem. If anybody ever has a problem with the commands of God, then they are not children of God.

The thief does not want us learning this because he does not want us operating in the love of God in relationship with Him, with ourselves, and with each other. God has set down a way that we can actually live in perfect peace, hope, and joy with one another and live happily ever after forever. That is God’s plan. The devil does not want folks getting into that because they will not have to worry or fear ever again. God’s perfect love casts out all fear. (1st John 4:16)

The thief does not want anybody operating like that because he wants us antagonistic towards each other, he wants division, and he wants separation, fighting, quarreling, and feuding. He never wants people to have peace in their lives. He wants every day to be agitated and stirred up. Have you found you can stir yourself up? You do not even need anybody else to do it.

The Lord has a better plan for relationships. Relationship is the most important thing to God before everything else in life. Relationship with Him and with us together, and then we together with each other in Him. He is always in everything. He is the center.

Keep the faith. Hold the faith up in front of you every moment of every day. Believers believe. They are not doubters.

Delight vs. Burden

When the Word of God is not a delight but a burden, or not a joy to you, then there is something wrong in the house. Even though I hear a Word a thousand times, I just love it like it was the first time.

Have you had a relationship with someone where a thousand days have gone by and you have lost the joy of the first day? The only way that you can have the relationship that God says to have every day is to consider it brand new. His mercy is fresh and new every new day, and the delight and love stays in the relationship. The faith stays in the relationship. You are not thinking that people let you down, or they did not keep their word.

“If thou, Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?” (Psalm 130:3) Who am I to turn around and say, “Look at their flaws.” Love covers a multitude of sin. Let’s be believing God that people come to salvation in Christ and receive the love and forgiveness of God.

“For everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.” (1st John 5:4-5)

“We love because He first loved us. If anyone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar. (There goes a whole lot of the church. God says you are a liar.) For he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from him, that he who loves God should love his brother also.” (1 John 4:19-21 RSV)

Then I hear this one: “He is not my brother.” What they are saying is they are not believers. Well, hello, Cain. *“Am I my brother’s keeper?”*

The Word of God is spiritual and it is alive. It is given for relationship with God and with each other, and it should quicken a person’s heart. If a person does not love God, they will just say, “It is nonsense. I will like who I like, I will dislike who I dislike, and I will live how I want to live.” But, understand that God so loved us while we were yet enemies. Christ died for us: the godly for the ungodly, to get us saved and in relationship with Him. To get us back where God created us to be – family with Him as our loving Father.

You did not choose your family, you were put into family. You can choose friends, but you do not have a right to *not* love everybody. You have a right to love everybody, and God has given you that ability (you did not have that ability before Jesus).

God says there is not anybody that does good, no not one. All have fallen short of the glory of God. To enter into the God realm you have to realize that you are nothing apart from Jesus. People who build up their self-worth and self-esteem will hate that. Jesus said the world would hate you. They do not want anything to do with it, but the people need to hear what God says. Relativism takes away the truth and says that it’s okay, you can just be how you be and get away with it.

When God comes to clean His church, all those people who have bitterness, unforgiveness or selfishness are not going to be in it. They are not going to be a part of His chosen generation, His church.

“...This is love for God: to keep His commands. And His commands are not burdensome. For everyone born of God overcomes the world.” (1st John 5:3-4) We have to daily die to our old self, as Paul says, and take on the new. That gives us the power to help us to love each other. The old you was crucified with Christ. (Galatians 2:20)

Functions of the Law

The church needs sound teaching brought back. That is what the Holy Spirit will do. He will convict sin and then drive people to the

cross, the second function of the law. The first function is to present the moral law of God (not the ceremonial laws which are all “religion,” like do not touch this, do not taste that). Stick to the Ten Commandments in Exodus, chapter 20.

Jesus affirms them in the New Testament just like they will be affirmed in the new heaven and the new earth because God’s law is holy, it is just, it is perfect, and it is true.

The first function of the law is to show me my sin. I have ideas about my life and how to live it, but when I read God’s Word, God says something different. Because I love God now in Jesus, I want to make the change to do it His way, and the law shows me my sin.

If you have bitterness in your heart towards anyone, but you are faithful and just to acknowledge your sin, God is faithful and just to forgive you your sin and to cleanse you from all unrighteousness. It is completely gone, taken off the record. (1st John 1:9)

When I hear that, I say, “Okay, I need to make an adjustment. I need to love that person.” The commandments of God are not grievous, they are not burdensome. It is not a pain to somebody who loves God and loves His commandments. I can always tell when I am loving God because I want to do what He says.

Have you been rebellious or independent towards the authorities God put in your life? They are there for your good as Romans, chapter 13 says. They are not a pain, grievous, or cramping your style.

I have had people tell me they need to go to another church because Pastor Randy is cramping their style. I say, “Man, I do not cramp your style. God is cramping your style because your style is not of God, and, quite frankly, I do not think that other church wants you.” Because the Body of Christ is the Body of Christ. If it cramps God’s style one place, it is not going to change by going someplace else. You are the one who has to change because God’s Word is not going to change. You might find a place, however, that does not hold you committed, accountable, and responsible. In other words, they do not love you.

The Proverb says parents actually hate their children if they do not discipline them, correct them, show them the truth, and the way they ought to live. They cause their child to go to hell. God wants things differently.

The second function of the law is that it drives you to the cross. It drives you to Jesus for forgiveness because now you have seen the error of your ways and you are driven to Him. There the Lord will have mercy on you, and He will forgive you. (1st John 1:9) If you acknowledge your sin to God, He is faithful and just to forgive you and to cleanse you from all unrighteousness. And not just cleanse you, He gives you ability, which is what grace means. Many Christians do not even know what the term means. They say, "I am not under the law, I am under grace." If you are still living like hell, you have no grace either because you cannot be forgiven if you do not want to give it up.

The third function of the law is to show you how to live God's way. That is what the God-man and the God-woman do. When I look at the commandments, I am looking at how God wants me to live and what He wants me to do. The Lord will show you how to deal with others. The Lord will always say, "Speak the truth in love. Prefer the other more important than yourself. Put yourself in their position. Compassion." Then you have the power of God to change and transform.

This is a teaching about doctrine. It is necessary. It will lock you down when the wind and waves of life come by. You will still be solid on the Rock and you will not be moved.

The Lord Will Help

I remember when the Lord told me, "Bless, do not curse." Never curse people. To bless says I want to know Jesus, I want to know what God says, and I want to do what He says. I want the blessing of God for everybody. I do not want anybody to miss it. And all of a sudden God's heart starts coming up inside of you. Those who are part of the Church have been saved, they have received salvation because it is a gift from God. Now they have to do something with the gift.

Philippians 2:12 says to work out your own salvation and get all of the benefits working that God has. It is all about relationship. It does not say that God so loved the world that He died to save the trees. Yes, God loves the creation, for He made the creation. Man messed it up for profit and seeking their own selfish ways and gain. The trees are not the issue, people are the issue. People care more about animals than they do about babies and about others. Yes, we love the animals. God gave us the animals to enjoy them, but people are the ones created in God's image.

Proverbs says that if you mistreat your animal you are an evil, wicked person. I remember the day when my Bandit, 140 pounds of puppy, jumped the fence and got into the new grass I had just planted. I picked up the palm tree that she had chewed in two and went after her with it, and the Lord said, "Son." It was in a moment of rage.

It says in the Proverbs that if you gossip about somebody you hate that person.

When any guy would come around, that poor puppy would just go belly up and pee herself because she had been beaten. People are no different. I see that all the time. People just belly up because they have been abused. They have been used, and they need to get delivered. They need to get free of that and get help. Jesus can do it. He can help them.

People say, "I am never going into a relationship again." Do not ever say "never;" do not limit God. The Lord can do it, He can help us. The Lord gives specific directions in Exodus 20. He lays out the Ten Commandments.

The Ten Commandments

The Ten Commandments were written with God's own finger. He carved them right on the stone.

He said, *"I am the Lord, your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery."*

1. You shall have no other gods before me.

2. *You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God,...* (You will learn about what proper jealousy (of God) is. The other kind of jealousy is right from hell, coming from selfish possessiveness which destroys relationships. There is a healthy God type of jealousy.) *“...punishing the children for the sins of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.”* (Exodus 20:2-6)

It is not God who is sending people to hell. It is people not receiving the love of God and the salvation that He has for them. God has thrown a rescue line out to people and they are not receiving it, so they die and go to hell. Jesus said He did not come to condemn the world but to save the world. But folks have misunderstood. By their unbelief they have rejected the love of God and the salvation of God, thinking that they have a better way to do it. Their plan is not going to work because the ultimate thing that stands in the way of the self-made man is death, and he has no way to overcome it. He leaves everything that he has lived, gained and acquired to the next guy, whether a wise man or a fool, and before long he is not remembered.

A wife, a child, a parent, or a friend can become an idol. *“If you love father, mother, son, daughter, etc. more than Me, you are not worthy of Me,”* the Lord says.

Yes, you can build statues of yourself and do different things to try to memorialize yourself, but you will be forgotten. The Lord has a better way.

The Old and New Testaments are the whole Bible, the Word of God. Some in the church have been trying to do away with the Old Testament, saying we do not need it. Guess what is in the Old Testament? The Ten Commandments. Why do they want to get rid of them? Because they do not want to be under them. If you are keeping the Ten Commandments, you are not under them. If you walk after the Spirit, you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. (Romans 8)

It is vast ignorance that has come in to demoralize the church so that it is not holy anymore. They are trampling underfoot the blood of Jesus, saying it is of no value.

3. *“You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.”* (Exodus 20:7) Does that refer to cursing and swearing? When you speak His name, He answers. But if there is no faith there and it is just carelessly using a name, then He does not respond. Did you pray and not believe that you received what you asked? That is violating the third commandment. You are misusing the name of the Lord because it is a holy name, and when you speak it, God is intending to do something. Every time you use the name of Jesus, every time you call upon the name of the Lord, He is there, and He is answering and responding.

I ask people in the prayer line what they want, and if they do not know what they want, I politely ask them to sit down until they do. I want them to understand that God is in the house. We need to make up our minds what we want to do and He will enable it to happen. We are concerned about God’s results.

4. *“Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.”* Man’s church changed the commandments of God. *“Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but He rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.”* (Exodus 20:8-11) In the Bible the first day (which is dusk to dusk) is Sunday. Our calendar runs sunrise to sunrise. Genesis, chapter one says, “the evening and the morning” were the first day. People say this commandment is about going to church. No, it is not about going to church. You can go to church every day. The church has gotten away from the everyday meetings because they figure it is too much and they will not have a life.

However, they lost the community, they lost the power, and they lost the encouragement. During the week things go on and people cannot wait to come back to church to refill. God gave this for us to rest. Jesus says the Sabbath was not for man to live, but the Sabbath was made for man – for rest in the Lord. Enjoy your family, enjoy yourself in God. Church is part of it. Jesus went to the synagogue every Sabbath as was His practice. It was a godly habit and He loved it. He anticipated it. He looked forward to it, and He enjoyed it.

The first four commandments deal with loving God, the second six with loving your neighbor as yourself.

5. *“Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.”* (Exodus 20:12)
This has to do with authorities in your life. Love the authorities that God has put there. They are for your good, to help you to come into all that God has.
6. *“You shall not murder.”* (Exodus 20:13) Jesus explains this further in the Sermon on the Mount.
7. *“You shall not commit adultery.”* (Exodus 20:14) A break of faith.

All these commandments deal with loving and doing good to your neighbor; always befriending them, always protecting them, always believing for them, always supporting and encouraging one another, never doing anything that is going to cause them harm.

8. *“You shall not steal.”* (Exodus 20:15) You should be happy when somebody has something. You should be happy for them. If you find something and you keep it, that is stealing, for it belongs to somebody else. You need to seek to find out who it belongs to and befriend them. We need to look out for each other. We need to cover each other and protect each other, defend each other, believe for each other, care for each other in good times or hard times, come hell or high water. We are going to stand together in God.
9. *“You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.”* (Exodus 20:16) Every time somebody is talking bad about somebody else or telling half-truths it is the worst kind of false

testimony, and will cause them harm. It will cause them to lose reputation, to lose face. The God-man, and God-woman do not do that. We will build each other up, encourage, support, and speak well of each other.

10. *“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his manservant or maidservant.”* I do not want to take anything that belongs to my neighbor. *His ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.* If their ox runs out through the fence, I will not say, “Oh, it’s mine.” I am going to take it and give it back to them.

These are the Ten Commandments. This is the moral law of God. Heaven and earth will pass away, but this moral law will not pass away. Those who do it will live and be blessed. Deuteronomy 28 tells us how the blessing will happen.

In addition to the moral law, there are ceremonial and religious laws. Christ Jesus, the blood offering, the blood atonement at the cross, did away with those things.

When you look at people, the inside of you should rise up with holy wonder and awe that you are looking at God’s children. They are somebody that Jesus gave His life for. They should be so awesome in your eyes that you want to do nothing but good to them all of your days.

God shows no partiality in relationship. This is supernatural.

THE GOD-MAN
RELATIONSHIPS
Great Love Story
Chapter Ten

Receive the Promises

“My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:19) My God will cause everything that He has for us to come to us. God is opening the windows of heaven. *“Give and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom.”* (Luke 6:38) The blessing is coming in from the north, south, east, and west.

Sarah laughed at the promise of God when she was eavesdropping. Many times eavesdropping is dangerous because you might hear something that is beyond you. God and Abraham were talking about the promise. But Sarah laughed when she heard the promise. It was not because she thought it was great and wonderful. It was a laughter out of *How can this be?* Meaning, *I am barren and Abraham is old.* She just did not think it could happen.

Mary, on the other hand, when she heard the promise from the angel, asked the question, “How can this be?” It was a different heart asking the question. She was asking how it was going to happen. Sarah was asking in unbelief. When Mary heard how it would be, then she said, *“Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word.”* (Luke 1:38 NKJV)

When the dust settles, that is where you have to go.

The Lord told Joshua *“As I was with Moses so I will be with you.”* (Joshua 1:5) He said to him *“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid, do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”* (Joshua 1:9) Just keep on going, and we will see the glory of God, but it has to be received.

We knew a little gal who found out she was pregnant. It is not always good news for some folks. She had several children already and this was not received as good news. About six months into the

pregnancy I had a dream about her, and in the dream I saw her happy and excited while running around holding the placenta in her hand. It was sickening and gross. The Lord told me some things, so I went to her and asked, “You are wanting this baby to die, are not you?” As she looked at me, tears started rolling down her face. She said, “Pastor, I ask God’s forgiveness, I ask your forgiveness, but I have not wanted this baby.” I said, “That’s what the Lord was showing me.” I told her, “You are going to need to receive this child with joy.”

Three months went by and the baby was delivered. As she came out, she was a gray color and not breathing. The placenta, which is normally full of blood and rich, just crumbled, and there was no life or nourishment in it. The woman remembered what the Lord had said, to receive the child with joy. When she began to rejoice, praising the Lord, and receiving the child with joy, the baby came alive.

The Lord gave life to that child. She had been dead in the mother’s womb, but the Lord superseded what was going on. We have had the privilege over the years to see many things like this. The Lord intervened because He wanted that baby. He also wants to birth blessings in His people, and He wants them to come forth. We cannot let our unbelief, our lack of desire, or being tired and weary get in the way. We need to stir up the Holy Spirit in us and get on with what God has and get the babies birthed. We are talking not just about physical babies, but spiritual babies – people coming to Christ. We need to get the Word to the nations, and give the glory and the praise to God that His plan is never going to fail.

One thing I do not experience, and I never will, is lack and poverty. Poverty, lack, fear, worry, selfishness and self-pity are a waste. Stand up, shake yourself, and kick that stuff out of you in Jesus’ name. If you are going to see all that God has for you come to pass, you have to get rid of that kind of thinking, and you have to let it go. Ask God’s forgiveness and move on.

Do not be looking at lack and poverty. Be looking at the Lord who has no lack and poverty. We have to get our eyes back where they need to be. We will be tested, but the Lord will never fail.

God Wanted to Fellowship with Man

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The Spirit of the Lord was hovering over the waters before He created everything that exists. He created man for Himself. God is love, and love needs to be expressed. He had nobody to express His love to, so in His great love created man in His image. He wanted to love and fellowship with him. As the Lord was doing that, He saw that man needed someone else, so He created woman by removing a rib from Adam. He created the woman for the man, and together they would fellowship with the Lord. He would love them and they would be His family, for He made family to express His love to the people. However, man decided to go after something else and disobeyed the Lord. Adam preferred his wife over God and they broke up the family. They divorced themselves from the Lord and went their own way, hiding from Him. Their relationship was broken. The Lord sought them out because His heart was to have relationship, to love people and to fellowship with them.

Because Adam and Eve had cut themselves off from the Lord forever by what they did, and He did not want them to stay in that condition (separated from Him), He set a plan in place. He knew that only in Him is life and love and every good thing. Apart from Him there is nothing, and He did not want to leave His people in that state.

He gave the promise of a Savior who was to come to save the people and restore them to Himself. So the Lord loved on them and continued to love and remained faithful because that is who He is. He is love. He is just. He is true. He is committed. He will not leave or forsake us. He is there even when we are not there with Him. He is there for us. But He cannot benefit and bless us as long as we are going our own way. As history continued the people moved further and further from God, nor wanting to be His children.

They built a tower to the heavens to try to reach God, but it really was not about reaching Him, it was about *Look how wonderful we are, and what we are accomplishing and doing*. The Lord said, "That is not something I want," so He confounded them, and they went their different ways. They could not understand each other's languages. In relationship you have to have communication. You have to be able to understand what the Lord had said. As long as folks can

understand each other and work together, nothing will be impossible to them. But it was without God that this was going on, and it was not going to last, and it was not going to work.

Leaders/Saviors Were Raised Up

1. Noah

You have seen what selfishness does, where people get proud about their accomplishments and what they can do. Then they do not need the Lord. The Lord said, "This is my family, these are my people," and He set about to save them. However, only Noah and his family were saved in the Ark. God cleared out everything because mankind had gone so far away from Him and His ways. They were selfish, hateful and violent. The Lord started a fresh family.

The thief has come to steal, kill, and destroy, Jesus says in John 10:10, but the Lord came that we might have life and have it more abundantly. He is the author of life. Because people loved the creation more than the Creator, the flood came. He gave opportunity for everybody to get on the ark, but they laughed and mocked Noah instead. The Lord always gives opportunity to everybody to come into what He has. He does not show partiality. Eventually the boat was sealed up, all the people drowned out there, and the Lord started over with Noah and his family.

2. Abraham

As time went on, people went back to their old ways. Nobody was seeking the Lord until a fellow named Abraham came along. God gave him a promise, and Abraham was God's friend because he believed Him. As he believed, God blessed him.

The Lord is always concerned about blessing and loving people, but the people would not have anything to do with Him. Abraham started anew, then came Isaac and Jacob. Eventually people turned away from the Lord, and the Israelites went into slavery for 400 years in Egypt.

3. Moses

God raised up a savior named Moses to deliver the people. Throughout history God always raised up somebody whom He could work through. He searches to and fro, back and forth across the earth looking for somebody to whom and through whom He can show Himself mighty, to whom and through whom He can show His love.

Moses was raised up to save the people. They did not know the Lord, they had gotten so far from Him and His ways, but in His love He still remained faithful to His promise and His word to Abraham, His friend. God kept the plan going.

The Lord always continues the plan of love, the plan of relationship, the plan of family. *“If Thou, Lord, should mark iniquities, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee, that you may be feared. I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in His word I do hope.”* (Psalm 130:3-5)

God raised up Moses and rescued the people, delivering them out of slavery in Egypt. He sought to make a new family called by His name. He brought them out with mighty signs and wonders, and He helped them to see that He is the Lord. He went before them in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, leading the people to the Promised Land. All the way there the people kicked and squirmed because they wanted to do their thing. They were not interested in going the Lord’s way. He performed mighty signs and wonders, feeding them supernaturally with food (manna from heaven) every day. They never lacked for any good thing because He was showing them who He was and how He loved and cared about them. He wanted them to be His family, believe in Him, and follow Him for life and blessing, every good thing.

But the people rebelled against God over and over again. Even though the Lord supplied, and supplied, and supplied. They were unbelieving, rebellious, selfish, and self-centered, nor did they want to identify with the Lord as family. As a result the first generation did not go into the Promised Land, but the Lord was faithful and kept the promise going for their children. His love and mercy endures forever. He went on to the next generation who believed Him.

4. Joshua

The Lord said to Joshua, *“As I was with Moses, so I will be with you,”* and He continued, “I will not leave you, I will not forsake you, I am going to bless, I am going to help,” He enabled Joshua and the Israelites to overcome all obstacles to receive the land that God had prepared for them.

The people in the land despised the Lord. They had false gods, and they were seeking to abuse God’s people, but God stepped up and befriended and defended. Love believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things: love never fails. And God protected His people and enabled them to receive the land that He had promised.

After settling in the land, they went after false gods. They forgot the Lord and all His benefits. Every now and then they would cry out for help, and the Lord would send a judge along who was a deliverer.

5. Samson

Samson was a deliverer, one of the famous ones. There were many others that the Lord used, causing the folks to come back to Him. God remained faithful, but in time, again, they turned against Him.

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” (Hebrews 13:8) His love does not change. His plan does not change. He still wants to save His people. *“He will send them a savior and defender, and He will rescue them.”* (Isaiah 19:20)

6. David, Solomon, and the Prophets

David, Solomon, and the prophets of old were always calling the people back to God. “Return to the Lord and He will bless you. He will help you. He will take care of you.” The Holy Spirit was upon these individuals, but *all* the people did not have the Holy Spirit. They went to the man of God to receive the word of the Lord which would encourage them, help them to get right with Him, and follow His ways.

Those people died in faith, looking forward to a Savior that was to come, the Messiah that was in God's plan of love. There was always a remnant of believers. There was always a few that sought the Lord and God honored them. In the book of Malachi there were some that honored the Lord, even though most of the folks had stopped giving their tithes and offerings.

In every great revival the people always returned to the Lord, returned to the Sabbath of the Lord, returned to giving their tithes and their offerings.

After Solomon, it got so bad in the kingdom of Judah and Israel that they had separated from one another. First the northern kingdom was carried off into exile. God used one of the enemies of Israel to take them away, to give them a "time out," and come to a realization that without God they were nothing. They had nothing because everything had been supplied by the Lord. And yet in their presumption they still thought that they were blessed.

Something happens to people when they get out of sorts with God. They come into a deception where they start doing all kinds of religious deeds, but their heart is not in it. *"In vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men."* (Matthew 15:9) *"...and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me."* (Matthew 15:8)

Then Judah was carried away into exile. All along, as Jeremiah said, God had a great promise. *"I know the plans that I have for you, plans to prosper you and... give you hope and a future."* (Jeremiah 29:11) God gave that to the children of Judah when they were in captivity, away from their homes, away from their families. The Lord kept wooing and drawing them back to Himself, giving promises that there would be a change. *"Then you will call on Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. You will seek Me and find Me when you seek Me with all your heart. I will be found by you," declares the Lord, "and will bring you back from captivity."* (Jeremiah 29:12-14) *"Draw near to God and He will draw near to you."* (James 4:8)

But people forget once they get out of their little trouble. They forget the Lord who delivered them.

7. Josiah

During the time of Josiah, a godly king, the people had gotten so far away from the Lord that they did not even know the Ten Commandments. They had lost the moral law of God that He had established with Moses on the mount when He established a covenant. He said, "I will be your God, and you will be My people." The people said, "We're not going to have anything to do with this," and the law of God disappeared. It disappeared so thoroughly that they did not know it existed.

When Josiah opened up the scroll and read it, it says his heart was cut to the quick, for he realized how far they had gotten away from God. The Lord started a revival, and all the people turned from their wicked ways and false gods, and turned to the Lord.

8. Jesus

A New Family, A New Breed

The promise was always that the day of the Lord's return was coming, the promise of a Messiah and the promise of the end. But also a promise of restoration where they would not be separated from God forever. So one day in a little stable, in a cave out back, the Lord Jesus was born. God so loved His people and so much wanted family that He made His own family. People could not relate to Him as God so He came as one of us. He was seeking to establish relationship. He came born of a virgin, a miraculous birth.

Many people do not want to believe. They do not want to understand that God actually left the heavens and came on our behalf and became one of us. Jesus is God come in the flesh, and He wanted to show us how much the Father loves us. He lived His whole life, a life of love, healing and delivering people. *"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how He went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil,"* (Acts 10:38) separated from God. He was bringing them to God.

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but will have everlasting life.” (John 3:16)

Jesus, God’s Son, came to make us His sons and daughters, to make us family again, that whoever believes on the Lord Jesus will be changed and transformed.

“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” (John 1:12-13) God’s Spirit come to live within the people.

The Old Testament was external. The New Testament is internal, internal faith. The commandments of God are written on our hearts because Jesus is in us and Jesus is the Law and the prophets. He is the fulfillment of everything that is God, and He now has come to live within us with His love.

Jesus now lives. When He died for us, He broke the power over everything that separates us from God. The power of love never fails, and God set us free just like He set the Israelites in Egypt free. He established a new creation. We are a new creation. The old passes away through faith in Jesus. We are a new breed of God-people: sons and daughters of the Most High with the seed of Adam, the fallen seed of man, gone from us. God has given us His new seed in Christ Jesus. A new family. The old deals with the promise to a people, the new deals with the promise to everyone who receives Jesus. The highest of God’s creation is His church, His family, His people, born of Him, and His Spirit is resting within us. The love of God daily comes to us as He is caring for us, loving us, giving all these very precious promises (2nd Peter 1), that we might inherit the divine nature. That we might truly become His sons and daughters in every way, shape, and form with the Father loving us, protecting, providing, defending, caring, doing everything that He has intended. He has given us a commission to go out now and, as He has loved us, to love one another.

Jesus set the model at the cross. *“Father, forgive them. They do not know what they are doing.”* He was asking life for the people as He

gave His life to fulfill everything that separated us from God. All our sin and separation was on Him, and He gave us His right standing with the Father. Through faith in Jesus, we receive what He has done, the love of God, and say, “Jesus Christ, come into my heart. You be my Lord and my Savior.” This means He rules my life and I give up my old separated life, which is Adam’s fallen seed. Jesus’ seed is in me now through faith in Him. I am alive to God, and I am able to experience His great love. I am able to receive His promises, which are all “yes” in Jesus.

Then Jesus ascended to the Father, and in so doing He established God’s promise forever for His people, that whoever calls upon the name of the Lord will not be ashamed, they will not be forsaken, they will not go away empty. God’s promise of eternity with Him is in you right now at this time. This is why we cannot let any willfulness, selfishness, “poor me” mentality, and unbelief have power over us because it brings us down.

“Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.” (Colossians 3:1-2) You are not of this earth anymore. You are of heaven. You belong to God, and the life of God flows through you. You bring heaven to people.

The Lord continues to care spiritually, mentally, emotionally, physically, financially, and in relationships. He will never leave us, He will never forsake us. He has set an everlasting love upon us. That word was spoken in Jeremiah to the captives who had turned away from God. He was saying, “I love you, come on back to Me. I love you with an everlasting love that does not change.”

While we were yet His enemies, separated from Him, Christ died for us (the ungodly), so that we might be made godly in Him through His blood. This is God’s plan of love.

The Holy Spirit Poured Out

When Jesus ascended, He said to the disciples, “I am not going to leave you comfortless. I am sending the Holy Spirit to you. The Holy

Spirit will bring to remembrance all that I have taught you so you do not forget it and so that you can inherit it and come into it.”

God sent the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and it was poured out in power upon the people. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is working in us who believe. (Ephesians 3:20) And the life of God is within us.

The apostles started to preach because in Acts 1:8 it says *“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”* God gave a calling and a plan to His church to take His love to the nations and to share the good news that He is not leaving them abandoned. He is not leaving them helpless and hopeless. He has come to fill their hearts and lives with His peace, His joy, and His love forevermore.

More than a Story

We are in what we call the church age now. Since Jesus was raised from the dead, and ascended to heaven, that is where our faith is based. He is alive. He is risen. God is a God of the living, not of the dead. When you die in the Lord, you are going to live. *“He or she who lives and believes in me, though they die, yet shall they live. He or she who lives and believes in me will never die.”* There is no separation from the Lord anymore. We are His special family, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, joint heirs of the kingdom of God in heaven as His children.

This is such a precious calling that God has given to us in His great love. You are not the person you see in the mirror. When you go by a mirror, start rejoicing and shouting because you are saved by grace through faith, not by works. You are God’s good workmanship (Ephesians 2:8-10), an ambassador for Christ, co-laborer with God.

“Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the earth,” Jesus said as He ascended to his throne in heaven. Then He said He would come back. *“In my Father’s house are many mansions. Do not be afraid, I will come back and get you, that where I am you might be also.”* Forever we will be with the Lord to His glory.

That is the story of God's great love. It is good news. Who would not want to hear that? Through it all the Lord is faithful. The Lord is kind. People condemn themselves by not receiving God's plan of love, for it is not that God does not want them saved. He wants everybody saved. He does not want anybody to lose out. He wants everybody to enter into all His blessings because that is who He is. Nothing is impossible to Him. You are loved beyond anything you can imagine or think.

It is all about relationship. We are family in Christ. A God-family is tighter than any flesh and blood family will ever be – until flesh and blood family comes into Spirit family. Somebody has to shine the light and speak the truth in love so folks can come into all that God has. He is working with us, enabling us to will and do His good pleasure. (Philippians 2:13) He is not abandoning us. He is not rejecting us.

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” (1st John 1:9)

We need to believe in that love. The Lord says, “I loved you first, now you love Me and love My people.” He told me years ago, “Love my people, care for my people, for I am coming soon.” He has given us a commission to take that word to the nations. It is not just a form; it is not just a story. It is more than a story. This is the truth of God that has the power to transform and change a person's life.

We live in a society where there is isolation, abandonment and rejection. It is what I call a throw-away society. People throw away what is good. They think what is evil is good. They even think what is good is evil. Caring for others goes only as long as they are meeting their needs, wants, or desires. That is not love at all. With love there is a quality of faithfulness. Faithfulness endures forever.

Many people have trouble with the law of God, but if it is written on your heart, why would you have trouble? If you love God, you love His commandments. He is the Word made flesh. He wrote the commandments with His own finger, establishing a people, a covenant, and a promise with the people. Then He sealed it with His blood. He came Himself to save us.

We want people to know that love, but it has to be demonstrated. The love of God was demonstrated in Christ Jesus. The same love that Jesus showed to people is what He wants us now to show to one another. Others will know the Lord by the love that we have for one another.

Yes, people have been burned, they have been hurt, things have happened in life, but Jesus can put Humpty Dumpty back together again. He can heal the brokenhearted. He can give faith and confidence back. The Lord says, *“I am not a man that I should lie.”* People lie, or they just say things that they cannot do. The Lord can do everything He says.

Receive the Lord, Know the Love, Give the Love

Once you receive His love and you have the power to overcome other things, nobody can hurt you anymore. *“Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, ‘I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.’ So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man shall do unto me.”* (Hebrews 13:5-6 KJV) Do not go after other gods. Do not look at your life as empty.

Paul’s prayer in Ephesians, chapter 3, is that the church might know the height, depth, breadth, and width of the love of God that is ours in Christ Jesus. Receive it and know it. Receive that love. In every relationship people who would have friends must show themselves friendly. This is not just a one-time thing. I know I am loved and I keep giving and receiving that love. As soon as I stop giving the love, I am cutting off the flow. I begin to become selfish and self-centered, wanting to receive. Relationship is always two ways: give and receive. If everybody is giving love, just think what kind of a wonderful world we could have. Love, if it is being given, is being given to someone. That person is going to get blessed and in turn will bless somebody else. He or she who refreshes others will be refreshed.

God never breaks faith with anybody on His end, and He is helping us to become like He is. We do not break faith, and we do not give up.

Receive God's love and know that you are loved. God first loved us, we in turn respond to Him in love, and then to one another. It has to go to one another because we cannot say we love God and hate (or have nothing to do with) our neighbors and friends. While we were yet enemies of God Christ died for us. He called us friends. He wants us as family. While we were unlovable God loved us right where we are.

Zacchaeus' life changed when Jesus went to his house, for nobody had much to do with tax collectors in that day. They were considered the low life. But Jesus said, "Zacchaeus, you come down from that tree. I am going to your house with you." Can you imagine the delight that filled his heart? How do we know that? He said, "I am going to repay everybody that I have taken from and repay them with more, and I am going to take half of what I have and give it out to those in need." That is a demonstration of love. That is what the Lord wants us doing with each other.

What more can God do than what He has already done? He says He is not going back to the cross. "It is done, it is finished." There is nothing in hell that can separate us from the family of God anymore. Not even the gates of hell can prevail against the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Quit identifying with the old, selfish self that is supposed to be crucified with Christ. *"I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God."* (Galatians 2:20 NIV) If folks are not working faith, they do not have love because faith works by love. They do not know they are loved. But when I know I am loved, look out devil. He cannot do anything to separate me from God. (Romans 8) Nothing can separate me from the love of God that is mine in Christ Jesus; absolutely nothing. When you start thinking about yourself, you separate yourself from God. You need to get about God's business.

The kingdom of heaven is forcefully advancing, and we have to take hold of it. Many do not understand that their life is hid with Christ in God. In other words, you are right in the palm of His hand.

To love takes courage. To be loved takes courage. Everything in this world is telling you you are not loved, and that is what the devil is

telling everybody: that he rules, you are not loved, God does not love you, you are on your own, and you make things happen. He says he will help you, but he is a liar and a betrayer. He tries to seduce us away from God, just like he did Adam and Eve. He tries to get us to give up our heritage in Christ Jesus for some little thing of the world, some passing momentary fantasy.

We are born of eternal, incorruptible seed. We are going to have to say no when unbelief and doubt try to come and when fears and worries try to come. We have to say, "*A thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you.*" (Psalm 91:7) It is not getting inside of us. The Lord is in us, and we are not letting Him go. He is never letting us go, so we will embrace Him.

Emanuel means "God with us." The mystery of the gospel: God in us, the hope of glory. We are dearly loved, and how great is the love the Father has lavished upon us that we should be called His children. (1st John 3)

Open your arms and embrace the people with the love of God. When you ask the Lord what He wants you to do today, and where He wants you to go, He will put people in your path. He will give you opportunity to love them with the same love that loves you. We have purpose; we are on an assignment from God to love the people we meet in Jesus' name.

Understand, just because things happen to you in your life does not mean God left you. Joseph was moved in order to save the whole world of his day by the hand of God. They tried to kill him, they sold him into slavery, he was taken away from his homeland, he lost everything he had, but God was still with him. That is all you need to know. God loves you and He is still with you no matter what has happened to you over the years. He has never forsaken you, He has always been faithful to everything that He said.

THE GOD-MAN
RELATIONSHIPS
Loving God's Way
Chapter Eleven

Be about Jesus, not about Self

If you still have any of the “old man in you,” it will affect your life. You cannot put old wine into new wine skins.

Many times people wonder why they are going through situations and problems. God says the old stinking flesh has to go. It has to die with all the self-serving works and everything needs to become about Jesus. Our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit. We are to be all about Jesus and nothing about self. Self-preservation has nothing to do with God.

Today it is all about God working in us. Are you going to let God run your life, or are you still going to be seeking to survive?

One day Diana and I were trampling through a jungle area, and she said, “You know what? I would never make it on the *Survivor*.” I laughed because she was right, nor would I. Folks are running their life trying to survive, trying to keep their heads above water. You do not have to do that anymore. All you need to be is about your Father's business, and He will take care of everything that you need. Go around doing good, healing people that are oppressed of the devil, speak the word of faith, the word of hope, the word of life and love. As you do so the Lord is going to take care of you and do what is needed.

There should be an enthusiasm and an excitement about God. There should be an expectancy because the Lord is our advocate. He is our helper. He is our very present help in time of trouble, in time of need. The harder the press, the more good things are going to come out of it.

A diamond is formed through extreme pressure. What makes a pearl? Irritation. Steel is made through extreme heat, a purifying. We are being purified, pressurized, and irritated. The old flesh hates it when the Spirit of God starts ministering the truth through the Word.

David said, "Search me, O God, prove me, test me, try me, and get out of me anything that is not of you." Whatever is hidden that I am not seeing or whatever is known, get it out of me. I do not want it anymore. I do not want to be tainted by the corruption of the world, the flesh, the unbelief, the pride, the pride of life, and all that. Jesus said, "*For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.*" (Matthew 16:25 KJV)

The Holy Spirit is the master builder. He knows exactly what to do and how to do it. If you are being pressured, a diamond will come out of it. A diamond has many facets to it. If you are being irritated, there is something not of God that has to go so a pearl can come forth. A pearl of great price, the life of God, the salvation of God. The lady gave up everything that she had to gain what the Lord had for her. If you are under the fire (James, chapter 1), count it all joy when various trials, temptations, or tests come upon you because the proving of your faith will develop patience which in turn is going to make you mature in God.

The Application of Love

You can never have the love that Christ had for you except you have an enemy. That perfect love, that sacrificial love, is developed in you. On the other hand, how do we treat enemies? We love them with the same love that Jesus loved us. That cannot just be a philosophy, an ideology, or a concept.

Many times people do not have a problem with a concept until it has to be applied. It can be going on everywhere else, but it does not affect them until it affects them. Then they think they have to do something about it. Yes, we are going to have to believe God. We are going to have to do something about this.

Loving folks is a great concept. When they are in your face, we get an opportunity. What are you going to do? There is a slogan, "Put your big girl panties on and deal with it." When the pressure comes, we will stand, and having done all to stand, we will overcome. We are going to be strong in the Lord in the power of His might. And having done all to stand, we will stand some more, and when the dust

settles, we will be found standing with the Lord who is standing with us and is not leaving or forsaking.

When the irritation comes, say, “Holy Spirit, what is in me that is allowing this to get under my skin? What needs to get out of me?” A God test is to prove our faith. A devil test is to take away our faith. As we stand our ground in a devil test and count it all joy when the trials, tests, and pressures come upon us, we are rejoicing in the Lord, we overcome, and our faith will go up 50 notches. The more you do it, the stronger you get. God in us is mighty. The kingdom of heaven is forcefully advancing.

Our position is in Christ Jesus so there is no need for competition, jealousy, or comparison in the God-man or the God-woman. We do not do that. So anytime I find myself comparing myself with somebody else, either for better or for worse, I stop it. This gets rid of the superiority or the inferiority, the worthiness or the unworthiness; it is all gone in Christ Jesus.

When I approach you in relationship, I am not competing with you. I am not comparing myself with you. I do not have to. I am not inferior, I am not superior. You hear about men’s and women’s rights. In Christ Jesus we gave up our rights. We have no rights to self. We have rights that are ours in Christ Jesus. That right is to love you, to forgive you, to do good to you, and to do good to myself because God loves me and He is doing good things for me. So under His Holy Spirit’s direction good things are happening with me.

