

# STEPPING STONES

Illustrated Biblical Studies for Walking through Life with the Word  
A Four-Book Collection

## BOOK FOUR (78-100)

Dr. Bob Abramson

This is the fourth and final book in the collection. Each book is comprised of a wide range of illustrated, one-page studies in the Word of God. Most deal with a single topic or biblical principle, though some may be part of a series. The studies are concise, containing key points which are intended to be expanded or “unpacked.” They can be used devotionally for individuals or groups. They also make excellent teaching or preaching outlines. We invite you to approach these studies with an open heart to hear from the Holy Spirit. Use them to discover what God wants to say to you, and then to others through you.

Our prayer is that what you receive from them will draw you and those you minister to a little closer to God, helping you become a little more like Christ, every day in every way.

### About the Author

Dr. Bob Abramson is a missionary pastor, leadership mentor and coach, and Bible school educator around the world. He has a heart for mentoring leaders to fulfill, skillfully and effectively, their call from God. Over the years, he has pastored multicultural, international churches in New York City and in the South Pacific. He previously established or taught in Bible schools and ministry training centers in New Zealand, Fiji, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Europe and the United States. He has authored extensive curriculum materials for ministry training and just completed his latest work, a textbook on cross-cultural mentoring.



Dr. Abramson teaching in Malaysia

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# 78. The Truth about Disappointment

**JOSEPH'S 1<sup>st</sup> DISAPPOINTMENT - His brothers' hatred buys him slavery in Egypt.**

**GENESIS 37:1-36, 39:1**

Joseph finds himself a slave in the house of Potiphar, Pharaoh's Captain of the Guard. Joseph's story teaches us that disappointments are part of life. We will all be disappointed (1) with people, (2) ourselves, and (3) circumstances that seem to dash our hopes and dreams.

## 1. Disappointment is an inevitable part of life.

**GENESIS 39:2-5**

The Scriptures tell us that even in slavery, *"the LORD was with Joseph."* We must always remind ourselves that God is with us in every disappointment!

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**JOSEPH'S 2<sup>nd</sup> DISAPPOINTMENT - He is falsely accused and thrown into prison.**

**GENESIS 39:7-9... 12, 20**

Potiphar's wife tried to entice Joseph into an evil encounter. He refused! When Potiphar came home, he believed the lies his wife told him about Joseph's actions and threw him into prison.

- God's presence does not guarantee we will avoid injustices or hard times. However, His presence does guarantee that we can be overcomers and see our dreams come true!
- God was with Joseph. He had a destiny. His circumstances could not cancel, alter or void it!

We often quote **ROMANS 8:31-35**, yet some of us never gain release from the things that have captured and discouraged us. Joseph not only endured persecution and enslavement in all he went through, but he prospered in them! He had favor in spite of, and beyond his position!

There are always two options:

First Option - Misery

Disappointment can be an open gate to bitterness, self-pity, compromise, unforgiveness and worse... all based on what you have experienced.

Second Option - Joyful Expectation for Victory

Disappointment can also be the catalyst for our resolve to press on, hope for the future, for an expectation of the best God has to offer - all wrapped up in the joy of the Lord.

*"He will not be afraid of evil tidings; His heart is steadfast, trusting in the LORD."  
(Psalms 112:7 NKJV)*

## 2. Disappointment may be inevitable, but misery is optional!

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**JOSEPH'S 3<sup>rd</sup> DISAPPOINTMENT - A forgotten promise leads to two more years in prison.**

**GENESIS 40:1-5, 14, 23** (Two Full Years) → **GENESIS 41:1... 8-14, 25-43**

## 3. Disappointment is an opportunity for your next appointment - an appointment with God!

**PROVERBS 4:14-27 -- MATTHEW 5:14-16**

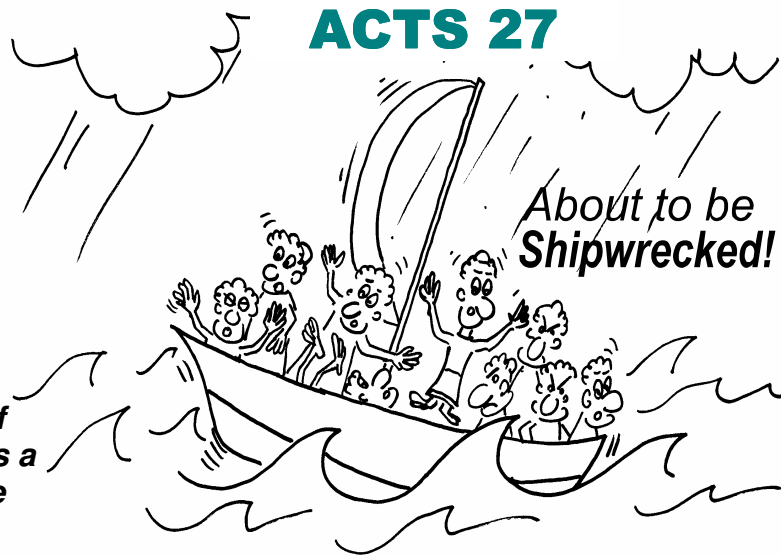


# 79. Faith in the midst of the Shipwreck

## 1 TIMOTHY 1:18-20

To be shipwrecked is “to encounter an obstacle that sinks your boat!” Shipwrecks are designed to deny us our destinies.

*Paul's is going to face the judgment of Caesar in Rome. Winter is coming. It's a dangerous time. A great storm hits the ship. It looks like all is lost.*



When we no longer expect a change in our circumstances, or to be rescued from the storm, we are ready to put ourselves and the storm in God's hands!

- 1. When the storm is overwhelming, the only thing that will overwhelm the storm is a Word from the Lord!**
- 2. When it seems there's nothing left to do, there's still one thing left to do. You can believe God!**
- 3. You have much to do to fulfill the will of God. The storms of life may come upon you, but they will never stop you!**

### WHAT DO YOU DO IF YOU ARE FACING SHIPWRECK TODAY?

- Get in His grip. Take a firm hold on God and ride out the storm!
- Continue to believe what God said is true, and that what He said applies to your storm, regardless of how difficult it gets.
- Continue to do the right things in good conscience (even when the wrong things are done to you). Just keep standing on the faithfulness of God.
- Understand that God will take you safely through the storm and make a way for you to complete the journey to your destiny. It will be just as the Lord has said!

## JOB 26:7-12

*“And by His understanding He breaks up the storm.”*



# 80. The Substance and Evidence of Faith

Faith is seeing beyond what our eyes see, what our minds understand, or what our hearts feel. Faith is seeing the fullness of the realities our spiritual eyes reveal to us.

*“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”  
(Hebrews 11:1 NKJV)*

*Faith is, “Reaching into the light of God’s promises... Taking hold of the substance of what you see in the spirit... Declaring, testifying to, and making known the evidence of your expectations - until it comes to pass!”*

Effective faith is not blind! Hebrews 11:1 tells us faith is two things:  
(1) Substance (2) Evidence

1. Faith is “**substance.**” It has the quality of something tangible (real and solid). It can be measured. Jesus said we could have no faith, little faith or great faith. **He measured it!**
2. Faith is “**evidence.**” In any court of law, evidence is presented to the judge and jury - in order to determine the truth of a matter. Our faith presents tangible proof that there is a God, who is always at work in our lives. Faith is our window into reality. It allows us to see the clear truth and respond according to what we see.

## 2 KINGS 6:8-17

Nobody could deny the Syrians were there, but Elisha saw what the servant did not see. He saw through the eyes of effective faith and made a spiritual judgment. He saw the threat, but he also saw the provision! And great was the provision from God!

**1. Stop focusing on the problem... Start looking at the substance and evidence of your faith.**

## PSALM 91:5-7, 11

**2. The natural threat must be seen in proper relationship to the supernatural provision.**

## PSALM 46:1-3

## 2 KINGS 6:18-23

Elisha prays, “*Strike this people, I pray, with blindness.*” God responds and the Syrians are blinded, helpless and vulnerable. God’s power always prevails!

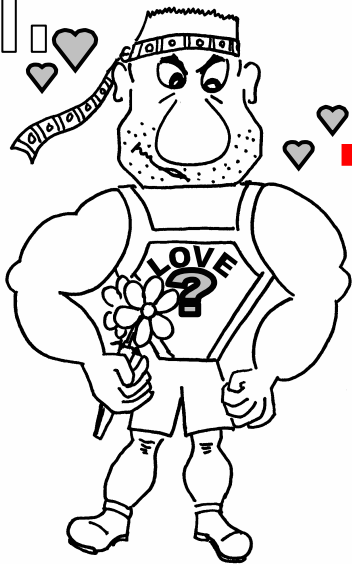
- Effective faith leaves no room for fear or doubt.
- Effective faith anticipates the supernatural intervention of God.
- Effective faith expects its miracle. It speaks its voice and receives its answer.

**3. The substance and evidence of effective faith are seen in the light of your own words.**

## MARK 11:23-24







# Beware of The Love Terrorist



## LOVE TERRORISM

**The Process: JAMES 1:14-15**

**The Warning: JAMES 1:16- 17**

**The Way of Escape: JAMES 1:21-22, 1 COR. 10:13**

### Love: Healthy or Sick

<u>Healthy Love</u>	<u>Sick "Love"</u>
† Reality based	☒ Fantasy based
† Completes another	☒ Seeks to be completed
† Finds a friend	☒ Seeks a victim
† Sacrifices	☒ Demands sacrifice
† Patient	☒ Impatient
† Kind	☒ Rude
† Forgiving	☒ Resentful
† Doesn't hold grudges	☒ Seeks revenge
† Born out of security	☒ Born out of fear
† Vulnerable	☒ Defensive
† Allowed to develop	☒ Pressed to perform
† Gentle	☒ Combative
† Honest	☒ Deceitful
† Satisfied	☒ Restless

1. Healthy relationships take no advantage of each other.
2. Healthy relationships are those in which we see each other as "precious and beyond earthly value."
3. Healthy relationships are full of gentleness in times of criticism or stress. They bring peace and quite the storms.
4. Healthy relationships are always "covering relationships." They are a guard, a high tower, a wall, a shield, and a shelter.
5. Healthy relationships are always looking for opportunities to display themselves among others rather than hiding in dark corners.
6. Healthy relationships never allow room for either person to sit in the judgment seat!
7. And finally... Healthy relationships glorify God and give witness to His promises.

**REAL LOVE: A DELIBERATE AND CONSISTENT EFFORT TO BRING AS MUCH OF GOD'S GRACE AS POSSIBLE TO MY BROTHER OR SISTER IN CHRIST, AT WHATEVER THE COST TO ME MAY BE.**



# 82. A Word from God for You!

*Launch out into the deep and let down your nets.*

## LUKE 5:1-11

One word from God can change your life. One word can birth a new dream. It is a great time to listen for a word from God.

### Verses 4-5

Peter accepted the word without regard to his past experiences.

*“Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net.”*

- Deep waters are seemingly not as secure as shallow waters.
- Deep waters are where the storms arise, but...
- Deep waters are also where the abundant catch awaits us.



Simon Peter

## 1. Our complete trust and full obedience will enlarge His word and release the increase!

A word from God speaks only the beginnings of the great potential it carries. It can grow far beyond our initial expectations.

Peter under-estimated the power of Jesus as the Word-Giver. As a result, he under-estimated the potential that Jesus' words carried.

The word was, *“Let down your nets”* (“nets” plural). Peter let down only one net! Though Peter never willfully intended to be disobedient, he did fail to understand the greatness of the Lord's intervention. How often are we like Peter... under-estimating God's ability to do so much more than we normally expect?

### Verses 6-11

## 2. When we get a word from God, it is the minimum, not the maximum!

Maximize the increase! Expect the unexpected. Expect nothing less than the supernatural intervention of God! This is the year to receive great things from God and to do great things for God!

## 3. Launch out into the deep things of God. Hold nothing back. Let down all your nets. Catch something big!





# 83. HE IS THE GOD WHO ANSWERS BY FIRE!

Part 1

## ❖ Three Conditions for the Fire to Fall ❖

Acceptable Altars - Acceptable Sacrifices - Acceptable Priests

### First Condition - Acceptable Altars

**EXODUS 20:23-26**

*(Exodus 20:25 NKJV) "...for if you use your tool on it, you have profaned it."*

What kinds of altars does it take for the fire to fall?

**1 KINGS 18:20-40**

#### Unacceptable: Profane Altars

- Built to human specifications
- Ignited by fires that do not fall from heaven

#### Acceptable: Precious and Holy Altars

- Designed to the specifications of the Lord
- Only burn when they are ignited by fire that falls from heaven

The fire of God **will not fall** on empty altars. It **will not fall** on unacceptable altars. It **will not fall** on altars dedicated to anything or anyone but God. The fire of God will only fall on altars designed and built to God's specifications... and dedicated to God's glory.