As I give, I receive. All that God has for me will come to me when I am giving. “...*whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.*” (Proverbs 11:25b) It will come back. If I give out something to help somebody, it is going to come back to me when I need help. Do not let pride get in the way.

Many Christians beg God. They are ignorant and do not know the promises. They do not know the Word. We do not have to beg anybody. We are secure in Christ Jesus in relationship.

You have heard that women need security, but I know just as many men that need security. A man’s security is in love and a woman’s

security is in money. That was the old life. The new life is the new wife, a wife who has been transformed by the Spirit of the living God. The Lord has made her a new wife where she has her security in Christ Jesus, not in stuff. The fellows are not looking for mama's love anymore. Our security is in Christ Jesus too. There are not a bunch of namby-pamby boys running around. We have men of God who get rid of the false macho man idea.

Since we got rid of the inferiority and superiority, we are free in Christ Jesus to have relationship with people. The final area of blessing is relationship. The first is spiritual; loving God first. When that is in place, then you are able to love yourself. Love others as you love yourself. We do not try to make ourselves loveable, Christ already made me loveable, and I am able to give love. I am able to be a blessing everywhere I go. I do not try to hang on and get somebody else to meet my needs. I have everything in Christ Jesus. I am not approaching a relationship in a needy way. I am bringing heaven to people. Something really special can happen then, and the only way that can happen is when I quit thinking of myself.

The big thing in the 1960's was "Who am I?" The Bible tells you who you are, and apart from Jesus you are nothing. In Jesus you are still nothing, but He is in you, the hope of glory. You are fully possessed with the Holy Spirit of God, but you only hear about the counterfeit, which is the devil possessing people. It is time folks wake up and the church starts to get possessed with the Spirit of the living God, starts to rise up and know who they are in Christ Jesus.

That Spirit is only going to love people. He will only do good. He is not going to tear them down except to build them back up. Speak the truth in love. Do not get into tearing down anybody because you are not called to be a fruit inspector. You are called to edify, to encourage, and to build up. Get the log out of your own eye first so you can help somebody else. God never tears down except He builds up something better in its place.

Loving Everyone

The next quality of the God-man and God-woman in relationship is they love everybody. In concept it is easy, but if you have ever been pressured by people, God says to love them. If you have been used

by people, God says to love them. Have you been persecuted? God says to love them.

We are in the world, but we are not of it. The love of the Father is in us. We will be persecuted by the world. Jesus says in John, chapter 15, that the world will hate you for His sake.

The God-man and God-woman are not judgmental, and they seek mercy. If you had an opinion and felt that you had a right to say something, God does not care about your opinion about anything. What is in your heart? What is your motivation for saying what you are saying?

I have had to say some pretty hard things to people. Jesus said some very hard things to people. We call them the hard sayings of Jesus. I have told people things that were life changing, although it was not exactly what they wanted to hear. But it changed them once they got over the irritation and the pressure. The flesh hates the truth of the Spirit. Jesus spoke some things against a religious spirit that was in the folks.

Willing to Change?

Jesus said He did not come for the people who think they are righteous. He came for the sinners, He came for the people. *“Blessed are the poor in spirit”* are the people who recognize they need God. They need help. He did not come for the folks who do not think they do. If you do not think you need help, you will not seek it. You will not change.

Many times God’s Holy Spirit is saying we have got to change something, or if we are going to move on into all that He has for us, we have to get rid something else. Read Revelation, chapters 2 and 3, where the Lord tells the churches they are doing good in certain areas, but they have to change in other areas or *“I will... remove your lampstand from its place.”* (Revelation 2:5) This meant He was to remove His presence if they did not change. The Lord will not allow us to say, “Oh, no, you are wrong on that. I need to keep this. I can still have this in my life, it is okay. Just one vice is not going to hurt me. I got rid of everything else, what do you want me to do?” God is saying, “You got rid of everything else, let’s get rid of them all.”

“Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks” (Matthew 12:34) each day, and you show what is in you. Is it the Spirit of Christ, or is something else coming out? If you catch yourself saying something or doing something that is not Christ like, then you have to challenge it. It has to go in Jesus’ name.

“Why art thou cast down, O my soul?” David said in Psalm 42. Saul was pressuring him, trying to kill him. He was hunting him down like an animal every day, and David caught himself when the depression started to come on him. It always comes to take away your faith. It does not take much, it just takes a little, but we have to work what faith we have. We have to speak it forth.

David challenged that when he said, *“Why art thou cast down, O my soul?”* (Psalm 42:5) In other words, he took a good look at how he was acting, what he was feeling, and what was going on inside of him. It is better to talk it out than to hold it in because it can consume you. Many times you do not know what is going on in you until you speak it forth.

A lady was in the prayer line one day, and the Lord said to her, “You need to forgive,” and she said (right out of her mouth at the top of her lungs), “I hate him!” She did not even know that was in her, but the Holy Spirit did and now it was exposed. As long as it is hidden in there, and we are holding it, we are not getting rid of it. But it has to come out. When it comes out, you cannot keep it. It has to go.

In that particular situation the lady did not let it go, and that was the end of things as they be. God knows time is a friend, and over time folks can change, but at that moment she did not want to let it go.

It is in a moment like that you have to think about what Jesus did for you at the cross. You have to know who you are, what you believe, and what you are about. There is absolutely nothing that is worth giving up your salvation. Unlike the fellow who went to a fellow servant and said, “You owe me money, and you need to pay up,” we need to forgive; we need to let it go.

Not One Moment of Strife

The word “judging” means to condemn, to cut yourself off from people and to damn them to hell. That is not your call. Not having anything to do with the person is not your call either. If we are going to be together forever, we need to get along. You cannot allow a moment of strife to come into your heart or your mind because at that moment the thief has access to everything in your life: spiritually, mentally, emotionally, physically, financially, and relationship. At that moment you have just opened up the fortress of God and taken down the hedge of protection that the Almighty had over you. You have said to the devil, “You have a right to come and take everything that pertains to my life including my salvation.”

The thief works so hard to divide, separate, and create issues. We need to perfect the love of Christ in us. It may be that you are hating yourself. People say that suicide is the unpardonable sin, but it is not. The only unpardonable part of it is that you are dead and you cannot seek forgiveness, so I guess it is unpardonable. The real unpardonable sin is blaspheming the Holy Ghost, saying what is done by God is done by the devil. But understand, you cannot have a moment of strife in your life. It will destroy you and everybody around you because it spreads like a cancer very fast. You cannot keep it inside.

I found out later that the lady I mentioned earlier had already alienated her affection towards her spouse. If you hate somebody you are going to gravitate to someone else’s love. But it is not love, it is a false security. The end thereof is messed-up lives. How can you say you love God but you hate your brother and sister? We are to love everybody. We are not judging but seeking mercy. Lord, forgive us all.

Helping God’s Way

When I first got married, I was seeking to help my wife. But I was also seeking to change her. Every time I tried to change her she would get upset. And why would she get upset? Because I did not accept her and love her the way she was. God wanted to do some things in regard to her, but sometimes you are not the one he uses. Other times you are. But she had not learned yet about letting her husband be her pastor. God put me there to care for her, but that meant sometimes I had to change things.

The Lord will move through the spouse if she lets Him. A man will not react or respond to a woman's insecurity. He will not make decisions based on her fears. If he does, he is in serious trouble. If Adam would have stood up to Eve in the beginning, we would not be in the mess we are now. But he did not, so here we are. Thank God for the second Adam, our Lord Jesus, who stood up and is counted for, and now we in turn come in on His blessing. He is the firstborn from the dead and we all rise in turn.

Everybody has his own life, with things he is dealing with. Part of why I was trying to help my wife was to make things good for all of us, but especially me. I asked Diana to never raise her voice to me because when growing up in my family and in high school, strife was all we had. From that point on all hell broke loose in my family, and there was nothing but strife and fighting. I hated it.

It is hard for some people. When they get excited, they get loud. When Diana's happy she gets loud. It is part of her. But I just turn people off when they get too loud. I do not listen to it, and I especially do not listen to a certain tone. The Lord had to help me with it. He said, "Son, you just take care of yourself, and I will take care of her." And He did. He started freeing us up.

You do not have any right not to forgive. You have no right to decide not to give your tithes or offerings. You have no right to decide not to go to church. You have no right to decide not to help a person. You do what the Father determines you to do. That is what you have a right to do.

What is the first thing Adam did when God came seeking him out? He blamed God first. "God, if you had not given me this woman, I would not be having this problem." He did not look at himself first. He just freely turned over dominion of the earth to the devil. He gave it over because his wife said, "Here, get involved with this."

Then the woman said, "The snake made me do it." The only one who did not blame anybody was the snake. By then the devil had used him and abused him and the snake left. The snake used to walk, and now it had to crawl on its belly. It was cursed.

The “blame game,” the “he said, she said, who said what” game, the “I am conqueror” game (where we try to overpower one another) are control games. The accuser of the brethren is the devil. God is our advocate. Have you ever tried to show somebody what was wrong, and they just said, “Who are you to judge me?”

One time a guy in church told me that. I said, “No, I am not judging you. This is what God’s Word says right here. All I am saying is what God says. You need to change this.” We need to change. I always put myself in there; we are all in this together. It could just as easily be me doing it. That has to be your heart when you come to people, it could just as easily be you doing it. Maybe it was you doing that last week. But we have to change so everybody can get blessed. What affects one affects all.

Have you found that it affected the whole family when one of you “got off?” It ruined the vacation. It wrecked the whole day. It wrecked the whole year.

Be in the Will of God

A fellow in the prayer line one day said he had not spoken to his father for 42 years. I told him he needed to get on a plane and go back East to see his dad, and the Lord would make a way for him to do that. The fellow did go, and he and his father had a wonderful time. However, his dad died two weeks later. There was not a thing wrong with him at the time. You never know. Just think about it, people can carry guilt, and only Jesus can take that guilt away. Not talking to your dad for 42 years? Oh, my goodness. Forty two minutes when you are in strife is 42 minutes too long. In that moment the thief can take your life.

One day while I was driving I came up to an intersection, and the Lord showed me something about myself. I asked the Lord to forgive me, and at the very next instant something happened. I went into the intersection and a car was right there. Quite frankly, to this day, outside of just knowing this event happened, I do not really know what happened – whether that car went over my car, or through my car. All I know is it missed me. I absolutely cannot figure out why it did not crush me. The memory is very vivid to me, that maybe if I had

not asked for God's forgiveness before I went into that intersection I could have died.

Out of the will of God is out of the will of God, and I do not want to be out of His will. Angels of the Lord encamp around about the righteous.

It was important enough for the Holy Spirit to bring it to my attention, but I cannot even recall what it was to this date. It was important enough to the thief that he could have had access to my life.

We live in an age where life or death hangs in the balance. You have to live your life with an understanding that you cannot allow anything to separate you from anybody. Romans 12 – As much as lies within you live peaceably with “whosoever.” What lies within you? The Lord. You have the ability to do this. You know when something is not right. You can feel that separation.

Be not judgmental, but seek mercy. “Lord, have mercy on us. Have mercy on the people. Bless them. Help us all. Help us to put down our pride.” Who cares who is right or wrong? Do you remember the old Indian proverb about the two deer who locked horns, and they died that way? The only thing left was locked horns. What is the sense of that? Life is too short.

The devil wants everybody to go to hell with him. He wants everybody separated from the love of God forever. He does not want anybody to be blessed or happy. But many times a fool will not receive correction and instruction. He is always denying. He says, “Uncle Henry should have been here today to hear that one. It is just what he needed to hear.” No, it is what the fool needs to hear.

Once I shared some things with a couple (they were fighting beyond what you could believe), and I stepped in and told them some things. After that they got together, and they both hated me. I said, “Hallelujah, we have one more marriage back together.” Down the road it all worked out really well because serious things happened in their lives, and they knew to come where God could heal them and bless them. And God did. He restored them.

Loving and Caring for People

We have to realize that we cannot be taking this lightly. Every relationship is precious in God's sight. He loves the people. Paul said about Timothy, "*I have no one else like him, who will show genuine concern for your welfare.*" (Philippians 2:20) That is what it is all about – loving and caring for the people.

The Lord told me years ago when I was at a conference, "Love My people, care for My people, for I am coming soon." He wanted that word passed on to the ministers and to the people of God. He is not coming back for a dysfunctional church where people are not talking to each other; where they are divorced, hating each other, where they are fearful and worried. He is coming back for a holy bride, a secure bride.

There is no vengeance or violence in the God-man or God-woman. They seek and promote peace as a ministry of reconciliation. They repay evil with good. This is supernatural. They are forgiven and forgiving. They befriend people, promote people, and encourage others.

I love the word befriend. Be a friend. If you want friends, be a friend. That is how it works. If you think that nobody wants to be around you, I say, "Come on, that is a deception, a lie. What are you believing? Did you not take a bath or put on deodorant? Maybe you have something that needs to change. Maybe nobody wants to be around you because you talk about others."

I tell some people things I want spread all over town. Be a friend, which means stick up for them, protecting them. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, protects, defends, cares for, looks out for, and encourages. That is what God does with us.

Feel somebody's pain. Understand. Ask the Lord what is going on with them. How can you be a blessing to them? *Lord, give them what they need today.* When somebody is upset, do not take it personally. They are upset about something. Find out what is wrong. If they do not want to talk, well, pray, and believe God. Support them, encourage them. You do not have to say anything, just be there.

Have you ever wondered what to say when someone's loved one just passed on to the Lord? You sit there trying to think up something to say to comfort them, but you do not have to say anything. Just be there. Let them know that you care. You do not have to come up with some great gem from the Holy Ghost. If God gives a great gem, fine, but a great gem is just being there and caring for them, letting them know you are there. It may be three weeks later that they want to talk. It may be sometime down the road. Many times when people are sick everybody shows up at the hospital that have not seen them in months, weeks, or whatnot. Do not show up at the hospital. I have been on both sides of the bed. I know what it is like. More than likely, the patient does not even know you are there if they are on medication. They know somebody came. I have visions of folks that came to me at different times. It was nice they came but I did not really know they were there. And do not stay long. Being in the hospital is a recovery time, it is not a social time where all the family comes and they all get together. Sometimes it takes something like that to get the whole family together, but it is the wrong time to do it.

Yes, it is good to show up at the funeral, but the surviving relative really needs you down the road. It is important then because those nights get pretty lonely when somebody has gone on to the Lord, and they reach over to touch them and they are not there. However, God is there, and we always want to encourage folks. The Lord is there, and He will not leave or forsake.

God knows how to love and care for the people. When you open your heart to be more about God and the people than about yourself, you are going to get more than you ever dreamed or imagined the Lord would give to you.

The man and woman of God seek the Lord's best for everybody. They do not harm anybody. If they have an issue, they will not throw it back in someone's face. We have all done it before. It is like somebody does not even want to talk about their issue because later somebody else is going to use it against them.

There is not a day that goes by where people do not do or say some stupid thing or create some issue. The Lord says, *"Let your conduct be without covetousness..., for I will never leave you, nor forsake*

you.” (Hebrews 13:5 NKJV) In other words, do not look for somebody else. Look for Me. I will not leave you. I will not forsake you. *“So that we may boldly say, ‘The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me’.”* (Hebrews 13:6 KJV) Or not do to me.

Sometimes you want them to do something to you; sometimes you do not want them to do something to you. Usually they come up with something different. You cannot allow yourself to get upset because that is what the devil wants you to do. Upset means that you are taken from your set position. And what happens then? You get angry, you get bitter, you get hateful, you get vengeful, and you are out of sorts.

Have you said something when you were upset that you wish you had not said? You cannot catch it, it is already out there and gone. It has done its dastardly deed. When somebody is upset, do not take it personally. You just happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time, or maybe you are the right person at the right time. I would rather people get angry with me than with somebody else because I know how to deal with that. But understand, it is not anything that anybody wants to be involved with. We need to operate in self-control, which is a fruit of the spirit that God has given us. We do not have to react in situations. We do not have to take it personally. There is a proverb that says that the wounds of a friend are faithful.

If I have ever hurt you, I am sorry that you were hurt. This is what Paul said to the people at Corinth. He had to say some pretty hard things to them and it hurt them. But understand, it was from a faithful heart. You want to see God’s best for all of us together. When folks know that you are faithful, and that you love them and care about them, then they are more than likely going to receive something. Even though it hurts them at that moment, they will come back around once they get over the initial offense because they know there is relationship.

Commitment to Love

Relationship is developed over time, with a track record. I tell people even if I have just met them that moment, “I may not know you yet, but God’s Word is faithful.” And so, the question I always ask others

to please consider is, "Is it God's Word that has been spoken or not?" If it is God's Word, then do it. Even if we do not have a relationship, it is God's Word and God has relationship. Get to know your own heart. People say, "God knows my heart." Yes, He does, but you do not. You need to know what is really going on. Why are you continuing to hold something against somebody? It devastates relationships.

I am a minister of reconciliation, not division. Who cares who started it, let's finish it and drop it. Have you ever been so upset with somebody that you actually followed them around?

There were times when I went in one direction and Diana went in the other, but then the Holy Spirit caught us. We acted like the people in the commercial where they were in the field and they run back together. Anybody that tells you that they never had a cross word, never had a misunderstanding, or never had an issue with each other is a liar. When you have relationship and you have commitment to God, to yourself, and to another person, you are not going to let anything in hell separate you anymore. God says nothing can separate you from His love, and I will not let anything separate us from each other. That is commitment. Until natural death do us part.

You may not really think you like a certain person, but you have to say, "To hell with that in Jesus' name. I am going to like that person, and I am going to love that person. I am going to do good like God did to me, even when I was His enemy going the other direction. He sought me out and He loved me with an everlasting love and He gave Himself for me. I am going to be just like my Daddy in heaven, and my Lord Jesus. The Holy Spirit is working in me enabling me to will and to do His good pleasure.

There will come a resolution within you and a desire in your heart to refuse to enter into strife. You refuse to enter into commotion and confusion. There is every evil work in strife. Refuse to have a bad thought about anybody including yourself and refuse to enter into the negative demonic nonsense in Jesus' name. When it comes up, cut its head off in Jesus' name because you are not going to tolerate it within your life.

“If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.” (Romans 12:18) Do good, and someday stand before God and know that you will stand with a clear heart, a clear mind, and a clean conscience that there is not anybody you have not set to love in your heart.

In a relationship you cannot let anything undermine that foundation and trust. You cannot let time go down in strife. It says, *“Be angry and do not sin: do not let the sun go down on your wrath.”*

(Ephesians 4:26) Do not be like the lady who came to me and said, “Pastor, I am going to hold it until sunset.” I told her, “No, you will have every devil in town by sunset. Get rid of it right now. Do not hold onto it for a moment.”

If you have something in your heart towards somebody that is trying to separate you from that person and separate you from God, ask the Lord to forgive you for your attitude and your heart. Do not let another moment or another day go by. Life and death hangs in the balance. Do not play around with it or think that you can do it. Ephesians, chapter 4, goes on, *“Do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place [opportunity (in the Greek, a home)] to the devil.”* (Ephesians 4:26)

I do not want anything in me that is not of God. I only want what is of God in me, and I will not tolerate unforgiveness anymore.

Forgiveness has to do with you first. When you forgive somebody, it is for *you* to get right with God. You will forgive them as the next step, and that has to happen. Then you need to go to them, and you need to reconcile. Just say, “Lord, forgive me for my part in this” and lay it down. If something is telling you, “You do not have to do that,” you say, “Go to hell in Jesus’ name” because that is not the Holy Ghost talking to you.

Relationship is too precious to let it go away. I thank God every day that He did not let me go away and sought me out. He gave me His heart. He gave you His heart so that you can live with others too and reach them with the love of Christ, being a minister of reconciliation, ambassador for Christ, bringing God’s love to them.

Even when Jesus offended more people than received Him, He was speaking the truth in love. They did not want to hear the truth of God. They hated Him for it. They hated Stephen for it and they killed him. (Acts 7) But he loved and cared enough about them to tell them the truth in love.

Allow the Lord to heal you because unforgiveness is worse than cancer. I would also like to point out: many cancers are caused by unforgiveness and bitterness. It affects the body. It destroys relationship. It takes away your peace and joy in God. It cuts you off from the Lord. It is cursed behavior and we do not want it. We want what is blessed.

THE GOD-MAN
RELATIONSHIPS
Response to God
Chapter Twelve

Commitment, Accountability, Responsibility

Everything in life happens in time and process. If you are in a hurry, you might as well forget it.

One day I was in a Bible study with some folks, and a man said something about himself. His wife leaned over and told him she did not know that about him, and he said, "Well, you do not know everything about me!" They had been married 60 years.

The Lord is revealing things in time and process. The only way you really get to know people is over time through good times and hard times. Commitment, accountability, and responsibility is God's definition of love. When you have all three, then come hell or high water, things are going to start to happen.

God never intended for people to be by themselves. The greatest fear that people face is that of separation, and being alone, not loved. In relationships there are two sides to everything. There is always more than one side to the story. When a husband and wife come in for counseling, the husband will tell his side, the wife will tell hers, and when you sit them down together you get another story. Usually the truth is somewhere else, and the Holy Spirit will then bring it into focus.

It takes commitment in relationship to make things happen; it takes accountability, responsibility, and commitment. The Lord is committed towards us. He says, "*Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love.*" (Jeremiah 31:3) That is commitment. It is not the "I do not love you anymore" kind of thing.

I do not need to know a lot, all I need to know is that the Lord loves me with an everlasting love that never changes. And to that commitment is Hebrews 13:5 "*Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you.*" That is the commitment the Lord made to us, and He is

responsible to that Word. We can hold Him as the recipients of that love, accountable to that Word.

The Lord will never give up on us. He keeps no record of wrongs. He says He has chosen us in Jesus. That means that commitment demands a commitment back. In relationship it is always two ways. God is love, but love is no good if it has no expression. He has to give that love. *“Give, and it will be given to you.”* (Luke 6:38) Before we received Jesus as our Lord and Savior we were selfish, self-centered, rebellious, independent, and whatever good we thought we were doing we had hidden agendas. *“There is a way that seems right to a man (Proverbs 14:12 NKJV) but the Lord searches every heart and understands every desire.”* (1st Chronicles 28:9) It was basically, *You pat my back, I will pat yours, and I will be taken care of.*

Did you try to build and protect your little world? As long as people agreed with your little world, they were in your little world. My wife Diana said early in our marriage, “I always thought I was a submissive wife until you said, ‘no.’ ”

The Lord says, “I am not a man that I should lie.” (Numbers 23:19) I will not break faith with you. “Have I not said it, will I not do it? Have I not promised, and will I not fulfill?” In other words, He knows that He is responsible to His commitment to you and me, and He is accountable for that commitment. He is accountable for His actions, for His heart and attitudes towards us, and He is never ever going to stop loving us.

There have been many things taught in different ways in the church. Some people think if they do not keep the law of God, He is going to shoot a lightning bolt through their heart, or give them a cancer. God will not ever do that. He only gives good and perfect gifts. What happens, though, if we are not doing what God says? His commandments were given in love and they are for our good, they are holy and they are eternal. Paul said, “I delight in the law of God after my inner man, my spirit man,” but, he also said, “My mind works against me sometimes.” We have to bring our spirit, mind, and body in agreement so that we can receive God’s best. *“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”* (Romans 12:2)

Realize that as the Lord has told you what is right, just, and good, it is for your good. If you choose to do something different, then you take yourself out from under God's protection and blessing. That opens the door to a thief. Jesus says in John 10:10 *"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; but I have come that they might have life and have it more abundantly."* That is what God wants for you: abundant life and blessing.

On God's end, He is never going to violate His commitment to us. That gives us security. He will never leave, He will never forsake. He is believing for us, He is hoping for us, He is loving us every moment of every day. He wants to give good and perfect gifts to each of His children.

The thief has no commitment to God. He has put himself in a rebellious, independent place. As Jesus said to the folks who had not received Him, "Your father is the devil." Now you can understand why there is so much pride, selfishness, and independence in the earth. People do whatever feels good, they do what they want to do, they think they should be their own person etc. In the 1960's people all over the earth wondered, *Who am I?* I think they still have not found out who they are.

The Lord says who we are, and He says what His plan and His purpose for us is. In John, chapter 1, the Lord said some very significant things to us. This is man's response to God's love. *"But as many as received Him [Jesus], to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."* (John 1:12-13 NKJV)

Jesus said to Nicodemus, *"You must be born again."* (John 3:7) And then Nicodemus wondered how he could be born again – "Can I go back into my mother's womb?" People are always thinking on a physical plane. What God has done in Jesus is on a *spiritual* plane. You heard the good news about God's love for you, you professed Jesus as Lord, you received that word, and you said you wanted to give your life to Jesus. You wanted to give your life back to God, for you were born separated from Him. Notice how babies are totally

selfish and about their own purpose. They grow up to become stronger about their purpose and more devious or crafty.

Have you tried to control people around you, making them into your image? They rebelled, did not they? They did not want to be told what to do. Did you tell your parents not to tell you what to do, and now your children are doing that to you? The curse will continue unless you change, for in Jesus that curse can be broken. You can stop and change. The Lord has made us alive spiritually, which is the real life, and the real you is your spirit. You have a spirit, a mind, and a body.

When you have Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, you get a life, for God will give one. The second Adam is Jesus who came to save us from our sins. (Sin is separation from God and going against the will of God. It puts a person in a separated place.) With our new life, our old sin nature is gone. The selfish, independent, rebellious person is dead, crucified with Christ Jesus. (Galatians 2:20) *"I no longer live, but Christ lives in me."* God is in us now, the hope of glory, and we have been transformed and changed. We are *"out of the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of His dear Son."* (Colossians 1:13 KJV)

"If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." (2nd Corinthians 5:17) The new has come forth to serve God in righteousness and holiness. *"We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."* (John 1:14) That is talking about Jesus.

Jesus is the First Born, and He calls us brothers and sisters. He is the Firstborn risen to the Father, and we in turn are going to rise to meet Him in the air and experience all that He has in the new heaven and the new earth. No more pain, sorrow, suffering, sickness, disease, poverty, confusion, separation, anxiety, or death.

In the meantime the Lord says the kingdom of heaven is within those who have received Jesus as Lord and Savior. To be your Lord means He is going to run your life. When Jesus became my Lord and my Savior, I yielded all my rights, my independence, my rebellion, and I said, "I am agreeing with God."

“The commandments of God are not burdensome.” (1st John 5:3) They are love and a joy. I love to do the will of Him who sent me. *“I come, O Lord, to do your will,”* Jesus said. In the same way we say, *“I come, O Lord, to do your will.”*

A New Image

As I receive the love of God, God transforms me. He changes me. He makes me into His image. (Romans 8) Into God’s image, not the old sin image.

I was raised in the church, and every Sunday we would confess these words: “I, a poor miserable, wretched sinner confess unto thee, O Lord, all my sins and iniquities which are ever before me.” I became so conscious of sin and separation that I was not free to enjoy the love of God. The fear of God can override the love of God. I am not talking about the fear of God that means respect, honor, worship, loving the Lord with all your heart, mind, and soul. I am talking to the one that says, “I do not know if I can come to God, I do not know if I can pray to God. I do not know if He will hear me, I do not know if I am in a right place or a wrong place.”

James, chapter 1, says a double-minded person is unstable in all his ways and cannot expect to receive anything from God. People who are afraid to come into God’s presence think they are doing something that is going to offend God, and as a result, they do not even draw near to Him.

If you have felt you were walking on eggs around somebody, do you like spending time with them? If you feel they are always judging you, condemning you, finding fault with you, do you want to spend time with that kind of person?

“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives to all liberally” (James 1:5) and not hold back anything. The Lord says to come to Him and He will give you everything you need to understand whatever you need to understand, to accomplish the purpose of God and the blessing for the people.

When I first got married, I was before the throne of God night and day. How was I going to understand this woman? I was a marriage counselor. I was trained in all the disciplines, trained well, I excelled, but when the personal test comes the test comes.

The Lord gave me wisdom and understanding about my bride so I could understand what she was thinking, why she was thinking that way and why she was doing what she was doing. That thief tried to steal our relationship, but he had to go in Jesus' name. My wife was not a problem, I was not a problem, there was a problem out there, and we needed to come into agreement and kick it in the head, saying, "Go to hell in Jesus' name. Get out of our marriage, get out of our life, and get out of our relationship." I refuse to allow anything to separate me from God, my wife, my children, my family, or anyone else because I have taken a stand on this relationship thing. If my Father in heaven is as committed as He is, then I as His son will do what my Daddy does.

I told my children, "I love you and your momma loves you more than anybody else could ever love you. Bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh, we are going to do God's best to you all of your days. We believe for the spouses and the grandbabies, they are all one in Christ Jesus. There is no division. The thief has come to steal, kill, and destroy. He has come to divide and break up relationships. He is the one that tells people that God is not a good God and you cannot come to Him. We have to say that is a lie."

You do not need to go through anyone to get to the Father, for the Father Himself loves you. Jesus was God come in the flesh to save us, to show us who the Father is, to show us the love of God and to demonstrate. He was committed to the point of giving His own life for us on the cross that we might be saved. Hebrews, chapter 12, says that He did not even consider His own life because He knew the joy that was set before Him. When He gave His life, we received our life.

I want to thank the Lord every moment of every day for what He has done. That is the key to help us be committed to God and to ourselves. We are God's good workmanship created by Him to do works that He has foreordained, for He has a plan for our life. He has

people He wants to touch. He has things to do. God is with you wherever you go. You bring heaven to people.

Jesus taught the disciples how to pray. You have probably prayed this prayer a thousand times in your lifetime thus far: *“Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”* This prayer caused me to look at what was going on in heaven. By God’s grace and God’s truth we can have right now what we are going to see in heaven. *“As much as lies within you live peaceably with everyone.”* (Romans 12:18)

Jesus said that you have the kingdom of heaven within you, which makes you different. The word calls us a peculiar people, a holy people, a chosen people, set apart for God’s high praise. We will grow and understand who we are in Christ Jesus, who our Father in heaven is and what He is about, and what He is doing in us and through us.

“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.” (Ephesians 2:8-9) We cannot get ourselves saved. We cannot earn it or buy it, it is the gift of God. He gave that gift of Himself to us because of His love. That gift is ours. Become very aware that it is Christ Jesus living in you now, (Galatians 2:20) not aware that you used to be a poor, miserable, wretched sinner.

It is the confession of many mainline churches like the one I was raised in. I could not continue to confess that because the Word of God says that I am a new creation, the old, poor, miserable, wretched earthbound sinner is dead. We do not give it power anymore. When we live to the flesh, and violate God’s commandments we start to get back into selfishness. Paul says you daily have to die to yourself because it wants to raise up.

As a Christian, have you been angry or bitter? Have you worried or been fearful? That should not be so. When you did that you allowed your old self (*“without pride there is no contention”*), your old opinion, to come up. Have you been stubborn, rebellious, or independent? That is not the new you. Wake up, you are a son of the Most High God.

Be Not about Your Own Purpose

You need to know who you are and what you are about. You are not about your own agenda or your own purpose. You are not about trying to get people to agree with you. The fear of man is a snare. Many people are afraid of their two year old tyrant.

I told my children right off, "I am not your friend, I am your dad. I am on an assignment from God to train you up in the ways of the Lord so that all your life you will be blessed and no thief has power to harm you, to take your life, or to do anything to mess you up. Until you are able to stand on your own, and stand and overcome, I am standing. Behind me and in front of me God is standing, and nothing in hell is going to prevent you from having all that God has in Jesus' name." There was not any of that emotional blackmail.

Emotional blackmail is not of God. It is selfish and intended to get one's own way at the expense of the family, at the expense of the church and the kingdom of God. When Jesus is coming back, He is not coming back for people who are not walking in His ways.

When I do the rebellious, independent, "poor me" stuff, giving offense and receiving offense, that is not of heaven. Which is worse, the person who causes the offense or the person who receives offense? They are both cursed, and they both have to be laid down.

Every day is a new day and you have a new opportunity to separate yourself from God. Do not go there in Jesus' name.

What you speak in earth God honors in heaven. (Matthew 18) As a recipient of God's love you have the right to use His name. *"Whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father be glorified in the Son,"* Jesus said. (John 14:13)

All authority in heaven and earth has been given to you in the name of Jesus to work the works of God. (Matthew 28:18)

What you speak on earth, saying to the mountain, problem, or situation in the name of Jesus to bow to the name of the Lord, it has to bow and get out of the way. If you do not doubt in your heart but believe those things that you say will come to pass, you will have

whatsoever things you say. Therefore when you pray believe you have received and you will see it to the glory of God. (Mark 11:22)

We have God's faith, hope, and love. (1st Corinthians 13) We never leave home without Him, and we keep Him wherever we go. You cannot run, you cannot hide. I do not care about running and hiding from the Lord. The only time folks run and hide from the Lord is when they are out of line. The Lord is not finding fault with you, He is not condemning you. Your old flesh condemns you, the old you. The Holy Spirit is lovingly saying that is not it, son, that is not going to work. When you start to feel a little guilt inside because you are out of line, the Lord is lovingly trying to get you back on track.

If you lack wisdom, ask in the name of Jesus, and the Lord gives it to you. Ask in faith, nothing wavering. The Lord does not find fault with you. Have you dealt with being put down all your life? People project that onto the Lord. They expect Him to act like their dad or mom. Your own self can put you down. Have you had thoughts of inferiority or superiority? Did you have to compare yourself with somebody else so you find somebody that does not have as much as you?

In Christ Jesus there is no competition. There is no comparison. There is no inferiority or superiority. You cannot get any higher than being a child of God. God made us the best of the best in Christ Jesus.

Throughout Ephesians you will see "*in Christ Jesus.*" In Christ we are the best of the best, but we do not care about that. All we care about is bringing praise to our Father in heaven because we were created by Him to be to the praise of His glory. (Ephesians 1:10)

As you start to understand who you are in Christ Jesus, you realize you do not have to compete with people. You do not have to compare yourself with others. You do not have to prove your love to anybody. If someone does not trust you, you can never prove your love. How can folks not trust a loving heavenly Father who is totally committed and accountable and responsible to that and is going to make sure? He even made an oath with Himself on our behalf. If He would have made an oath with us, there would have been potential

for failure because we are not always thinking right. But that does not mean that we are not children of God.

“My people perish for lack of knowledge.” (Hosea 4:6) It is because people do not know what God really says. Yes, I always want to remember that I was a sinner (meaning separated from God). Absolutely going to hell in a hand basket, except God reached in, in His love, and saved me from the fire. God became the Champion to save us. And He made us more than conquerors in Him through Christ Jesus. (Romans 8) Nothing can separate us from the love of God that is ours in Christ Jesus. Height, depth, breadth, width—nothing can separate us from His love. I do not want to go back to those old ways because I am so thankful to God that He saved me, for the wages of sin is death, separation from Him forever. Not just physical death, separated from all that is love, from all that is good. That is the torment that goes on there. It is not fire. You cannot burn a spirit.

The Peace That Passes All Understanding

Fear causes torment, but God’s perfect love casts out all fear. The problem is folks do not really trust God. He says, “I am not a man that you cannot trust Me.” He is saying that He knows you have had a lot of bad experiences in life, like somebody not keeping their word. Have you ever promised something that you could not fulfill? Then you were really resisting to tell somebody? You set yourself up for a fall. Do not wonder why all of a sudden they do not trust you.

The Holy Spirit will help you to become sensitive and keep your word. It says, *“He who swears to his own hurt.”* (Psalm 15:4) Which means that you are going to keep your word even though you do not like what you agreed to.

Jesus says, *“My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives.”* (John 14:27) The world cannot give it because it *does not have it*. But the shalom peace of God means nothing is broken, everything is working, and all the blessings are coming from the north, south, east, and west. The favor of God is upon us, just like the Lord said over Jesus, *“This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.”* John continued this thought in 1st John: *“How great is the*

love that the Father has lavished upon us that we should be called His children.” The Father is pleased with us in Jesus’ name.

When you get ahold of this, you are right with God through Jesus. It says in 2nd Corinthians, chapter 5, that I am the righteousness of God in Christ. *“He who knew no sin became sin for me that I should be made the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus.”* The righteousness of God is ours.

Because the Father has shown His love and commitment to us, our response to Him is “Abba Father, dear Daddy, thank you for loving me, thank you for caring for me.”

“Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God.” (1st Peter 5:6) Do not be independent or rebellious, and do not seek to do it your own way. The Lord says, *“I will exalt you in due season.”* He says, *“Cast all your cares upon me for I affectionately care for you and watch over you.”* (Amplified Bible) In other words, the Lord does not want us to have or carry cares about anything, and if He does not want us carrying the cares for ourselves, He certainly does not want us carrying them to somebody else.

If you think other people do not believe, then show them the love of God, talk to them, share with them, bring them the Word of God, and produce some faith. We have all the faith we need to move mountains, we just need to put it to work. We need to do something with it, and when you do that, look out. Here comes heaven.

Paul’s prayer for the people in Ephesians, chapter 1 is: 1) that they might get to know who their Father in heaven is, and 2) that they know the hope of their calling. This is not all there is. We are ambassadors for Christ in this earth, bringing the good news of Jesus to others. We are ministers of reconciliation. We are agents of reconciliation to the people in the earth. We have to be reconciled to God.

When we are right with God, then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding guards and keeps our hearts and minds in faith in Christ Jesus. Then I bring that peace to others, and they bring it to somebody else. A peace the world does not have. They cannot buy

it, they cannot earn it; they just do not have it. It only comes from being right with God. Then the faith and the hope line up.

The Forceful Take Hold of It

It all came with Jesus, and if Jesus is your Lord and you are doing what God says, there is nothing in hell that can stop you from doing it. As I delight in the Lord, He has given me the desires of my heart. Because He loves He is not going away. He is not abandoning me. He is not forsaking me. It is not, *Where is God?* When I am experiencing the onslaught of the thief and I look around. Some get sentimental about the “footprints in the sand” and how God carried them. - No, He wants them to grow up and *stand with Him*. Babies are carried. The church has got to get rid of that mentality.

God is making us warriors in Jesus' name, and we bring love to people. To really love them you have to tear down strongholds and walls, pride and prejudice. The whole world is desensitized to what is truly love. *“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”* (John 15:13) While we were yet enemies of God, Christ died for us, the godly for the ungodly. You have to be a warrior to stand against the hatred, the bitterness, the violence, the prejudice, and partiality in the earth. You have to stand up when nobody else may be standing up and say, “I am not going to talk badly about that person. I am going to call things that be not as though they are.” (Romans 4:17) Then God will bring into existence blessing where there was cursing, life where there was death, peace where there was unrest, joy where there was nothing but hell. Our God will deliver these people into His hand, and they will see the blessing of the Lord forevermore.