**VERSE 21:** People were double-minded toward God.

*(James 1:8) "...he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways."*

Do we the same attitude they had on Mount Carmel - a wait and see attitude toward God?

**VERSES 22-24:** "The God who answers by fire, He is God."

God looks into the altars of our hearts. If He finds them acceptable, the fire will fall!

**VERSES 30-37:** Everyone knows wet wood won't burn.

- The altar only burned when it was ignited by fire that fell from heaven! That is the kind of altar that is acceptable to God.
- If the altar of your heart is built upon your own thinking, your own specifications... so it suits your pride or serves your own attitudes, the fire will never fall! That is a profane altar! It might be perfect for profane fire, but heavenly fire needs to be soaked in living waters - waters of obedience, forgiveness, love and submission.
- They poured about 240-300 gallons of water on the altar - in the midst of a three-year drought! Water was the most precious thing they could pour out! God is looking for people who will pour out the precious upon the altars of their hearts!

**VERSES 38-40:** Tongues of fire licked up the water!

Let the Holy Spirit touch the altar of your heart with tongues of fire. Let it happen now!

**ACTS 2:1-4**

Give Him the precious, not the profane. Then expect the fire of God to fall... on you! When the fire of God falls, the abundance of rain is not far behind!



# 84. HE IS THE GOD WHO ANSWERS BY FIRE!

## Part 2

### ❖ Three Conditions for the Fire to Fall ❖

**Acceptable Altars - Acceptable Sacrifices - Acceptable Priests**

### **Second Condition - Acceptable Sacrifices**

**What kinds of sacrifices does it take for the fire to fall?**

*(Romans 12:1 NKJV) "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service."*

#### **Unacceptable Sacrifices**

- Dead (Have no life)
- Have no substance (Cannot be measured)
- May have a cost, but they are not spiritual in nature. They have no eternal value.
- Unholy (Profane - irreverent, disrespectful)
- Reflect the will of people, not God

#### **Acceptable Sacrifices**

- Living
- Have substance (Can be measured)
- Have temporal & eternal, natural & spiritual costs!
- Holy (Can approach God)
- Fully dedicated to God
- Give testimony to the will of God

### **1 KINGS 18:20-40 - Elijah and the Prophets of Baal**

#### **1. It began as a sacrifice of faith! 1 KINGS 18:24 & 32-35**

It took faith to drench the altar with water and expect the fire to fall. Imagine the consequences if the fire had not fallen! Elijah's bold faith was a confident demonstration of his complete dedication to God, with no fear or regard for criticism or ridicule. God always accepts a sacrifice of faith, and when He does, the glory of God will fall!

*(John 11:40 NKJV) "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?"*

#### **2. It proved itself as a sacrifice of obedience! 1 KINGS 18:36-37**

Elijah prayed, "...let it be known this day that You are God in Israel and I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word." It was a holy sacrifice, dedicated in obedience to the God of all glory. **When Elijah demonstrated His obedience, God demonstrated His power!**

#### **3. It caused a sacrifice of praise - for all! 1 KINGS 18:38-39**

The fire of God fell and they repented and turned back to the Lord. Everyone began praising God (except of course, Ahab and his 850 prophets). They shouted their praise: *"The Lord, He is God! The Lord, He is God!"*

*(Hebrews 13:15 NKJV) "Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name."*

#### **4. We must become living sacrifices with no choice! DANIEL 3:1-25**

Faith is tested in the face of intimidation and fear. Our tests can become our testimonies. God is looking for living sacrifices - people with faith to walk through the fire with Him!

**Have faith. Give God the precious, not the profane. Then expect the fire of God to fall... on you! When the fire of God falls, the abundance of rain is not far behind!**



# 85. HE IS THE GOD WHO ANSWERS BY FIRE!

Part 3

## ❖ Three Conditions for the Fire to Fall ❖

**Acceptable Altars - Acceptable Sacrifices - Acceptable Priests**

### Third Condition - Acceptable Priests

*Through the shedding of His blood, Christ has become High Priest of the New Covenant. He took His blood, shed for our sins, into that Most Holy Place in heaven. It was with His own holy blood that He secured our salvation forever. Under the old covenant, the blood of bulls and goats could cover a person's sins. The blood of Christ did not just cover our sins, but removed them forever from the eyes of God. Christ offered himself to God as a final, perfect sacrifice for all our sins. His death on the cross set us free from the penalty of our sins. We are forgiven. Now we may enjoy a new, loving personal relationship with Him... and with each other - for all of eternity. (HEBREWS 9:11-14 - Dr. Abramson's Paraphrase)*

📖 *"Redemption through His blood" (EPHESIANS 1:7 NKJV)*

📖 *"Made near by the blood of Christ" (EPHESIANS 2:13 NKJV)*

📖 *"and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross." (COLOSSIANS 1:20 NKJV)*

**We are...**

#### **A Chosen Generation**

We have divine favor, selected by God for mercy, not judgment. When we are saved, it is by the gift of His grace alone! (EPHESIANS 2:8, 9)

#### **A Royal Priesthood**

We are blood relatives of King Jesus. Our royal status is established and chartered in His name, written with His blood and upheld by the authority of His throne.

#### **A Holy Nation**

We are wholly consecrated to Him, and dedicated to living in ways that please Him.

**As followers of Christ, we are now acceptable priests of the Lord because of the blood of Jesus!**

**We are the New Covenant Priest-hood of Believers!**

*"I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, My soul shall be joyful in my God; For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, As a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels." (ISAIAH 61:10 NKJV)*

**We only wear our priestly robes because He wears His robe!**

**REVELATION 1:4-6** *"He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God."*

**REVELATION 19:11-16**



# 86. Take Hold until it Comes to Pass!

*(1 Chronicles 28:9-10 NKJV) "As for you my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a loyal heart and a willing mind; for the Lord searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts... {10} Consider now, for the LORD has chosen you to build a house for the sanctuary; be strong, and do it."*

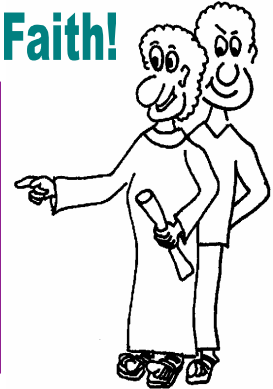
*(1 Chronicles 28:20 NKJV) "And David said to his son Solomon, Be strong and of good courage, and do it; do not fear nor be dismayed, for the LORD God; my God; will be with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you, until you have finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD."*

One word from God can bring a dream to pass! We have a word from God. "Build a house for the sanctuary. Be strong and do it!"

**Faith!**



*Faith is, "Reaching into the light of God's promises... Taking hold of the substance of what you see in the spirit... Declaring, testifying to, and making known the evidence of your expectations, until they come to pass."*



## FOUR STEPS TO EFFECTIVE FAITH

1. Leave no room for fear or doubt.
2. Anticipate the supernatural intervention of God.
3. Believe God, and speak your voice.
4. Behave as if the miracle has already happened.

WHAT IF... it doesn't happen?



WHAT IF... it does happen?

WHAT IF... there are barriers between us and our miracle?



WHAT IF... God utterly destroys those barriers, in answer to our prayers?

WHAT IF... it still does not happen?



WHAT IF... we refuse to allow the outcome to influence our faith?

When God answers our prayers, we must guard against letting our own doubts or fears keep us from what God wants to give us. His answer is designed to enlarge our faith.

**MARK 11:22-24**

**The substance and evidence of effective faith are seen in the light of our own words.**

**ISAIAH 55:11**

**The substance and evidence of effective faith are proven in the dependability of God's own Word.**



Will we open our hearts? Will we give sacrificially of our time, talents and money? This is our church. God is waiting with a multitude of people on the other side of our obedience. It shall come to pass!



# 87. What can we do with our ANGER?

## EPHESIANS 4:26-32

### Verses 26-27

*New Living Translation: "And "don't sin by letting anger gain control over you. Don't let the sun go down while you are still angry,"*

*International Children's Bible: "When you are angry, do not sin. And do not go on being angry all day. {27} Do not give the devil a way to defeat you."*

Painful experiences will often leave us angry, bitter and unforgiving. We react by looking for somebody to blame. We may even blame ourselves. Blame is not the issue. Being responsible to God for our attitudes and actions is the real issue.

### **There are two ways anger works against us.**

#### **1. WE BLOW UP.**

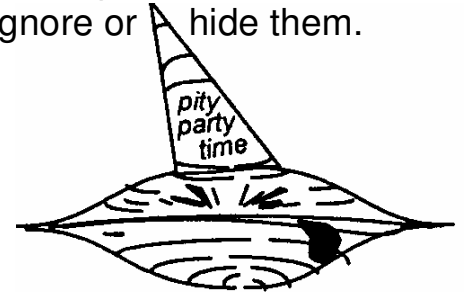
Blowing up is an outward expression or violent explosion of our anger. It is usually directed toward other people, but at times, can be an outburst without a particular target.



**PROVERBS 15:1-2**  
**PROVERBS 14:12**

#### **2. WE CLAM UP.**

When we clam up we stuff the feelings deep inside of us. We try to ignore or hide them.



Anger is intimately connected to unforgiveness. Whether we blow up in anger or stuff our feelings deep inside, we must be careful not to allow unforgiveness to take hold. If we give these feelings a place in our hearts, they will gradually turn our hearts to stone. Jesus told this parable to teach us that we must give anger and unforgiveness no opportunity to live in our heart. Peter knew how difficult this could be. He asked Jesus, "How many times must I forgive?" Jesus replied, "As many times as it takes!"

**Blowing up in anger or clamming up and keeping our anger within will not help us. Both keep us captive to bitter feelings which will hurt us. Neither pleases God.**

### **A Third Way - We can give up!**

Instead of blowing up or clamming up, we can give up! Here is what we must do.

1. Surrender to God.
2. Acknowledge His absolute authority in our lives.
3. Take our anger to the cross and leave it there.
4. Forgive... and when necessary, ask to be forgiven.
5. Move ahead in the blessings and favor of God!

#### **PSALM 37:8-9**

*"Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; Do not fret; it only causes harm. {9} For evildoers shall be cut off; But those who wait on the LORD, They shall inherit the earth."*



# 88. Principles of Faith to TEAR THE ROOF OFF!

## Part 1

**LUKE 5:17-26**



His friends brought this unfortunate man, struck down with paralysis, to the house where Jesus was. He was without hope. But he had friends who were determined to make a difference for him. They could not ignore his trouble. They would not be denied. They had to do something, and they did what they had to do! He could not move from his bed, so they moved his bed to Jesus.

- The friends of this crippled man would get together... and together they would get the victory!
- It was the power of agreement. It would multiply their ability to gain the victory!  
**It was simple spiritual mathematics in action!**

### SPIRITUAL MATHEMATICS

*(Leviticus 26:7-9 NKJV) "You will chase your enemies, and they shall fall by the sword before you. {8} Five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight; your enemies shall fall by the sword before you. {9} For I will look on you favorably and make you fruitful, multiply you and confirm My covenant with you."*

### **FIRST PRINCIPLE: Faith works through the Power of Agreement!**

There is great power when your faith moves in agreement with the faith of others. Such faith moves God to miracles.



They could not get into the crowded house, so they chopped a hole in the roof and lowered him, his bed and all his sorrows into the midst of the crowd who had filled the house. They rose above the obstacles and they lowered him to Jesus!

Imagine the dust and the debris of the roof coming down on the heads of the Pharisees, the doctors of the law, the disciples, the curious, and the needy. So he is dropped down into their midst, and there he lies. All because some people loved him enough to get radical - to go out of their way, even to offend others if necessary.

### **SECOND PRINCIPLE: Faith succeeds through Determined People!**

Something will always try to keep your faith from having room to work.  
You have to be determined and not be deterred!

**HIS CONDITION COULD NOT BE DENIED BY HIS FRIENDS... AND HIS FRIENDS WOULD NOT BE DENIED THEIR OPPORTUNITY!**

**JOHN 6:37-38**  **JOHN 13:34-35**  **1 JOHN 2:8-9**

**HURTING PEOPLE ARE ALL AROUND US! HOW CAN WE IGNORE THEM?**



# 89. Principles of Faith to **TEAR THE ROOF OFF!**

## Part 2



**LUKE 5:17-26**

First Two Faith Principles from PART 1

1. Faith works through the power of agreement.
2. Faith succeeds through determined people.

*(Luke 5:24-25 NKJV) ““But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins”; He said to the man who was paralyzed, “I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.” {25} Immediately he rose up before them, took up what he had been lying on, and departed to his own house, glorifying God.”*

As they looked down through the hole in the roof, the friends of the paralyzed man did not expect the Lord to say, *“Man, your sins are forgiven you.”* They had worked hard to bring him to Jesus. Healing was their priority. However, sin is always our greatest burden. It must be dealt with first because it affects our eternal destiny. We must still deal with our sins before we can expect God to deal with our burdens.