The kingdom of heaven is forcefully advancing in the earth and the forceful have to take hold of it. But it is not by might nor by power. Those were the old ways that we used: might, power, manipulation, control. *“It is by my Spirit, saith the Lord.”*

God can do anything. He could overpower everybody, but He does not do it that way. It is not His way. His way is love, unconditional love, whether they are naughty or nice, whether they are acting sane or insane. Thank God for Jesus.

He has given us understanding.

Who We Are in Christ Jesus

The third thing that Paul prays for in Ephesians, chapter one, is that we might know who we are in Christ Jesus. This is important for relationship. You need to tell the people in your life who they are in your life. Do not just assume and presume that they know and understand. Tell the children how much you love them and care about them. Speak life to them; tell them that they are the blessing of heaven.

Were you told that you were not wanted, or that you were a mistake? I am here today to proclaim that God knew you before the foundation of the world and before your parents ever had a clue, even before *they* were. God knew you would be here, you are a blessing from heaven, and God has a plan for your life that is good. So get rid of the curse and know that they just talked out of ignorance. Forgive them; they did not know what they were saying.

On the cross Jesus said, *“Father, forgive them. They do not know what they are doing.”* And the Father in heaven forgave all of us – past, present, and future. He forgave us all and gave us the gift of life in Jesus that whoever believes in Him will not perish but will have everlasting life.

I encourage you every day to renew your vows. Say, “Jesus Christ, you are my Lord.” And when you start to doubt, fear, or worry, you say, “Jesus Christ, you are my Lord.” You tell those thoughts to go away because you have the ability in Him to say to those thoughts of unbelief, “I cast you down in Jesus’ name. You get out of my head because that is not who I am in Christ Jesus. My Father has this all under control, and He will figure it all out. When the dust settles I will still be standing with Him.”

Have you been given a certain amount of time to live, yet you are still here? Thank you, Jesus. In spite of all that is going on, you are still here. You have weathered the storms of life and you are still here. Spiritually, mentally, emotionally, physically, financially, and in relationships, you are destined for the throne. You will be seated with Christ in the heavenly places.

“Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.” (Colossians 3:1-2) We are in this world, but we are not of it. Get your thinking out of this world. Get out of your mind and get into the spirit so your mind can be flushed and renewed with God’s input. Get the Word of God in you. We are not earthbound, we are free in Jesus.

Blessed Beyond Measure

Have you had guilt come on you because you were so blessed? Let me tell you, you have not begun to see how blessed you really are from God’s perspective. Get rid of poverty thinking. Jesus taught that the talent that one guy buried was given to the one who had the most. Just thank God and praise God.

One time that guilt came on me. I was walking around praising and thanking God for how He had blessed me in my life and how everybody that was in my life was blessed. (Blessing has the ripple effect.) Then a thought came to me, *There are a lot of poor suffering people out there in the earth.* And I started to think, *Yeah,* and then I started to identify with them rather than with the blessing, and my heart began to sink. The Lord spoke up then, “Son, you have what you have because you have obeyed my Word. You have believed me and you have obeyed my Word, and I have put a blessing upon you that nobody can take away from you.” He also said, “There are people out there who are ignorant of My ways. There are some who are disobeying My ways, and there are others who are not yielding to My Spirit. That is why they have what they have.” He said, “You continue to thank Me.”

He was saying that I am risen with Christ. *“Set your affection, your heart, on the things above, not on things beneath.”* The world’s saying is, “You are so spiritually minded you are no earthly good.” The Holy Ghost’s rendering of that is, “If you are *not* spiritually minded you are no earthly good.” The only ones who can bring any good to this earth are the spiritual folks. The God-folks. The God-men and the God-women.

You cannot be spiritual enough. You cannot believe God enough. You cannot love enough. In other words, when you stand before God I would rather be on the high side of faith, hope, and love than on the low side. Nothing is impossible to God. The Lord says, *“If you have faith as a mustard seed, you say to the mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.”* (Matthew 17:20)

People say, “Yes, with God nothing is impossible.” And God says, “If you have My faith and act on My faith, nothing shall be impossible to you.”

There is no relationship or financial situation in which you are powerless. There is no physical situation in which you are powerless. There is no mental situation in which you are powerless, and there is no spiritual situation in which you are powerless because the Lord will not leave you or forsake you.

When you start to understand this, and it goes from a head concept or philosophy, to a heart and mind concept, this is reality. This is real in Christ Jesus.

In John 14:12 Jesus said, *“...He who believes in me, the works I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do.”* Greater than what Jesus did when He walked the earth. *“For I go to the Father.”* Note, He did not leave us alone, He sent the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, the Paraclete, the Guide, the Spirit of truth so we could have the truth. The truth will set us free if we continue in it. (John 8:31-32)

Even as a young child, you can get this. That is the reason we teach the little ones, “Jesus loves you.” Tell them that. Tell them that in the womb. They are in there floating around, not a care in the world (unless you eat something hot).

There are times when we want to override situations because we want heaven, we do not want hell. People sometimes say, “My life is hell.” I say, “Maybe you are getting a foreshadowing of what is going to happen.” Without Jesus, without doing it God’s way, this life is hell.

We have good news to bring to people and they need to hear it. How will they hear it except somebody tells them? We want to bring people life and blessing. For those who have the kingdom of heaven life is going up.

The Lord said the kingdom of heaven is within you (the people who have received Jesus).

Get Excited about Jesus

Do not be ashamed of being a child of God. We need to fire it up and be excited. We need to be out there like those shepherds who came to see Jesus after all the things they heard. Then they went out and told everybody about what great and wonderful things they had seen and heard because there was a visitation of the Lord.

We have to be excited. The church around the earth needs to start getting excited about Jesus. I am not talking about an emotional excitement, but that I know the Father, I know the hope of my calling, I know what is mine in Christ Jesus, and I know the power of God, the same power that raised Jesus from the dead is working in me.

In Ephesians, chapter 3, Paul prayed for the church — that they might know the love of God that is theirs in Christ Jesus. If you know the love of God in Christ Jesus, you are totally free and out of this world. You are not looking for anything this world has to offer, but you are looking to bring heaven to the people.

Jesus did not come praying the kinds of prayers that you hear Christians praying like, “Lord, meet my financial needs.” He is getting tired of that one. He says, “I have already met your financial needs. The heavenly supply has more than enough. It says, *‘My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus’*.” (Philippians 4:19 NKJV)

There comes a point where you have to understand that the love of God leaves nothing out. *“All that the Father gives Me will come to Me”* (John 6:37) in Jesus’ name.

The man and woman of God, the men and women of faith, hope, and love know that, so they are not running around praying all those little

prayers like “Lord, help me physically; Lord, help me mentally; Lord, help me love that person.” God is in us. He is not leaving us or forsaking us, and He knows what we need even before we ask.

Have you prayed, “Father, thank you for knowing what I need and supplying it.” Have you ever thought that He is God Almighty and He has prepared everything in advance, and He knew your situation was going to be happening before the foundation of the world was laid, that it was going to happen right now? He already has a provision waiting for us if we just open our eyes that we might see what He already has there for us in the situation.

There comes a point where we just thank and praise and go about our ways. All His days are our days, and we live happily ever after with a loving God. Then we are able to take on the public, the ones that God loves out there with an everlasting love just like He loves us.

Power Over.....

The reason people have problems in relationships is because they have problems with God. Health things are not a problem. If you help others, the Lord says your healing will come like the morning sun. It will rise. It does not say you will not get sick. He says sickness will not have you. It tries to come. He says that you have power over the sickness. If you do not receive it, it is not going to stay. Sometimes folks are just getting a wake up call that they have to get serious.

The Lord knows He has power over sickness and disease. He sent out the disciples with power over sickness and disease. He sends out His disciples today who have power over sickness and disease. Since we have power over it, we have to believe and act on it.

You can tell what you are believing by what you do and what you say, but more so by what you do. Have you spoken the word of faith but you did not act on it? The difference is results. God will show you grace and mercy in spite of yourself.

We do not want to give the thief any opportunity, so close the doors on the thief. Get rid of the junk out of your life that God does not want there. Yield to the Holy Spirit when He is showing you something and

change it. You can change your ways. You have love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, kindness, meekness, and self-control in you already. It came with God, but it needs to be exercised. You have faithfulness inside.

You need faithfulness with God, yourself, and others. God put that in there, so do not separate and break faith. As much as lies within you, you can live peaceably with folks. God is going to have to work with them, but we are not looking at it because it is not our concern. Our concern is doing what God wants us to do and saying what God wants us to say, believing what God wants us to believe, and taking the devil off of people because we have authority over that in Jesus' name.

“Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things, love never fails.” (1st Corinthians 13 NKJV)

God did that for us, now we need to do it for somebody else. You have to know who that somebody is. We will do good to people, not harm to them all of our days. *“Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.” (Psalm 23:6 KJV)*

THE GOD-MAN
RELATIONSHIPS

Vision, Goal, Plans & Purposes
Chapter Thirteen

The Word of God says that without a vision or goal in relationship, people perish. That is why a lot of marriages start out like the rushing river flowing down the mountain, fresh. Over time it becomes like the Mississippi River kind of working. It slows down, but it is still moving. It has a destination, it has a goal. It is going to the sea, an outlet.

Many times side ponds and pools develop like swamps. They have no outlet, there is no goal. The water is not moving anymore. Soon everything becomes stagnate and dies. It stinks as well.

If your relationships stink, it is because somewhere along the line people stopped believing, they stopped hoping, they stopped having goals or a purpose. Then they just coexist, and coexistence will not make it. Before long folks start going their own way, doing their own thing. Instead of coming together in unity and community, they are separating.

At that point, they start feeling helpless, hopeless, distressed, disturbed, and depressed, they think there is no future and hope at all, and they just want to give it up. But life is a marathon, not a sprint. Every day is a new day. The Lord says, *“Behold, I make this day fresh and new.”* The only way that you can really start to revitalize it is to instill the Holy Spirit’s joy and peace back into the relationship, and whatever you do, do it with all your heart in the name of Jesus to the glory of God.

Put purpose and vision into that relationship. I see my bride as the first day we got married. We are going on over 40 years now and she continues to be a blessing to me. Hopefully I continue to be a blessing to her. That is our intention.

The Lord says in Jeremiah 29:11-12 *“I know the plans that I have for you.”* God has plans for you. *“Plans for good, not for evil, plans to prosper you and to give you hope and a future.”* We have something

to look forward to. It is not like the situation where a guy comes home one day after the kids have grown up and gone away to college. His wife has all her bags packed, and he says, "Oh, we're going on a trip." But she says, "No, I am going on a trip," and she leaves because all her life and goals were wrapped up in the children. She looks at the guy and says, "Who are you?" That should not be so.

Many people are like that in other relationships. They hop around here and there and cannot stay rooted anyplace. As a result things cannot grow, prosper, and succeed. There comes a point where you need to get settled, where you need to get rooted and grounded in the faith, in the relationship. That takes purpose.

"This is the day the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it." (Psalm 118:24 NKJV) He has a plan for it, He is going to give you a hope and a future. Therefore I need to check in with the Lord and see what He wants me to do in this.

"Where there is no vision the people perish." (Proverbs 29:18 KJV) People have to have goals. They have to have a plan to reach those goals. God will give the plan. He already has the plan. We just need to get in with it. He says, *"I know the plans I have for you."* How are you going to get the plans? You are going to communicate with Him. He says, *"Call unto Me, and I will answer you and I will show you great and mighty things, things that you know not of."* He knows what He has in store for you, and it is going to be good.

People ask me what the future holds. And I say that I do not know, but I know it is going to be good for all who love the Lord and love His appearing.

"Though [the vision] tarry..." (Habakkuk 2:3b) means that sometimes the vision does not happen right away. Likewise, relationship is in process. It is not happening overnight.

I ask people who want to get married, "Why do you want to get married?" They often say, "Because we love each other." And I say, "Oh." Love needs to be tried and tested through hell and high water,

good times and hard times. through the days of their lives. It does not just happen that way.

Have you ever thought that you did not love someone anymore? Thank God He does not do that. He loves me with an everlasting love that never fades away or changes. We have that kind of love in us. We just need to work it. There is none of this falling-out-of-love stuff. That is emotion and not from God. You have to say, "Get away from me in the name of Jesus. I love that person."

"For the vision yet is for an appointed time." (Habakkuk 2:3 KJV) God's vision is going to happen just as surely as He said in Numbers 23:19 *"God is not a man He should lie, neither the son of man that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? (KJV) Does He promise and not fulfill?"* (NIV) In other words, the Lord is going to do exactly what He says He is going to do.

Have you gotten discouraged along the way? The promise of Abraham for a son took 30 years. During those 30 years Abraham and Sarah tried to figure out a different way to make it happen. They succeeded, but it was not God's way. It was their way. As a result they had problems when little Ishmael came along. Isaac was the son of promise. The Arabs and the Jews have been fighting ever since, but God blessed both of them. When we try to take things in our own hands, complications come about.

God makes all things beautiful in its time. That includes you. The Lord has things ahead of you that He wants you to do that you might not even know about yet. Life is an adventure in the ongoing saga of the Holy Ghost. There is a freshness and newness to it every new day.

In 1984 the Lord gave us a vision for the ministry. God's visions are always about people. Facilities just facilitate people. He gave a plan. He showed us what to do and how to do it. He in turn was running a parallel vision of sowing the word to all the nations through all the media. Then we had a building going up. The Lord says, *"When you pray, believe you have received, and you will see it."* The problem is in a vision people do not see yet. As a result they may have feelings about it.

Everything in life works through time and process.

“Godliness with contentment is great gain.” (1st Timothy 6:6) We came in with nothing, we leave with nothing, and what matters is the Lord is with us. Whatever we need will always be there when we need it.

Whatever God has is what is going to be. When you learn this, you will be a success in all that you set your hand to do because you are not doing it. The Lord is doing it.

THE GOD-MAN RELATIONSHIPS

By Purpose, Principle, Potential
Chapter Fourteen

Purpose Statements

We have to have purpose in our lives and in our relationships. A simple definition that Paul gives for purpose is *“To live is Christ and to die is gain.”* (Philippians 1:21) It is more helpful for folks that I am around and that I do what God has given me to do in the kingdom in their behalf. To put it another way, *“Whatever you do, do it with all your heart in the name of Jesus to the glory of God.”* Those are purpose statements and heart attitudes, a mindset that I am here to be to the praise of God’s glory. (Ephesians 1:11-12)

We live *“...for the praise of His glory.”* That is talking about spirit, mind, body, finances, and relationships. I am here about the Father’s business. Jesus at 12 years of age said to His mother, *“Do not you know I must be about my Father’s business?”* That was the purpose of His life. *“I come, Oh Lord, to do your will.”* Those are purpose attitudes of heart.

We can take every one of those and apply them to us. My purpose for living, existing, and life is to honor God because He has given me life in Jesus, and I now want to honor Him with my life.

Many people do not know what their purpose for living is, or their purpose for existence. The Lord has made it very clear what our purpose for life and existence are. It is all about Jesus and bringing glory to God. We bring heaven to people. When we apply that to relationships, we bring good, we bring peace, and we bring God’s faith to people. The words that I speak edify and build others up. We are not negative, tearing folks down. God never tears something down except He builds up something better. Sometimes you have to speak the truth in love so people can grow up and come into what God has. But not everybody is open to truth.

Have you found that you did not have the whole truth in presenting what you are doing? There is the story about the 30 blind guys that

were trying to describe an elephant. Many times in life that is how people operate. They do not really see it clearly or understand it clearly, but they have their opinion. We are to prefer others more important than ourselves.

We want to live by purpose and principle. Purpose is a goal or a plan of approach or vision. Principles are character qualities of God. Jesus actually lays these out in the Sermon on the Mount. It is the only real, solid teaching section that you will find in the gospels. Jesus is teaching what is important to the heart of God.

We live by God's purpose and we live by His principles. We have to have both. The principles are how we actually carry out the purpose while purpose is the overriding theme to everything. *"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters."* (Colossians 3:23)

"For me to live is Christ." I bring heaven, and I bring purpose to people. God is working in us enabling us to will and to do His good purpose which He finds great pleasure in doing. He only does what He wants to do, and He only does what He takes pleasure in doing.

Principle gives us the character qualities that go with enabling us to fulfill His good will and purpose, His pleasure.

God's overriding purpose is to have all people part of His kingdom. He wants everybody saved. He does not want anybody perishing, and He wants everybody blessed. That is God's glory. That is His purpose.

If we are going to have blessed relationships, the Lord shows us how to have it. All of God's purpose and all of God's principles are centered in the love of God. They are centered in the love of Christ.

Jesus approached it first with the blessing areas.

The Sermon on the Mount

Look at What is Blessed:

- *“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”* (Matthew 5:3) Jesus is not talking about the poor. The poor are cursed and under a cursing, as shown in Deuteronomy 28. God’s purpose is not poverty. There are principles that God has established. Another word for principle could be action, which would be doing the commandments. On the other hand, it indicates character because it takes God’s character to keep His commandments. Being in Christ is the only way we can keep them. Otherwise things will be perverted.

One principle is to honor the Lord with your substance. People who do not honor the Lord with their substance are cursed. They curse themselves. God does not curse anybody. People curse themselves by not doing what God says, and the result is poverty. So, if they are not doing what God says regarding His principles, then they are going to be poor.

It says, “Poor in spirit.” These are the folks who will find themselves empty, needing the Lord to fill them. It is an attitude of heart that says God is God, and I need Him in my life for me to have life and to have it abundantly. That is what Jesus came to do, to give life and give it more abundantly. Those folks will be part of the kingdom of heaven.

- *“Blessed are those who mourn for they will be comforted.”* Loss will be removed from their life. People mourn over loss, but the Lord’s comfort will remove all loss from people’s lives.

We add to people’s life, we do not take away, which are principles for life and for relationship. The Lord gives us life, and then He gives it more abundantly. We do not give life, we present Jesus to one another and we bring heaven to one another. What we are doing in Jesus is adding to people’s life what He has promised.

“Give and it will be given unto you, pressed down, shaken together, running over shall men give to you.” I have children come and give me gifts. Why do they give me gifts? Because I love them. I care about them. It will come back. This is a principle that when I give love, I will receive love.

Many have wondered why when they give their tithes and their offerings, it does not seem to be coming back to them. You have to give it out of love and faith, not begrudgingly. The proof is on the first time you do it, and God gives you back the blessing. It should not have to be that love is proved the 95th time you are giving your tithe. If you have been married for five years you still should not have to be proving your love.

If you have to prove your love before you are married, you should not get married. You should not have to prove anything to anybody. Many people are trying to prove their love to God. He knows whether you love Him or not. There is not any indecision with Him. (When you love people, you know what is going on with them.) God already gave His life for you, He does not have to prove it.

- *“Blessed are the meek [the humble] for they will inherit the earth.”* These are the folks who submit themselves to God. They will inherit the earth. There is always a blessing with every one of God’s principles. There is always a blessing on character. *“Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”* That belongs to the person who shows mercy. That is a quality of God.

It is such an amazing thing that people do not realize that there are consequences to their behavior for blessing or for cursing. It is like people do not even want to talk about the consequences. Somebody needs to talk about it because if we are going to keep people from evil, we have to talk about it. If you go down that road you are going to be sick, diseased, poverty-stricken, or you will have catastrophe in your life. It is a “thus saith the Lord” because He knows what is going to happen.

“Today I set before you blessing or cursing, life or death, choose life.” Diana and I always taught our children about the blessing, the principle, and the blessing that goes with obeying God, and the cursing which goes with disobeying God’s principle because there *will* be a cursing.

God wants to bless us in the city, bless us in the country, bless us going in, and going out. You cannot run fast enough because the blessing is going to overtake you. That is the heart and desire of God. What we have to find out is that this belongs to the person who has purposed in his heart and mind to be God's child and to fulfill His purpose for his life. Nothing in hell can stop God's purpose from being accomplished in me and through me if I want it. But you have to deny yourself and follow Him. You have to die to yourself and follow Him.

Many people have not done that yet. It says we are crucified with Christ. *"It is no longer I who lives, but Christ who lives in me, and the life I now live I live by the faith in the Son of God."* Before there can be a resurrection, a resurrected life, there has to be a crucifixion. I would say that is where a whole lot of people in the church are. They are getting crucified and dying to self so they can have the life of God and really walk in it.

- *"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled."* (Matthew 5:6) They will be filled with righteousness, right-standing with God. That is where nothing of the devil can touch them. It is where nothing of the world can touch them. Where their own selfish flesh cannot touch them and mess up the blessing.

That is a purpose of heart where you want to leave everything for the sake of knowing Christ Jesus, and understand and participate in His suffering. Paul in Philippians, chapter 3, *"That I might know Him and be known of Him."* It is the longing of my whole heart that I might be one with Him, and then take that to the people that I meet every day.

When your heart is in the right place, relationships are going to be blessed. They may speak evil of you for your well-doing. People often say, "There is not a good deed that does not go unpunished." I say, "Forget that because there is not a good deed that goes away not being blessed." When they speak evil of you for My namesake, says the Lord, do not worry about it. (1st Peter) Let it be that you have done good and when they speak evil later they will come to their senses and know that you have done the right thing, that you really loved them and cared about them.

This is something that a lot of folks do not realize. In the book of Proverbs it says, *"The wounds of a friend are faithful,"* meaning that they wounded you, but they are faithful because they spoke the truth to you in love and your flesh did not like it. When you got wounded, hopefully we will stick a spear through the thief's head so that you can get free. If you have some kind of tapeworm in you that is eating you from within, it has to be taken out. It is keeping you back from the fullness that God has.

God has given potential to everybody. There is a purpose, a principle, and a potential that He wants to fulfill in us. We are His good workmanship and He has things that He has prepared for us to do. It is purpose that He has from the foundation of the world for us to do and we need to fulfill it. The only way we can fulfill it is to operate in His purpose, principles, and potential, and then to see the potential in others as well. We need to see Jesus in people, even unbelievers. God calls things that be not as though they are. His power will transform anybody into all that He has.

People say, "I do not like how my wife or my husband is acting." God has given the potential to make that a blessed marriage, and you hold the key. You have the power to loose that potential or to hold it back.

The reason relationships fall apart is because people do not see the potential in the other person, and they do not realize the potential in themselves to love and to bless. It is there. Do not go away not using it. It is power. It is potential. It can happen. With God all things are possible.

- *"Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy."* If you show mercy, you will receive mercy. These are principles of God.
- *"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God."* These are the people whose motivation of their heart is consistent with their purpose. *"For me to live is Christ,"* to bring heaven to people. That is my purpose. The principle here, I am going to keep myself pure. Jesus made me pure. He forgave me all my sins. He took away all that separated me from God. He took

away everything that separated me from myself. Your enemy is yourself; it is the old flesh that wants your own way.

I was crucified with Christ, and now I have the potential of God working in me to carry out His principles which will open for me the door of blessing. Blessing to me and through me to others, and I am able now to loose that blessing in others. Put a little water on the seed and watch it grow. Whatever it is supposed to grow. The potential is in the seed.

If my wife is not in a right place, then I am not helping the potential of her, and vice-a-versa. It works both ways. We have the potential to work it. We have to do our part. *“Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things, it never fails.”* Folks who give up on relationship have not learned the love of Christ or the power to produce salvation through the love of Christ.

- *“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.”* We are peacemakers. This is a principle. I purpose to make peace. Jesus came to make peace between us and God. I am an ambassador for Christ, a minister of reconciliation. (2nd Corinthians 5) That means you draw people to God. You do not push them away. That means you reconcile with people. I ask for forgiveness and I receive forgiveness. I give forgiveness and I receive forgiveness. There is no division. No separation.

What has kept Diana and I together for over 40 years is we purposed that our marriage lasts until natural death do us part. It is all about commitment, accountability to the commitment, and responsibility to the commitment. The commitment is about purpose. What God has joined together let no man or woman tear it apart. It is a commitment to God, a commitment to yourself, and a commitment to a spouse. To love and cherish in good times and hard times come hell or high water, and it will come.

“Blessed are the peacemakers.” You have to get whatever is not of peace out of your house. It is not your spouse! *“If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.”* (Romans 12:18) It is easy to live peaceably with somebody you do not know or

care about. Yeah, you care about them, but you do not know them and they do not know you.

I have found people I do not even know talking about me. It is amazing because if they knew me they would love me. Why? I can either be your best gift from God in this earth or your worst nightmare. If you are seeking to do what is right, we will come right up beside of you and kick you into high Holy Ghost gear. We are going to see God's best come out of this whole thing. But if you are resisting God, I am just going to have to speak the truth in love. I love you and care about you, and I cannot let you go down the path and ruin your life and other people's lives. Then you will not end up with God, and you will go to hell. If you love somebody, how can you let them do that? I cannot. And I am going to do everything in the power of God in me to stop you and prevent you from doing something that is going to ruin your life even if you may hate me for a while.

I am a minister of reconciliation, which is an assignment from God. It is a holy charge that He has given me — to bring peace where there is no peace, love where there is no love, and good will where there is no good will. People go around the world and seek to save everybody and lose their own house. If you are going to be a minister of God, your first concern is your own house before anybody or anything else. Your own house begins with you. I have to have peace in myself. That is the principle.

Jesus says, *“My peace I give to you.”* He is operating in the purpose and the principle. He got the peace from His Father because He is in right standing with Him, and so, He is a minister of reconciliation. He is bringing us peace, and He is bringing us to God so we can be one with Him and have all His blessings.

Now you can see how demonic and ugly strife, bitterness, and resentment are. Where did “I do not love you anymore” come from? It came from hell. Do you just use people and then throw them aside when they do not seem to meet your needs or whatever you are looking for? You just cast them away. That is like the devil. He uses folks. He abuses them. Then he throws them away, kills them, and then destroys them.

We are not a part of that anymore. The old selfish you was a killer, a murder, a destroyer. And you were even destroying yourself in not knowing it. But the new you is a life-giver, a life-restorer, and a life-preserver.

- *“Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”*

It is a principle that the Lord will give 100 fold in this lifetime everything you left for Him, and He will give it with persecution. This means the world will hate you for not going the way of the world. But so what?

Peter says that the glory of God will rest upon you in those times. As you stand up for God, He will stand up for you. When the dust settles, you are going to still be standing, raising your hands and praising the Lord when everything else is gone.

- *“Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”*
(Matthew 5:11-12)

There are those who spoke the truth in love, trying to get people to come back to God, turn from their ways and receive God's best. But people did not want to hear it, and so they did away with them. But the Lord says the glory of God rests on them. The first martyr, Stephen, in the book of Acts, stood there as they were throwing rocks at him. He looked up in the heavens and saw Jesus standing at the right hand of the Father. What was He doing? He was honoring the first martyr coming into the kingdom of God for the name of Jesus. The blessing of God was on him. It says his face shone like an angel. The people went into a demonic frenzy. After that the church got stronger. Every time somebody stands up for love, peace, hope, and joy in God, the church gets stronger. It is not about us, it is about Jesus and not being selfish but loving the folks to the death.

Purpose, Principles, Potential

“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness...
How does that happen? You lose your purpose, what you are about, which is Jesus. Salt is a preservative. If I lose the principles of God and I forget the principles of God, I will no longer be an effective light for Jesus. When I get selfish, bitter, start gossiping, being independent, rebellious, and not caring about people, I am losing my purpose, my principles and therefore my potential. The potential is still there, but it is ineffective. That is where I pray to God... I always give the Holy Spirit an override on my life because if I ever go crazy and get away from God’s principles, if I start to lose sight of the purpose that God has called me to and given me in Jesus, I pray that the Holy Spirit would snatch me up, get me back on track and keep me on track.

Everything in hell tries to get you off of God’s purpose, God’s principles, and God’s potential and forget the power of God that is in you to work the works of God. The devil is trying to get you away from that. He tries to use distractions, and he tries to neutralize you. He tries to get little sins, little compromises, little unbelief’s, a little bickering and fighting, and allowing a little strife.

“Little foxes spoil the vines,” and they bear no fruit. They take away the saltiness. They get rid of your purpose in God. They get rid of your God-like principles to live your life by. They get rid of the potential. This helps you to forget that God is inside of you, enabling you to will and to do His good purpose and pleasure. We are God’s good workmanship created by God to fulfill His purpose in the earth.

The enemy tries to neutralize us and get us thinking about the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches. Everything is going fine so we forget about God. Everything is going fine so the prayer life goes.

“I can do all things through Christ Jesus who strengthens me.” That is a principle of God. Without Him I am nothing. With Him all things are possible.

“It [salt] is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.” That is what happens when people compromise their walk with God. They compromise their lives and they are not

the head anymore, they are the tail. The bad stuff goes by the tail. The good stuff comes by the head.

Self-deception comes on people. It is amazing they still think they are right with God. They get even more industrious about doing “good deeds,” but they are all self-works “in the name of the Lord.” Jesus said, *“Many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did not we do this in your name and that in your name? And He will say, ‘Depart from me, you workers of iniquity, I do not know who you are’.”* They were just doing religious self-works to make themselves look good “in the name of the Lord.” But God says, “I am not even in it because their heart is not right towards Me. It is not done out of love for Me. It is not done out of faith in Me. They are trying to be good in people’s sight so people think they are okay.”

King Saul tried to please the people, and he grabbed Samuel, “Come back with me and sanction me in front of the people. Let them think I am still alright.” And Samuel said, “I will have nothing to do with you.”

At that point Saul wanted to please man rather than please God. It is not that God leaves us; it is that God cannot do anything with us at that point because we have chosen the way we are going. There is no blessing in it.

“You are the light of the world,” with the purpose of God, the principles of God, the potential of God working in you. *“A town on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”* (Matthew 5:14-16)

The Lord will get the glory and the praise for what is done. When you are purposed in God, you are living by God’s principles, and when you are using the potential that He has given, that is application. You can have all the love in the world, but if you do not show it to anybody and give it out it is not doing anybody any good. That is why it says it cannot be hid, it has to be displayed. It has to be given out. We have to tell the people what great things the Lord has done. We cannot

hide it. We cannot keep it to ourselves. We need to be out amongst others.

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.” There is a movement in the church that has taken place throughout history. It is called antinomianism, which means “against the law.” You hear Christians saying that they are not under the law anymore, and they are using it as an excuse not to *do* the law.

I am not under the law either and neither are you in Christ Jesus because if you are doing the principles of God, if you are living and doing the law of God, you are not under it. It is in your heart as a New Testament believer.

Many folks use that for an excuse for their sin. 1st John is really clear, *“Those who are righteous will live righteously,”* which means they will live by the principles of God. They will keep the commandments of God if they are Christians, if they are righteous. Do not be deceived about this. Those who are righteous live righteously; they live by the principles of the Lord.

Jesus did not come to do away with, He came to fulfill. Because Jesus came to fulfill the law, we are now able to fulfill the law of God. We are not able to save ourselves, that is the gift of God. *“Not by my works.”* (Ephesians 2:8 and following) But *“it is the gift of God.”* I am now able to work out my salvation because God is in me enabling me to will and do His good pleasure. (Philippians 2:12-13)

Paul said, *“I delight in the law of God after my inner man, my spirit man.”* (Romans 7) 1st John 5:3 says the commandments of God are not grievous. It also says what love is. The interesting answer to “What is love” is keeping the commandments of God, keeping the principles of God. If I say I love God and I do not do what He says, how dwells the love of Christ in me? It does not. I love to do the will of God.

“I tell you the truth.” When Jesus says He is telling you the truth, He is telling you the truth. *“Until heaven and earth disappear not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen (punctuation points), will*

by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven [rewards and blessing]. “For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:20) Jesus is telling us to do what they say but do not do what they do because what they are doing is not right.

Practice what you preach. If you are a Christian, you live by God’s principles.

The Command Not to Murder:

“You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.’ But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment.”

Do you think that anger is okay? Is that because you were angry? You are the one who allows it to work in you. It cannot have a place or power over you. *“Be angry but do not sin. Do not let the sun go down upon your wrath. Neither give place (opportunity) [in the Greek, a home] to a devil.” (Ephesians 4:26)*

“The wrath of man does not accomplish the purpose of God.” (James, chapter 1:20) You are not and cannot be about God’s purpose when you are angry. Righteous anger is just for the moment and then is gone. You cannot hold onto it. It is not accomplishing God’s purpose.

My anger will absolutely not fulfill the purpose of God in relationships or situations. To the contrary, who is angry? The devil is angry, he is always angry and upset. All he does is lie awake nights thinking of nasty stuff to do to people to get back at God. He hates us because we are God’s children and we abide in God’s house. We have the favor and the blessing of God in Jesus, and he hates us for that. He wants you to bow to him and forget God. That is an enemy. He does

not have our best interests at heart. He wants to steal, kill, and destroy us.

He was questioning God's principles when he asked Eve if God surely said, "If you eat of this tree, you will surely die." Then he questioned God's integrity and purpose towards us. He went on to say that God just did not want Eve to be like He is, and He was holding back something from her. She fell for it. She was ignorant and stupid, disobedient and rebellious.

God's purpose for your life is that you have everything that is good and blessed, and that you have love, life, and relationship beyond anything you can imagine or think for good. Do not let a thought cross your mind that says any differently. The devil is always trying to make God's purpose out to be bad. He does not love you, he does not care about you, and he said, "Take the hedge down around Job, God, and then let's see whether He curses you or blesses you." The devil did not care about Job. He was trying to kill him. That is why God said, "He is in your hands," meaning Job took down the hedge, not God. In Job 3:25 he acknowledged it. *"That which I feared the most is that which came upon me."* Unbelief took down the hedge of protection and blessing. God's principle had the hedge around him.

The thief wanted to kill him, but God said he could not take Job's life. God put a limit on it. He said, "You can touch him in any way because the hedge is down, but you cannot take his life." Why? God knew He was going to turn this whole thing around for good and get Job back on the track. Come chapter 42 God prospers Job and blesses him in every way better than he was before. Do not ever believe there is no blessing in doing what is right. There is no good deed that will go unblessed. They will always be blessed. God will always honor what He is doing in you and through you every time you are obedient.

"Honor life and relationships" is God's principle, which is the opposite of murder. He always honors life and relationship, and whatever is trying to destroy them is not of God. That is why when you approach people in relationship as a God-man or a God-woman you do not want to do anything except bless them. You want only God's best for them. They may not know what is best for them, but God does.

When you are praying in the Holy Ghost, doing good to them, and being obedient to do what the Lord directs you to do, you are furthering abundant life and living, and you are furthering relationship.

“If it is possible, as much depends on you, live peaceably with all men.” (Romans 12:18) Do good to people. Jesus went around anointed with the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:38) with power, doing good to people, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; He took the devil off folks and allowed the blessing of God to come to them and encourage them.

Jesus says of the devil that he is a murderer from the beginning. He is a liar and a murderer. He destroys relationships. He divides to conquer. It is a demonic working. He tries to separate people from God and from others to destroy them, and not let them find happiness. They are always lonely. They are never reaching out to anybody, never wanting anybody to reach out to them, yet they want others to reach out to them. That is a point of bitterness because nobody is reaching out. They make everything so miserable that anybody who gets close to them gets pushed off. They need to get delivered, and God can do it.

It takes somebody to love people enough to stay in there and care. *“Father, forgive them, they do not know what they are doing.”*

Anybody would look and say they know exactly what they are doing. Something was plotted, premeditated, and planned out, but Jesus says they do not really know what they are doing and saying. They do not understand the consequences of what they are doing. If you do not understand the consequences, and you are not looking down the road at what is going to come out of the whole thing, you really do not know what you are doing.

Do not do anything in haste. In only a few minutes you can destroy what you have done for 30 days to accomplish in relationship. Do not listen to people when they talk in anger or when they are talking out of their mind. People listen to it because they have a “hurt me” spirit on them. If you do not receive offense, nobody can give you offense, and if you are not giving offense, then you are not going to hurt anybody.

Purpose To Do Good to the People in Your Life

Work God's purpose, principles, and potential with Him. Develop an attitude that says "I love to do Your commandments, Lord. I love to do Your will." Get it out of your head that you have license for the flesh to do what it feels like doing. It is not about you and your feelings.

It was commitment that saw my wife and I through these forty-something years. It is commitment to God, to self, and to each other. Feelings will steal you blind. Once you open up the gate of strife, it is pretty hard to shut it. But I praise God when somebody falls on their face and starts talking to God. Quit bantering with others. Ask the Father to forgive you for the feelings that you had at the moment.

If you are angry, you have murder in your heart toward that relationship. You want it to die at that point and you have to say, "Forgive me, Lord. I am not going to let the devil steal from me what you have put in my life. I am not going to have any part of it."

There were times, I am sure, when my wife thought about walking out, and there were times when I had thoughts about walking, and I did. I walked out the door. The next thing I knew God would zap both of us and we would have a heart of compassion to come back to God, to ourselves, and to each other. She would be coming through the door to meet me, and I would be coming back to meet her, and we would hug and reconcile. We would get on our faces together before God and ask Him to forgive us. Then we would kick the devil out of our house and what was causing the commotion. You have to do it. Do not let the thief steal, kill, and destroy. Do not let him use you or abuse you or anybody else through you. That is purpose.

In 1992 I purposed in my heart that I was not going to be stolen from anymore in relationships. I said, "Enough is enough." The thief comes and tries to put lies in people's heads and do different things to separate them from one another. I just was not going to allow that to happen anymore. As much as lies within me, I will be at peace, I will reconcile, I will seek to do the right thing towards folks, and that is it.

So when I stand before God someday, I am not going to have a wake of broken relationships behind me. I am going to present my one wife to the Lord. Because I know on the other side there is no marriage and there is no giving in marriage. It is all about faithfulness. It is all about commitment. It is all about accountability to that commitment and responsibility to fulfill it. And in Jesus we can do this.

You have to tell the lying thief to get out and leave because he is a liar. I have seen so many folks caught in a deception so they cannot see the forest for the trees. They think they are doing the right thing. They even have dreams confirming it. And I say, "That dream came right from the pit of hell. It did not come from God because we have God's written Word about what He thinks on the subject."

I know people go right on down the block until they hear what they want to hear. But it is not going to be God's best. We want to see God's best for your life. Through trial and testing you get stronger. Commitment gets stronger. Love gets stronger towards God and towards you.

I have seen the devil try to wear people down and get them to break faith, and try to get them to give up. I have been there and done that. I have seen that so many times over the years. If we can get you to say, "I believe God" and do what He says in spite of everything else that is trying to pressure you, there is a great blessing that is coming. It is right there waiting for you if you do not faint and give up. The devil tries to make you feel helpless and hopeless, that you cannot do a thing about it, and you cannot do a thing to change it. That is a lie in Jesus' name because with God nothing is impossible.

Ask the Lord to give you the strength sufficient to do the right thing and to love, encourage, and not break faith; to rise up in hope in Jesus' name. Start to pray for the other person and intercede for them, and break the thief off their life as well. What I learned really fast in marriage was that she is not the problem nor am I the problem. It is that we both have a problem because the two are one. We need to be one in spirit and we need to come against the problems together, that our prayers not be hindered.