Some of those in the house challenged Jesus’ authority to forgive sin. To meet this challenge, He demonstrated the awesome power of His divinity and healed the paralyzed man instantly. The power of God was truly there!

### **THIRD PRINCIPLE: Faith accepts and trusts in God’s priorities!**

God’s priorities for us are always just right! Trust in His timing, and be content with it. Have patience. His judgment is always perfect! He is faithful!

**PSALM 37:3**

**PROVERBS 3:5, 6**

### **FOURTH PRINCIPLE: Faith accepts and trusts in God’s ways.**

God’s ways are always best for us! They are higher than our ways. Consider them as your only option!

Whether or not you think you can - whether or not it is convenient - and even if it seems it might be embarrassing... just determine to do it His way! Here’s how:

- Search your heart and ask God to forgive your sins.
- Bind every fear or doubt that would keep you from accepting and trusting His ways.
- Believe your miracle is surely coming. Remember, He is faithful! (PSALM 36:5)
- Behave as if your miracle has already happened. Thank and praise Him now!
- Broadcast your faith. Declare it to the heavens! There is power in what you say!
- Break out of your boundaries. Possess your promises!

**ISAIAH 55:8-9**

**GO AHEAD... *TEAR THE ROOF OFF!***



# 90. Principles of Faith to **TEAR THE ROOF OFF!**

## Part 3

**LUKE 5:17-26**

**PHILIPPIANS 3:12-14**

First Four Principles from PARTS 1 & 2

1. Faith works through the power of agreement.
2. Faith succeeds through determined people.
3. Faith accepts and trusts in God's priorities.
4. Faith accepts and trusts in God's ways.



### **FIFTH PRINCIPLE: NO REGRETS! - Faith never looks back!**

Failures and disappointments are not defeats. They are only moments in your life's journey to success and significance. They are opportunities for very special encounters with God. In these encounters, He will release you from your past and all your regrets. He wants you to be completely free! Reach out and touch Him. He is faithful.

You are on a faith journey with God. You are a winner. You are God's champion!

**PSALM 27:5, 6 - ISAIAH 43:18, 19 - HEBREWS 12:1**

We may walk through some valleys, and experience troubles and opposition, but nothing can stop our feet from moving to the high ground God has prepared for us. Lay aside every weight and sin. Go ahead, look to your promises and then walk into them!

### **SIXTH PRINCIPLE: NO RETREAT! - Faith never goes back!**

Refuse to live in the past, to go back to it or live on past memories. God wants to speak to you about your future. When He does, receive it and run to your promises!

### **SEVENTH PRINCIPLE: NO RESERVE! - Faith never holds back!**

**PHILIPPIANS 4:13**

You are a "can do" Christian. You can do what God says you can do. You can be who God says you can be. You are a story well written, that needs to be well told, and well remembered. Get ready to break out of your boundaries. Hold nothing back. Press on and give it all you have. Go ahead, possess your promises!

**IT IS A BREAKTHROUGH SEASON. IT IS THE HOUR OF YOUR DESTINY!**

GO AHEAD...

**TEAR THE ROOF OFF!**



# 91. UNDERSTANDING THE VALUE OF RELATIONSHIPS

Lessons from

RUTH 1:8-9

## THE BOOK OF RUTH

RUTH 1:14

*"...but Ruth clung to her."*

When God establishes relationships among us, we become His gifts to each other.  
We are to love and care each other!

### 1. God never designed life to be a lonely journey. It is a walk in which we are to *cling* to those we love.

Our relationships do not happen by chance. They are established by God and have divine purpose. They are designed to shine His light and show His glory! We must walk life's journey together, as we value and care for each other!

### 2. When we give our God-centered relationships top priority, it helps us to journey past the hurts and failures of life.

MARK 12:28-31 - 1 CORINTHIANS 13:8

Ruth's commitment to Naomi was not subject to circumstances. Ruth and Naomi valued each other. God's love ruled their lives.

*Love never fails!*

RUTH 2:8-12... 15-16

### 3. When we sow seeds of our love, we will reap a full harvest of God's love.

We will not glean leftovers. We will gain a full supply of God's blessings! Sowing seeds of love brings us under the full wingspan of God's divine protection and provision! Jesus is our good Shepherd!

PSALM 36:7 - RUTH 4:13-17 - PSALM 91:14-16

### 4. In due season, the seeds of love we sow will bring forth their harvest - people who will value, love and care for us.

*Sow seeds of loving care from within your heart. Harvest your blessings!*

*Cling to each other!*

1 PETER 1:18-19

*You, and those God gives you are His treasure forever  
- Redeemed by His Precious Blood!*

*Cling to Christ!*



**MATTHEW 15:21-28****MARK 7:24-30**

Her daughter is being tormented by a demon. She asks for her miracle. Jesus seems to say, “No.” She simply replies, “Yes Lord.” She chooses to agree with what He says. She touches His heart with these words.

*“Yes Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.”*

**“YES LORD” - TWO WORDS THAT CAN CHANGE A CIRCUMSTANCE, A CONDITION, A FUTURE AND A LIFE**

She humbles herself before the Lord, as a “*little dog*” - not deserving of grace or demanding any special treatment. Her faith declares that Christ has enough grace, even for someone in her position. She reminds Jesus of His love, and believes He is willing to have compassion on the least of His creation. She uses what the Lord said as the beginning of a declaration of her faith! Her agreement has power with God.

**AGREEMENT WITH GOD IS THE PRINCIPLE UPON WHICH HER REQUEST IS MADE AND HER FAITH IS FOUNDED.**

And Jesus replies,

*“O woman, Great is your faith. Let it be to you as you desire.”*

Her humble attitude, combined with her great faith moves the Lord to act. He cannot deny His character. He is loving and full of mercy. His mercies are new every morning. Great is His faithfulness. The demon must go. Jesus sets her daughter free.

**When it seems the Lord is saying “No”... or “Not yet,” or “It will not be the way you want it,” let your response always be, “Yes Lord.”**

- “Yes Lord” delivers and makes you whole.
- “Yes Lord” invokes the sovereignty of God. It brings the glory cloud.
- “Yes Lord” is the language of winners and champions.
- “Yes Lord” walks away with the victory.
- “Yes Lord” disarms the enemy and breaks his power. The fire will fall and the devil will get small.
- “Yes Lord” is the language of tomorrow! It is the language of breakthrough! It is the language of great faith! Let it be your language!

**YES LORD!**



**ROMANS 7:9-12**

Religion, when not based on truth and God's love, can become a set of inflexible rules and requirements that keep people in bondage.

**SIN IS ALIVE AND WELL. IT WANTS TO BE YOUR INTIMATE COMPANION!**

**ROMANS 7:15**

The Apostle Paul finds himself doing what is wrong. He hates it. He wants to please God. Yet, he finds himself attracted to all he has been delivered from.

**ROMANS 7:17-19**

He knows that the sin-nature inside of him is causing this to happen. He knows it is bigger than he is. It has more power than his natural abilities to resist it.

**ROMANS 7:24-25**

He cannot free himself. Where can he turn? He declares, "Thank God for Jesus." He will make the difference. Paul submits to His lordship and surrenders his will to God. Many of us find ourselves wanting to do the right thing, but having an attraction to doing the wrong thing. Thank God for Jesus! Thank God He sent us the Holy Spirit!

**WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO BREAK OUT OF THE GRIP OF SIN?**

**ROMANS 8:1-6, 14**

Do what is right. Live and walk according to your relationship with the Greater One, the Holy Spirit, who lives in you. He is greater and has greater power than your carnal passions and desires... or your adversary the devil. When you surrender your hungers and passions to God, you will soon hunger and be passionate for Him. He will lead you to your breakthroughs.

*"Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."  
(2 Corinthians 3:17 NKJV)*

**MATTHEW 16:24**

**DO WHAT IS RIGHT! BREAK OUT!  
THE ANSWER IS TOTAL SURRENDER  
TO CHRIST! IT WILL SET YOU FREE!**

*"Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. {25} If we are living now by the Holy Spirit, let us follow the Holy Spirit's leading in every part of our lives."  
(Galatians 5:24-25 NLT)*





## REUBEN - DOING WHAT IS WRONG

In Genesis, Chapter 37, we read that Joseph's brothers throw him in a pit and plan to kill him. In their culture the oldest brother, Reuben, was responsible to do the right thing - and to hold his brothers accountable to do the same.

### GENESIS 37:4-8 - GENESIS 37:29-30

Reuben does the wrong thing. His actions reflect his character.

- Deception
- Appeasement
- Compromise
- Fear of Man

Reuben's character failure would follow him for the rest of his life.

Reuben tries to manipulate and fool his brothers, so he can later come back and free Joseph. He fails.

- Never worry about what people might say or think. Do the right thing.
- Never risk what is too precious to lose. Reuben loses his brother, his integrity, his self-respect, the respect of others, and his leadership position in the family.

## JOSEPH - DOING WHAT IS RIGHT

### GENESIS 39:2-3 - GENESIS 39:7-9, 12

Joseph's reaction is automatic. He runs from the sin and draws near to God.

## TWO OPPOSING FORCES - TWO VERY DIFFERENT PROCESSES

(James 1:13-15 NKJV)

"Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am tempted by God'; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. {14} But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. {15} Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death."

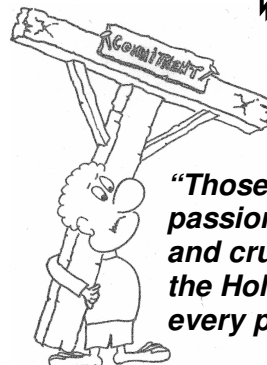
Process of  
Temptation

Process of  
Resistance

(James 4:7-10 NKJV)

"Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. {8} Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. {9} Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. {10} Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up."

MATTHEW 16:24



"Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. {25} If we are living now by the Holy Spirit, let us follow the Holy Spirit's leading in every part of our lives." (Galatians 5:24-25 NLT)

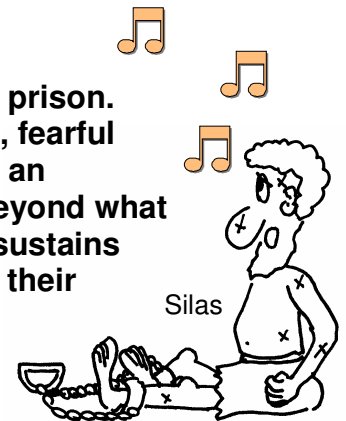


# 95. THE BREAKTHROUGH POWER OF JOY

## ACTS 16:22-34



Paul and Silas are chained to the wall of a filthy Roman prison. Will their circumstances cause them to be discouraged, fearful and without any expectation of change? **No!** They have an unshakable trust in an ever-faithful Christ. They look beyond what is happening and sing to the Lord. The joy of the Lord sustains them until they get their miracle. The Lord breaks open their prison and they are led out by the mighty hand of God!



They pursue His presence. Nothing can stop them!  
**The joy of the Lord is their strength! (Nehemiah 8:10)**

## PHILIPPIANS 4:4-9 MICAH 2:12-13

*(Psalms 16:11 NKJV) "You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore."*

**HAPPINESS DEPENDS ON WHAT IS HAPPENING.  
OUR JOY DEPENDS ON THE PRESENCE OF GOD!**

*"Joy is so much more than happiness. Happiness is based on what happens in our lives. Joy is the enduring quality that sustains a person through difficult times to the birthing of God's power in our circumstances."* (Pastor Tom Peters)

## JOHN 15:9-11 - The Joy that Jesus Gives

The world does not give us His joy and the world cannot take it away!

**HAPPINESS** → It is an emotion. It comes and goes with our circumstances. Happiness will fail us. It has no substance or strength.

**JOY** → It is a spiritual understanding of who we are in Christ. It is supernaturally given. It provides us with enduring strength to sustain us through difficult times, until the birthing of God's power changes our circumstances.

## PSALM 30:5, 11-12 PSALM 43:3-5

His favor is for life - even all of eternity! We walk in the F-O-G (Favor of God)! We must remind ourselves that He has done great things for us... and we are glad! He is about to do even greater things! Breakthrough is coming!