It is very easy to say, “Man, you have an issue,” or “You have a problem.” No, we have an issue, we have a problem, and God has the solution for us. We are going to pull together in God, and we are going to tell this mountain to move in the name of Jesus. We are going to break the power of that attack in Jesus’ name.

I shared a testimony about a dream I had where the devil was dragging my wife away from me in the first year of our marriage. When I decided to make the commitment and not let her go, I went and whopped that devil and carried my bride back out of the woods so I could love her and care for her the way God intended. I had to purpose in my heart that I was in the marriage and I was not leaving it.

I was the covering. I was to cover my wife. In the dream she was naked, being dragged out by her hair into the wilderness. I said, “Forgive me, Lord.” I went after her and I beat the pulp out of that devil, and I took back my wife. And I said, “I am not going to allow that to happen.”

I have had to make a commitment many times over the years. It is not just a one time commitment. Every day is a new day with new blessings and new thieves. It is a different level, and a different devil. But it does not matter because *“Greater is He who is in Me than he who is in the world.”* I will not allow anything to steal from me anymore.

THE GOD-MAN
RELATIONSHIPS
Spiritual Principles
Chapter Fifteen

Qualities of a God Relationship

There is no great reason for us to beg, *“I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.”* (Psalm 37:25) When folks are beggars, their relationships are in trouble. A needy relationship is in effect when you are looking for somebody else to fulfill your life and your needs.

You can expect disaster and problems when operating outside of the principles of God. In a God-man and God-woman relationship everything is done with God’s purpose in mind. Everything is done based on God’s principles and commandments. *“Have I not said it, will I not do it? Have I not promised, and will I not fulfill?”* (Numbers 23:19) As such, every commandment of God is based on a promise of God, and God always keeps His Word.

Time is our friend. Time is involved in the process of getting to the goal. Relationships have a beginning, but it takes time for a relationship to develop.

I ask people who come to me wanting to get married, “Why do you want to get married?” and they say, “Because we love each other.” This is the answer I receive 95% of the time. I say, “You have not even begun to understand what love is. After hell and high water, after good times, hard times, sickness, health, and financial ups and downs, in 30 years, then we will talk about love.”

The Lord loves me with an everlasting love that never fades away or changes, and the God-man and the God-woman operate the way God operates. Love is forever. Commitment, accountability, and responsibility; you are committed, you are accountable for your commitment, and you are responsible to your commitment.

Relationship has to have consistency. In Malachi, chapter 3, verse 6, the Lord says, *“I am the Lord who does not change.”* *“Jesus Christ is*

the same yesterday, today, and forever.” (Hebrews 13:8) “Heaven and earth will pass away, but my Word will never pass away.” (Matthew 24:35) It will not change.

Have you been in a relationship where it was up and down, hot and cold? One day loved, the same day not loved. It is like, *Will you make up your mind?* Selfishness destroys relationship. When people want their way, they destroy relationships.

The Lord is always into adding to, building up, refining, refueling, refreshing, and renewing. He is always adding to relationships. That is how God wants us to be. He does not want us to take away from them. Selfishness will do that. *“Without pride there is no contention.” (Proverbs 13:10)*

Ask yourself, “Am I adding to or am I taking away from the relationship?” If you think God changed on something, understand it was you that changed. God never changes. *“I am the Lord who does not change.” (Malachi 3:6) I am the same yesterday, today, forever.” (Hebrews 13:8)*

Consistency in Relationship

With consistency comes stability. People have come to me and asked me about something, and then after I tell them they say, “I knew you would say that.” My response is, “If you knew I had say that, then why are you asking me about it? I am not going to change it.”

If you are committed to God, to His work in you, and committed to others around you in this moment, then there is a good chance that commitment will go on into the next moment.

“If you continue in My Word, then you are My disciples indeed, and you will know the truth and the truth will make you free.” (John 8:31-32)

Consistency has the element of continuation in it. We are going to continue in what we are doing here. The key to a life based on purpose and principle is to continue not with just purpose and principle, but with God’s purpose and principle. We have purpose,

we have goals, we have things that we are seeking to obtain and we have standards that we live by, many of the ones that work are God's standards. But the problem is we do not acknowledge God. We figure we are good people with good values and principles. Principles will work if they are God's principles, but eventually people will break down when they are not giving God the glory. They do not have God's purpose at heart. They have their own purpose and agenda at heart and ultimately that will break down relationships.

When there are two people in that kind of working, there are two agendas. Consequently you have power problems because each one is going to try to work their agenda at the expense of the other person, and the stronger one wins. But actually there is no winning in that kind of working and ultimately the relationship is going to break up. *"How can two walk together except they agree?"* (Amos 3:3) They could not agree with each other because they have their own agendas. Even when one sacrifices to go with the other person's agenda, later they get bitter, resentful, and things are going to break up anyway.

Come into Agreement

The only way it can work is when people agree with God's agenda and God's purpose based on God's principles. He has laid down His Word very clearly as to what we are to do and what we are not to do, how we are to live and how we are not to live, what is blessed and what is cursed.

God has set natural laws in motion. He has set in motion physical laws and health laws. Everything that God has created is related and associated with the law that He has put in place to make things function. Without laws no proper working will ever happen. Your body is a masterpiece of God's health laws and principles. When you violate God's health principles, sickness and death can come. On the other side, when you obey God's health principles, you will have health, long life, and blessing. There is always blessing when obeying God's principles, and cursing when disobeying God's principles. It is not God's fault if you are cursed.

He says, *"...I have set before you life and death, blessings and cursing, now choose life..."* (Deuteronomy 30:19)

There are also spiritual laws that God has put in place; laws of the spirit. These are related to the moral, social, and religious belief systems. It has been said if you want to keep a good relationship do not talk about religion or politics. Everybody has their opinion. But understand the Lord does not have opinion. He inserts truth. What He speaks is the way it is, and whether you believe it or not, it is the truth. Whoever believes it and acts upon it will be blessed. Whoever disagrees and does not want to do it will be cursed. You either curse yourself, or you enter into God's blessing.

As long as you continue to obey God's word and principles, you will continue to be blessed. But if you choose to go another way, then you bring cursing into your life. Have you ever "dumped out" for a season and bad stuff started to happen? It may not happen right away but it is on the way. You have gotten off God's path. You have gotten out from under the shadow of the Almighty. You have stepped out of the protection of God. When you walk in God's principles, you are under the protection and the blessing of God. You are under the grace of God, the divine favor of God, and the Lord will enable you to receive His purpose.

"For I know the plans that I have for you, plans for good not for evil. Plans to prosper you, to give you hope and a future." (Jeremiah 29:11-12) The Lord has it all under control whether you are abounding in little or abounding in much. People wonder how they can be abounding in little. You can be abounding whether you have much or you have little because your life does not consist in the things that you possess. Your joy is not based on the circumstances and the situations going on around you.

A God-man and a God-woman rises high above the earth and the working of the earth because we are not of the earth's system. We are not of this world. We are in it, but we are not of it. We are born of God and His principles are working on our behalf. All of the great miracles of God happened in time of famine. They worked when the people did not have anything to provide and God supplied. Even when He took them to the Promised Land it says in Deuteronomy 8 that God caused them to hunger so He could feed them. He was

moving them from Egypt to the Promised Land where there was not any food along the way except what God supplied for them.

God will always supply for you as you are honoring His principles and seeking first the kingdom of God. In Matthew 6:25 He says, *“Do not worry about what you are going to eat, what you are going to drink, what you are going to wear.”* Honor God with the tithe and the offering and seek Him first, be about His purpose and the Lord will never cause you to lack. *“The Lord is my Shepherd. I shall not want.”* (Psalm 23:1)

Violations of God’s Principles

Many Christians are not so smart; that is why Jesus calls us sheep. They do not understand what God is saying. All kinds of sin in the form of lying, cheating, selfishness, unforgiveness, bitterness, anger, fear and worry is going on. These are violations of God’s principles. It is what opened the door to take the hedge down around Job. He stepped out of God’s blessing and principle and leaned to His own understanding.

Job said, *“The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord”* (Job 1:21), but that is a false principle. God gave, but the devil took it away. Job repented of believing that in chapter 42:3. He said, *“I spoke about things too wonderful for me, things I did not understand or comprehend.”* He learned that God is a good God who only gives good and perfect gifts to His children. *“Only good and perfect gifts come down from the Father of Lights.”* (James 1:17)

What we have to understand is that there has been a mishmash of belief systems and principles that people have spoken out of ignorance of God and who He is. Therefore, they believe a lie. If you have a false belief system, you will have results contrary to what God actually wants for you.

When God says *“I am not a man that I should lie. Have I not said it will I not do it. Have I not promised will I not fulfill,”* (Numbers 23:19), that means you run your life based on what God’s principle says and you are about His business, His purpose, your life is going to be secure spiritually, mentally, emotionally, physically, financially, and

relationships no matter what is going on, and you are not going to have to fear about whether people will love you or not love you.

Proverbs 29:25 says, *“The fear of man is a snare.”* It will cause problems, *“If you love father, mother, son, or daughter more Me,”* Jesus says, *“you are not worthy of Me.”* People have to come to grips with that. The Lord has to be First Love, first relationship and then comes everybody else. The Lord will order all the other relationships after that. And He will bless them.

Jesus’ definition of murder is anger. If you are so much as angry at somebody, you have committed murder. Have you ever said something in anger that you wished never left your mouth? You tried to catch it, but it was too late. You can destroy relationships that way. You can be working for years on a relationship and in five minutes you can ruin it. People are not going to remember all the good stuff. They are going to remember those five minutes.

Here is a very interesting phenomenon: People can devastate another’s life, and the next day they do not even remember they did it. They were out of sorts in their heart towards God, people pressured them for that moment and they did horrible things.

I read an article where a man in Los Angeles drowned his child in the bathtub, and later, when all the authorities were there, he was just beside himself because he did not remember what happened. This can happen many times with babies. When people get out of sorts, it only takes a moment with a little one and harm is done. Self-control is a fruit of the God-man and the God-woman. It is in your new spirit.

“Cain, why are you so angry? If you do what is right, will you not be accepted?” (Genesis 4:6-7) If you do what God said to do, you would be blessed. Cain was angry because he did not get the results he wanted to get from what he did his way. That is why leaning to your own understanding can get you into trouble. *“Judge righteous judgment, not by the appearance of things.”* That is a principle of God.

Have you prejudged somebody? You did not have all the facts or information about them. Have you cut yourself off through prejudice

from somebody who later turned out to be a real blessing? For whatever reason you made a judgment about the situation and the person and cut yourself off from them, never even giving them a chance. That is death to a relationship because the relationship never started. It did not have an opportunity.

A Reconciliation Experience

When the pipe came through my windshield in 1986, my face was rearranged, wired up and I had to suck everything green and brown through a straw. They left a little hole between my teeth so I could eat and gave me snippers in case I chocked on the brown and green stuff. Normally folks would choke on it, but to me it was great. I was thankful to God every time I was able to have some.

Later I was at a banquet with other pastors and one pastor kept following me around. I was trying to figure out, *What is with this guy?* He kept trying to engage me, and so, I stepped out for a minute and I came back in. He said, "Here, Pastor Randy, I have got a chair for you right next to me. Please come and sit with me." So I figured anybody that pursues you that much is either a stalker or a God-blessing. You have to figure out which one is working. So I sat down with him and he started crying. I said, "What's wrong?" He says, "I misjudged you." I had never met the fellow before. He said, "I made the mistake of listening to what people said about you, and now I have been watching you. I have been listening to you and you are not at all like what they described." I said, "Well, that's nice."

"Whisperers separate chief friends." (Proverbs 16:28) It may not even be a friendship. It may be a friendship about to develop and about to happen, but people stay away because they were poisoned by somebody and they did not have the spiritual fortitude to stand up and say, "I am going to find out for myself about that person." Never listen to garbage. Gossips are destroyers of relationships. People with opinions and prejudices and biases are destroyers of relationships. They are not adding to anybody's life.

Understand this, if they are talking about somebody else to you, more than likely they are going to be talking about you to somebody else. Do not get into that kind of working or you are setting yourself up for

messed up relationships. Then the tendency is to try to defend yourself.

That pastor and I had reconciliation, and I did not even know there was anything wrong between us. God did something very special in his heart and showed me that I have to go on a crusade to help people learn how to love one another and to have blessed relationships. I was to show them how to break down the walls and barriers that separate and divide. Some get a bee in their bonnet from the devil, and try to undermine relationship for their own purpose and their own agenda. They have a tendency to justify themselves and their actions in their own minds. They rationalize and depose others who they are “against” (those who do not agree with them).

Get that out of your life and out of your heart. It is death to relationships. It is against God’s principles. God so loved “everybody” that He gave Himself for “everybody.” While we were all enemies of God, Christ died for us, the godly for the ungodly. We must keep the peace. *“As much as lies within you, live peaceably with all men.”* (Romans 12:18)

Besetting Sins

Do not compromise. That is how a lot of people think they are going to keep the peace. They think that if they agree with others, they will have peace. But if you are not agreeing with God and God’s principles, and you agree with them, then you are all going down. Jesus says, *“Let the blind lead the blind and let them both fall into the ditch”* when the disciples said, *“Do not you know, Master, you have offended these people?”* (Matthew 15:14)

If they are offended because of the principles of God and the Word of God, and if they are offended because I am doing the purpose of God while they want to do other purposes or agendas, then that is their problem.

Stay away from them because they are putting poison into you. I tell the ladies to stay away from rebellious, independent, self-willed women because they will ruin your marriage. They will ruin your life because hell is in that working. I tell the guys, “You are married; that means you stay home and enjoy your family. You are not going out

with the boys three or four times a week. You have a home, you have a wife, you have responsibilities, and you have children.”

The Lord went on to say to Cain, “*Sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it.*” And what did Cain do? He rejected the Lord’s counsel. He violated God’s principle because he was not getting his way. He threw a tantrum, went right out and killed his brother in the field; murder. The murder had already begun in his anger, with his jealousy of his brother.

If you have jealousy, envy, or selfish ambition in your heart, you had better lay it down at the cross. Such things will destroy your life and bring every devil in town into your house. If you have your own personal selfish-ambition agenda, you had better lay it down and ask the Lord to forgive you and take that out of your heart.

Each of those sins has lack. Many times people start comparing themselves with somebody, not realizing that they already have something. They do not recognize what God has in them already. The God-man and the God-woman are not jealous or envious of anybody. They do not have any ambition of their own. They come to do the will of the Father. They are easily entreated, which means that they are open to the best plan.

Diana and I had to find that early in marriage. She is a very bright, funny, intelligent person, very intuitive. She can look at a person and read them. I am the same way. But that will cause problems because sometimes people do not see in themselves what is really going on because somebody else has filled their head with garbage. You have to understand in God’s eyes you are His dearly beloved child, you are the best of the best as far as He is concerned, and He does not find any blame or shame in you.

As a God-man and God-woman, you are no longer condemned. Do not let anybody condemn you or put you down. Do not buy into anything that is short of what the Father says. You are God’s finest because of Jesus. It is because of Jesus, what God has done in your life. When I meet somebody, I have confidence in the Lord. It is not self-confidence, it is God confidence. It says, “*The Lord shall be your confidence.*” (Proverbs 3:32)

Cain did not have to go out and kill his brother. God told him what he needed to do. He could have just made an adjustment and asked for forgiveness, straightened it out, done the right thing and been blessed and lived with his brother happily ever after. But he chose not to. You can always tell when people are acting like the loser or the devil. Right away after Cain killed his brother he went out and God asked, *“Where is your brother Abel?”* (Genesis 4:9) Abel’s blood was crying out to God for vengeance from the ground. (Genesis 4:10) Not Abel, his heart was not like that, but his blood was crying out. Why? – Blood guilt.

You do not have to stick a knife in a person or shoot them dead to destroy their life. You can destroy their life by the words that you have said. If somebody says something to you in anger, do not believe a word they are saying. Do not receive it. Do not absolutely receive it. Do not take it personally. Unfortunately sometimes there is a little bit of truth in there, but not much because truth out of balance is heresy, it is false.

The devil knows your weak spot and if you have trouble with blame he is going to hit on blame. If you are insecure about something, what is he going to hit on? Insecurity. It is like, “They pressed my buttons.” People around you know what will get you going, and the devil knows what will get you going. I told somebody one time, in fact I was teaching a series on it, “Remove all the buttons.” If there are no buttons on the keyboard they cannot push them. In other words get rid of all the stinking thoughts about how you think about yourself. Maybe you are thinking about yourself too much. The God-man and God-woman do not spend time thinking about themselves because God occupies their time with gladness of heart. (Ecclesiastes 5:20)

God’s Way at Our House

If you want blessed relationships, you are going to think about God. We are going to talk about God together. That is what Diana and I had to figure out early in marriage. It is not her way, it is not my way, it is going to be God’s way. We agreed on that and we made a pact together with God about that. It is going to be God’s way in our house. Not my will, not her will, but God’s will be done in our house. *“As for me and my house we will serve the Lord.”* (Joshua 24:15)

We had to do that because we were fussing. The power struggle goes on in every relationship, but submission is not a bad term. It says in Ephesians 5:21, *“Submit yourselves one to another,”* and then it goes on *“Wives, submit yourself to your husband as to the Lord.”* (Ephesians 5:22) *“Husbands, love your wife like Christ loved the church.”* (Ephesians 5:25) He gave his life for the church. Submit to one another as to the Lord. The submission is to the Lord.

Every time we would go back to that point, blessing and unity would come. Peace would come and good things would start to happen. God would show her things and me things. I remember one special offering back in the 1980's. It was the first special offering we ever called for and the Lord gave me a figure. I always ask God what He wants me to give, and Diana does the same. The Lord told me, “Give everything you have – your bank accounts, everything you have saved into that offering.” I said, “Father, you are going to have to talk to Diana about this one.” I came home a few days later and Diana was sitting at the table doing something. I think she was paying the bills. Diana is a bookkeeper, an account manager, so I would be dumb not to let her do that. But I take responsibility on how it is delegated and where it goes.

So she looked at me and gave me that twinkle-in-the-eye look and said, “I know.” I said, “What do you know?” And she said, “I know what the Lord told you” (I had not shared it with her yet). Remember what I said, “Lord, you are going to have to show this to her.” I know this about my Father, He is faithful and He shared that with her. She said, “The Lord told you to give everything,” and she said, “I am ready to write the check.” Agreement on God's principle and God's purpose. Blessing on the promise.

The Lord had told me to give it last after all the funds had come in. They had all come in and that was when we were supposed to give it. That was an integrity call because the tendency is when it is all in, oh, I do not have to do it.

I had another person tell me, “I will make up the difference from whatever does not come in.” He said to me, “Well, I do not have to do anything now it all came in.” I looked at him and thought I am not

going to judge that guy because the Lord told me when it all comes in, then give your offering. And so, we did.

Diana had never been to Hawaii. She comes from the east coast. Weeks later some people came to us and said, "We put together a trip to Hawaii for you, Pastor," and I thought, *How good is this!*

We could have bought that trip five, six, ten times over, but it was God's provision. That is what is needed because that is how much we had given. God returns on His investment. He keeps His word. When He gives something, He gives spiritual principles.

Spiritual Principles in Relationships

- Bless, do not curse. (Romans 12:14)
- Do to others what you want done to you. (Luke 6:31)
- Give and you shall receive (the law of reciprocation) (Luke 6:38)
- Refresh others and you will be refreshed (Proverbs 11:25)
- Honor God, He will cause you to be blessed, honor His servants, He will cause you to prosper. (2nd Chronicles 20:20)
Why? You are receiving and believing the Word of God, the principles of God that they are bringing to you, and when you do so God is going to bless those who bless His servants.

Jesus said, *"Truly I tell you, wherever this gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her."* (Matthew 26:13) because she honored Jesus the man, the servant of God as He was walking the earth. In the same way, when you honor God, He will honor you. When you honor people, they will honor you. This is the law of honor.

The fifth commandment is *"Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you."* The principle has promise. The commandment of God has promise.

I absolutely do not want to say that I am not under the law. What I am saying by the Spirit of God is, if I am doing the law of God and I am fulfilling the will of God, then I am not under the curse. I learned as a little boy that if I do what God says I will be blessed. I learned

that I was blessed as a child of God, so I do what God says because I am blessed.

Before the fall of man Adam and Eve in the garden did not have any Ten Commandments. All God said for them to do was stay away from that one tree. That was not such a hard thing to do. There was no guile in them, there was just complete innocence, for they had no sense of wrong, no sense of evil, no sense of anything that was poverty. They had no sickness, no death, no disease, no fussing in relationship. There was no power struggle until Eve was hanging out where she should not have been and Adam was not watching to see where she was.

I do not believe that husbands and wives should do separate vacations. That has been a principle for me and Diana for all of our marriage. I say where I go she goes, and where she goes I go. This is important because there is no break of faith. There is no opportunity for nonsense or foolishness. When I travel around I have somebody with me. We are not going to give the thief opportunity. This is a wisdom principle.

Eve gave into the devil, she was enticed and went for it. Do you know that when somebody tells you they love you, it does not mean they love you? Just because someone has something for you does not mean it is something from God or is good. Adam just joined right in. After that point they felt their shame, and they were under the law. They broke God's commandment and they died spiritually. They had absolutely no power anymore because they gave it to the devil. They gave the devil the power over their life, over their home, over everything. They lost the dominion in the earth that God had given them and it was given to the devil. Jesus and Paul called him the Lord of this world.

Mankind received the Ten Commandments because they did not know the principles of God anymore and they did not have the power to keep them in the Old Testament. When Jesus came, dominion came back. That is why Jesus came to save us. The law though it is perfect could not save us. It could not unite us with God because nobody could keep it perfectly. Christ Jesus kept it perfectly, *"For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or*

one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled." (Matthew 5:18) The commandments are still good and they are still in effect. They are to show transgressors their sin. They are the curb that shows the boundaries. What is blessed and what is cursed. They drive people to the cross for forgiveness when they see that their life is not doing what God says.

Jesus took the one commandment, "*You shall not murder*" (Exodus 20:13) and He applied it to anger. He made it even more extreme. People say, "I never killed anybody." But the Lord says, "Yes, you did with what you said about them. You murdered them, you killed them, and you separated them from other people." Do not be one of those ignorant people that believe anything you hear unless you know it is true. Really, we should be looking to help each other, and if one of us is in trouble we need to help the other to get out of trouble. That is what the God-man and the God-woman do. They are ministers of reconciliation, getting us back to Christ, getting us back to the cross, getting us back into forgiveness, and getting us back into blessing.

Great will be your reward in heaven when you act like that towards brothers and sisters, not being one of those who is looking for fault and picking and poking. The devil is a liar, is not he? If he cannot find fault in you (he is the accuser of the brethren), he will make something up, and there will always be somebody out there who will believe it to their shame.

We have to do something with it. At the cross Jesus gave us life. Whoever believes in the Lord Jesus will not perish but will have everlasting life. Flesh and blood family will never be as close as spirit family until flesh and blood family comes into the Spirit with God.

After Jesus, the law of God is now not on tablets of stone (external), but it has been put in our hearts (internal). Just like Adam and Eve before they went against God. Our conscience came alive where before it was dead. (We were dead spiritually.) The devil was messing around with Eve when he said, "Did God really say you will surely die if you participated in this?" And she said, "Yes, that's what God said that we would surely die." But when she participated in it, she did not physically die, and so, she thought she was still okay and offered it to Adam who did not even think about what God had said,

His principle and His provision. Adam could have overrode the whole thing if he had stood up and been courageous, but he went with his wife and he lost it. He did not even check in with God.

Women ought to thank God when the man stands up for God and does the right thing because that is where stability and security are, in people living God's purpose and God's principle.

Let God put together relationships. Do not you go looking for relationships. Make sure that person loves God more than they love you. Make sure they are about God's purpose and God's principle otherwise you are going to have serious problems. Just talk to Samson.

Spiritual Principles (continued)

- Forgive and be forgiven. Forgive people, receive God's forgiveness. It is God's forgiveness that enables us to forgive people. (Luke 6:37)
- When you pray, believe and receive what you speak. (Matthew 21:22)
- Do not repay evil with evil, but overcome evil with good. If somebody does evil to you, you overcome evil with doing good to them. (1st Peter 3:9) Only God can help you do that. But you do not even have to think about it because with the God-man and the God-woman it is natural. They are not wanting revenge.
- God says vengeance is mine I will repay. You are not to get into vengeance with people. God will deal with things. (Romans 12:19)
- Do not take delight when somebody else fails and falls or God will take His hand off of them and put it onto you. (Proverbs 24:17)

Everything happens for a reason. We can show you where you either passed it or you missed it. Everything is truth and consequence in life. It all works that way for blessing or for cursing. The Lord says to choose life. Choose to follow what He says. (Deuteronomy 30:19-20)

We have to have consistency in our lives, not having a yo-yo life where one day in the world and the next day seated with Christ in the heavenlies.

Simply ask the Lord what He wants and how He wants to do it. When you are leaning to your own understanding and trying to figure it out, you forget that ingredient. It is very subtle because in your heart you are thinking *I only want what God wants, and I know He wants this and now I am going to try and figure it out how to make it happen.* Hello, Abraham and Sarah, in regard to the promised son. God wanted the promised son and He was going to make the promised son happen in His time and process in the way He wanted to do it (through Abraham and Sarah who were both old and barren and it seemed impossible to have it happen that way). However, that is the way God said He was going to do it. Over time people think they have got to do something because it was promised and it is going to happen, but it has been a long time coming. So they get a Plan B.

Watch Plan B, and watch Plan A because it may not be God's way, it may be your plans. The Lord says, "Do not do it." Trust Me, *"Lean not to your own understanding. Acknowledge Him in all your ways and He will direct the path."*

Be it done to you according to your will and plan, Lord, and I know it will be good and awesome. Leaning to your own understanding is unbelief. People get unbelief into their relationships and they start doubting. They start not trusting themselves or the other person. They start doubting their own feelings, their own beliefs. What you knew was true suddenly becomes a question.

That is what the devil was doing with Eve in the garden. He was getting her to question what she knew was true. Once he got her to question it was just a matter of time until she was off track, not looking back, and she brought Adam into it and away we go. Thank God for Jesus who can get us back on track. Thank God for the Law of God which shows us our lack and gets us back to the cross where we belong.

Get back, get back, get back to where you belong.

If you are needing something in your life, the Lord has already supplied it and it is on the way in Jesus.

THE GOD-MAN
RELATIONSHIPS
Purpose, Principle, Promise
Chapter Sixteen

Continue to Believe

From the moment things are sent from heaven there is a battle in the heavenlies. We as God's people have to learn what is really important and vital to receiving from God. People say, "By faith I have it." I am saying that there comes a point where I want to see this thing happen. I cannot hurry the process, but I can surely believe it in.

I have seen so many of God's people who do not receive because they do not continue to believe. This has to stop. You will see people who are elated because they are feeling good about things. But feelings change. People have a tendency to go by feelings, circumstances, and what is going on around them.

A happy face says something about a happy heart. Yes, people can put on a happy face, but you know when they are putting on the happy face but do not have a happy heart. It is time for that to depart from our hearts. Have the joy of the Lord rooted and grounded in you, the peace of God rooted and grounded in you, and the love of God rooted and grounded in you.

Many times people have crummy relationships because they are negative. If you are negative you are emitting negativity, and negativity is a curse. Start to think that the Lord reigns.

People tell me the Lord reigns, but when I hear that stinking unbelief "but" word from them, I say to just shut up right there. We are not going any further with the way that conversation is headed because it is not of God.

You have to have a vision. You have to have a hope. You have to have a purpose, and then principles of faith. Many say, "I am not into formulas." Well, God, is so why are not you? The Lord says to believe and you shall receive. That is a principle. That is a formula.

If you are ever going to see the blessing of God, you will have to act on the principle of God. Believe it and act on it accordingly.

The thief works in the feeling realm, in the circumstance realm, and the situation realm. He is trying to steal, kill, and destroy. But, the Lord says, *“I have come that you might have life and have it more abundantly.”* Who are you going to believe?

We are going to believe the Lord because we are believers. In this day and age it is a time to hear what the Lord is saying. People are listening to all kinds of voices that are saying all kinds of things. Many of those things are not any good.

If you are around people who are talking about things that you do not want to hear (or you do not need to hear), or you are thinking those things, 2nd Corinthians 10:3-5 says to grab ahold of the false imaginations and reasonings of the mind, and cast them down in the name of Jesus. Bring your thoughts captive to the mind of Christ. In other words, you are going to grab God’s principle, His purpose and promise and run with that. Do not let anything take away what God has for you. Do not let it go. Jacob held on to that angel until he got the blessing. The angel touched his hip and his hip went out, but he was not letting go for anything.

Faith, hope, and love; God’s promises do not let go of anything. *“For I know whom I have believed and I am fully persuaded and convinced He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him.”* (2nd Timothy 1:12)

If you do not listen to what God says and get into the Word of God (think, talk, sleep on it, meditate and go over and over it until it gets down inside of you), some thief will easily rip it out. He just comes along with a feeling or he comes along with somebody else and their negativity, and the next thing you know you are doubting in your heart, you are not believing what God says, and you are going to let it go. This happens especially over time because everything does not happen just like that.

What Takes Away Unbelief?

What people do not realize is there is a thief out there and he has come to steal, kill, and destroy, but God has come that we might have life and have it more abundantly. If you want to be ripped off, that is your issue. Do not be crying to anybody because you are not believing God. Eventually you will get sick and tired, and you are going to lose. Maybe you will come to your senses and say, "Yes, the Lord is real, and He is true, and, Lord, forgive me for my unbelief, forgive me for what I am thinking and talking. Lord, I believe, help my unbelief to go away."

God is not going to zap you so that your unbelief goes away. It will never happen. *"Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."* (Romans 10:17) If people are not putting themselves subject to the Word of God by thinking, talking, and acting on the Word of God, day in and day out, it is going to be stolen.

What is going to take away your unbelief? Even when the boy in Matthew 17:14-20 was healed it did not take away the father's unbelief, but it took away his circumstance and his issue that he had been dealing with all those years with his boy. The boy was tormented by the devil who would cast him into the fire and water trying to kill him. The daddy was doing the best he could to keep him alive, and then he heard about Jesus and he went to Jesus.

Have you had a circumstance that you gave to God and the Lord dealt with it, changed it and turned it around? The Lord did it. Similarly have you had another situation and you did not think God was doing it? Did He do it before? Can He do it again? Will He do it again? When will He do it again? - When you act on it. It is not emotion because that goes away as soon as you get tired of doing that.

What is going to make the difference? What is going to put people over the top? See how Daniel did it.

Purpose in Your Heart to Believe

In Daniel 10 – verse 7 *"I, Daniel, was the only one who saw the vision; the men with me did not see it, but such terror overwhelmed them that they fled and hid themselves. So I was left alone, gazing at this great vision; I had no strength left, my face turned deathly pale*

and I was helpless. Then I heard him speaking, and as I listened to him, I fell into a deep sleep, my face to the ground. A hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. He said, 'Daniel, you who are highly esteemed, consider carefully the words I am about to speak to you, and stand up, for I have now been sent to you.' And when he said this to me, I stood up trembling. Then he continued, 'Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them.'"
(Daniel 10:7-12)

Daniel had a vision and he did not know what it was about so he asked the Lord for wisdom. James, chapter 1, says the Lord will give it if we do not doubt and are not double minded. He will not hold back anything, He will not find fault with us, He is going to help us to get what we need to get.

Another way of saying that is Daniel purposed in his heart to believe God to receive whatever it might be. Part of the problem is people do not purpose to receive. We receive based on the principle that God has given a promise that if I lack wisdom, I ask and I will receive. It is the same faith principle to receive salvation (if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, believe in your heart He has risen from the dead, repent of your sins and turn to God you will be saved). That is a promise. Based on God's principle, based on God's action of coming to save us in Jesus and it is based on God's purpose that I become His child. He loves me with an everlasting love.

Everything is based on God's purpose, principle, promise, and action in my behalf. The Lord has acted on my behalf in Jesus. He came Himself to save us. The same principle is true for physical healing, finances, relationships, and the mind, the thought life.

Where Do You Set Your Mind?

Isaiah 26:3 says, *"You will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on You because he trusts in you"* NKJV. Set your hearts. *"Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts, [minds] on the things above... not on the things beneath."*
(Colossians 3:1-2)

Have you found that when you set your mind on the things beneath you get upset, discouraged, and confused? That is not where God says to set your mind. The more you look at your finances, your health, your relationships, or yourself, the further from God you get because the Lord says, "Set your mind, set your heart on Me, on the things above."

I told somebody recently, "The finest thing that you can be doing is praising and worshiping God. Not running around trying to fix everything, trying to work everything or trying to figure it out." Do not step out of the heavenlies and step down into the earth and start leaning to your own understanding or the trap will be set. The snare and the pressures and everything will come down. Do not stay there. When you lose your peace you need to get it back. Be quiet and worship the Lord. The peace of God will rise up.

Daniel set his mind to gain understanding from the Lord. He was looking to the Lord for the understanding, he was not leaning to his own understanding. *"Trust the Lord, lean not to your own understanding. Acknowledge Him in all your ways [spirit, mind, body, finances, relationships] and He will direct your path."* (Proverbs 3:5-6) This is principle based on God's purpose. His purpose is that He wants us to accomplish His purpose in the earth and to do that you have to have His understanding of *how* to do this, what to do and what not to do. He will show it if you get out of the confusion that your own mind will bring you.

Whenever you have an uneasiness inside of you something is not right. Do not condemn yourself, God is not finding fault with you. He is just saying, "Come on, let's go, we have a better way to do this."

"Then he continued, "Do not be afraid, Daniel." (Daniel 10:12) The Lord sent the angel the first day Daniel sought the Lord.

"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, evidence of things not yet seen." (Hebrews 11:1) Thomas says, *"Unless I see the nail marks in His hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."* (John 20:25) Jesus comes and says, *"Blessed are they who have not seen yet still believe."* (John 20:29)

'Yet and still' mean continue in the faith. They believe and they continue in the faith. If we are ever going to see the blessing, we have to continue in the faith because some things do not happen overnight. In the spirit they are happening even though you do not *yet* see it.

If you are going to receive anything from heaven (Hebrews 11 talks about it) it all has to come out of heaven in the spiritual realm, to get into the physical realm.

That is what was happening with Daniel. It has to come out of the heavenlies to get to him in the physical realm. This is why people get discouraged and impatient because they have dropped the ball, they have dropped the faith and as they drop the faith the angel does not know where to bring it in. *"All those the Father gives me is coming to me."* (John, chapter 6)

Believe and Agree with God

When you are living, seeking first the kingdom of God and God's purpose, then His principles are in effect. You are living by His principles, His promises are sure. (Numbers 23:19) He does not lie. He is not a man that He is lying about things. Has He not said it, will He not do it, Has He not promised and will He not fulfill?

The Lord is doing it. (Faith is active, not passive.) You have to act on that Word. So when you get the unhappy face and the unhappy feelings, you are running around like a chicken with its head cut off, getting upset. God's purpose will not be accomplished. The wrath of man does not accomplish the purpose of God. That is a principle and there is a promise to that. God's promise is not being accomplished because you are not working it, you are not acting on it, you are not believing it.

I am a faith, hope, and love person. God is in me. The power of heaven, the same power that raised Jesus from the dead, is working in me, but I let it work. You can cut it off with your unbelief. Disappointment, discouragement, and despair. It is revolting against God and it is allowing the devil to have his way in your life, and at that point you are breaking faith with God. A double-minded person is unstable in all his ways and should not expect to receive anything

from God. *“But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do.”* (James 1:6-8)

Be really quick to ask God’s forgiveness, get back on the track, and knock off the nonsense because it is not who you are. You are a child of God, one with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; one with the believers. How can two walk together except they agree; which is believing and agreeing with God. Let’s believe God together. Get off yourself and your own stuff, and advance the kingdom of heaven in the earth. This is the way the devil distracts people from such a focus and purpose, and pressure will start to come.

God said, *“Seek first the kingdom and his righteousness and all things will be given to you as well.”* (Matthew 6:33) What did the man of God tell the widow at Zarephath? *“Make me the first cake.”* Do what God says to do and then He will take care of your circumstances and situations. Yes, your stuff is important, but we have to believe God together that all of it will be taken care of if you are doing what God says to do.

Purpose to Understand and to Do

Daniel would not have received from God what this angel was sent to bring if he had not purposed in his mind to gain understanding. It goes on; he disciplined himself before the Lord to receive. He humbled himself before God to receive.

It takes discipline not to break ranks when the lions are in front of you. We are created for glory, and your own life does not matter. Jesus says in Matthew 10:30 *“If I seek to save my life, I will lose my life.”* If I seek to save my possessions, I will lose my possessions. If I seek to save my relationships, I will lose my relationships. If I seek to save my mind, I will lose my mind. But if I lose everything for the sake of knowing Christ Jesus, I will gain back spiritually, mentally, emotionally, physically, financially, and in relationships.

What you are dwelling on is your idol. This is why people win or lose. This is why people receive or do not receive. The Lord is a jealous God and He will have no other idols or gods before Him. This is the 1st Commandment. *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul, with all that is within you”* before anybody or anything else.

“Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God...” (Daniel 10:12) Another version reads *“discipline yourself before God”* which means you are not going to lose your focus. *“If you continue in My Word then you are My disciples indeed, and you shall know the truth and the truth will make you free and it will keep you free.”* (John 8:31-32)

The root of the word discipline is disciple. Discipline yourself before God. Have you had to discipline the flesh or bring your appetite under control? Using additives to do that is not going to last. You have to purpose in your own heart and your own mind to change or to do this or you are not going to do it.

A fellow came up in the prayer line one time, and I asked him what he wanted. He said, “I want to give up smoking.” I looked at him and said, “No, you do not.” He started laughing and said, “That’s right. My wife wanted me to come up here to stop smoking.” And I said, “You go back and sit down. I am glad you came to church and I am glad you and your wife are talking. But understand this, when you purpose to get rid of this and give it up, then you come back and God is going to take it away.” A few weeks later he came up on his own, he purposed to quit, and God took it away.

You have to purpose in your heart to do this. That is the way it is going to be. It is not an option. There are no options to sin in your life anymore. You gave up the right to sin. You only do the will of the Father, which is your right and your privilege now. You have no right to make your own choices or decisions about anything. This is living by God’s purpose and God’s principles. God’s promise which will actually cause you to inherit the divine nature (2nd Peter 1:4) as you discipline yourself, and train yourself to walk in God’s ways.

Many times children who miss church come up to me and say, "Pastor, I missed church. I love church." Better a millstone be put around the neck of those parents and they be drowned in the depths of the sea than to keep a little child from church. Because if you do, you are training them to think that other things in the world are more important than God. It is not really about church; it is about loving the Lord, and He is the priority.