**THE JOY OF THE LORD CANNOT BE TAKEN FROM US!  
OUR EXCEEDING JOY IS GOD HIMSELF!**

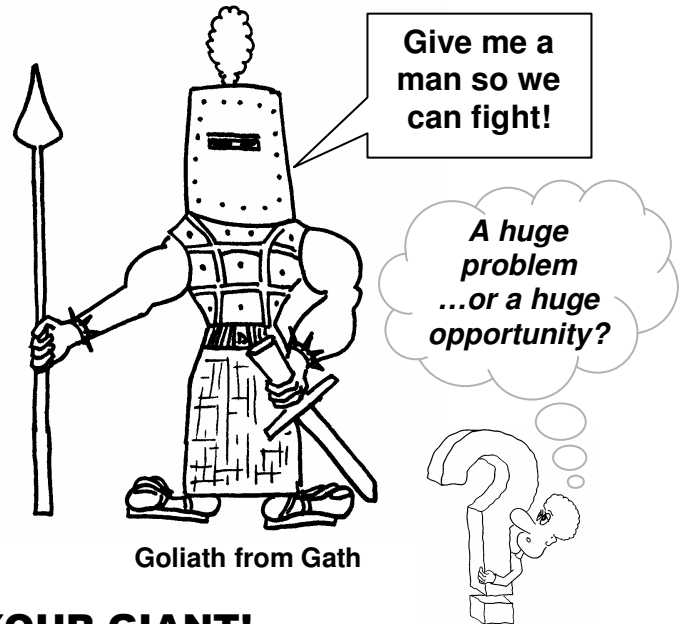


# 96. YOUR GIANT IS THERE TO PROMOTE YOU!

## 1 SAMUEL, CHAPTER 17

### Characteristics of Your Giant

- Verse 4** He will always seem larger than life!
- Verse 5** He will always appear invincible.
- Verse 8** All of his lies are designed to make you give up without a fight.
- Verse 9** He always wants to set all the conditions of the battle.
- Verse 10** He has no other agenda except to intimidate you into giving up what God has given you.



### 1. NEVER LISTEN TO THE VOICE OF YOUR GIANT!

He may be large, but he is less than a small ant under the feet of Jesus!  
Have you overestimated the giant and underestimated the size of God?

### 2. NEVER CHOOSE THE WORLD'S WEAPONS TO BRING DOWN YOUR GIANT!

Don't try to fight with a loser's weapons (the ways of the world). There is something far more powerful, effective, dependable and anointed. David relied on his faith, his experience, his voice and a few small stones!

**Your victory is just a stone's throw away!**

## ZECHARIAH 4:6-7

### 3. DECLARE YOUR DESTINY TO YOUR GIANT! PROPHECY TO IT!

Believe what you say. You will receive it. The battle is the Lords. Do your best and trust God for the rest!

## 1 SAMUEL 17:43-51

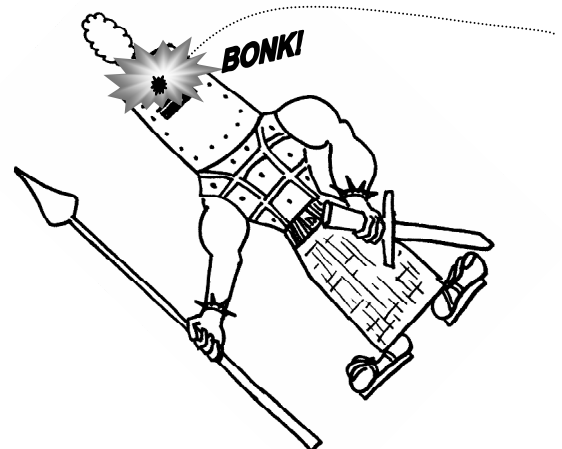
Anyone who underestimates what God can do with "the ordinary" has "rocks in his head!"

The bigger they are, the harder they fall! →

### 4. YOUR GIANT IS THERE TO PROMOTE YOU!

**IS THE GIANT IN YOUR LIFE TOO BIG TO HIT...  
OR IS HE TOO BIG TO MISS?**

## PHILIPPIANS 4:13 ROMANS 8:37





# 97. PRINCIPLES FOR PEACEFUL LIVING

## Part 1

### **Our Brand New Nature - Full of Great Potential in Christ!**

*(Colossians 3:8-10 NLT) “But now is the time to get rid of anger, rage, malicious behavior, slander, and dirty language. {9} Don't lie to each other, for you have stripped off your old evil nature and all its wicked deeds. {10} In its place you have clothed yourselves with a brand-new nature that is continually being renewed as you learn more and more about Christ, who created this new nature within you.”*



### **1. DRESS FOR SUCCESS. PUT ON SOME THINGS!**

Dressing for success means to “clothe ourselves” in very specific things.

*(Colossians 3:12 NLT) “Since God chose you to be the holy people whom he loves, **you must clothe yourselves** with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.”*

*(Colossians 3:12 NKJV) “Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, **put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;**”*

*(Colossians 3:14 NLT) “And **the most important piece of clothing you must wear is love. Love is what binds us all together in perfect harmony.**”*

Love is the key attribute of a “well dressed” Christian. It secures us, defines and protects our relationships, and keeps us together as the family of God.

### **2. FORGIVE SOME PEOPLE AND FORGET SOME THINGS!**

*(Colossians 3:13 NLT) “You must make allowance for each other's faults and forgive the person who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.”*

Do not focus on the faults of others. Secure those people with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, patience and love. Display the fruits of the Spirit and apply them to the situation. Give them to the person who needs them.

### **3. ENTHRONE GOD'S PEACE IN ITS RIGHTFUL PLACE!**

We must no longer allow unhealthy emotions to sit on the thrones of our hearts. It is time to unseat them! Give

**COLOSSIANS 3:15**  
Let His peace rule your heart



# 98. PRINCIPLES FOR PEACEFUL LIVING

## Part 2

### Review of Part 1 from COLOSSIANS 3:12-15 New Living Translation

*“Since God chose you to be the holy people whom he loves, you must **clothe yourselves** with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.” {13} You must make allowance for each other's faults and forgive the person who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. {14} And **the most important piece of clothing you must wear is love**. Love is what binds us all together in perfect harmony. {15} And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are all called to live in peace. And always be thankful.*

- 1. DRESS FOR SUCCESS. PUT ON SOME THINGS!**
- 2. FORGIVE SOME PEOPLE AND FORGET SOME THINGS!**
- 3. ENTHRONE GOD'S PEACE IN ITS RIGHTFUL PLACE!**

### **Wrong Choices (Dressing for Failure)**

**FIRST CHOICE OF A REBELLIOUS HEART** ➡ **TO DOUBT GOD'S WORD**  
**GENESIS 3:1-3** *“Has God indeed said?”*

The conversation between the serpent and Eve illustrates the process by which the human race continually rebels against God. The snake asks Eve a philosophical and religious question of the greatest importance. *Should we doubt the authority of God's Word?*

**SECOND CHOICE OF A REBELLIOUS HEART** ➡ **TO REJECT GOD'S WORD**  
**GENESIS 3:4-7** *“You will not surely die... You will be like God.”* ➡ **ROMANS 5:12**

**THIRD CHOICE OF A REBELLIOUS HEART** ➡ **TO JUSTIFY OURSELVES**  
**GENESIS 3:12-13** *“The woman... gave me of the tree... The serpent deceived me... I ate.”*

**LUKE 4:3-4 - JOHN 15:7-8**

Will you doubt God's Word, reject it and justify yourself... or will you believe and obey it. *“Dress for success!” “Put on the new man.”* Peaceful living means enthroning His Word in your heart and mind. You can do it. You are a champion for Jesus!