When the Lord is the First Love, He will order out every other relationship. He will order out every financial thing; He will order out every health, mind, and spiritual thing. That is His promise. When your delight is in the Lord and in His law, His commandments, and His ways, then He is working every good thing in our behalf. He is accomplishing His purpose in you and through you.

The angel said to Daniel, *"Your words were heard the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God."* The moment he first believed, the angel was sent. His words were heard and the angel came in response to them. The Father sent the angel. The angels are under the command of the Father, and they do the Father's bidding. They are servants to us who are joint heirs with God and Christ in salvation. They are under the Father's direction. You were actually assigned one before you were born. He has been with you since you were little.

"But the prince of the Persian kingdom (demonic realm) resisted me twenty-one days." (Daniel 19:13) This battle was going on 21 days in the heavenlies, but Daniel purposed in his heart to receive from God and disciplined himself. He continued in the faith in spite of the 21 days. Through faith and patience, we will inherit all the promises of God. (Hebrews 6:12) But understand, faith says I have it. The moment I believe, it is done. It is finished and you will see it in your relationships, in your body, in your finances, in your mind, and spiritually linked up with God in Christ Jesus.

God Will Accomplish His Purpose

Time is your friend; it is not your enemy. Have you felt time pressure? The Lord makes all things beautiful in its time. In other words, everything that God has ordained has a time and a season; a purpose and a reason. And He is going to accomplish it when it is

time. Our time is always now because we do not believe it unless we see it. *“Except I see the holes in His hands and the hole in His side and the holes in His feet I will not believe.”* (John 20:25) That person is not going to receive. That is sad because the thief can come right along and turn up the physical symptom. Have you prayed and the symptoms got worse? He will dump some feelings on you. He does not need to use a lot of different things with people because the same old thing works every time. People have not disciplined themselves to think differently about it. They have not grown in God’s Word to understand what is really going on. I say you should be rejoicing when everything is getting worse. The devil is kicking up and throwing a scene because he knows he has to go in Jesus’ name.

“A thousand will fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you.” (Palm 91:7) It is like the Charge of the Light Brigade. We are bringing God’s heavy artillery. The devil only copies what God does. Ultimately he has to bow to the name of Jesus.

Moses threw down his staff and it became a snake. The Pharaoh’s guys could do the same thing, but the difference was that God’s snake ate up the others. (Exodus 7:10-12) To me that is funny and a good thing.

Twenty-one days later the angel showed up. *“Then Michael, one of the chief princes [God’s archangels] came to help me.”* (Daniel 10:13) The angelic hosts are a team and they work under the direction of the Father in our behalf to accomplish God’s purposes. *“Because I was detained there with the king of Persia.”* (Daniel 10:13) There was a battle going on in the heavenlies over Daniel’s vision. The devil does not want you to have what the Lord has for you, but God does. He is going to make certain you get it when you purpose in your heart and your mind to believe God, to stand in the faith, and having done all to stand, to overcome in the name of the Lord. Be strong in the Lord’s might. Continue in the faith no matter how long it takes till you see it. You believe it, and as such you are going to act like it. Act like you have received it. Start thanking and praising God. Worship and love God. Set your mind and your heart on the things above, not on the things beneath (Colossians 2:2) *“because I know whom I have believed and am fully persuaded and*

convinced He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him.”
(2nd Timothy 1:12)

If you doubt that your relationships are going to be there today, they are not going to be there. Maybe not today but they are not going to be there tomorrow. Relationships that are based on fear, guilt, or compulsion are not relationships. If they are based on selfishness or convenience they are not relationships; they will not last. When the wind of life blows on them, they will fall, they will tumble. In other words, ‘the mutual use job’ will not last. Guaranteed, that is a principle.

Vision for the Future

“Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come.” (Daniel 10:14) In other words, it is not even for now, it is for down the road.

God calls things that be not as though they are. (Romans 4:17) God is a faith God. He knows how everything is all going to work out. All we have to know is:

1. Jesus loves me (Jeremiah 31:3)
2. He is not leaving me and He is not forsaking me (Hebrews 13:5)
3. He knows the plans He has for us, plans for good not for evil, plans to prosper us, to give us hope and a future. (Jeremiah 29:11)

We have a future and a hope and it is all going to turn out good because the Lord reigns. As you trust the Lord and lean not to your own understanding, and you acknowledge Him in all your ways He will direct your path. (Proverbs 3:5) But you have to be still and know that God is God. (Psalm 46:10)

Psalm 34, Psalm 46, and Psalm 91 are the fear busters. We just have to be still and know that God is God.

Twenty-one days later the angel showed up. That is why I am *not* going to get discouraged because I know whom I have believed. I am going to be committed to God and to what He has. My life

belongs to Him. My family, my children, my finances, my job, my relationships all belong to Him.

The Lord taught me years ago, He said, "Son, if the thief comes to you and says, 'I am going to strike your wife, I am going to strike your life, I am going to strike your children, I am going to strike your finances, I am going to strike the ministry or job (whatever it is that you are doing), you just look at him and say, 'You are just going to have to talk to God about this because I gave everything and everybody to Him. I do not own anything anymore. Nothing is mine.'" And the Lord is going to say, "You cannot touch his life, you cannot touch his wife, you cannot touch his children, you cannot touch the people of God, you cannot touch anything." And the devil is going to say, "You have got a hedge around him. I cannot touch him."

That is what the devil and God were talking about in regards to Job. The devil said, "I cannot touch Job, You have a hedge around him." He said, "God, take down the hedge and then we will see whether he praises you or not. Let me strike him." The Lord said, "*He is in your hand.*" (Job 1:9-12)

People think that God turned Job over to the devil with that statement. God always tells the truth. He always does justly. He cannot vary on His commandments or His ways. "*I am the Lord who does not change.*" (1st Samuel 15:29) God's promises are always the same. They are always true. His principles are eternal. Heaven and earth pass away, but the Word of God will not pass away. So we can rest secure in Him in His principles and His promises.

"That which I feared the most is that which came upon me." (Job 3:25) Job was afraid. His children became his idol. Job took down the hedge of God with his fear so that the devil struck everything. In his relationship with his wife, his wife asks, 'Why do not you just give up your God and die.' The children were gone; the roof fell in on them while they were partying. (Job 1:13-15)

Some parents do not take responsibility. They teach their children that worldly things are more important than godly things, like their relationship with God; it is better to have a relationship with your friends than it is with God. Many times they sell out their children and

offer them up on the altar of the world. The car-god involves gas, insurance, payments and anything the children earn goes to it. There is nothing to show for it. Of course the only time they can get a job is when church is, so they do not go to church and they are sacrificing their life to the car-god who is not going to repay any benefits and who is going to break down and incur more debt. As a result the person's life is not enriched; all because the parent decides they are tired of driving them everywhere.

Maybe it is time to say, "We will do this and we will do this, but if you want to do that you are going to have to walk, ride the bus, or get a bike." Not a motorized bike because those are very dangerous. People think they cannot say that because their children will hate them. They think their life and their style is being cramped... until the day when one of the children is killed in a car crash.

Do not Give Up the Faith, Hope, and Love

You would do well to turn off the news. Quite frankly all they are spewing is fear. People blame God all the time: "*The Lord giveth and He taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.*" (Job 1:21) That statement is total ignorance. The Lord gave, but the Lord did not take it away from Job; the thief did. The thief has come to steal, kill, and destroy. But Jesus has come that we might have life and have it more abundantly. (John 10:10)

So what if things are happening out there? Let's find out where the hole is and plug it up. "*When the enemy comes in like a flood the Lord will raise a standard against him.*" (Isaiah 59:19) What the devil is doing, so what? Do not even talk about what the devil is doing. Do not talk about lack. Do not talk about nonsense or broken relationships. You think it is the reality, but what about the servant who dropped his bucket in order to run to the man of God because the great army had come against the village? (2nd Kings 6:15-17) They came against Elisha who was believing God, probably one of the only ones in Israel because the thief wanted to wipe out faith, hope, and love in people's lives.

The servant came running in, "Master, master, we are all going to perish. The army is surrounding the village." And Elisha prayed to the Lord and said, "Father, show him the reality of what is going on

here.” That cancer is not the reality. That impossible cure is *not* the reality. That busted up relationship is *not* the reality.

You can only work one job at a time. I have seen people try to grab all the jobs they can but they do not do *any* of the jobs well; instead, they lose them. Do what you do with all your heart in the name of Jesus to the glory of God. What is the real reality? It is what God says is the reality of the whole thing.

The Lord opened the servant’s eyes and he saw the big army all around the village and then saw the army of God all around that. It is classic Holy Ghost. God has such a sense of humor. Then God blinded the eyes of the entire army, and the man of God led them captive to the king. (2nd Kings 6:18-19) They had come to take him, but God took them.

There is not anything intended for evil that God will not turn around to good to them that love the Lord and are called according to His purpose. (Romans 8:28) God is preparing us for His return.

If you cannot believe God for these things, then how can you believe for salvation? It is the same faith.

“Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you stood your ground in a great contest in the face of suffering. (Hebrews 10:32) Pressure tries to get you to give up your faith, to give up your hope, to give up your love for God, for what God is doing in you, for others. There is a contest going on. With Daniel, there was a battle going on in the heavenlies. A devil was on an assignment to stop that work of God. God had sent the angel on behalf of fulfilling the assignment to get the word to Daniel. Then He sent in the archangel Michael to battle with the devil so that the other angel could come around and bring the message.

Forget the Super Bowl. This ought to get a whole lot more attention. People are all hurrah, hurrah super bowl. Well, what is so super about it? That is a perspective in somebody’s mind. I understand why people think that way, but their perspective is amiss, out of kilter. A testimony is super.

“Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution; at other times you stood side by side with those who were so treated.” (Hebrews 10:33) We stand side by side with the believers in faith wherever they are in the world. *“You sympathized with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions.”* (Hebrews 10:34) Your faith, hope, love, peace and joy that God has put in you is priceless. It is beyond anything this world could ever offer. *“So do not throw away your confidence.”* (Hebrews 10:35) Faith, ‘fidece’ is the root word in confidence. But our faith is not in ourselves. Our faith is in the Lord. Proverbs 3 says *“The Lord shall be your confidence.”* That is saying “Do not throw away your Lord. Do not give Him up.” *“It will be richly rewarded.”* (Hebrews 10:35) In other words, the Lord is going to fulfill exactly what He said He would do. You need to persevere. Note: “person in severe situation.” Stay in there. Do not give up the faith, the hope and the love no matter what anybody is doing or not doing in relationship. No matter what is going on in your body. No matter what is going on in the finances. Hold on to God. *“You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.”* (Hebrews 10:36)

Be Bold and Live by Faith

You *will* receive what He has promised. That is for the future, and for sure now you will receive the promise of God. *“For in just a very little while, He who is coming will come and will not delay, but my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him.”* (Hebrews 10:37) The Lord is saying it is not pleasing for us to shrink back. He is not getting any glory and we are not going to see good results.

This is why God hates divorce. This is why God hates unfaithfulness—because it is breaking faith. We cannot be breaking faith. *“But we are not of those who shrink back.”* (Hebrews 10:39)

You have to tell those thoughts and that devil to hit the road. You may have to tell yourself and somebody else, “Quit it. I am going to believe God no matter what is going on.”

“But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed.”
(Hebrews 10:39) That is what happens to the person who shrinks back. They are destroyed by their fear. This is a time to be bold and to step forward in faith and to act on God and His promises.

If you have problems with finances, give. But do not give out of desperation; give out of faith. Do not give trying to get God to do something, but out of confidence in God that you are just being faithful and obeying Him. You are doing it out of love for God. You are doing it out of faith, as faith works by love.

“But of those who believe and are saved.” (Hebrews 10:39) Saved from what? Saved from all the evil work out there. We are saved and set apart to the glory of God.

It does not matter whether you are abounding in little, or abounding in much – we are abounding. It does not say whether you are lacking in little, or lacking in much.

People say they do not have enough faith and I tell them “You have a little faith but you are saying to me you are lacking in little faith. Well, I heard what a little faith will do; it will move mountains. It just needs to be exercised. The problem is, you are not exercising it. You are not thanking God, you are not praising God, you are not rejoicing, you are acting like it is all going down, and I am going to step away from you if you keep that up.”

People ask, “Are not you going to believe for me,” and I say, “Why? You are not believing for yourself.” Then they say, “Does not God believe for me even when I am not believing?” Understand, *“it will be done to you according to your faith.”* (Matthew 9:29) They say, “Well, are not you going to help me?” and I say, “Yes. I am going to believe God with you.” God is going to believe with you, but you have to put something into it.

We are going to do like Jesus did in Matthew, chapter 6. We have the five loaves and the two fish. A little. The disciples were saying, “What is this amongst so many?” They were lacking a little. They were saying it was of no effect. We have faith as a grain of mustard seed. It may not be a lot, but we do not need a lot. We need to get

what we have working. Jesus got it working by taking the loaves and the fish and raising them up to God and saying, "I thank you, Lord, for what you have supplied."

I thank you, Lord, that my life is in your hands and all that you have for me is coming to me. We are going to fulfill what God has given us to do as a regiment in God's army in this earth in this time in Jesus' name. We thank you, Father, for everything that You are, and as we do so, the angels have been given their assignments and they are bringing it into the earth. It does not matter how long it takes to see things. We know we have things and we are going about our Father's business in the meantime.

It is not about believing out of fear. It is believing out of faith and confidence in God because He is who He says He is. You have to tell Him that and praise Him. *"You are who You are, Lord. There is none like unto You."* (Psalm 86:8) He loves to do good things for His children who love Him and are called according to His purpose, and it is happening. It is all coming in.

THE GOD-MAN
RELATIONSHIPS
Why God Hates Divorce
Chapter Seventeen

Breaking Faith

People have damaged this thing called relationships. God hates divorce, but divorce is not where the break-up of a marriage actually takes place. The shalom peace of God means that nothing is broken, nothing is lacking.

Before the creation the Lord was in the heavens with the angelic hosts and everybody was happy. They were all in unity and praising God. Everything was working the way it should until Lucifer, later known as Satan, decided to break faith with God. He was created to praise and serve God, but he broke faith. A great battle went on in the heavenlies. It really was not much of a battle because when God says it is over, it is over, like that. But the point is that Lucifer said, "I am going to be God," and he rebelled against God in the heavens. He took one third of the angelic hosts with him. "The fools follow the scorner," Proverbs says, and they were all kicked out of heaven.

Jesus said in Luke, chapter 10, "*I saw Satan fall from heaven like lightning.*" He was kicked out because he broke faith with Him. God did not break faith with Satan. Since then the devil has run around maliciously speaking and acting against God with bitterness, hatred, and anger in his heart. He communicates to the people bitterness, hatred, anger, violence, and separation, so people always blame God for things. The greatest fear that man has is to be unloved.

The devil says that God does not love you, and he showed up one day talking to Eve, "Did God really say that if you participated in this you would surely die?" And Eve said, "Yes." God had created Adam for fellowship with Himself and they were going to be one, but God saw it was not good that man was alone and He created Eve. He was not just talking about being alone. He was talking about man had no way to procreate (did not have the ability to increase). All creation was created to grow, to multiply, to be fruitful, and to increase. But man had no way, so God made woman from Adam's

side to stand by his side and to be one together in fellowship with God.

Man was created to fellowship with God, not the animals. Man has a spirit. Animals have a soul (a personality, a body, a mind, a will, and an intellect), but they do not have a spirit. Man's spirit was eternal. God breathed into him the breath of life and man was formed from the dust of the ground. He became a living being, a son of God, higher than the angels. This is why Satan has always tried to get rid of man and to get him out of the picture because God created man to replace the fallen relationship for a true family. The angels were not family. They were created to serve God and to serve man under God's bidding.

Eve bought into the lie of the devil, disobeying God and breaking faith with God, breaking relationship. God knew that if they participated in this they would surely die, but they did not die in the way they could see. Their spirits died to God, for no longer was the life of God in them. They were not one with Him. Adam came right into it with Eve against God, and all three were in rebellion to God: the devil, Adam, and Eve.

Imagine the pain that God was going through because of this first rebellion. Lucifer was the highest of God's creation but he decided to be the creator and to take over heaven. They call it "the great divorce." Then as Adam willingly, openly, knowingly followed the woman, and broke faith with God, they discovered they were naked. This was more than an apple being eaten here. What was cursed was the fruit of the womb. In every generation, the fallen seed of Adam is in every newborn baby. We are all in rebellion to God except we be born again in Jesus. In which case we are forgiven and God brings us back. Then we are not separated from Him anymore.

Understand, what was happening there. People are always so concerned about their failed relationships. Abused people abuse. Selfishness came into the world. *Ish* in the Hebrew is man, separated from the God-man that God intended. He had no relationship with the Lord and chose to divorce God, going his own way. We know Adam and Eve's offspring, Cain and Abel, there was violence, hatred, envy, jealousy, and murder. There was no unity, no

oneness, no togetherness, and no family. Cain said to God, “*Am I my brother’s keeper?*” There was no sense of responsibility towards one another, let alone towards God.

If people say they love God but they hate their brother, they are liars and there is no truth in them (1st John 5) because there is no unity, no oneness, and no peace.

Then what happened? Illicit sex started in the earth. Every pagan worship involves sexual rituals and rites. There are all kinds of perversions that have come in. The worst of all the perversions is selfishness because it is the absence of love. A selfish person does not care about anybody or anything. He does not even really care about himself.

The devil is burning within, not by holy fire but by consuming fire of the judgment. He wants to take everyone down and separate everyone from God. He does not want the bride of Christ to have union with the Lord. What he is trying to do now is hurt the people who have been born again of God’s Spirit, who are now one with Christ, one with God, trying to get them divorced from God. Then they can go to hell with him, which technically is Gehenna, the place of fire, the final place, the second death.

God hates divorce. (Malachi 2:16) It is the *breaking of faith* with another and the condemnation of another person. It is not a writ of paper. When Jesus said that there was not to be divorce, the people asked why Moses permitted it. Jesus said because of the hardness of the people’s hearts. They refused to stay married. They did not want it. It was selfishness and it broke the union. It broke the faith.

Aspects of Marriage, Reasons for Divorce

I tell people that if they cannot be married in harmony they can at least be friends because there is more at stake here than meets the eye. The thief comes in and he ravishes families. He creates hatred and bitterness, anger, torment, and violence, and then he goes down after the children because the children then are not covered if the parents are out of sorts with God. Many times it is not a mutual deciding to break it off. You can mutually decide to repent and ask God’s forgiveness and get it right.

One person may run off with somebody else because they think that person is *so loving, so kind, so considerate, who understands me so well*. Such a person is a devil plant who wants to use you and abuse you too, and ends up casting you aside anyway.

The Lord said in Isaiah 54 that He is the husband of the widow whose husband has died. He is the dad of the orphan who has been abandoned and set aside (for whatever reason). Do not get caught up in your guilt and your pain about this. In the new heaven there will not be marriage or giving in marriage. There will be no more sex. There will be no more procreation as we understand it. All the attention will be between God and His people and there will be no more divorce. There will be no more pain, sorrow, suffering, sickness, death, nonsense, confusion, violence, selfishness, fears, worries, doubts, anxieties, commotion, depression, etc. You do not have to have that now either in Christ Jesus.

The Lord said He will be the husband. He will step in. He will fill that place. Jesus said in Matthew, chapter 10, *“If you love father, mother, son, daughter, husband, wife, more than Me, you are not worthy of Me.”* Jesus is bringing back the original order of God. The blessing of marriage. The holy sanctity of marriage. It was not about two selfish people getting together. It was one in spirit. Many people are one in flesh, but they are not one in spirit, but that is how a godly marriage needs to be.

We are at a 60% plus divorce rate in Christian homes. I tell folks, “When you said, ‘I do,’ you do, because that vow is made to God as well as to your spouse. And come hell or high water, you hold the line.” *“As much as lies within you be at peace with everyone.”* (Romans 12:18)

Jesus says because of the hardness of their heart divorce was permitted. (Matthew 19:8) That is “other” on the form which is called “irreconcilable differences.” In Christ Jesus there are no irreconcilable differences.

People have the idea to just live together. In the Old Testament if you took somebody into your tent, you married them. That is it, you

were married. There is no “we will try it out and see if it works, we will see if we are compatible.”

There are two grounds for a divorce according to the Lord. The first one is unfaithfulness, where people break faith. Sex outside of marriage is called adultery. Matthew, chapter 5 talks about that. The second is what is called pornea, which is the root word for pornography. Jesus said if you look at a woman or a man with intent that is not pure before God, you have committed sexual fornication (if you are single), or adultery (if you are married). You have broken faith with your spouse, or you have broken faith with God. This grieves the Holy Spirit in you if you are a Christian, for you defile yourself.

Pornea is fraudulent marriage where people represent themselves one way but they are a different way. After 20 or 30 years of marriage pornea does not apply because if you last 20 or 30 years, it is until natural death do us part. Commitment, accountability, and responsibility are love. Unless after 30 or 40 years of marriage somebody just decides that he wants to change his lifestyle or something, in which case that is grounds for divorce. Absolutely do not be one of those people who are looking for a loophole on the law. When you make a commitment in your heart, you make a commitment. That is the way God does it. He will never break faith with you. He will never leave you or forsake you. He will never abandon you. He will always be there for you.

He is my First Love, not my lovely wife, the woman in my life. The Lord is my First Love. Before I got married I told Diana, “You are going to be the second love of my life.” I was so excited and happy. She looked at me and I felt what she was feeling at that moment because it is everybody’s desire to be loved, first. But I looked at her and I said, “Oh, no, understand what I am saying. The Lord is my First Love like I want Him to be yours. I do not want to do anything ever to put you in a position where you are going to have to choose between God and me. I do not ever want you to put me in a position where I am going to have to choose between God and you.”

Read what Paul is saying in 1st Corinthians 7.

Deceptions, Temptations, Commitments

A lady came to me one day and say, "Pastor, I had a dream and in the dream God made a way for me to escape from my husband." She said, "I cannot bear anymore." I looked at her and she described the dream. I know a devil dream when I hear a devil dream because it is not consistent with the Word of God. It was using the verse right out of 2nd Corinthians 10:13 where God will not allow you to bear more than you are able to bear. It was the same kind of thing that went on with Jesus where Satan was telling Him, "You can jump off the temple pinnacle. Does not God say His angels will catch you, snatch you up and you will be fine?" It does not say to go up there, jump, and try it! Jesus said, "*Thou shalt not tempt the Lord your God*" or test Him.

The only time He says, "Test Me, prove Me" is on the tithe and the offering because He knows the hearts of people. Jesus talked about money more than He talked about love, but many times He was talking about money *and* love. If you love money more than God you are not worthy of Him because money is not your source. Your job is not your source.

People look at relationships in a wrong way. The Lord created us for fellowship with Him. When people say, "I need someone to hold me, to help me," what they are really saying is "I need somebody to go out and work for me and bring me home a check."

I deal with thousands and thousands. Proverbs 16:2 "*A man's ways appear right to a man, but God searches the intention or motivation of the heart.*"

What is your heart? There are many people who just co-exist, and there is no bond of unity. There is no peace. I was raised in a marvelous home in my early years, but all hell broke loose when I got into high school. I know where it came from and how it happened. I hate strife and yelling. I hate bitterness. I despise what the devil does in relationships; the violence and the vengeance and all that goes on out there in the world. The devil has tried to rip apart a holy union between God and His people.

When Jesus comes back, His Church is going to be His bride. He is coming back for a church without spot or wrinkle. I am here today to help prepare the way for the Lord's return. I am one of God's agents in the earth along with many others preparing the way.

In 1st Corinthians, chapter 7, Paul said that if you are married, stay married. If you are single, be single, married to the Lord. He was living in the urgency that Jesus could come back any day. Let me tell you, He could. But what I see in his comment is be married to the Lord. He is to be the First Love before husband, before wife, before your own life. The Lord is my First Love. That is where my commitment is. It does not matter whether the spouse is acting naughty or nice. God is not thinking twice about the relationship. He loves you whether you are naughty or nice, but it is a lot better for us when we get nice.

It is God's loving kindness that moves us into that. But what we have got to really understand is that the heart of God is for us, and no matter what somebody else does, the Lord will never leave you, He will never forsake you. He loves you with an everlasting love that never fades away or changes, and He is the One who you are to have first relationship with.

If only I could get that across to people, to get through the hardness of their heart. I tell the guys that they are thinking with their little head. Rise up and be a man or woman of God. This is what you were created for. Someday I am going to present my family to the Lord. I will present all the ones that God has had me touch and care for over the years, and I will make sure nobody is missing. There are many things out there trying to suck us into envy and jealousy, bitterness, strife (to separate people).

How Strife Works

I am a minister of reconciliation. That is what Jesus called us to be. Anything that is trying to take away and separate me from somebody, I want out of my life. I am going to tell it to go to hell in Jesus' name. I am not telling the person, I am telling what is trying to steal from us.

I was watching Star Trek one day and the Klingons were going at it with Kirk and the boys. They were fighting, and in the room a small

object started getting bigger and redder and then it got blacker and bigger and bigger. Finally Kirk stopped everybody and showed them there was an entity in the room. The more they were fighting, the bigger and meaner it was getting. He realized they were feeding this thing. That is what hatred and bitterness do. They just feed the devils and invite them in.

Ephesians 4:26 – Many Christians do not think they can have devils. Well, they have not read the book, and they are getting wrong teaching where they go to church. The Bible is very clear. *“Be angry but do not sin.”* I have not found too many Christians who can do that. We start out in righteous anger, and we finish in unrighteous anger. We invite a devil. *“Be angry but do not sin. Do not let the sun go down upon your wrath.”*

I said to the lady who came to me telling me that God had given her a way out of her marriage through a dream, providing her an avenue of escape, “Let’s look at a couple Scriptures here and see what God says about this.” We looked at 1st Corinthians 13 – *“Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things, God’s love never fails.”* Philippians 4:13 *“I can do all things through Christ Jesus who strengthens me.”* In other words, we do not have the strength but He does, and the problem is we are not one with God. We are being selfish, and when we start being selfish, all hell breaks loose. *“Without pride there is no contention.”* Pride is another name for selfishness. The self-man.

God hates strife more than divorce. Divorce is a piece of paper. I know a couple who have remarried each other twice. I have seen where others married and they had nothing but strife and hell. It would be better not to be married and go to heaven than to stay married and go to hell.

God can do things, but it was because of the hardness of heart that this whole thing came about and a desire not to walk with God. I told that lady, “Are you a Christian?” She said, “Yes, I am a Christian.” And I said, “Well, that was a devil dream you had.”

The Importance of Purity

God will fill a widower's heart and life with His holy presence, and he will not lack for any good thing. What does man always think he needs? – A little loving.

Adam, the purest man of the earth fell to those sexual desires. Samson, the strongest man on the earth fell to those desires. David was out there doing the same thing. The thief wants to defile us. He wants to separate us from God. He wants to break faith. I have seen where people got married, they were having relations before, and they got married and all of a sudden, there was “el Frigidaire” in the bedroom. What a trap. 1st Corinthians, chapter 7, talks all about this.

It says widows are free to marry if they want, but find a godly man (and they are not always as godly as they portray [pornea]). You find out they have women on the side. What is the deal? People say it is the culture, and I say to hell with that culture. That culture is going to hell. That activity is going to hell.

I came into a new church many years ago, and there was a guy on their Board who was telling me he was going to die if he did not have relations (and he was not married). So I had to come into that place, and I had to start to clean up Dodge City. In addition, there were gals coming up to the communion rail showing everything. I had to put blinders on. Where is the modesty and the discretion? I am not talking about having your collars up to your chin and your dresses down to the floor.

It says if you are married do not defraud your spouse by holding back relations, but on the other hand man does not live by relations alone. The “S” in relationship is self and sex. If you watch those things, you are involved in them. You might as well be doing a threesome, a foursome, or an eighty-eight some. Where is God? He certainly is not there because He is not going to participate in something that is unholy.

Yes, the Bible says the marriage bed is undefiled, but a whole lot of marriage beds are defiled and not of God. There is selfishness. The presence or the lack of sex does not make a marriage. Where is the caring, the sharing, and the camaraderie? The loving? The preferring the other more important than yourself. Where is the

studying God's Word together with your spouse? Praying together with your spouse? Growing together with your spouse in God. Where is the praise and worship together? You should not have to make anybody read the Bible and share and pray.

Divorce is breaking faith with God. When I got married, I got married to God. When I got born again, I got born again to God, and God blessed me with a companion so we can pray together, share together, have godly offspring together, and be blessed with godly grandbabies. I thought I had every good gift the good Lord gives, but then those grandbabies came along.

But understand this: whether I am single or I am married, God fills my life. Do not be looking for a relationship. In a godly relationship God will put the person together with you. You do not have to run around looking for them. One of the most important things in a relationship is honesty, integrity, and truthfulness.

Jesus says in Matthew 5:32 that if you divorce somebody you cause your spouse to commit adultery; except for pornea and unfaithfulness, or the spouse dies, in which case the person is free.

Staying Committed

There is so much wrong teaching nowadays because there are so many ministers of God. It says that a minister of God needs to be married to one wife, not one at a time. The devil is behind a move that is going against commitment in the earth, because he is not committed to God. He does not care about God, he does not care about anybody, he wants to take everybody to hell with him. He does not want to see anybody blessed.

We have to purpose in our hearts that Jesus is our First Love. The Lord is my First Love, and then if I love God first, then I am certainly going to do you right. I am not going to break faith with you. I am not going to lie, cheat, and run around doing nonsense. The Lord is faithful. He will never violate His trust with you or me.

People's lives are devastated because somebody broke faith, somebody lied, somebody cheated, or somebody did some unfaithful thing. I was twelve years old when the pastor of our church ran off

with the secretary. The whole church fell apart, and I was thinking, *What is wrong with all these people?* I go to church for God, not for the minister. I was telling people we need to pray for the minister. They were all gossiping about it. All that nonsense is not of God.

Whatever is of strife, whatever is of rebellion, whatever is of anger, bitterness, striving for position is not of God. Many marriages are nothing but a power play. One spouse is trying to get their way over the other one, but they get foiled when they raise up children who are brats: selfish, self-centered, wanting their own way and the next thing you know, they do not have a family. It has been called “dysfunctional.” Dysfunctional is not okay.

Do not blame God if your spouse is doing something wrong. It is not up to Him what your spouse is doing or going to do. But this I know, I am committed to my bride. When I was first married all kinds of hell broke loose because the thief did not want that marriage. But our commitment was to God, to ourselves, to our word, and to one another. It was not warm feelings. We made a commitment, come hell or high water, good times or hard times; we are in this ‘till natural death do we part.

When strife is going on, many folks do not want to stay committed. They do not want to work it out. They do not want to stay in there. The pressure was there in my own marriage, and I was asking, “Father, what are we going to do?” I had a dream that night and I saw the thief. Diana had long hair down below her bottom at the time and the devil had her by the hair and was pulling her off into the wilderness. She was naked, which means she was not covered. The covering for the house is the husband. I was vacillating in my commitment because it would have been easier to give up. I had told her, “If you are going to go out, do not let that door hit your butt, and do not expect me coming after you.” In other words, I said that we are either in this or we are not in this. The night of the dream I made a decision in the spirit, and I ran after that devil and beat him up.

It says the kingdom is forcefully advancing and the forceful take hold of it. You have to be forceful in the spirit not be mamby-pamby about your commitment to God, to yourself, walking in holiness, and to others. I grabbed my bride, I picked her up, I covered her, and I

carried her back to safety out of the woods. From that day forward I was locked down solid. A lot of times it is our wavering and our unbelief in the commitment that causes the thief to have access. That is commitment to God first, commitment to yourself in God, and that commitment then to every person in your life. I refused to be separated and stolen from in relationship with anybody anymore.

Jesus is saying, if somebody has an offense, go to them, talk to them, and try to get it worked out. At least ask for forgiveness and let God do something. Somebody has to have the peace of God in his heart and do the right thing. I strongly believe that if you are doing the right thing, then He is going to stand up for you, and He is going to help the other person get blessed as well.

If you have had dysfunctional relationships, whichever side you were on, understand the Lord is for you, He is with you, and He will help you. He is the mender of the brokenhearted. In Jesus, God gave you a brand new heart, and it is a heart for Him, and a heart for what He is doing in you, and a heart for the people around you. You are going to become one of those loving, compassionate kind of people that sees the blessing of God everywhere you go in your life.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I am going to dwell in the house of the Lord forever, together, with God.

THE GOD-MAN
RELATIONSHIPS
Sanctity of Relationships
Chapter Eighteen

There are some things that steal joy in relationships. Relationships are supposed to be fun.

The Lord says to overcome evil with good. Many Christians spend their whole life fighting the devil, fighting their flesh, and fighting each other. Have you gotten into one of those things called a discussion, and it became rather loud and heated? Noise happens when there is no communication going on.

If we were going to look at things that steal our joy in relationships, what would we look at? Ask the Holy Spirit to show you things that steal your joy in relationships. This is how you talk with the Holy Spirit. He will start to show you things. Everybody will be a little different, but when all the dust settles we are all the same. *There is not anything that happens to people that is not common to people.*

Things that Steal Your Joy Are:

- Selfishness
- Your own expectations
- Your own plans (which cause you to resist everybody else's plan because you think your plan is the best plan))

Why does not everybody see how wonderful my plan is – what is wrong with them? You start to get resentful, angry, bitter, and then you want to be alone. You no longer want them around you so you separate yourself from them. That is the beginning of divorce. It is no fun anymore. You think they do not love you because they do not do what you want them to do. You have absolutely nothing in common (when more than likely you never did. It was not a problem before because you were enjoying one another.) But as soon as people start allowing that selfish wedge to come in, when they are not preferring the other more important than themselves anymore, they have just opened the door to begin the divorce. The divorce usually happens long before the divorce papers are filed.)

Joy in Relationships

“The joy of the Lord is your strength.” (Nehemiah 8:10) *“I can do all things through Christ Jesus who strengthens me.”* (Philippians 4:13) He can strengthen you to have the best relationship you can have. But when you start dropping the joy in the relationship, the commitment unravels. The joy and the security are actually in the commitment.

One time a fellow was up in the prayer line and his issue was that he was having trouble with his wife. He thought that she did not want to be with him. As the Lord was ministering to him, I said to him, “Think about this. Of all the guys in the world she chose you.” He was feeling insecure and inferior because she had it all-together. And she did, which was great. I said to him, “This all-together woman is how you see her.” He was enamored with her which is the way it should be, but he felt so insecure about why she would want to be with him. And the Lord just said, “Of all the guys in the world that she could have gone out with and married, she married you. She chose you.” Then he went down in the spirit for about ten minutes, a little Holy Ghost shock therapy, because it got him. He had never thought about it that way. And consequently he was pushing her away rather than drawing her close.

“That which I feared the most is that which came upon me.” (Job 3:25) It is going to happen, and he was pushing her away. There is no joy in the relationship. When there is joy in the relationship, you cannot wait to be together.

I think that expression “absence makes the heart grow fonder” is a bunch of bull because many people are absent from one another by choice. That expression is not a true statement, and to me statements that are not true are just worthless. They are sweet nothings. There is no substance to it because why should your heart grow fonder toward people when they are absent than when they are here? That is something out of a romance novel or something that some crazy person came up with. My and God’s intense joy is in being with people. The Lord loves being with us so much He is always with us and He does not leave us or forsake us.

Well, we need a little space. Why do you need a little space? Yes, we teach that in marriage and relationships people need a little space from one another, but it is by mutual consent. Diana is always giving me time to go and be with the Lord. We have time with the Lord together and she has her time that way and I respect that. It is not healthy to be a clinger.

If you are getting together, and you are not having fun there is something wrong. The Lord told me one time, "Son, my people think that I do not like to have fun." And I thought about it and said, "Yes, that is right. That is how many people are. Church is no fun. Life is no fun. I *have* to do these commandments."

In relationships, people go out of their way for one another. If you are having joy and fun in the relationship, there is nothing too hard, nothing too difficult to go through with that person. It says, "*Count it all joy*" in everything that happens in life "*when various trials (tests and pressures) come upon you.*" (James 1) That is life. There are good times, there are hard times. There is sickness, there is health. There is poverty, there is wealth. There are times of testing/pressure. There are times of rest. Life is full. But the Lord says to count it all joy.

When people lose their patience, they do not give glory to God. They get irritable within themselves, and they get irritable with somebody else. Is there someone who has been a pain in your life? Did you try to love them for a while? Then a while got to be a *long* while and got to be a *longer* while, and you started growing weary in well doing. That is life.

When you start to realize that, rather than getting weary, offended, bitter, resentful and wishing they would not come around anymore; the joy starts to come back and you will rise to the occasion. You were born for adversity. "*Greater is He who is in me than he who is in the world.*" (1st John 4:4) "*I can do all things through Christ Jesus who strengthens me.*" (Philippians 4:13)

I do things by the love of God. "*Not by might, not by power, but by My Spirit' saith the Lord.*" (Zechariah 4:6) We need to hold up the

shield of faith against the devil who is trying to steal your relationship, and the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God.

We are not going to be overcome by evil; we are going to overcome evil with love which is good. *“Love never fails.”* (1st Corinthians 13) *“I can do all things through Christ Jesus who strengthens me.”* (Philippians 4:13) *“The joy of the Lord is my strength”* – for relationship. (Nehemiah 8:10)

Forgiveness is my middle name, and I am glad. That is what has held Diana and me together all these years. Commitment has forgiveness as its middle name, and faithfulness has forgiveness as its middle name.

Get all that Valentine or romantic stuff out of your heart or you are going to be crushed. You will think you are going to change that person but you will find out that you are at the beginning of divorce. Men and women were never intended to fulfill one another. God created us for relationship with Himself: to give Him glory and to honor Him.

“Cannot live if living is without you” is a bunch of nonsense. Your life does not consist of the people or the stuff that you have. Your life is hid with Christ in God. The Lord is your First Love. That is the way God intended it to be. He wants people to have fun and enjoy their life and enjoy Him. *“In His presence is fullness of joy.”* (Psalm 16:11). In Ecclesiastes, chapter 5, men and women of God seldom reflect on the days of their life for God occupies their time with gladness of heart, joy, and fun.

I am married to the Lord. That is why Paul says in 1st Corinthians, chapter 7, that whether you are single or you are married, you live as though you are married to the Lord. Do not be unequally yoked in relationships. If you do not make it in a marriage, it does not mean that other person is your enemy.

Do not Treat Others as Common

“As much as lies within you [God is in you] live peaceably with everybody.” (Romans 12:18) The Lord will help you to be at peace with people. In other words, you are able to forgive them, believe for

God's best for them, love them, encourage them, but they are not your life.

When Jesus said, "Who is my mother, my brothers, and my sisters..." (Matthew 12:48) Remember his mother, his brothers, and his sisters had come to take Him away. They thought He had gone mental. A Messiah complex. Apparently *whatever Mary had pondered in her heart*, she had forgotten about. As the angel from heaven shared with her, this wonderful child was going to come, and she was to call His name Jesus, "*for He shall save His people from their sins.*" He is the Messiah. He is the Lord and there is none like unto Him.

But sometimes people forget the blessing of God because people and things get common in their sight. Do not ever allow the people in your life to become common in your sight. Do not allow the move of God to become common.

If you allow a thing to become common, then you start to presume on your relationship, you start to use people and abuse people. You start to lose the delight in the relationship and your time together. Things are not fun anymore because you have allowed things and people to become common.

The Lord keeps coming and saving the people. He is always saving the people. Even when the Israelites went into exile because they had gone against the Lord, He remained faithful. That is where we get all of these incredible promises. They were actually written to the people who were experiencing the consequence of their sin, and the captivity they were in was the result of their doing, not God's. But God tells them, "*I know the plans that I have for you, plans for good, not for evil. Plans to prosper you, and to give you hope and a future.*" (Jeremiah 29:11-12)

What are we dealing with? The Lord is saying He still has plans for you even though you have divorced Him, even though you have separated yourself from Him, He still has good plans towards you.

There was a prophet of God named Hosea, and God told him to marry a prostitute. This blows to hell religious and traditional

thinking. With a man of God, a prophet of God, everything is done in demonstration.

The Bible says not to lose the joy in giving. When you start to become complacent, the faith is dwindling, the joy is dropping. The next thing you know you are not going to be a giver anymore because you have lost the joy of giving. That is the time to fall on your face and ask God's forgiveness. When you have lost the joy in the relationship, it is time to get on your face and ask His forgiveness. When you are having a hard time with church and God and you have lost the joy in His presence, He did not go anywhere; you just turned your back on Him. You need to get down on your face and ask His forgiveness and stir up the gift of God, stir up the joy of God, stir up the Holy Spirit. Because God has given us love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, meekness – we have it all.

Set Your Love on the Lord

Before you get married you had better get rid of selfishness. It is the love of Jesus that gets rid of the selfishness in you. God first loved me which is why I am able to love and give. The Lord just *keeps* loving, He *keeps* being faithful. Whoever looks to our Lord Jesus will be saved from the chaos of the earth and the world.

In Psalm 91 the Lord says, "*Because he has set his love upon Me,*" the Lord will protect, He will help, He will defend, He will care for, He will supply for. And you fall on your face before the Lord with thanksgiving. God loved you so much more than you can even imagine or think. He will not ever leave you or forsake you.

People have committed spiritual adultery because they love a person more than they love the Lord. In the New Testament you hear about the Body of Christ. The people of God are the Body of Christ. Jesus is the head, but He also talks about the bride and the bridegroom. The church, the people of God, are the bride, and the bridegroom is the Lord. He is coming back to get us someday and there is going to be a big wedding feast of the Lamb in the new heaven and the new earth. We are going to God's table. We will behold Him face-to-face even as He beholds us now.

In the meantime He has prepared a table for us here. He is there because He is in me and with me. And He prepares that table in the presence of my enemies. (Psalm 23) And He says, "Okay, let's dialogue. Let's communicate. Let's be at peace with each other."

In the new heaven and the new earth there will be no marriage or giving in marriage, but God is not down on marriage. It is holy, a sacred trust. That is why it is such a sad thing when unfaithfulness and pornea (fornication) happen because God intends for faithfulness to be in our lives. Just like He is faithful with us, He wants us to be faithful as He is. Faithfulness is in us, but when we depart from the Lord and get selfish, then we not only separate from a person, we separate from the Lord. People do not seem to get this.

"You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell." (Matthew 5:27-30)

He is not telling you to cut off your hand and pop your eye out. 1st Corinthians, chapter 6 says if you are doing adultery, fornication, or sexual immorality it is a sin against your own body. If you continue in this unfaithfulness to God and to yourself, God will hold you accountable. Sexual immorality and perversion came into the world as a result of the fall of man, and the womb was cursed in the woman. There would be pain in childbirth.

Which is better? To get rid of the thing that is causing the sin, or to go to hell? God does not look at this lightly. If you really love God, then you will keep His commandments because you love Him. His commandments teach you how to love Him. *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all you mind, and with all you soul."* (Matthew 22:37) There is no room for anything else. And because I love God that way, I am going to be sure that I am not going to, *in any way*, cause harm to my brother or my sister, my wife or my

children. I am going to go out of my way to do what God says because I love Him. The motivation is love, not fear, like when you think if you do not do it, you will be disciplined.

Necessary Attitude Adjustments

God disciplines those He loves. Parents discipline their children because they love them. If you do not discipline your children, God says in Proverbs that you cause your child to go to hell, and that is going to be on your head. (Proverbs 23:14) If you get right with God, then you go to your children and you ask their forgiveness. Tell them you did not train them up the way they needed to be and ask God's and their forgiveness for that; seek to do the right thing and tell them that you want to restore your relationship. Because, guaranteed, if you have not done the right thing towards your children, your children grow up to hate you. They will not want to spend any time with you. They will be distant from you. But if you raise them God's way, you will have family.

Jesus said, *"Who are my mother, my brothers, and my sisters? Here are my mother, my brothers and my sisters. They who do the will of Him who sent me."* (Mark 3:33-34)

The whole world is all love, love, love. The "Cannot live if living is without you" was a sick statement of a needy relationship. It was flawed, it was lacking. And apparently the guy did not do very much to keep her there. I know this: "How to handle a woman, mark me well, says the wise old man. The way to handle a woman is to love her, simply love her, merely love her, love her, love her." That means we are going to be together forever through hell and high water, good times and hard times. We have it in us because it is God loving them *through* us. That is what it is talking about when you are submitted one to another as to the Lord. I am allowing God to love me and love her through me; to love you through me. That is how it works.

A lady came to me and said, "I do not love my husband anymore." And I said, "No, that is not correct. You just need an adjustment. God *in you* loves your husband more than you can even imagine or think. You just quit being creative. You just quit letting the joy come

up in your life and relationship.” I said, “That’s not the end of the world, we can stir that back up.”

Diana used to work in a tire shop where she was the manager. A lady came in one day and wanted the people to change the air in her tires – take out the old air and put in new air. They said, oh sure, and they charged her. Out goes the old and in goes the new. We have to keep our relationship fresh; fresh with the Father in heaven and with the people around us. Every day God’s mercy is fresh and new. We have the ability. God is in us. We need to get out of the way.

Spiritual adultery exists when people decide that they are going to run their life, rather than letting Jesus be the Lord. God runs my life, not me. Yes, God wants us to be at peace as 1st Corinthians, chapter 7, talks about. He does not want fighting.

Divorcing the person is not the issue. I tell people that life is not over if there is a separation that way, but if you have bitterness, jealousy, envy, and strife in your heart, it is over for you until you ask God’s forgiveness and get this thing straightened out. Jesus is saying, “Let’s clean up the act here. Let’s get things the way they are supposed to be.”

“It has been said, ‘Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.’ This was the process as stated in Matthew, chapter 19, when they asked Jesus. Jesus does not believe in separation that way. But understand, the hardness of the heart will cause a separation and that is why Moses gave the writ of divorcement. You cannot expect anything different if you are unequally yoked. You are not spiritually one. You are not going in the same direction.

“But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness...,” and we add Matthew, chapter 19, pornea (fraudulent marriage where they misrepresented themselves, e.g. they were an alcoholic and they said they were going to change if they got married, or they were an unbeliever and they said they were going to change and be a Christian if they got married, but they did not.) A wise counselor always reserves the right in every case to

say this is not going to happen, it is not going to work. But people are going to do whatever they are going to do anyway for better or for worse. God can change people and He *has* changed people and things have gotten better and miraculously are today going strong.

“...makes her the victim of adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.” (Matthew 5:32)

I have thrown my hands up in the air so many times about this because what are you going to do? The whole Christian community has never read this and they have excused it. They have washed it away. They are writing books on how to have the third and fourth marriage. A minister of God who has married two or three times says, “I am just going to move on with my life.” And I am thinking, *Move on with your life, and you are saying this to God’s people?* Putting stuff in their heads. I am not talking unfaithfulness or pornea, I am just noting that they say, “I am tired of my spouse and I am going to move on with my life.” They are communicating to the ladies that if they get tired of their husband, just say, “Adios.”

Now if a husband is unfaithful and he is doing all kinds of sexual immorality, that is grounds (but God can change people). It may be better to separate as 1st Corinthians, chapter 7, says and let that person get his act together. We have to do something about this because the sanctity of relationship and life is at stake. Jesus is not coming back for an unholy bride. We need to get our act together with the Holy Spirit and the Lord and start to change our attitudes because the attitudes of the world start to creep in and you think it is okay when God says it is *not* okay. Irreconcilable differences are *not* okay. *The Lord wants us to reconcile.* The children need to be covered as stated in 1st Corinthians, chapter 7.

Godly Actions

Unfaithfulness is not a part of the God-man and the God-woman’s life. Nor is lying or cheating. The Ten Commandments tell us how to love God, how to love our neighbor. Honor the authorities in your life beginning with your father and your mother. We are not going to kill; we are not going to be angry. I am not going to covet my neighbor’s wife or stuff. I am not going to let myself lie (bearing false witness). I am not going to cheat my brothers or sisters. I *am* going

to protect what is yours. It is not “finders keepers, losers weepers.” I *am* going to protect, I *am* going to befriend, I *am* going to defend, I *am* going to look out for my brother and my sister. I *am* going to care for them. I *am* going to want God’s best for them in every way.

The Ten Commandments, the moral law of God, are eternal. They are all about loving and caring, sharing, encouraging, and believing. I am not going to tear down my brother or my sister. I am not going to find fault with them. I am not going to tell the world about their faults. I am not going to defame them or gossip about them. I *am* going to befriend them, speak well of them, and encourage them in God. I *am* going to stand up when their faith is small, I *am* going to stand up with them. And when my faith is small, *they* are going to stand up *with* me.

But in any case whether they do or they do not, it does not matter. They all rejected Jesus, it says. That did not bother Him. He did not stop loving them. He did not stop caring about them. There was not even a hiccup in the relationship because He knew that His Father in heaven was His source of love and life, and was going to protect Him and defend Him, and His daddy was not going to leave Him in the grave. He is not going to leave me or forsake me either.

You know Proverbs says the wicked man lies awake nights thinking up plots against people – how he can do harm to them and get their stuff. But the godly man and godly woman may lie awake nights thinking up blessings – how they can bless people. How they can do good to people. Good God-things should be in your thoughts towards others, helping their life to get even richer. Jesus says, “*I have come that you might have life and have it more abundantly.*” (John 10:10) In other words, His presence in your life is going to be the best thing that ever happened to you.

When you see people, say, “I bring heaven to you.” It is the best thing that could ever happen to them. I am not going to cheat them or lie to them, I will be excellent towards them; love them, and care for them according to their needs. I do not find my fulfillment in doing good works; my fulfillment is in my Jesus who loves me with an everlasting love. I love what I do. I love my life. I love everything about it because my God fills it with gladness of heart.

As you go out and face the world, you are ready for action. Yes, you are going to find some true tests out there, but understand *“Greater is He who is in me than they that are in the world.”* (1st John 4:4) *“I can do all things through Christ Jesus who strengthens me.”* (Philippians 4:13) There is not anything I cannot do that God wants me to do. You can say, “God in me is the best thing that ever happened to my life.” I tell people (and I am really arrogant in God about it) because I can be the best thing that ever happened in your life; “I bring heaven to you; I bring Jesus to you.” It is not about me. Get yourself out of the way. *“It is no longer I who lives but Christ who lives in me.”* (Galatians 2:20) When you are bringing Christ Jesus to people, that is the best thing that could ever happen to them. For that moment or for that lifetime, however long the relationship lasts. I tell people we are going to be together forever so we might as well get along now.

You have no control over what other people are going to do or what they are going to be, but you can set an environment for God to do something good.

Always remember that our enemies are not principalities and powers called people. They are demonic principalities and powers. *Those are our enemies*, and what do we do with them? Tell them to get the hell off of others in Jesus’ name, and get off of me. When you are acting nasty, you just step back and say, “Self, you are dead in Jesus’ name.” *I am going to bring heaven, not hell, to people.*

THE GOD-MAN
RELATIONSHIPS
God Is to Be First
Chapter Nineteen

Tithes and offerings are one of the ways that God says to honor Him. We are to do it with a thankful and loving heart. But the whole purpose of our existence is to be to the praise of God's glory. He takes pleasure in us when we believe Him, trust Him, and obey Him. When we do that, then the Lord steps up and says, "There is My child." *Then* watch what the Lord is going to do. In fact, if you knew, you may not believe Him. It is a walk of faith.

It is like being a blind man, and He is leading you. He makes you see, and you still trust Him as you walk with Him. He is the leader, not you. Even though you may know which way to go, it is not your call, it is His. Where He leads we are to follow. We walk together with Him. We are co-laborers.

Spirit or Flesh?

"Then Haggai, the Lord's messenger, gave this message of the Lord to the people: 'I am with you,' declares the Lord. So the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of the whole remnant of the people. They came and began to work on the house of the Lord Almighty, their God." (Haggai 1:13-14)

The Lord stirred up their spirit, and we as well need to get caught up in the Spirit of the Lord. He wants to come alive in us. In this day and age people allow their spirit to get put down and they allow other things to be stirred up in them. You *can* stir up the flesh. Much of the music stirs up the flesh. There are other things out there that are intended to stir it up. There is another kind of music that stirs up your spirit.

Never presume that you are not susceptible. *"Let him who thinks he stand take heed lest he fall."* Pride comes before the fall. We need to let thankfulness to God rise up. When we are doubting, fearing, worrying, and in unbelief, that is following a false god. It is not

following the true God. You need to repent and ask God's forgiveness to get back on track.

Start to take hold of those thoughts. *"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."* (2nd Corinthians 10:3-5)

The problem is that the reasonings of the mind are not lined up with God's Word or His Spirit. We are shining lights for Jesus. We are not murmurers, grumblers, or complainers. Nobody wants to be around someone like that. You have no reason to be one unless you are living in the trash can like Oscar from Sesame Street.

Love keeps no record of wrongs. Did you ever have a great relationship with someone until they crossed you? Then you got grumpy. Did you ever think somebody trashed your life? Nobody can trash your life except you. You have to get rid of that 'stink'n think'n.' Whether or not that person made you angry, it was you that allowed it to happen. You allowed yourself to get upset. If the Lord is filling the house, there is no room for offense. But if you are filling the house, you do not do a very good job of it. Usually you will compact all of it, and allow yourself to fill up with it.

Have you noticed how big your ears get when you hear somebody gossiping? What good did it do you? Did not it make you more upset? You did not need to hear it, and it is not helping anybody. We need to encourage each other and build each other up in the faith. We need to be speaking well about each other. God calls things that be not as though they are and they start to happen. (Romans 4:17) You need to be putting the faith that you have in there to work, bringing those thoughts captive to the mind of Christ. Say to yourself, "I am going to see no evil, speak no evil, think no evil, hear no evil, and do no evil."

Love God More

We need to love the Lord first with all of our heart, with all of our mind, with all of our soul before anybody including ourselves. If we

are going to have God like relationships, we have to love God more than father, mother, son, daughter, husband, wife, brother, sister, a trip or fun times. More than anything else the Lord has to be our number one love. He is a jealous God. There is a godly jealousy that says, nobody messes with my spouse. The Lord says, "I am yours and you are Mine and nothing takes precedence."

Remember that is how Adam and Eve started it all off. Eve preferred something other than God. She dishonored herself, she dishonored her husband, and then she involved Adam in it. Then he went right along with it loving his wife more than God. And we have all these ruined relationships ever since. It is no good.

When I have to tell people that they have to love God more than their spouse, more than their friends, more than their own lives, the flesh kicks up and the flesh gets offended. You can never get offended except when you are in the flesh and not in the Spirit of God. If you give an offense, or take an offense (abused people abuse), it is all because we are outside of the Spirit of God, outside of the blessing. That is why we have all of this commotion between people. Some think they are legends in their own minds, valuing *their* opinion over anybody else. "*Without pride there is no contention.*" (Proverbs 13:16) There is no strife.

You can tell right away when you are stirred up that you are just looking for a fight. You are looking for a quarrel. God hates strife. You do not want it in your life and you do not have to have it. We can all get along very well in Jesus' name.

Jesus always causes us to triumph in Him. When you are doing His word, you are going to win. He has won, and we are more than conquerors through Christ Jesus. (Romans 8:37) The Lord wants us to be with Him 24/7.

Where there is devotion, there is no commotion because the Good Shepherd takes us and He puts us upright, righteous. "*Righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*" (Right standing with God, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.)

Have you found that your problem is that you think about yourself too much? Part of the problem is that folks do not acknowledge what their problem is. They continue in the trash because they do not identify that it is a problem to think about yourself too much. What you are going to eat? What you are going to drink? What you are going to wear? Who you are going to be with? What you are going to do today?, etc. Then you get concerned about yourself.

There are many people who would really just like to be by themselves, but then wonder why they are feeling lonely. They start grumbling and complaining about nobody coming to see them. If you want to drop out of life it is your own issue, but he and she who would have friends must show themselves friendly.

See People the Way God Sees Them

What is going on in your thinking? What are you doing with your life? Are you attracting flies? Beelzebub means the lord of the flies. Are you attracting devils with rotting stinking flesh?

Gossips hate the person they are talking about (Proverbs 26), but love covers a multitude of sins. We need to get things resolved, and help that person to get it resolved.

If the Lord is your First Love, then you are going to see people the way the Lord sees them. The Lord loves them. Love is a word I do not really like to use because it has no impact anymore. People talk about it all the time, but do not know that love is commitment, accountability, and responsibility. I do not care how much candy, flowers, perfume, or jewelry you give to people, if you are not committed to them all day, all night, every day, you do not love them. If you are not accountable for your actions and your words towards people, then you do not love them. If you are not responsible to do the things that one would do to befriend, protect, defend, love, care for, provide for towards that person, then you do not love them.

Love is thrown around. It is a cheap term anymore. We live in a throw-away society where people are trashed. It is just the facts. But we shine as God's men and women in the midst of a perverse and crooked generation, holding forth the word of life and truth.

(Philippians 2)

We have to start to see ourselves differently. We have to see that God has not trashed us, and we are not recycled. You are a brand new creation. *“Therefore if any is in Christ they are a new creation. The old passed away”* and God has made you brand new and clean. (2nd Corinthians 5:17) You are pure, holy, and blameless. That is what the blood of Jesus has done for you. We have to start to realize that it is more than a happy thought. It is actually who you are. You are a dearly loved child of God. That is the truth no matter what anybody else thinks, no matter what your old flesh tries to bring up to trash you before God, no matter what the accuser of the brethren, (the liar, the devil) is trying to slander you with. I know I am a dearly loved child of God. That is what matters. *“I am [God’s] and He is mine. His banner over me is love.”* (Song of Solomon 2:4)

1st Corinthians, chapter 13 is talking about God’s love. He finds no fault in us. He does not run around picking us apart. People wonder why they do not have good relationships, why things happen. It is because they are always picking people apart and being negative.

They said about Jesus, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Now that was a prejudicial slur. They were saying the people of Nazareth are trash. Have you ever slurred somebody because they were of a different color, of a different thought process, a different education level, a different wealth stature, or lived in a different neighborhood? Which is the right side of the tracks?

I say to people, “Which is the best church?” Is it the one you go to? Is it the popular one? Actually, the best is being where God wants you to be when He wants you there and how long He wants you there. I have often seen where people are valuing or devaluing things based on their opinion or somebody else’s opinion rather than even bothering to ask the Lord about what He thinks.

Are There Idols in Your Life?

Paul says, “If you are single, live to the Lord. If you are married, live as though you are single to the Lord.” He is not saying that you dump out your spouse; it is just that they are not your First Love. That is the hardest thing in the world for this world to understand.

I had to give a hard word to somebody the other day because the person came to me asking if I believed their spouse would come back. I said, "It is not about whether your spouse comes back or does not come back. It is about you and God. If that is not in place, then your spouse is an idol in your life."

The purest man that ever existed, Adam, gave into Eve who was going along with demonic influence. He put her before God. Solomon was supposed to be one of the wisest men in the earth, and he had a thousand wives. I can never figure that one out. Every one of those wives brought their idols and their gods into the house. I tell people if you marry somebody, you marry their family too, so you had better take a good look at their family. You cannot take a person away from them.

Solomon had a thousand wives and he fell. Samson was the strongest man that ever was, but his weakness was his flesh. He was deceived by Delilah, and he forgot about what God wanted. Yes, they all got back on the track with God, but understand their falls caused all kinds of problems. That is why the Lord sent Jesus to bring people's love back to Himself where it belongs. When it is back to Him, then we can have a right relationship with somebody else. Only when your life is right with God in Jesus will you have the possibility of having a blessed relationship with anybody else. Otherwise, it is all based on how you are feeling.

The selfish flesh nature only does what it wants to do and takes pleasure in. When the dust settles, it does not care about anybody else. People have had reversals happen in their life, and because something happened, the spouse said, "I did not buy into this. I do not want to spend the rest of my life with somebody that is broke, or somebody that is sick, or somebody that is having problems." Such people have bigger problems than the one they are talking about.

Look To the Father First

Everyone left Jesus. If He was not set upon His love for God, the Father, and He knew the Father was set upon Him, who knows what would have happened? Because He knew His Father was with Him, even though everybody else left Him, He went to the cross to save

those that rejected Him. Unbelievable things can happen when someone has their relationships lined up properly.

Jesus never entrusted His life to people as John, chapter 2, talks about. He did not look for the praise of man or the criticism of man. He did not care about one or the other. He just looked for what His Father in heaven said about Him. And what did He say? *“This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased. Listen to Him.”* (Matthew 3:17) He is bringing heaven to you.

God loves the people and He wants us to love them. He loves people through us. *“And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love his brother and sister.”* (1st John 4:21) *“I thank my God upon every remembrance of you.”* (Philippians 1:3)

The people in Paul’s life were not wonderfully encouraging. But he was not going to entertain anything. Jesus did not let people’s rejection steal His life.

The Lord has to be number one so that you can be blessed in your life, and then everything else will proceed from that: spirit, mind, body, finances, relationships. The Lord has to be the First Love. But many folks depart from that because they cannot handle it.

“What must I do to be saved?” asked the rich young fellow that came to Jesus. He had everything. When you have everything, you have all kinds of friends. It is another thing when you run into hard times, then you will find out who your real friends are.

Jesus was not moved, troubled, or bothered. He never stepped out into the flesh because of what anybody else said or did towards Him. We have to quit allowing ourselves to be yo-yo’d by everybody and everything around, and by our own thinking: up and down, depending on other folks. You have to get rid of this craziness.

At the end of Ecclesiastes, chapter 5, it says, *“They [man or woman of God] seldom reflect on the days of their life, because God keeps them occupied with gladness of heart.”* Thinking about God.

Have you found it difficult to think about God because there is so much other stuff going on all around? It is intended that way by the world to get your thoughts off the Lord. But if you would get your thoughts on the Lord, Isaiah 26:3 *“He will keep them in perfect peace whose minds are stayed [or fixed] upon Him.”*

Your Life Consists in Jesus

We have to learn the same thing as keeping Jesus as First Love. When He is First Love, when your thoughts are fixed on Him, then He will order all your steps which involves yourself, your health, the people around you and everything in business. Whatever you are dealing with in your life, the Lord will order the steps. *“Trust the Lord, lean not to your own understanding. Acknowledge Him in all your ways and He will direct the path.”* (Proverbs 3:5-6) The world is constantly bombarding us and trying to get us out of the spirit and into the flesh because then the thief has free access to us.

“Be angry but do not sin.” (Ephesians 4:26) Most people have a problem with that. They cannot be angry and not sin because they are holding onto the anger. Righteous anger is over as soon as it deals with the situation. Jesus did not keep bringing back up how these people at the temple were a bunch of God robbers and a bunch of thieves. He just flipped the tables over that day; talked about His Father’s house should be a house of prayer and not a den of thieves. (The doves costs more at the temple than they did outside of it. It is like a hot dog cost more at the ballpark than it does outside.)

When something is wrong, you deal with it. You do not go back and keep harping on it all the time. I tell the ladies, “Make that husband aware of what is going on at the house.” He may not even be aware of it. “But do not keep bringing it up again and again.” Does not that get old? People keep rehearsing the problem.

People pray to God, “Lord, heal me. Lord, heal me. Get my spouse back. Get my spouse back.” The Lord is not deaf, dumb, or stupid. Jesus says they think they will be heard because of their much speaking. He is just waiting for faith in Jesus’ name to do something.

Your life does not consist of the things you possess. Your life does not consist of any of that, including yourself. Jesus says your life

consists with Him. That is where life is. I have to start to make some major adjustments with a lot of things. What have I sought to do all of my life? – take care of me? Take care of my stuff? I have seen people put their work, their stuff and their trips all before Jesus. Or they go the other way and neglect everything that God has given.

Everything you have in your life is a blessing from God. The whole world spends more time with the creations than they do with the Creator. In fact, they have developed teaching systems that remove the Creator.

Your life is hid with Christ in God. That is where you want to bring everybody and everything, into relationship with Jesus. This is radical Christianity. This is what is going to produce real life in you. But the flesh just screams. It hates this. The world screams, it hates this. The devil is banging his head against the wall throwing a tantrum and turning blue. God's way is doing what the Lord wants. *"I am my beloved's and He is mine. His banner over me is love."* Yes, that is the Song of Solomon, it is used for Valentine's Day, it is used for marriage seminars, but it is just a piece of stuff if it is not directed to the One who is directing it.

This is about the Lord. This is why a lot of guys do not live more than four years after their wife dies. They have become so dependent on that gal and vice-a-versa. The Lord says, "I am the husband of the widow." He is the blessing of the widower as well. He will fill that spot. You have to get the balance on this.

Adam could have done well without Eve. He was created for fellowship with God. People always think God looked at Adam and thought he was lacking something. No, that is not correct. He just could not have babies because men cannot have babies; they cannot have godly offspring.

You and God Are a Majority

You cannot fulfill yourself no matter what you or anybody else does, and things cannot fulfill your life. What is really of value are the eternal things in your life because everything else you are going to leave. The Pharaohs put everything in the tomb including their wives. You did not want to be married to the Pharaoh. However, women

wanted to be because as long as he was alive, it was gravy time. If that Pharaoh died young, the wife was out of it because she went with him to the tomb.

Put the Lord as the First Love. He says, “*Return to Me.*” Do not think about yourself. Depression is a form of idolatry. It is getting your eyes off the Lord. If you are right with the Lord, nothing has power over you anymore in Jesus’ name. You are not oppressed, depressed, or pressured, because the Lord is with you. He is for you; He is in you; He is working through you. The past is past; it has no power over you anymore. If people do something to you, so what? The Lord has not left you, or forsaken you. God and I are a majority. God can take care of your life. He takes care of the birds and the flowers. Are not you of more value than all of them? (Matthew 6)

The Lord will honor those who honor Him. They will never lack for any good thing, no matter what comes against them. They will be the head and not the tail. The sooner we learn this, the better. God is mighty in us, but we need to ask the Holy Spirit to help us to keep Jesus first. We need to ask the Lord to examine us and see what is really going on in our life. What are our priorities? How are we treating ourselves and people in light of God in us being mighty? Maybe you have been permitting some unbelief to get in there and allowing little foxes (little compromises) to spoil the vines. Do you care more about what people think of you than what God thinks of you?

Ask the Holy Spirit to show you because your own understanding will always say you are fine. In other words, you are just content and happy the way you are. But then, why are you grumbling and complaining? Why are you murmuring if you are happy the way you are? Why do you feel unfulfilled? Jesus would fill that.

I have learned that whatever state I am in to be content. Paul said that is the secret of life in Philippians, chapter 4. Whether I am abounding in much or I am abounding in little, I am content. Why? – I have Jesus. That is all I need. Everybody in my life is a blessing, but they are frosting on the cake. *Everything* I have, food on the table, thank you, Lord. A roof over my head, thank you, Lord.

A guy was living in a car one time and he was talking about some things, and I said, "Hey, you have got a roof over your head!" He stopped and thought about it. "Yeah, I live in my car. I have a roof over my head." And I said, "Praise God."

Whatever circumstance or situation we are in, in all circumstances it says give thanks to God. That allows the Lord, then, to start to do something. But if I am thinking, *I do not have as much as that person*, then I have poverty and lack in my life because I am thinking trash.

Diana has had people come up to her and say, "I wish I had a husband like you have," and Diana looks at them and smiles. People are people. But what is the factor to put over the top? The Spirit of God is in us. She will tell you that she does not go down in many prayer lines because she gets prayed for over the spaghetti because I have got to deal with it real quick.

Many times I do not even talk to God about the situation, I just start thanking, praising, and loving Him, and as I do, His peace comes and whatever else just disappears. Then I do not care about it anymore because He starts to occupy my time with gladness of heart. I will not sacrifice that peace and that joy and that righteousness for anything or anybody including myself. Usually it is not people or things in my life that takes me out of it, it is me allowing a thought to come and entertaining it. I need to cast that out fast in Jesus' name.

The rich young ruler walked away and never came back to Jesus (that we know of) for salvation because Jesus had told him give up what he considered his best love and follow Him. He would have given him eternal life. The man bowed his head and walked away sorrowing because he had great wealth. It is a very, very sad commentary.

Right afterward, Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, this is really a hard thing." Jesus said. "If you are willing to forsake everything and everybody, leave father, mother, family, lands, houses, everything you possess and follow me, you will receive a hundred fold in this lifetime, everything you gave up and a hundred fold return *with persecution* because the flesh, the world, and the devil will hate you. [But who

cares? God loves you.]” Peter said, “We have done that,” and Jesus answered, “Yes, you have. You have left everything and everybody to follow Me, and great will be your reward in heaven,” as well as right now because the world has no power over you anymore. The flesh has no power over you anymore. No sickness or disease has any power over you anymore. No poverty has power over you anymore. No tormenting spirit has power over you anymore in Jesus’ name because you are loved and forgiven and blessed.

“How great is the love the Father has lavished upon you that you should be His child.” (1st John 3:1)

Without holiness, nobody is going to see the Lord. The Lord is saying to the churches in the book of Revelation, “You are doing this good, you are doing that good, but this is off and you need to go back to your First Love. You need to return to Me or I will take your candlestick away.” Hold on to what is near and dear if you are going to be with Him forever.

This is a preparing-for-Jesus’-return message. God has called me to do this for the nations: to prepare them for His return along with God’s ministries around the earth.

The only thing God ever asks is “Believe Me.”

THE GOD-MAN
RELATIONSHIPS
Personal Integrity
Chapter Twenty

Relationships get messed up because people are not trusting God. They have problems with either sex, money, or selfishness. People have sex outside of marriage and ruin the relationship. It is horrible what greed does to relationships.

It is very exciting being a child of God in the day we are in. The Lord made us for this time. Have you ever thought in time past that you were weak and helpless, or depraved and deprived? Maybe you used to be but you are not anymore in Jesus. You are the head and not the tail.

What we have in the earth is not as much a faith problem as a knowledge problem. People do not know who they are in Christ Jesus and what the Lord has for us. When the silver is right and purified, the refiner will know it is right because he will see his face in the silver. And that is what God is doing with us. He is refining us into His image. When He looks at us, He does not see us, He sees Himself. That is the goal of the Christian walk, that the Lord be able to see Himself in you, and that we disappear and Jesus comes forth.

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified, those he justified, he also glorified.” (Romans 8:28-30)

Predestined means that he foreknew in is foreknowledge ahead of time who will be His. Justified means declares not guilty, not separated from God. Glorified is where the glory and the presence of God actually consumes the person; the fire of God. Jesus baptized with fire and the spirit of God. As a result, we are filled with the image of God and the glory of God that is in us. His presence in us permeates our spirit, our mind, and our body.

As I look at the men and the women in the Bible, I like to keep filling myself with miracles, faith, hope, and love. I love the one where they had the battle and the guy dies, and they threw him into the man of God's grave, and when they did that he touched the man of God's bones and the guy came back to life. The spirit of God had so glorified and permeated that man of God that his spirit, his soul were with the Lord, the bones were in the ground, and the spirit and the glory of God had so permeated those bones that when that man who had been killed in the battle was put in there and touched those bones, he came back to life. The man of God died when he was finished with what God had given him. He was not stolen from.

"The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." (John 10:10)

We live by principle and the promise of God. We are consistent about that and living with purpose, and God has called us to bring Him glory in the earth. To do that He had to justify us in Christ Jesus. We cannot justify ourself anymore than we can have life from the things we possess. Only God can do that. You cannot rebuke the devourer. In Acts it talks about the sons of Sceva and how they tried to cast the devil out of this guy. The devils in the guy said, "Paul we know, and Jesus we know, but who are you?" Even the devils know what is going on that way. In other words, you do not have Jesus as your Lord and savior, you do not have the authority of God, and you have no right to use the name of Jesus. You are willfully, knowingly, disobeying God so who are you to say to us get out of here and they proceeded to jump on the guy and the one guy routes all the other guys and they run away barely saving their lives.

When you have Jesus as your Lord and savior, you have the authority of God in the name of Jesus. You have the blood of Jesus covering you, and you are getting rid of willful, knowing sin in your life in Jesus' name. In other words, I am not tolerating it in my life anymore, and I am not making excuses for it, I am not allowing anything to separate me from the love of God that is mine in Christ Jesus.

The thief is a perfect example of how not to be. He rebelled against God. He is the author of division, separation, strife, sickness, disease, poverty, and what he did brought death into the earth. It was not present before his break away from God. God hates breaking faith with people. When you break faith with God, nothing happens that is good. Not exercising your faith will bring nothing good. Not exercising the authority that God has given will bring nothing that is good. Because one has to exercise the authority that God has given. That is why you want to rebuke the devourer as God rebukes the devourer in Malachi 3. And just by your being obedient does not mean you are rebuking the devourer. You have to exercise faith onto that obedience.

When you make an obedient step, out of faith and love for God that is good. But now it is going to be pressed and tested. Have you ever done the right thing and then all hell breaks loose? The thief is trying to steal the blessing. He has no right to take your life, to steal, kill, or destroy. You have to know that because when that test comes you have to be ready.

The thief can never have blessing in his life. He is the most miserable of all creation by his own choosing. He is being consumed from within, and now his soul bent and purpose is to take as many people away from God as he can. That is why he walks around like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour who resists steadfast in the faith. He is not after the folk who consider their life their own. He already has them. He does not even spend the time of day with the ones who run around who are greedy and are doing all kinds of selfish things. He is after the ones who are resisting steadfastly in the faith. Those are the ones he is seeking. The ones who humble themselves under the mighty hand of God. The ones who are submitted to God, the ones who are honoring God, or are seeking to obey God and are saying get off of me in Jesus' name. Those are the ones he wants. Especially the ones who are now getting the other people into the kingdom of God and showing the love of God to people, sharing with people, and doing God exploits praying for the sick and helping the people. Those are the ones he wants to take out.

But God is for us and if God is for us who can be against us, Romans 8 talks about that. If God justifies us, who can bring any charge against us? The thief is the accuser of the brethren. What have you got? Gossips and slanderers trying to separate people and demean people. I am not going to listen to that or enter into it. That is a thief in my life trying to take that person out of my life. I am not ignorant of Satan's devices. (2nd Corinthians 2 – Paul talks about that.) We are not ignorant of these things and we do not want God's people to be ignorant of those things either.

That is why having done all to stand, you have to stand. Be strong in the Lord in the power of His might. Having done all to stand, stand and overcome in the name of the Lord. He cannot steal from us if we know what God says and we are doing it and we are holding forth the word of life. We're not just talking about it we're doing it and we're enforcing it; proclamation.

When I would tell my children to go to your room, what did they do? They went to their room, and it was not an option not to go to your room. A lot of parents nowadays beg their children to do things. When I tell the devil to go, he is going to go in Jesus' name not because of me, but because of the authority that is in the mighty name of Jesus and all heaven starts to move. Yes, he is going to do just like a little child with you.

How many parents have let their child do their thing and then you had to pick them up? You have to hold them, or pack them on your back while you are vacuuming. If they think they are going to get away with it, they are going to get away with it.

What is in a thief? They are going to steal; they are a thief. When Jesus said to the disciples, "Know ye not of what spirit you are of" it was very significant what He was asking because the spirit of God always brings life and life more abundantly. The spirit of Satan will steal, kill, and destroy. He has nothing of good in his heart towards you. He wants to take everything that God has given us away from us because he lost everything by his choice. The spirit of a fool (pride) would not allow him to humble himself towards God and ask God's forgiveness, and he never will.

Have you gotten into that stubborn pride before and you were not able to humble yourself and seek forgiveness and reconciliation to be at real peace. That is not wisdom from God. James 3 talks about that.

There are three things involved in the spirit of Satan. The first one is pride and with it is unbelief. The second is: he is a liar, he is a deceiver. And thirdly he is a thief. There are many ways to steal. He is a liar, and a murder. Jesus says, and he is a thief, and he thinks he is totally correct in everything he does opposing God.

What is God? The spirit of truth. The spirit of love. And He is a giver. He is a helper. Jesus talks about the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete; the helper. He is the spirit of truth. He is the counselor. He is the one who helps us, defends us, and looks out for everything. He is always adding to our life, not taking away except to take away what is not good and of God because He is all about developing us into the image of Jesus, the image of God.

The first four of the Ten Commandments are dealing with loving God. The first one of course, thou shall love the Lord, thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy soul, with all that is within. Not make any graven images. Not taking the name of the Lord in vain. People think that is cursing and swearing and cussing and whatnot. What that is actually talking about is not putting faith in the name of Jesus. That when you use the name of Jesus you are honoring God and you are allowing God to do wonderful things in the earth because everything that is of God is good comes to us and through us in the name of Jesus. So if you do not value the name of Jesus, then you are not valuing God, and part of loving God is valuing God. Part of loving your neighbor as yourself is valuing your neighbor and valuing what God is doing in you.

The thief is always trying to create confusion, and commotion, and we have to step out of that in Jesus' name. Only the spirit of God can bring clarity to us and understanding to get us out of that commotion and confusion. It says in James 3 that with confusion is every evil work. And you get into that hatred and the bitterness and the strife and the striving and the competing and the comparing with yourself with others and all the commotion that that brings. Then you have:

am I worthy, am I unworthy. That is all gone in Jesus. He makes us worthy. You have all kinds of people who go to church trying to work their way to heaven. They think they have to do all this and do that, and do that, and to earn God's love.

The day you have to earn somebody's love is the day you are in serious trouble. And the thief wants to get you to do that. But you can never please somebody. You cannot even please yourself. I am either doing too much or too little. I am either driven by this or driven by that. How can I have relationship with God or anybody?

The Lord knew that we were all a bunch of dirt bags. That is why Jesus came to save us. There is none that doeth good, no not one and He knew that. We need to start to understand that there is not anything good in us apart from the Lord. There is absolutely nothing that I can do to please Him or come to Him. I cannot buy my way. I cannot get so educated that I get smart. I found the more educated folk are, a lot of times the stupider they are about spiritual things because all of a sudden they start thinking they know something.

The Lord knows everything and He gives all of us whatever we need for life and for what He has given to each of us to do. And He will show us what He wants and how He wants it to be done. We just need to obey Him, trust Him, and follow Him.

That thief is out there and he wants to keep us away from all that God has for our life, and he especially wants to keep us away from functioning in what God wants us to be doing with the life that He has given us. So he comes with all these other distractions to us. The lust of other things gets people away from God; it gets them off on to self, health, wealth, self-relationships. The other person becomes an object not of affection, but of use, and you will use them and abuse them just like the thief. He does not care one bit about you. And though he flatters you, it talks in the Proverbs about the flattering tongue, and they say all these kind of wonderful things about you and all this and that, they are only looking for something. When they are done with using you for that whatever it is, and some folk they do not even bother with because they do not figure they have anything that they can benefit from, so they do not even go there. But let me tell you, if the time came when they needed to use you for some

purpose, the scorner uses the fools Proverbs talks about. And though they have the flattering tongue, there are seven abominations in their heart and they just want to use and abuse, and then they will cast aside.

There was a son of David that was lusting after his sister by a different mother, and as soon as he lay with her and had relationships, he hated her. How often does this happen? It is a thief trying to steal. Then that set off Absalom, her brother, against the other brother who had done this to his sister. And so Absalom went to the Dad who was King David, and King David did not deal with the situation in what Absalom thought was a satisfactory manner, so what does Absalom do? He goes and sits out at the gate of the city and he is saying, "Hey, we're glad you came, but my dad is really busy, and I will take care of your needs and I will help your needs. He had a betrayal spirit in him. A rebellious spirit developed within him towards his dad now because he hated his dad because he did not help deal with this other fellow who had raped and molested his sister. Violation, a break of faith where the trust between people is broken and the thief wants to come to steal, to kill, and to destroy.

He comes with suspicions and a lot of times with actions. So we always have to be very careful to get all the facts. But then again a lot of things are not for us to get all the facts. A lot of things are not our business. So he gets the meddlers going; meddlers stirring up strife and trouble for other people.

If something does not pertain to you, and you are not in a position to deal with the situation, then get out of it. It is none of your business. Why do you think one third of the angelic host got involved in the problem between Satan and God? The perfect scorner, and he involved all of the fools that were in the choir in the heavenlies and they started to take sides.

I tell folk, do not you ever take my side on anything. God is the one that you follow. If I am following God, God will defend me. He will protect me. He will supply, He will provide no matter what anybody does. But what do people do? You get into a little spit and spat with somebody and the next thing you know your mouth started flapping about what was going on and you are trying to get folk to justify you,

to agree with you, and to take your side. So what happens? We polarize things.

God is into unity, community, and working together. The thief is into messing up, separating, dividing and messing everybody's lives up. Getting everybody thinking about agitated stuff rather than peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. And as a result, your belly starts getting stirred up. Your intestines start to not work right. You cannot sleep at night because you are all worked up and stirred up in your head. You do not have to go there anymore in Jesus' name. You do not have to follow that thief.

Absalom leads a rebellion against David trying to overthrow and take over the kingdom. He polarizes the whole kingdom. You die when you are in that situation. Absalom got killed and the rebellion ended. A lot of lives were destroyed because they got involved in the family split.

What happens to the divided person is he or she who sitteth on the fence getteth stuck. You cannot take sides with people, but you take sides with God. And the righteous, if they are righteous, will line up with God and those who are righteous will be kept from the harm and the devourer will steal, kill, and destroy those that want to stay in the thing.

Have you ever noticed how people cannot let stuff go? Something may have happened 20 years ago and they are still holding on to it keeping it fresh as the day it happened. Of course, it is not the truth about what happened. It is the deception perception. It is not the facts about what went on it is one's perception about what happens, but it is not the whole truth it is one's interpretation.

“He or she who meddles in another man's strife takes a dog by the ears.”

Love is never looking for somebody to fail or fall. It is never looking for self-vindication. It is never looking to take vengeance. Absalom got into taking vengeance which did not help his sister or anybody else it just allowed the thief to come in and to ravish and to steal, kill, and destroy.

I have had him try to come in to my personal life, my family life, and my church life, and I took a stand in 1992 and I said, "Enough. I am absolutely not going to permit or allow or condone a thief in the camp that is going to steal, kill, and destroy." I refuse to let him take anybody out of my life.

God so loved every one of us that he came and died on that cross to give us life. And as much as lies within me I am going to live peaceably with everybody. I am going to stand before God someday and not have any question about what I have done or said, or anything towards anybody. I am going to have it right.

I spent two years going around trying to make things right with folk. Some responded and some did not. Some are responding 20 years later. I have a heart towards them. I never let them go. I never broke faith. I did not see them or know where they were, and the next thing I know they are calling me up and things are happening. It is God doing it. Why? God remains faithful even when we are not.

A thief, or a liar is not faithful. What happened to Gehazi when he took the gifts that were brought to the prophet of God? Remember Neman brought all the goods and the man of God said, "No, I do not want to take this." Understand this, there was a reason why the man of God in that particular incident with that gentleman that came to him who had great wealth and power. What was God interested in? – That man's salvation. And if you look at the story you will see that when the man of God did not receive the goods the man receives the blessing of God into his life and he asked the man of God, "When I go home, my life now belongs to your God, but I ask permission that when my king whom I am faithful to goes into to worship his false god and I have to have my arm on his that I be able to bow knowing that I am not giving up the true Lord." And this great miracle of God happens, even greater than the guy losing his leprosy, he receives the Lord. And then Gehazi, who was a faithful servant for many years allowed Satan to come in him just like Jesus told Judas, why have you allowed Satan to come in you. Go do what you must do. Gehazi goes out right after the chariot and says, my master has need of some things, not for himself, but for some traveling folk that have come through and we can use a few garments and a little bit of cash.

Cash has been the downfall of a lot of folk because it is a great temptation. God caused the ground to open up and swallow up Akin when he stole from Jericho. God said I do not want anything. I want it all destroyed. And he took a few things for him and his whole household and family, and everybody that was his got swallowed up by the ground because they stole, they robbed. You do not touch God's anointed and you do not touch God's stuff, and you certainly do not touch God's people.

The Lord is not going to stand for this stuff. I remember one time when the accounting was off a dime, and the Lord gave me a dream and He showed me it was off. I went into the folk that were doing accounting and they said, yes, we just kind of sloughed that away. And I said, "You cannot slough that away. You have to be concerned about every penny. It has to be accurate. This is God's business. It has to be right. We have to get this thing just the way it needs to be." God knows what is going on. How many parables are about God and managers? And making sure everything is done right. *"Whatever you do, do it with all your heart in the name of Jesus to the glory of God."*

All that Jesus did was done well. They said everything He does is good. When God was done every day making the creation, He said, "It is good." He was not just boasting it was good. Boasting is when there is no substance to it. We do not have any reason to boast about anything except the Lord, and that is because the Lord has given us everything that we have and are.

Sometimes people need the truth spoken to them in love so that they can get out of that place and move on to what God has for them. Otherwise they just stay in mediocrity and they do not amount to anything. They never go anywhere, they never come into all that God has.

I want to see God's best in people's lives. I want to see them prosper in everything the Lord has for your life. It says to provoke people to love and good works. Provoke them out of that place of complacency. Let the thief steal no more, but let them go out and become a blessing and a giver. Let them go work and do something

so they have something to provide not take from what belongs to somebody else.

If you steal somebody's reputation, you are a murderer. You are a killer. What should be done with the man who took the other person's sheep, the prophet says to David. And David says, "He should be killed." He took somebody else's stuff for his own personal use. And the man of God looks at David and says, "You are the man." He was so deceived. That is how the deceiver works. All lies are deception.

You see in the sermon of the mount that Jesus is talking principles of truth. We were looking at the principles of breaking faith with divorce and whatnot. But understand lying is breaking faith with somebody. You are breaking confidence. You are separating yourself from them. Most lies are done out of fear to cover oneself for fear of loss of love, relationship, or losing something so we seek to cover it.

The Lord says in Psalm 32 if you seek to cover your sin you cannot profit, you cannot be blessed. But blessed is the man who confesses his sin (James 5), blessed is the man who confesses his transgressions because he will be forgiven.

The deception of the liar is do not confess that you did wrong, what will people think. Who cares what people think, what are you and God thinking about it. He knows the whole thing.

Many folk come up with these confessions after the fact only because they got caught. It goes worse when you get caught. We always taught the children we had better be in on it before you get caught because you are going to get caught. There is nothing hidden that will not be revealed. We would actually pray that everything hidden would be revealed. We still pray that prayer. I pray that prayer for myself. "*Search me O God, prove me, test me.*" I pray that for everybody. So if somebody gets caught I say, hallelujah, I am not going to give a word to the judge to make it go easier on you. God will work through that judge. Folk want to get off. A lot of those folk sitting in the jail cells say, "It was wrong what was done to me" and this is the third time they are sitting in jail.

There comes a point where we have to come to our senses. Let the thief steal no more. You do not take things because you have a need. What about them? Thieves steal from the people they know, and they call it family. It is not about the family; it is about you and your need. Who is the loser in those situations? – The person who is not believing God and looking to God.

Have you ever asked the Lord why you lack something? Because everything God has given me to do is going to come to me, so maybe I am looking for something, maybe I am not lacking, maybe I am wanting, maybe I am being covetous.

“Having food and raiment let us there with be content.”

Maybe you are looking at things from a wrong perspective. The deceptive perspective. You are looking at it the way the thief looks at it rather than the way God looks at it. It says, *“If any lack wisdom, let them ask God and He will give it. He will not find fault.”* The Holy Spirit inserted that because God knows how the thief works. Did you not know something and you were afraid to ask a question because you thought you would show yourself to be ignorant? It is really ignorant to not ask the question. You are not God and so you do not know everything. There are things that you do not know and there are things that you will never need to know, and there are certainly many things that you do not even want to know. You have to sort out what is what.

When you look at the last six commandments, the fifth one honor your father and your mother. It is not the fourth commandment. Some circles have taught that it was the fourth commandment, but that is a deception. The church has been hoodwinked and lied to and people have been raised thinking that is the way it was in the catechism, the commandment. They dropped one of the commandments, the one about making idols. That was big bucks for the church. Look at all those little things bobbing their heads on the dash. There is not any power in that. Jesus said in John 16 that you do not need any intermediary to go to God because the Father Himself loves you. Meaning you do not need Mary, you do not need whatever saint, and you do not need Jesus the man as He walked the earth. You can go directly to the Father because He Himself loves

you. Jesus taught that. Always check your sources it is important, we have to have the truth, and the Lord wants us to have the truth.

All the rest of the commandments are dealing with stealing, killing, adultery, and coveting. They are thief workings. *“Do not covet your neighbor’s wife.”* Anything that pertains to them, but rather befriend them, speak well of them, look out for them. No slandering, bearing false witness (lying). Speak the truth. Befriend, support, encourage.

Killing, we looked at Jesus on the Sermon on the Mount. He says if you are even angry with somebody you have killed them and you are a murderer. Jesus says to the folk there in the church, your dad’s the devil. He is a liar and a murderer from the beginning. He is a thief. You are not believing God, you are not believing the one He sent, you are in pride, you love to have people look at you as being something important, outside looking really good, inside stinking and rotting.

The Lord wrote those commandments in love for His people. And He showed us what to do and what not to do in relationship to each other. The god man, the god woman lives by those commandments.

It says foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child. Unfortunately some folk are children all their life. They never grow up to take responsibility for their life, for their actions. They are always wanting somebody else to take care of them, to do everything for them and they get all the benefits. That is not the way it works. If you are going to be a blessing, you are going to have to put something in to receive something out. That is community.

The Lord says in 2nd Thessalonians 3 that if you do not work you do not eat. It is talking about putting something in. There are many ways to do things that way. A lot of folk interestingly who are the greatest contributors to relationship really are not making money on it. They are the folk every day that are loving, caring, and doing things. A lot of folk have devalued the housewife in our society. Let me tell you, that woman is priceless. Call them a domestic engineer; try to do whatever you want to do, but in God’s sight that is the role of the mother and the wife. (Titus 2) Is to take care of that husband and those children and make sure they are raised in the Lord. That is of great price as far as God is concerned. It is invaluable because if

those children are not raised in the Lord, they are going to grow up to continue the curse in society. And they are going to raise ungodly offspring.

There is a myth about the working mother. By the time you get done paying taxes, paying for clothes, paying for this and that and going out and doing all the other stuff that whatever they made goes to zippo. A lot of gals have been put into that position and God will bless them and help them and cause wonderful things to come in spite of that because the Lord is the husband of the woman set aside. The Lord is going to fill that gap. The Lord is the daddy of the orphan who has been set aside. The Lord will always see to it that that gap is filled.

When you make an oath, it says in Matthew 5:33-34 *“Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not break your oath, but fulfill to the Lord the vows you have made.’ But I tell you, do not swear an oath at all; either by heaven, for it is God’s throne.”* It used to be you go to court; you raise one hand up and put one hand on the Bible, and swear to tell the truth nothing but the truth so help me God. A lot of folk do not believe in that God and they do not believe in that Bible. So what good does that do? And a lot of folk even though they do it they lie through their teeth because we live in a lawless society. There has always been a lawless society since the fall of man. Since Satan got kicked out of heaven. Lawlessness happened in the heavens. It is a spirit. It is an anti-Christ spirit, and it is working.

How can you be a child of God and be a liar, a cheater, or a thief? You cannot be. You cannot be a murderer, angry with people, angry within yourself. That is how the devil is day and night. He is consumed with his wrath and anger, violence, hatred. He goes around seeking to ravish the earth. When he got kicked out of heaven, he destroyed everything that was here in the earth. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. God creates everything good and perfect. And in verse 2 it says the earth was without form and void. God does not create like that. What happened? The thief got kicked out, came down, and threw a temper tantrum. Have you ever read in the Bible what an angel can do? He ravished the place and he is ravishing places and lives all day long

every day out there. Do not be an instrument of the devil anymore. Be an instrument of God's love and peace and joy.

The thief says God is not my provider. He says if you have to play the game you have to play it loftily.

“Or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. All you need to say is simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.”
(Matthew 33:34-37)

Were you ever asked to do something and you said, “I will pray about it.” Did you really pray about it or did you just say so? Or did you accept an invitation and did not want to go so you made an excuse? That is lying. Little foxes spoil the vines. You start getting into that thinking it is okay and the next thing you know you are a thief. You are breaking faith with that person. Then you say, “Well I do not want to go.” And then they say, “Why not?” – Because they want you to go, and they are going to try to talk you into it. So there has to be respect on both sides. A person that respects you, loves you, and honors you is not going to keep pressing you.

I have found in my world a lot of times I would be invited out to dinner or something and it ended up being another agenda. I say, “Shoot, you want an appointment, get an appointment. You do not have to buy me dinner.” I appreciate the thought, but why do not we just say what it is. Let's not confuse dinner and relationship with appointment and relationship.”

These are little integrity things. “Oh, Pastor, can I have a moment.” And I can say, “Yes or no.” And if I say no I look at you and say, “I want to give you quality time, and I cannot give you quality time in a moment because I know you are not going to just take a moment and I do not have more than a moment. If you want a moment, the moment is up.” We have moved on to the next moment.

God demands personal integrity because He is personally integrity. He calls Himself the spirit of truth. That is how important He thinks it is and He would never think of taking what belongs to somebody else

and taking it to Himself. You will note, He says some pretty straight out statements. This is important in relationship. We have to set the boundaries. He says, *“I am the Lord there is none like unto Me.”* So do not even go there and think about it. You are not like Me. He says, *“All the silver and gold are Mine.”* Who can say that any of the silver and gold is mine? – Nobody. God says it is all mine. It does not belong to the devil.

When the devil was offering Jesus all the world’s stuff that was ridiculous. Yes, he was the lord of the world, Jesus and Paul called him that, but it was not his it belonged to God. He is a thief. Do not listen to him. Do not believe him. Do not buy into that. Do what God says. But the thief has deceived the people about what God says.

God says, *“Vengeance is mine, I will repay.”* Do not even go there. God is going to repay, not you. *“When a man’s ways are right before the Lord, even his enemies will be at peace with him.”* If your enemies are not at peace with you yet, then I guess something needs to work. Sometimes when you go to folk and try to make things right, they still hang on to it. When God sees you are right, then the stinger will leave you and you will not be driven by that.

When you run into some folk, all they talk about is the stuff that happened 20 or 30 years ago. They are ensnared. Pray for them that the Lord help them to get out of that.

He says, *“All the people are mine.”* You do not touch any of God’s children. He will come from the heavens with a fury it says in the Psalms to defend His own.

Understand this, God is for us, and we need to be for others like God is for us. Judge righteous judgment not by the appearance of things. No, we are not building a case; we just have to get things resolved. You cannot have relationship if it is based on falsehood. Build on the rock not on the sand.

Gehazi could have messed up that beautiful work of salvation that God did with Neman. It was never disclosed to Neman, God never showed it back to him because that could have turned him away from

God. But note, God did not let go. The Lord never lets things go. That leprosy went on to Gehazi.

I have to tell people that there are consequences to stealing, lying, cheating, and you might never see it come down right away, but when you stand before God, it is on the record because you never asked God's forgiveness and got rid of it and changed your way.

The Lord always gives people opportunity to change their ways before the hammer comes down. And oftentimes He gives multiple opportunities. We cannot be stolen from in Jesus. That is one of the ways that He really gets people too.

Have you ever been traumatized because something was stolen from you? Release it now in Jesus' name and be free of that because everything belongs to God. What God has for us will come to us. We cannot live in that bitterness or that sorrow, the pain that comes on you when somebody does something to defraud you or to steal from you. If somebody does something wrong to somebody who has done nothing but good to them, the curse will not depart from their house. You do not have to curse, God wants us to bless. He wants us to pray a blessing and move on. He does not want us to curse because once you start getting into that, you have just entered into the devil's realm. He is cursed, and he is cursing you.

We are blessed, and we are blessing. Let's live with integrity within ourself as well as with others to the glory of God in Jesus' name.

THE GOD-MAN
RELATIONSHIPS
The Love Test
Chapter Twenty-One

The Principle of Graciousness

If you tell somebody the truth, but you do not speak it in love, it will cause separation your relationship even more. When people know that you love them, care about them, and have their best interest at heart, the way God would have it, then they will listen to what you have to share. But when they do not trust that you have their best interest at heart (and the thief plays a lot with that one), then they will not listen to the truth. Also, oftentimes you cannot see the truth about yourself.

“You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.” (Matthew 5:38-42 NKJV)

This is the principle of graciousness; going out of the way to cause the blessing to happen. If someone wants you to go one mile; you go two. Not to show them something, but graciousness says that your God is bigger than this whole thing. You have died to yourself, and you do not have pride in the way.

“Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.” (Proverbs 16:18) *“Only by pride comes contention.”* (Proverbs 13:10) Without pride there is no division, no contention, no strife, and no striving. Wherever there is strife and striving, you know there is pride involved. This is where somebody is putting their opinions and their thoughts against somebody else.

Early in our marriage Diana said to me, “There is no arguing with a wall.” In other words, it takes two to tango, it takes two to love, and it

takes two to give a gift and receive a gift; it takes two to argue and fight. Or does it?

Have you argued and fought with yourself? Understand, there were two factors involved: your spirit which wants to go God's way, and your flesh which wants to go the devil's way. One has to die. That is why Paul says that he has to daily die to himself so he can live for God and not be divided within himself. (Romans 8:4-13; Gal 2:20) If I have the peace of God and the Lord is my First Love, then I am able to communicate peace to somebody else. I am able to communicate that love and to give it. But if I do not have the peace and the love in my heart and my mind, then I will put out to others whatever is going on within me.

Examine Your Own Heart

There is a principle that is used in psychology circles known as *projection*. Basically, psychology is just a study of the mind, how people think and what they do.

Jesus put it very simply and succinctly, *"Judge not lest you be judged."* (Mat 7:1) Jesus says, *"How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? (Matthew 7:4)* When people are looking through their own filters, and there is a log in their own eye, they *project* that the other person has the problem or issue. Often, the reason you can see it so clearly in the other person is because you are loaded with it yourself, and so it becomes very apparent.

Always look at yourself first. Why are you thinking the way you are thinking, and saying and doing what you are saying and doing? You need to challenge that rather than just go off on somebody else. You need to examine your own heart and mind first.

" 'You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax

collectors do the same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? Therefore, you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.” (Matthew 5:43-48 NKJV) The term perfect is mature.

The principle here is love. You never get to the highest place of maturity in the Lord until you have enemies. That is the true test. It is the refining of our faith. When the Lord sees Himself in the image of the silver, then it has been refined. This is a process. We go through various things in life spiritually, mentally, emotionally, physically, financially, and in relationships. The whole goal is to perfect us into the image of Jesus Christ so that God be glorified in us and through us. For that to happen you have to die to yourself. That is why it is basically impossible for people who do not have Jesus to really have completely blessed relationships. Everything is based on a ‘you do this for me and I will do this for you’ basis and it is not pure. Ultimately it is going to break down when people start getting selfish.

Relationships should not be about power. *“Not by might nor by power but by My Spirit, saith the Lord.”* (Zechariah 4:6) His Spirit is love, and love has to be the basis for all relationship, not self-love; it is the God-kind of love that thinks nothing of self. It is *always* giving, caring, sharing and serving. It does not think more highly of itself than it ought. It does not defend its rights. It does not even have rights. It gives them up to God. The only right you have is to love people, forgive, and do good like Jesus does.

For blessed relationships to happen you have to have love for the people. As Christ has loved me, so I now love you. God wants us to love everybody because He loves everybody.

There are different levels of relationship. I tell my wife I love her differently than how I tell other people. There is a difference, but yet there is the same forever. In other words, in the marriage relationship there is an element that is not to be included in other relationships (dealing with the sexual element). There are boundaries that God has set. *“The marriage bed is undefiled.”* (Hebrews 13:4) All other beds are defiled. We have to maintain and respect that.

If you have friends, you want to befriend them; you want to encourage them in their marriage, in their vows. If you are really a friend, you want to stand with the people and encourage God's best for their life. That is all part of relationship. In other words, we have a relationship one with another.

For relationships to grow, in need to spend time with each other. You will get to know me very well as you come to church because I share a transparent life. As you involve yourself in people's lives, you get to know them. You have heard the expression, "To know me is to love me." Some people feel that is not true. That feeling has to go because Christ loves them. If they do not believe that expression, then they are coming into the relationship as damaged goods.

Know the Love of God

Most people in the world are damaged goods. You have to know that God loves you and have that relationship in place. Once you know it, you will never be hurt again because the Lord will never leave you, forsake you, or do anything to cause harm to your life. If you have been taught something else about God, you have been listening to a liar, a deceiver, and a thief because the thief portrays God as somebody that really does not care about you.

The thief is projecting where he comes from. He has come to steal, kill and destroy you. (John 10:10) Even though he may speak well of you and flatter you, he is just building you up, puffing that ego up because he wants you destroyed with him forever. He wants you to be with him forever which is not good; it is cursed.

You have to know the love of Christ; the height, depth, breadth and width of the love of Christ as Ephesians, chapter 3 explains. When you have that, then you are prepared to meet the public; out there you will run into all kinds of things, but you will know that you are loved and you are not going as a needy person into the relationship. This has been the problem with people since the beginning. People are needy in their relationships. They are always looking to be loved. They are always looking to be included. They are always looking to be a part of things. That can be trouble. And they usually want relationship on their own terms.

People never really take a good look at what they are thinking, what they are saying, and what they are doing. *“Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith.”* (2nd Corinthians 13:5) How are you treating people around you?

Jesus is saying in Matthew, chapter 5, what good does it do to just hang out and gather together with people that love you and do good to you? (Would you rather be around someone who is irritable, self-centered, and nasty, or around somebody that is hospitable, doing good to you, and giving you things and doing nice things for you?)

A relationship with God is of no value to the world. But if the Lord took His hand of blessing off the earth, that would be the end of everything because only what is good and what is lasting comes from Him.

Be a Blessing to Others

People naturally want to associate with others that are thinking good of them. There is an expression, “Only go where you are celebrated.” That is, go where people want you to be. In Matthew, chapter 10, Jesus says that if you go to a house where the Lord’s peace is, and they welcome you, stay there a few days. In the early teaching of the church you could recognize a false prophet because he would stay over three days. They were just a bunch of freeloaders running around.

People who are receiving the Word of the Lord are welcoming it. When people do not receive the Word of the Lord and do not welcome it, do not be nasty to them, but just go on to somebody that is willing and open. Do not spend years on the same people. It is time to move on. You sowed the seed, let the seed do something. There are others who need to be reached and touched, and we need to go on.

However, it has to be done with correct attitude. People say, “Shake the dust off your feet and curse the town and let them all rot in hell.” James and John were the disciples who wanted to call down fire on the people in Samaria because they did not receive Jesus or themselves. And Jesus looked at them and rebuked them. (Luke 9:52-56) *For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn*

the world, but to save the world through him. (John 3:17) People condemn themselves because of their unbelief. God takes no joy in people going to hell. He takes no joy when people are suffering and having loss in their life. He has come, He loves the whole world, and He has come to save the whole world. He wants blessing for everybody whether they are just or unjust. Believers or non-believers, the Lord wants everybody blessed.

He cannot bless the unbeliever because they do not believe in Him, so He cannot do what He wants to do for them. But He came for them. So we have to get rid of this me-against-the-world kind of thinking. Or the-world-is-against-me kind of thinking. If you have that attitude, you are not a blessing to the world because you really do not love people, and if you do not really love people you cannot be used of God.

Learn to Love the Way Christ Loves

Many times when people do something for somebody else it is either to make themselves feel good or there is something in it that they are looking to get.

The second year that I was in seminary I went into my room late at night after I finished work, and the glory cloud of God was there. As I entered the room I started weeping and fell on my face. The Lord showed me all the things that I was doing for Him that were before Him. He was six or seven on the list after all the things that I was doing for Him.

Why are you doing what you are doing? Do you really love that person like Christ loves that person? The Lord gave Himself for us to save us. While we were yet enemies of God, Christ died for us, the godly for the ungodly.

You really do not love and learn to love the way Christ loves until you have a test and a challenge; until you have an enemy in your life. Then you find out whether you really love or not. I did not think there was anybody I could not get along with, but I had some tests. *When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.* (Proverbs 16:7) You might say, "Every day of my life is a test." But God in you is greater and he will give you the ability

to love that person like Christ loves the church and gave Himself for it.

Testing comes at different times in your life. These tests are not necessarily for the moment. One test I had lasted about three years, and during that time I really found out what was in me. I came to a reckoning. All of a sudden the Lord may remove all of your friends from you. Isaiah 30:21 talks about how He removes all your counselors, all your friends, all the people that encourage you. In Psalm 121 the Lord gave me, *“I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord.”*

All of my minister friends disappeared. I had my wife Diana, but the Lord even told me at one point to send her away because we were in the thick of the fray and she did not need to be in what I had to deal with. When you are going to the cross, nobody except you is going. It is just you and Jesus. It is the hardest thing because you want to justify yourself. You cannot understand why it is happening. You have not done anything to the person. You seek only to do good to people, but they do not see it as good. They do not see anything that you are doing as good. Often times, there are people that you have done good to who were your friends or family, and the next thing you know they are all gone. They leave you, and everything in you is screaming, *What is this all about?* It should not be happening, but it is.

You have to understand what is really going on. When this was happening to me, I was reading in the psalms where David said, “Strike down my enemies, Lord, kill them all. Vindicate me, vanquish my foes.” And I was sitting there thinking it when the Lord spoke up and said, “He is wrong, son” because that was sounding really good to me.

Everything in the Bible is correctly stated, but it is not necessarily what God said. It was David talking about vanquishing his foes. You have to go by God’s principles. God told me, “Son, I show you a better way,” and He took me to Mathew 5:43-45. *“You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to*

rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.”

In other words, you are *not* one of His children if you are *not* doing this. Because that is how His Spirit is. That is what He does. This is the love test.

It is easy to get along with people that get along with you. It is easy to get along with people when they agree with you and like to do the same things. But relationship involves self-sacrifice. Jesus laid down His life for us to save us. That is true love. It is not “love’s first kiss” thing. It is giving your life for that person.

Diana and I gave our lives for the church of God. Sacrifice. A lot of people want to be in the limelight, and they want accolades, but people do not know the sacrifice that is involved in caring for God’s people. Paul said he bore in his body the marks of Christ for what he went through and what he took from people for the sake of the gospel. (Galatians 6:17) But let me tell you, there are great rewards in heaven.

“He causes the sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.” (Matthew 5:45)

It is easy to understand why God blessed the righteous, but you were blessed before you were righteous. Before you knew Him, He was blessing you; He was loving you; He was caring for you; He was doing things for you. He is always faithful, and tries to get us to be faithful.

When things are happening, it is easy to say, “Forget you, I will never see you again.” But they are going to be the first one at your door. *The Lord prepares a table before us in the presence of our enemies.* (Psalm 23:5)

I asked the Lord what selfish prayer is. And He said, “It is like this, son: you ask for it, you receive it, and when you get it, if I should ask for it to be used in another way, you say, ‘No; mine,’ and you will not give it or share it.” That is selfish prayer.

“Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.” (Matthew 10:39)

He is perfecting His love. It is the highest point of maturity in Christ. People who want to grow up in Christ and be mature need to know that the highest point in Christ is to love your enemies. 2nd Peter, chapter 1, deals with the growth process of character. As long as you are all about your life, saving your life, taking to yourself and what pertains to you, your family, children or your job (which you should have given to God a long time ago because it has caused you all kinds of grief), the devil says, “Oh, that is yours? Okay then, I will try to steal that.” If you gave these things to God, you would not have the grief you have or the ups and downs, depending on how you are feeling about your stuff, the people in your life, and yourself. If I am loved, I do not need to be ‘yo-yoing it’: whether people love me or not, or whether I love myself or not. That is all pride - the high side and low side of it.

Being all about yourself is not love. Love prefers others more important than oneself. *Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.* (1 Corinthians 13:7 NKJV) This is not for yourself; it is about other people.

Jesus says, *“I am the vine, you are the branches.”* (John 15:5) The fruit is at the tip of the branches and it is for others. The vine never gets to taste that fruit. The fruit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, meekness, gentleness, self-control.

The reason I hold my tongue at times is because God does not want me to say something that will tear somebody apart. Another time He will have me tell it, and it will not tear. It is like when you are having a baby and you push too hard, you are going to tear. When you push too hard in relationship, things will tear because you are violating the respect and honor principle. Love always respects and honors.

In Romans, chapter 12, it says, *“If your enemy is hungry, feed him. If he is thirsty, give him a drink.”* So I got right on that because I wanted to love these people and do good once the Lord made the adjustment. It is easy to call down fire, anybody can call it down, but when you do, you will get burned too. I set out to love the people.

“Do not be overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.” (Romans 12:21) I sought to do it so I reached out to the people and they bit me. (Not a physical bite.) I realized something was wrong, and I went back to the Lord. He said, “Son, they are not hungry enough.”

“When a man’s ways please the LORD, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.” (Proverbs 16:7) Sometimes your biggest enemy is your own flesh because that flesh will try to justify and rationalize itself. Also, you think that other person does not deserve anything good.

God Is the Vindicator

“Whoever rewards evil for good, evil shall not depart from his house.” (Proverbs 17:13 NKJV) What is in your heart when you are wanting the curse to happen to them? There is no love there. Jesus said we were all going to hell in a handbag and He came to save us.

“Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord” (Romans 12:19) Although it should not be, there are people who are not right with God and they try to work against God by trying to harm God’s people and His ministry. However, I have seen these people take one step down and fall and break their neck or have massive heart attacks.

One fellow came to me who was being used by others, spreading lies and gossiping. I was saying, “Lord, help people to come out of this and recover themselves.” 2nd Timothy 2:24-26 says a servant of the Lord must not be quarrelsome. There is something wrong with you if you want to fight, quarrel, or strive. You have to look at yourself and get that out of you because you have hell going on inside of you; the old chip on the shoulder thing.

“A servant of the Lord must not quarrel, but be gentle, able to teach, patient.” (2 Timothy 2:24 NKJV)

God will grant people repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, but they have to acknowledge it themselves. You have to ask God’s forgiveness and watch your attitude towards people. I have seen many people who have no love for others. How can you be a minister of God and not love the people? How can you be a husband

or a wife in a family and not love the family? How can you be a son or a daughter and not love your parents or your brothers or sisters?

I started praying that they would be able to recover themselves out of the snare of the devil who has taken them captive. When we get into strife with one another, the devil is taking people captive. The Holy Spirit has come to set the captives free. Somebody has got to start to love the way Christ loves. It starts with you.

The next thing I know this fellow comes to me and says, "Pastor, I have been taken advantage of. These people have been setting me up." (Nobody can set you up except you are agreeing with them.) He said, "What do I need to do to get right with God?" I told him, "There are four things the Lord has given: One, you need to ask God's forgiveness for what you are doing and separate company from those people. Two, you need to ask my forgiveness. (I had already forgiven a long time before because I cannot walk in anything but forgiveness towards people.) Thirdly, you need to ask my wife's forgiveness (because what they were doing with me affected her too). And fourth, you need to ask the congregation's forgiveness because you have been spreading garbage and causing trouble, stirring up division, and spreading lies."

He asked God's forgiveness right there. He asked my forgiveness right there. He came over and saw Diana a couple of days later and asked her forgiveness, and when Sunday came he was supposed to stand up before the congregation and ask their forgiveness. I was all excited for him because he was going to be free and blessed. I looked and I looked and the service time went by, and I did not see him. Apparently, the people had gotten ahold of him and told him he could not do that because it would have exposed them as well, and the gig would be up. *"For there is nothing hidden that will not be disclosed, and nothing concealed that will not be known or brought out into the open."* (Luke 8:17)

Well, come Monday morning, he was on his route and he dropped over dead of a massive heart attack. The scorner uses the fools. That is how the devil works.

The fruit of the matter is, his son grew up under the tutelage of the Lord in the ministry through us, and he is a pastor to this day.

My heart broke when I heard what happened to that man. It did not have to happen. God had a totally different plan. The Lord does not want to see anybody go to hell. He wants everybody saved. Jesus came for everybody. That is what love is about. It is about God loving the people through us. As God has loved me, I love you. This life is too short to allow any strife or nonsense in our hearts or our minds.

Later, the time came when the person that bit me got cancer. It says if something bad is going on with somebody, do not rejoice in what is happening with them because God will take His hand off of them and put it onto you. Take no joy in these kinds of things.

I know this: I do not need to vindicate myself, and I do not need anybody to vindicate me. If you are right with God, then you are right with God and He is the vindicator. You do not need to get into vengeance.

In Philippians, chapter 2, it says Jesus became of no reputation for us. He came out of the heavens as Lord of lords and He became a man. He became a servant for us – to love us, to save us, and to make us heirs with God together with Him. People are always trying to save their reputation when the Lord says to lose your reputation for His sake and you will gain your reputation. *“Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.”* (1 Peter 5:6)

God lifted up Jesus as He was an obedient Son loving and caring for the people. He exalted the name of Jesus above every name, that at that name, Jesus, every knee in heaven and earth and under the earth shall bow and confess Jesus as Lord.

When the love of God is in your heart and your mind, you cannot be hurt anymore, for the glory of the Lord God of Hosts rests upon you. He says, “There is My child.” He is proud of you; He will stand up for you; He will love you. Even if you are martyred, you are entering into the kingdom of heaven. Stephen was being martyred and Jesus

stood up. The Bible says that He is seated at the right hand of the Father. When Stephen died, the Word says Jesus stood up in the heavens welcoming the man of God that loved Him and loved the people so much that He spoke the truth in love to people so people could be saved. (Acts 7:55-56) Paul (then known as Saul) was there watching the whole thing. Later Paul took the Word of God and transformed the nations of his day. That same Word is going on today as the Spirit of Christ is working. *“And they loved not their lives unto the death.”* (Rev 12:11 KJV)

Turn Up the Fire of Love

It does not matter where people are in their walk. *“Father, forgive them, they do not know what they are doing.”* (Luke 23:34) You will love them into the kingdom of heaven. That is all that matters. And when the dust settles and you are there and the Lord looks at you and says, “Well done, son/daughter. You loved My people. You cared for my people.” There is not anything else in life that is worth anything more than that. Everything else passes away.

If there is someone in your life that you have considered a thorn in your side, forgive them and make a point to love them.

The person that got the cancer came to me and said, “Pastor, I am sorry for what I have done and what I have said. I was wrong.” And the Lord healed him of the cancer.

Another one had other things happen and the Lord healed, delivered, and set free.

God wants us reconciled but sometimes we have to wait until the people are hungry and thirsty enough. I had said, “Lord, I want to be the first one there to meet them when they are hungry and thirsty enough to receive. And I want you to work your works through me for their good.” And He did.

I have experienced this several times in my life. The Lord has seen me right through everything. I am not finished yet. I have not been martyred physically. I have been martyred in every other way, but not physically. You will find all that matters is that Jesus be exalted in you and through you. Nothing else in life matters, including what

people think of you or say about you.

Jesus did not receive either praise nor criticism. He just submitted His cause to the Father who judges justly and He went about His business. What was His business? Loving people, doing good to them, caring for them and being there for them.

Some people may not stay around you, but when they need something, guess where they come? To you, because you will be there for them. That is the heart of Christ. We want the heart of Christ perfected in us.

Do not break faith with anybody. You may not see them, you may not be around them, but your heart is for them. When you walk in that grocery store and they are walking down an aisle, you are not going to have to hide anymore. You just come up to them and say, "Hi. The Lord's best to you today. I thank God in every remembrance of you in my life."

You have to know that God's plans are for good for your life, not for evil, plans to prosper, to give hope and a future. (Jeremiah 29:11) The kind of patience that James, chapter 1 talks about is involved with all of this. *"My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires. Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you."* (James 1:19-21)

The thief is coming now trying to mess things up. If we will just turn up the fire of the love of God in Christ, it will get rid of whatever is trying to separate us from people.

The Lord does not want any more parting of the waves. We are together forever, holding the same sincere love one for another. When our last breath ceases, we know where we will be.

THE GOD-MAN
RELATIONSHIPS
God Loves Everyone
Chapter Twenty-Two

Live Peaceably with Everyone

Selfishness and pride are two of the most evil things in the earth. They are relationship destroyers.

I had one of the happiest childhoods ever until high school when the thief came in, ravaging and destroying my parent's marriage. I was raised in the commandments and principles of God and I had a firm grounding. I was the eldest of four and I basically told my family, "What you are doing is wrong. This strife is totally wrong." *"If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other."* (Galatians 5:15) I hate strife.

Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. (Romans 12:9) Peace is good. Joy is good. Harmony is good. Unity is good. Commotion is not of God. *"For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work."* (James 3:16)

When people are trying to prove they are right and having power struggles, everything is going to get destroyed. You may get your way, but you will lose. You find out how selfish you really are when you go into a relationship with somebody else. If you get two selfish, bullheaded, stubborn, stiff-necked people together, you will have hell on earth.

As much as lies within me I am going to live peaceably with everybody. *"If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone."* (Romans 12:18) When you have God in you, there is no excuse for commotion and strife. According to Proverbs 13:10, *"Without pride there is no contention,"* there is no fussing, no quarreling. *"A soft answer turns away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger."* (Proverbs 15:1) Anger is a destroyer.

Have you ever talked with somebody but you were really not talking with them? You were talking *at* them, and while they were trying to

talk back to you, you were not listening; you were thinking about what you would say next. That is not communication.

Why do you have to speak your mind? At that moment you are out of your mind, and all you are speaking is insanity. Have you ever been in strife, and you were trying to get away, but the person followed you? They were going to get you, shake you, hold you, and tell you until they got you.

On several occasions when Moses was being verbally attacked by the people he just fell on his face to the ground. He went to God, praying to Him, and what happened? The Lord came onto the scene and He decided what was right and what was blessed.

The Lord taught me that years ago in relationship with my wife. We cannot get into a fight. If you fight, somebody has to pull out of it. Without pride there is no contention. Pride says I am going to fight this.

When it was Jesus' time, He submitted His life. He laid it down. Up until that point nobody could touch Him because He was in the Father's care. When it was time for Him to lay down His life for our sake, He laid it down. There was no big fight. *And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well.* (Matthew 5:40) It takes a long time to learn that one. The blessing is that I know that my heavenly Father is taking care of me and I am going to submit my cause to the Father who judges justly (1Peter 2) and I do not have to defend myself.

If you have to be right, you are wrong. God is right. You have to look at the motivation of your heart. *"A man's ways appear right to a man, but God searches the intention or motivation of the heart."* (Proverbs 16:2) Why are you making an issue out of something?

Later in life my parents both remarried, and when deliverance came to them, they had a desire to go back to each other. But that could never happen at that point. Interestingly, both their spouses died early. In their last years they were friends. The venom and strife was gone.

Forgiveness Is Necessary

We have to hate strife and division. The thief has come to steal, kill, and destroy. He is a murderer from the beginning. He hates people, he hates God, and he is burning up from within. Hatred and bitterness will consume you. Many cancers, heart problems, and nerve problems are caused by bitterness, strife and unforgiveness in a person's heart. The Lord says to us that if we do not forgive others we will not be forgiven. If you are not forgiven, you are going to hell.

He is talking to Christians. This is something that is wrong in the body of Christ. People are afraid of offending others so they allow them to go to hell. If you have unforgiveness and bitterness in your heart, you are no different than the guy in Matthew, chapter 18, who was forgiven the great debt, but then he went out and found somebody that owed him money. He would not forgive the debt owed to him. He was cast into the place of gnashing of teeth; the eternal separation from God. You cannot be a Christian and have bitterness, unforgiveness and strife in your heart. There can be no division.

Jesus' prayer in John, chapter 17, is that we and the Father (like He and the Father) are one, that all who believe in Him might all be one together and live out our lives happily ever after. *"Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen."* (1 John 4:20)

The word says in Proverbs 26:28: *"A lying tongue hates those it hurts, and a flattering mouth works ruin."* When you are talking about somebody else, is it building them up or encouraging them in God? Is it building up their reputation among those who hear it?

I ran across a fascinating fact: Many people that do not even *know* me, do not like me. I do not even know who they are. Of course, in my heart, I view it as everybody loves me. Jesus says if you are of God, you will love me, if you are not of God you will not. I understand that fact, but the Lord taught me to love everybody. So as much as lies within me, I am going to love them. I am going to live at peace with everybody, and if somebody has an issue, that is their issue; it is not mine. I am going to pray a blessing on them and ask God to help

them get out of their issue so we can all live together happily ever after because I hate strife. I hate division, and I am not going to be ripped off anymore in Jesus' name.

The Lord taught me early in marriage about relationships, saying, "Son, if you speak badly about your wife, you knife yourself in the back." That is a betrayer.

Enter Not into Strife

I do not see Christ entering into strife, commotion or arguing. *"A servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil."* (2nd Timothy 2:24-26)

Strife is a snare. It is intended by the devil to steal, kill, and destroy. The Lord will break into life and He will tell you sometimes, "Come on, knock it off." If you do not discipline your child, you cause them to go to hell. The problem is the home does not have any authority anymore; the church does not have any authority anymore. God is standing up and speaking truth and He is not putting up with nonsense. He is looking for men and women of faith who will stand up and act upon His Word, get His results, and help somebody out there who does not have a clue. If everybody is going the same road, then they are all being led to the slaughter.

I had a dear friend one time that was caught up in commotion in his marriage. Every day there was strife and problems going on. One day I said, "You should divorce your spouse." And he looked at me and said, "God hates divorce." I know I taught him that, but the Holy Spirit then said, "God hates strife more."

You could have a divorce and be friends the rest of your life. When you are married, it is all hell. It could be better than that, but at least somebody is going to go to heaven. Because where bitterness, strife, fighting, and confusion are, every evil work is present in that home. *"For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work."* (James 3:16)

I did not see the guy for a long time and it grieved my heart. But sometimes I have to say things. *“Speak the truth in love”* so people can come out of it and go on to what God has. I loved the person I was saying that to, and I loved the other party too. Never take sides.

It should not be Republican/Democrat – a party spirit. You should be able to vote for whomever and get the best people in and everybody work together. It should not be a Republican agenda or a Democrat agenda. I am not talking politics, I am talking God and truth. It should be that in these times people are standing up and seeking the truth that is going to be a blessing for everybody. People are more concerned about their positions than they are about helping others. What is really going to help people?

Have you ever fought for your opinion or your right to have an opinion? Your opinion does not matter. We need God’s truth. Diana and I had to learn: it is not my way or her way; it is going to be God’s way in the house. We took off the gloves. We do not have to fight each other; we can be friends.

Years ago we were in a little squabble one day, and as I looked at her, I had a little Holy Ghost lucid moment and came to my senses. I looked at her and she was waiting for me to come back. She was serving some garbage at me and then I was going to hit it back, but the Lord caught me before I hit it back. We already had volleyed a few times. Thank God for the Holy Spirit. He helps us come to our senses. And I looked at her and said, “This is not any fun.” And she started laughing and looked at me and says, “No, this is not fun.” So I said, “Let’s go on a picnic.” And we left that strife just like that. We asked the Lord to forgive us and we went out and had a great day.

Have you ever noticed that right before you were going to have a great day, all of a sudden strife kicked in and you ended up not even *wanting* to go on vacation, or even out?

The Lord wants us to enjoy our life. Many Christians do not even know how to have fun. They never learned that God wants to have fun.

“They seldom reflect on the days of their life, because God keeps them occupied with gladness of heart.” (Ecclesiastes 5:20) He wants to have fun with us.

Pride, jealousy, envy, difference of opinion, taking offense, giving offense or taking sides all undermine relationships. *“Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things, it never fails.”* (1st Corinthians 13) Love is always going to bring unity and keep the peace. It is going to bring peace, it is going to keep the peace, and the peace is not compromised.

Oftentimes, there has to be war before peace can come. *“What causes fights and quarrels among you? Do not they come from your desires that battle within you?”* (James 4:1) It comes from your own flesh, your wants and desires and you cannot have it, so you fight for it. That is what many people do in relationship. It is all about power. It is all about control and manipulation. People play games with each other trying to manipulate their way. When you were little, you threw a tantrum.

You have to refuse to enter into strife and division. Whatever is creating commotion, you have to start to take a stand. This is not for the weak or the faint. God in you is mighty and you have to allow Him to rise up in love, and line up your mind, your body, and everything that is in you with Him. You have to refuse to enter into the strife. You have to refuse to allow those thoughts in you. You have to say, “Shut up and get out in Jesus’ name.” This is for you. If you get up on the wrong side of the bed, you are carrying yesterday’s nonsense into today. Did you ever go to bed in strife? You are giving the devil an opportunity to come into you. *“Be angry but do not sin. Do not let the sun go down upon your wrath.”* (Ephesians 4:26) Do not give the enemy opportunity. In the Greek it means a home or a place. Do not give them an opportunity on your life because that is what he wants. He wants you to burn within, forever separated from God.

“For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

(Romans 8:38-39) Colossians 3 talks about the same kind of thing. *“Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.”* (Colossians 3:13-14) Bear with one another. They are having a problem and you are not the problem, so maybe you can help them and vice-a-versa. There are times when we all need a little help and encouragement.

God called us to be ministers of reconciliation; to bring people together in God with one another. The devil out there does not want any part of this. He wants to destroy us. I look at my walk with God as a joyous thing. I just rejoice in the Lord every day. I thank Him every day for life and breath. I believe He has a purpose today and a plan, and I am just thankful to be a part of that. It is such a wonderful thing to be alive in Christ Jesus. There is nothing finer. We do not want to allow any of the negativity to get on us or in us because it is trying to create strife, confusion, and separation.

Why would you want to do anything that is going to separate you from God? God is not separating from you. I have heard so many times people say, “I do not love that person anymore.” I say, “What is this? Are you a Christian? What do you mean you do not love that person anymore?” How would you like God to say, ‘I do not love you anymore, you are out?’ Do not say that you love everybody else, except that one person. How would it be if God loved everybody else and just left you out? You need to forgive and let it go.

God’s perfect love is being perfected in you. If you fail, ask God’s forgiveness, forgive yourself, humble yourself and ask the other person’s forgiveness. You tell the person you really want them to help you because you love them and love having relationship with them and you do not want anything to separate you ever again.

If you are a Christian and Jesus is your Lord, this should not even be happening on our part. *“As much as lies within you, live peaceably with everybody.”* (Romans 12:18)

The Love of God Goes Out to People

Maybe God wants to win this other person to the Lord and He does it through His loving kindness. As we love people and continue to love people, even though they are not being so loving, maybe the Lord is going to touch their heart someday.

One day years ago there were some people having a “Christian Concert” out in the park. But just because it is “Christian words” does not mean it is God music. I was invited so I went to the concert and the next thing you know, as I was looking out in left field, a guy was attacking a girl. I went out there; there were two of us who went out to help the girl. The guy was over the girl on the ground like a cat over its prey. I felt a gentle swoosh across my head, and the next thing I knew, the guy came up; he figured he had one shot. Street fighters have to get as much as they can on the one shot they got, so his shot came right across my head but I never felt a thing. It went on across to take out the guy next to me; his teeth and face were rearranged. We stood there; the guy was just looking at us because he was expecting violence, retaliation. God was all over the fellow who was disfigured because when you are persecuted for Christ’s sake the glory of God is on you, and he was just standing there bleeding all over the place. But he was standing there loving the guy and I was standing there loving the guy. The Lord’s angel had protected me that way as we were standing there loving the guy. He was paralyzed and did not know what was going on because he was expecting something to happen to him.

I looked at him and I said, “The Lord loves you.” I asked the girl, “Do you want what is going on out here?” And she looked at me, she was all disheveled, and she said, “No.” She had this fear all over her. I said, “Then you just move away.” And the guy was still standing there, and I kept saying to him, “The Lord loves you and he has a good plan for your life.” I put my hand on his shoulder, and he just froze. When these hands go on somebody, the love of God is going out to them. He started to cry and then he ran out of there like a shot. The boy could really run. We just stood there and helped the girl.

There was no retaliation. The Lord stepped in to stop the violence that was going on. *“Not by might or by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord.”* (Zechariah 4:6) We prayed over the fellow who was injured that night, and the next day at church, he was all cleaned up

and everything was fine. He had a few marks for a little while, but he was fine; he was healed.

I shared with the band that was playing so they could learn from this experience that just because the music has Christian words does not mean it is Christian. They were inviting every devil in town into this park. Many people are listening to music that is not giving them peace in their spirit and mind and is, instead, actually agitating and provoking.

There are people who know how to push other people's buttons. I tell them to remove the buttons so nobody can push them. But understand, this is a word to the pushers of the buttons, why would you want to antagonize that person and provoke that person and then say, "Just kidding?" Proverbs has a word to say about it. That is not the love of God. We want to encourage each other. We want to build each other up in God. We want to bless and help people. We do not need to agitate each other.

We need to hate this evil called strife and discord and distention.

THE GOD-MAN
RELATIONSHIPS
Sacrificial Love
Chapter Twenty-Three

The Lord's Great Love

Years ago, when I was in school, I was taught in a worship class how God first loved us; the love of God comes down to us; our response to Him, which is worship, goes back up to Him. Then love to one another. It is all about Jesus and the cross.

When we always live our lives thinking about what the Lord in His great love did for us in demonstrating that love, our whole life will be changed. All of our relationships with others will be changed when we think about how the Lord loved us while we were His enemies. We did not care about Him or seek Him out. We just wanted to do our own thing with our life. He sought us out, and He loved us so much that He gave Himself for us so we might be children of God and be a part of His family.

Remember, when the Lord in His great love created man, it was for fellowship with Him. Love has to be given. It does no good if you have all the love in the world, but do not have anybody to give it to. Then it profits nothing. So, the Lord in His love, when Adam and Eve went away from Him, sought us out and provided a Savior. That is what our Lord Jesus is all about: to bring us back to God. That is why we are called ministers of reconciliation. We bring people together; we do not separate and divide.

“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” (John 10:10) God wants to bring people into His love where there is peace and joy and righteousness (right standing with Him). There is nothing we can do, nothing we can buy, nothing we can work for or earn the right to receive the love of God. It was and is just God's love reaching out to us and saying, “I love you with an everlasting love that never fades away or changes,” and it is unconditional.

This is something that people have a hard time with. The Lord loved us while we were totally off the wall — crazy, rebellious, independent, stiff-necked, stubborn, hard-headed. But the Lord is changing us. He *has* changed us and *is* changing us. We have to quit seeing ourselves in that old way because we are not the old way anymore. Romans 10:9 says that when we receive Jesus into our heart as our Lord and Savior, and make that confession with our mouth, salvation comes to us. It is done.

The bloodline of Adam had fallen away from God. That is why Jesus said you must be born again. *“But as many as received Him, (Jesus) to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”* (John 1:12-13 NKJV) So when you get a spirit family and a blood family together, how awesome can that be? It was God’s intention from the beginning. Man messed it up because he went about doing his own thing and went away from the Lord.

The Lord did not just say, “Okay, adios, you are cut off forever.” It is **not** God’s will that anybody perish as stated in 2 Peter 3:9. God takes no delight in people suffering and having all the problems they have out there in the earth. He takes no delight in people being in strife.

Opinions, self, being critical, negative, or judgmental divide. It does not promote the love of God. The church has been notorious for being the only army that shoots its wounded. People judge and criticize. They are negative and critical. How dwells the love of Christ in that? It does not. Inferiority, superiority, and prejudice (prejudging situations and people) is not the love of God. You would be amazed if you really looked at your life and examined yourself. How many prejudices do you really have, looking through your old filters, the old you (who was either superior or inferior depending on how you looked at yourself)? Consequently, you see everything and everybody the wrong way.

God Keeps His Word

I remember years ago when my daughter, Erin, was a little girl, and some of the other little girls were getting their ears pierced and had

earrings in their ears. She was about four or five at the time, and she asked me about that. I told her when she got to be 14, then we would look at it. My children know when Dad says something, that is it, and they just go about their business. Well, her 14th birthday came and I never heard a word about it. I said, "Okay, we're going to go down and get your little earrings." We went down to the shop and the lady says, "Just stand over there and I am going to shoot you." Erin was standing there and she closed her eyes. You would have thought it was going to be an execution or something, but she was just standing there waiting for it.

The moral of this story is that God keeps His word. There are different things that break up relationships. Erin had forgotten all about getting her ears pierced, but God had not forgotten about it and neither did Dad. We always teach the ladies that the outward adorning is not what makes you beautiful, it is the inward adorning. It is the gentle, quiet and trusting spirit in a woman that makes her beautiful. There is nothing more beautiful than a woman of faith who believes God and honors her husband as to the Lord. It is not about clothes and jewelry and everything else. It is about the heart.

There is nothing more handsome than a man of God who loves God, cherishes his wife, and keeps his word. Commitment is very important. Relationships can be spoiled by a break of trust and a break of faith. The Lord says that when you make an oath to Him you had better keep it. He says when you give your word to somebody else, you "swear to your own hurt." Later you do not change your mind about it.

That is why it is important not to rush into things. Get before God and pray, and think about stuff before you are quick to say yes, you are in. The devil tried to use Ananias and Sapphira to break up and divide the early church which was unified; everybody was one. They were caring for and sharing with one another. Ananias and Sapphira had some property, and they said that when they sold it they were going to bring all the proceeds in and give it to the ministry.

It is different when it is just an idea, but when the land actually sells, then it is at your disposal to do with as you desire and direct as Peter made clear in Acts 5. But they lied about the proceeds and they were

in cahoots about it. They had the same story. Ananias dropped over dead and Sapphira came in later. The issue was lying to the Holy Spirit.

What people do not understand is that whether you lie to God or you lie to somebody else, it is the same thing. The Lord holds our word the same whether we are talking to Him or we are talking to somebody else. Many people say they love God, but they do not love their brothers and sisters. That is a contradiction. If the Lord loved us while we were enemies of Christ, then how much more so should He love when we become His children? On the other hand, God loves the enemies with a love that never changes. How much better can that get?

Sacrificial Love Principle

Christians tend to judge people who are unbelievers. The Lord says not to judge unbelievers in 1st Corinthians, chapter 5. He says love unbelievers. Do not hold a distinction. Taking that into relationships, if I am to love the person who does not agree with me, who is not going the same direction as I am going and who probably persecutes me when I do not agree, how much more does God love that person?

I hate strife. It is not peace at all cost, though. Many times there must be a war before there is peace. There must be a resolution to the conflict because we are not going to compromise our faith, but we are not going to fight either. Jesus laid down His life for us so that we could be saved. What did He tell the disciples and Pilate? *“Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here.”* (John 18:36 NKJV) And He brought in what we call the ‘sacrificial love principle’.

You could sacrifice a bull and a goat in the Old Testament for a sin atonement, but what God did is step it up and gave Himself for us (true love). *“A greater love hath no man than this that he lay down his life for his friends.”* (John 15:13)

What do you think would happen in this earth if everybody was speaking well of each other, encouraging each other, doing good to

each other, not allowing a negative word or a negative thought about anybody or anything? Would it be amazing?

Several times I caught myself putting a negative opinion out there, and the Holy Spirit was right on it. I say, "Good job, Lord; forgive me." The negative is not promoting what God has. We are God-promoters; promoting love in the earth. I do not want to say, do, or think anything that is going to create strife. I do not want to undermine. I want to support and befriend. "*Love believes all things, bears all things, hopes all things.*" (1st Corinthians 13:7) This is God's best. God's love never fails. He calls Himself the gift.

God is love as 1st John states. When you receive Him, you receive love. *I am his beloved and he is mine.* (Song of Solomon 2:16) *His banner over me is love.* (Song of Solomon 2:4) You do not have to seek love, you do not have to feel you do not have love, you do not have to run around looking for love or acceptance. If somebody does not love you, it does not matter. It does not hurt you. You are not offended. Only the flesh or prideful self can be offended. Whatever somebody does or says does not take away from the fact that you are loved.

Since you are loved, you are free to love people, and do good to them, whether they are naughty or nice. You are not checking a list and checking it twice. It is not - they did this to me so I am going to do that to them. It is not - I am going to get them before they do something to me. *God's perfect love casts out all fear.* (1 John 4:18) Fear is among those who do not know they are loved. The greatest fear that people have is not being loved. They want to be a part of things. They want to be included.

The ones that say they do not need anybody are not being truthful or they are self-deceived. They have been hurt; so they wall up; they do not want to be hurt again. Jesus at the cross took all our pain, all our sorrow, all our suffering, all our sickness and death, all the poverty, all the emotional poverty and the nonsense that goes on; the superiority, the inferiority. He took it away from us and he took it on Himself. He bore our separation from God, from ourselves, and from others.

When Adam and Eve fell away from God, they were separated from what God had intended. It was gone because they chose not to follow the Lord, but to follow their own understanding. As such, they stepped into position with the devil who is separated from God forever and who can never go back because he never wants to go back and change. He hates God and he brought hatred, discord, strife and division. The unity of the spirit, mind, and body in wholeness and the shalom peace (nothing broken, nothing lacking) of God was removed from man. Then man had to be looking to be fulfilled. Man always must look for something to complement him, always looking for some meaning that he lacks.

God's perfect love has no lack, it has no separation, but man became separated from it. So, a man will spend his life looking for a woman to fulfill him, looking for power and position so people will honor him, looking for wealth so he can control everything around him. However, there is something facing him called death, and he cannot transverse that barrier. He cannot overcome that. In futility he lives his life only to face death at which point he is separated from everything that he knew and acquired. How sad and pathetic.

But in Christ Jesus, God restored everything back to us. You must recognize that it is *not by might nor by power but by the Lord's Spirit* (Zechariah 4:6) and His Spirit is the spirit of love, giving, caring, sharing, protecting, defending, and blessing. It is a whole different outlook. Life is not about protecting you, caring for you, loving you, looking out for you. It is about honoring God by loving His people and caring for His people, whoever they may be in our life; the ones that God has placed in our life.

Those are not just the ones who do good to us or like us. They are everybody that we meet; some for maybe a moment. What kind of impression are you leaving with them? Are you leaving a God impression with them, or are you leaving something else with them? Are you drawing them closer to the Lord or are you just leaving them with whatever the world would leave – nothing?

It is God's loving kindness that leads people to repentance or to change. His loving kindness consists of His goodness, His tolerance and His patience. As we are growing in relationship, we must look at

how we are displaying God's goodness. We must look at God's tolerance in ourselves and how we are displaying His tolerance to others. We must look at God's patience in ourselves and how we are displaying His patience.

Change begins with you. *"How dwells the love of Christ in you?"* (1 John 3:17) Examine yourself. God has done all of this for me. All His goodness is in me. I am seated with Christ in the heavenly places. (Ephesians 2:6) *Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.* (Colossians 3:2) But I am not going to live in the ivory tower up there, I am created for relationship. If I am isolated, I cannot give out the love of God.

Paul says the love of Christ constrains me. (2 Corinthians 5:14) That means it keeps me from going to the flesh at all levels of life. It keeps me from telling you that you are a no-good jerk, you will never amount to anything, and there is no hope and future for you. The flesh would say your life has no meaning or value. When the selfish flesh would speak well of people, it is setting them up to use them.

Though everybody rejected Jesus, He never rejected anybody. He spoke the truth in love even to the Pharisees. He was seeking to help those He spoke very sharply to. The Lord believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things, and His love never fails. His mercy endures for all generations. It is everlasting. He is always believing that people are going to change and come into all that He has. He gives everything to us. He does not hold back anything.

God's Love Standards

Remember the lie the devil gave to Eve: *the Lord does not want you to know about this, for then you will be like Him.* God wanted them like Him and they *were* like Him. The difference was He was the Dad and they were the children. He did not want to hold back any good thing from anybody, and He does not want anybody to perish. He takes no delight in people having problems and issues.

What we must understand is people have problems and issues many times when they are out of the will of God. That is why they are having relationship problems. *"Without pride there is no contention."* (Proverbs 13:10)

Jesus said, “*Judge not, that you be not judged. ² For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.*” (Matthew 7:1-2) It will come back to you pressed down, shaken together, running over. Did you ever judge somebody and then you found yourself getting judged on the same thing, but more so? It comes back.

Whoever digs a pit will fall into it, And he who rolls a stone will have it roll back on him. (Proverbs 26:27) I have decided that I just do not want to talk negatively about anybody or anything anymore because I do not understand the whole picture. We only understand it from our perspective which amounts to our opinion. God does not care about your opinion or anybody’s opinion. All He cares about is what He says. So, what are you going to do with this?

God loves you with a superior love. Unconditional love is a superior love because you will find that if you look at your life and your relationships, much of your love is conditional. People say that God put conditions when He gave the Ten Commandments. Understand, we did not know how to love. He did. So, He wrote some things down with His own finger, and called them Commandments so that we could know how to love God (the first tablet of the law); how to love our neighbor as ourselves (the second tablet of the law). We did not even know how to love ourselves because we conditioned our love towards ourselves as well. The selfish person does not know how to love anybody including self.

Consequently, they take the inferiority route; they take the superiority route; they take the acceptance route; they take the rejection route. “Well, if you do not want to play with me I will just take all my marbles and go home, and I will not play with you.” It starts when you are little. You must get out of that mentality. Jesus will help you but you must do it by His Word. You must look at His love standards. What He is saying is the Lord never tells you something to do that you cannot do in Christ Jesus. What you must do is decide whether you are going to do relationship His way, or you are going to do it the old way that never worked.

What does the Lord want you to do? The Lord says to love your enemies, pray for them that spitefully use you and persecute you. About the time you are thinking, *God, strike them all down, bring the fire down, destroy their life, maim them, take their money away from them, let them run destitute in the streets, let them come to me begging for forgiveness, begging for some bread.* How dwells the love of Christ in you? That is not saying “Lord, how do you want me to love that person”; it is saying, “Lord, get them out of my life.” Have you heard this?: “I would be a great Christian if it were not for them.”

We must go back to God’s Word and His loving principles and do it His way because that is what we were born again to do. And for that to happen we must learn what is God’s way.

There are several chapters in the Bible that I call *God’s Way for Living and Relationship*: Romans 12; Colossians 3; Ephesians 4 through 6; Matthew 5 through 7. When I look at these, I learn what I am supposed to be doing.

The Ten Commandments of God are in Exodus, chapter 20. You can learn how to live and how God wants you to do things.

“Judge not, that you be not judged.” (Matthew 7:1) Therefore, I catch myself and I say, “Hey, that opinion is a judgment” or “that thought is prejudice.” I am prejudging and it all goes back to setting my will and my position up against somebody else. That is destined to fail because you are not the only person in the earth. As soon as you run into another person, you should see them the way that God sees them; the Lord loves that other person more than you can imagine or think.

The “old me” would look at that person and determine very quickly (within 10 minutes after a little conversation) whether he or she was going to benefit my life or not. You get very good at asking a few questions and you can find out where they are coming from. Have you ever chalked somebody off in the first four seconds? You just took one look at them and said, “Okay, I am out.” With others it takes four minutes, with some four years. Have you ever wondered how a couple can be married for many years but suddenly something happens. The husband comes home and the wife has all the bags

sitting out and he says, “Oh, we’re going on a trip?” She says, “No, I am going on a trip. Adios.”

What happened? All the kids are raised, and there is nothing there. In God-relationships, you should cultivate every moment. The Lord wants to make the most of every moment with the people we are with, whether it be one person or one thousand. This needs to be the best God-moment we can have together because it may be the last moment we have together.

I have had too many near death experiences not to live in a reality that at any moment I could not be here. I am going to make the most of this moment that God has given me with you. So, if I am intense at times, understand God’s love is intense. A lot of people cannot handle it because it is pure. It is true. Romans 12 says to love one another with sincere love – the real deal; not this phony nonsense that goes on all the time out there in the earth. God’s love will transform and change everything it comes in contact with. The Lord’s love is in you, and you hold the treasure within you. It is with the love of Christ that God so loved you and has lavished His love upon you that now you just have to give it out.

The love of Christ constrains me from the flesh and from hurting people, using people, abusing people and using people for self promotion. The love of Christ compels me to just do God’s best towards everybody I meet. I have God’s ability to do that because all that I am and all that I have, God has given me. It is all His and I am not lacking any good thing. I am not coming begging or needy into the relationship. I am coming to bless. How can I bless you? This is the God-man and the God-woman’s attitude, thought, and heart. It is not about me at all. That is how Jesus lived.

Jesus came to do the will of His Father, and that was to love and care for God’s people, and to ultimately give His life for us to save us. The highest crown that God gives out on the day of rewards is the martyr crown. It is the one that is given out to those who love the Lord and love not their lives to the death. They have lived for God and they love God’s people. Those are the ones that He is going to exalt.

When we refer to “relationship,” we are talking about the giving of yourself, and “God in you.” God fills you with His love and you are here to pour it out. When you lay hands on people, you are pouring it out. These hands are not for violence; they are for loving God’s people. His power flows through each and every one of us. We have been anointed with the Holy Spirit. *“...how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.”* (Acts 10:38)

We are looking for the good; we are not looking for the bad. We are not looking for the evil in people. We are going to bring out God’s best, and if there is not anything of God’s best in that person, we will produce something of God’s best into that person. In the name of Jesus, we are going to take authority over the devil who is stealing, killing, and destroying the lives of people, and we are going to bring the people into the kingdom of God. We will bring them into the love of the Father where they will not lack for any good thing: spiritually, mentally, emotionally, physically, financially, or in relationship. We will show them the love and the plan of God and how they, too, can come into the blessing that we have. We are not going to put any stumbling block in front of anyone. We are going to see, yes, God loves that person and He has got a good plan for his life. God put me into this relationship to help make that best come out.

There is no flesh in this. Flush the flesh. Get rid of self. You do not need it, you do not want it, it is refuse.

We are going to bring out God’s best. *“Love... bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.”* (1 Corinthians 13:7-8)

References from the Book of Colossians, Chapter 3

- Colossians, chapter 3, talks about positioning yourself with Christ in the heavenlies: your mind, your body, your finances. Your body is here in the earth, but your position is in heaven. You are a citizen of heaven. You are on a mission. You have an assignment from God to love the people and care for His people.

- *“Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips.”* (Colossians 3:5-8)

Filthy language is not just referring to cussing and swearing. This is referring to unbelief. This is talking to people in a way that God does not talk to them.

A guy said he was giving me a word from the Lord, but it was all negative and in a negative tone. I looked at him and said, “I am sorry, I love you, brother, but my Father does not speak to me like that.” I know how my Daddy talks to me and even when He corrects me and disciplines me, He does not speak to me like that. He does not talk out of anger and rage.

The man ended up losing his family, his job, and went kinky in his life. He did not have God’s best. Now I am still believing for God’s best for him, but you do not mess around speaking to one of God’s children in the “name of the Lord” in ways that are not God talking. It is what we call projection in the psychological world. It is where people project what is going on with themselves onto somebody else. When Jesus says, *“Get the log out of your own eye, and you can see clearly to get the speck out of your brother’s eye.”* (Matthew 7:5), He was talking about projection.

The Lord does not find fault with people. This is contrary to every religious belief out there. They all say that God is finding fault. God already knows we are nothing without Him. He says, *“...apart from Me you can do nothing.”* (John 15:5) But with Him you can do everything. You have the power to do good and to heal all that are oppressed of the devil. You have the power to put Humpty Dumpty back together again in Christ Jesus through the love of God that loves and believes and never fails. But it is not going to happen through you unless you get rid of anger, rage, malice, slander, filthy unbelieving, unloving language from your lips.

- *“Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.”* (Colossians 3:9-11)

All prejudices are removed in Christ. There are no male or female in Christ Jesus because the Lord loves us all and has blessing for all without exception. There is no more striving for position, for recognition, for love, for honor. Have you ever seen a family where siblings will strive for position, recognition, love, and honor, and they compete for it? People grow up to be adults, and they are still doing the same thing.

The Lord does not want that. He wants no competition and no comparison. The flesh compares and competes with people. I do not have to compare myself to nor compete with anybody. There is freedom and liberty in that. I am free to love everybody: rich, poor, whatever the color, whatever the educational background. I am free to be able to love people the way God intends, no strings attached and no fear whether they like me, accept me or do not love me, whether they invite me or do not invite me. I am not going to take offense because I live my life ordered of the Lord and all that He has for me will come to me. It will all happen the way that He intends for it to happen because I am trusting in Him. *“Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.”* (Proverbs 3:5-6)

In other words, the Lord is going to order my day; who He wants me to see; who He wants me to talk with; what He wants me to say, what He wants me to do. *“Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.”* (John 5:19) Note: it is always going to be drawing somebody closer to God, building up somebody in the faith, hope, and love in the Lord.

Whatever is not of faith, hope, and love in your life, forget it. It is just a distraction. Whatever is not drawing you and everybody around you closer to faith, hope, and love in God, it is just futility.

- *“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience....” (Colossians 3:12)*

Compassion is the power of God’s love to change lives. The Lord told me years ago, “Son, never lose the passion for the compassion.” Wherever the Lord wants to love and do something, be there and do it. Work it.

“Kindness...”

Note, all these things build up relationship. Kindness is God’s loving quality. It is not dependent on the people or the situation. God showed kindness to us while we were His enemies. He reached out to us in His compassion and He showed us His goodness, His tolerance, and His patience. *“If thou, Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee that thou mayest be feared. I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in His word do I hope.” (Psalm 130:3-5 KJV)*

He is not marking faults. He is not counting records of wrongs. Love keeps no record of wrongs.

“Humility...”

This means, I am under God. It is not that I am a poor miserable, wretched sinner, I am not good, I have no ability. That is nonsense. In Christ Jesus, heaven moves when we speak. All the promises of God are yes in Christ Jesus, and I have access to every one of them in Christ Jesus. It is not humility to run around stating that I cannot do anything. No, I can do all things through Christ Jesus who strengthens me. I can do everything God wants me to do.

Humility is being under God. Jesus said that he did not do or say anything His Father did not give him to do or to say. *Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. (Ephesians 5:21-22)* There is no flesh showing.

“Gentleness...”

What could happen if people were gentle? In Matthew 11:28, Jesus says *“Come to me you who labor and are heavy laden...”* In other words, when you are tired of running life your way, when you are ready to surrender your life and do it God’s way, come to me. *“Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”* (Matthew 11:29-30)

Men are taught to be rowdy, they are not taught to be gentlemen. Gentlemen have class. They are in control, but gently, lovingly, in confidence and caring. When people know that you love them and care about them, they are willing to cooperate with you. If they do not think you love them and care about them, they are not going to do anything with you because they do not trust you. Trust is a privilege in relationships. The greatest thing that a husband or a wife could receive from their spouse is trust. When a wife trusts her husband, or a husband trusts his wife as to the Lord, it is the greatest compliment that could ever be given, and children trust their parents.

The most horrible thing that can happen in relationships is when people are feeling that they must look out for themselves at all costs, with pressure to get their will and to make sure they are okay. Security becomes more important than a loving relationship.

As soon as a child starts doing that, or a man or woman start doing that, all hell breaks loose and every confusion and evil work can happen because they are not trusting God. Even if the husband is not a good covering (he has holes in his umbrella), the Word tells us to pray for him. Believe God for him. Speak well of him, honor him. Absolutely do not be an Abigail who called her husband a fool but did not know anything, and she ran around looking after the best offer.

“Patience.”

If people would just be patient with each other. *“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”* (Ephesians 2:10)

KJV) A lot of people have not yet come into the place where God wants them to be. I do not want to put a stumbling block in front of anybody to discourage them from what God has for them.

- *“Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.”* (Colossians 3:13-14)

This is sacrificial love; when I am more concerned about your salvation and life and blessing in God than I am about my own life. Most people have never come into that revelation. I found that usually people that have had a near death experience will come a little closer into this because suddenly relationships become more important. They realize that our time on this earth is short. It is important that we make the most of our relationships.

I tell people I do not go to funerals. Not out of disrespect to the people or the family, but I live, love, and honor people while they are alive. It is very important to me to honor them while they are alive because that is when I am with them.

- ...*“Which binds them all together in perfect unity.”* (Colossians 3:14)

You will never have perfect unity in a relationship until you are in the sacrificial love mode because there cannot be agreement otherwise. You must love that person with the love of Christ. When you are doing that, then you are right before God and in your own heart. You are united in spirit, mind and body, and the peace, love, and joy of God is going out of you. The goodness, the fruit, is there and then it is whether you want to enter into it or not. Relationship is a privilege.

Just because you get married does not mean that you are a husband or a wife. Just because you have babies does not make you a parent. Just because you are a child in a house does not mean that you are part of the family, unless you are part of the family. Until you die to self, you will not have blessed relationships anywhere you go because you are nothing more than a user and an abuser. That is the devil's family, not God's.

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

When you start living your life so that you are allowing the peace of Christ to rule, that means you are not going to allow anything other than the peace of Christ to rule in your heart. You look at what is going to take away the peace of Christ in your heart such as strife, selfish desires, promoting one’s own idea and interests, fear of your life, distrust, unbelief, anger and insecurities that will steal your peace. That is why the Lord says in Philippians 4:8-9, *“think on the things that are true, just, beautiful. Things of virtue, things worthy of praise.”* Think on God. Think about how God is working in your life, and be thankful about everybody and everything. Let no complaining, murmuring, grumbling, or griping come out of your mouth, but rather praise and thanksgiving to God. (Philippians 2) You will then see those relationships start to skyrocket. Amazing God-changes will start to happen because it is in you. God is in you and He wants to love the people.

How has it been over the years? God wants to love people through you and you have been shutting it down, or you let it out a little over here, and a little over there; maybe to some of the people that are nice to you, and others you just walk on by.

The measure you put into this is going to be the measure that you will get out of this. God’s desire is that we flourish. It says they knew the early Christians by the love that they had for one another, that they showed each other.

Have you ever done something nice for somebody, and they did not say, “Thank you.” You got offended and you decided that you were not going to give them anything anymore. What were you thinking? Was your gift a selfish gift looking for something from them, or was your gift something with which the Lord wanted to love them and do for them?

- *“Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms,*

hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.” (Colossians 3:16-17)

Do it all to the glory of God with all your heart. Are you letting the Word dwell in you richly or are you getting off in your own understanding? Let the peace of Christ dwell in you.

Someday the Lord is going to give out rewards. We do things because we love God, we love His people, and we love the ministry of God. It is not for recognition, but understand, in Malachi 3 the Lord says those people who gave out of love for Him and believed His word are going to become part of His treasured possession. God’s treasured possession, how awesome is that?

By giving to God, they were saying: “We are the believers.” The unbelievers were saying: “We are not giving to God” and God has called them God-robbers. How would you like to have your name on the “God-robbers wall?” Which wall do you want to be on?

Purpose to seek God as to what He would have you to do for somebody to love them. Ask Him, “Who do you want me to love this week?” and let Him direct that. He may put somebody very interesting into your head.