### **Our Final Point**

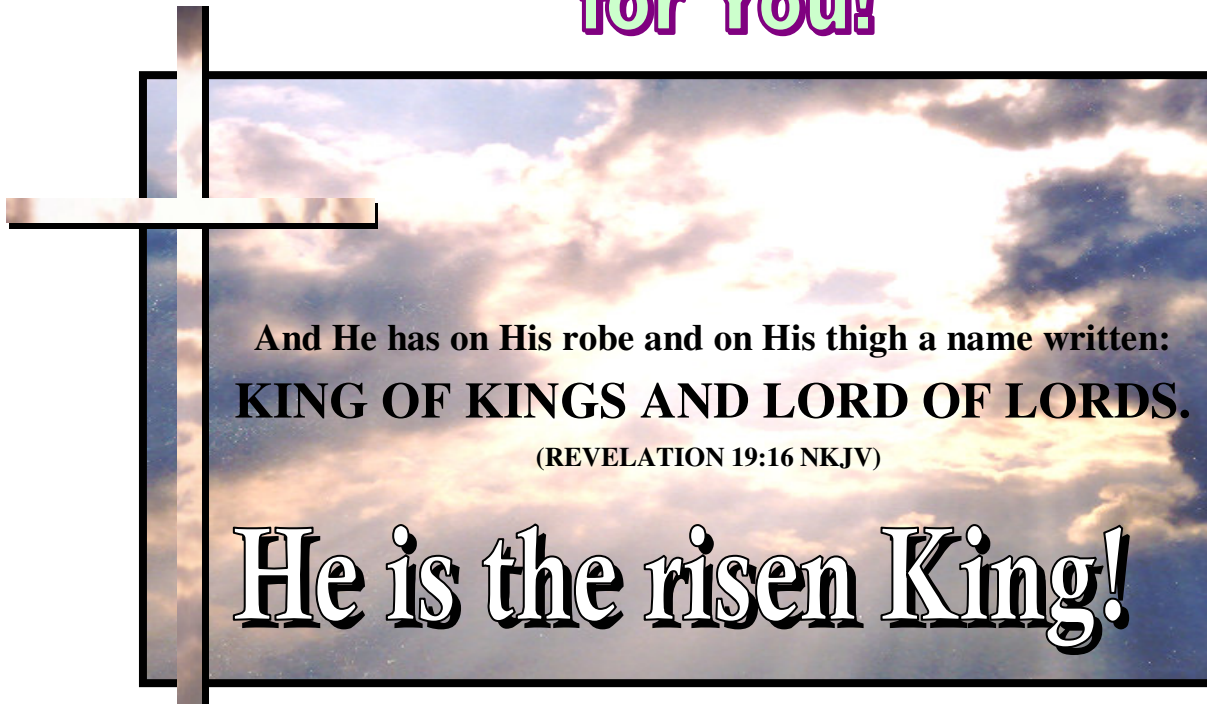
## **4. ENTHRONE GOD'S WORD IN ITS RIGHTFUL PLACE!**

*“Let the words of Christ, in all their richness, live **in your hearts** and make you wise.”*

*(COLOSSIANS 3:16a New Living Translation)*



# 99. Christ the King won the Victory for You!



It was the greatest series of battles ever conducted. It ended with the most violent overthrow of the most violent regime and the most ruthless killer of all time!

## **THE KING'S VERY FIRST MOVE INTO THE BATTLE**

**MATTHEW 1:18-21**

The King of Glory made His first move in the battle for an eternity of souls. He flung aside His divine privilege and became a helpless baby in a manger.

## **THE KING'S MOST LOVING, CRUCIAL MOVE IN THE BATTLE**

**LUKE 23:26-46**

Jesus suffered the horrible death of crucifixion. It was the most unimaginable pain on a cross of shame... and it was our cross, not His! They took His body from the cross and placed it in a tomb. All hell rejoiced over what looked like the victory that would doom us to eternal torment. It was a dark day. It was Friday. Jesus was dead. But Sunday was coming!

## **THE KING'S DECISIVE AND FOREVER VICTORIOUS MOVE**

**LUKE 24:1-6**

The King did not stay in His grave clothes. He did not stay in the tomb. He did not stay dead! He is alive! He has taken his rightful place as our forever faithful God, forever on His throne!

*Our prayer is that you will know Christ the King and experience His resurrection power in your life, and that you will be blessed with the fullness of His love for you.*



# THE PROGRESSION OF FAITH

*“Now faith means putting our full confidence in things we hope for,  
It means being certain of things we cannot see.”  
(Hebrews 11:1 J.B. Philips Translation)*

<p><b>1.</b></p>	<p><b>BELIEVING FAITH</b></p> <p><b>I BELIEVE GOD.</b> <b>I BEHAVE ACCORDING TO MY FAITH.</b> <b>I TRUST HIM FOR THE OUTCOME.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Faith is always a challenge within the challenges of life. God uses these challenges to bring us opportunities to go deeper in our faith.</li> </ul>	<p><b>MARK 5:21-42 NKJV</b></p>
<p><b>2.</b></p>	<p><b>INCREASING FAITH</b></p> <p><b>I BELIEVE GOD.</b> <b>I BEHAVE ACCORDING TO MY FAITH.</b> <b>I TRUST HIM FOR THE OUTCOME... REGARDLESS OF WHAT THE CURRENT SITUATION SEEMS TO BE!</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What happens <u>TO ME</u> is no longer the only issue.</li> <li>What happens <u>IN ME</u> - that becomes my issue!</li> </ul>	<p><b>PSALM 91:14-16 NKJV</b></p>
<p><b>3.</b></p>	<p><b>INFLUENCING FAITH</b></p> <p><b>I BELIEVE GOD.</b> <b>I BEHAVE ACCORDING TO MY FAITH.</b> <b>I TRUST HIM FOR THE OUTCOME, AS BEFORE, REGARDLESS OF WHAT THE CURRENT SITUATION SEEMS TO BE - BUT NOW I AM MORE FOCUSED ON THE OUTCOMES FOR OTHERS INSTEAD OF MYSELF.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What happens <u>TO ME</u> is still an issue.</li> <li>What happens <u>IN ME</u> is still an issue.</li> <li>What happens <u>TO OTHERS</u> because of my faith - that's the primary issue!</li> </ul>	<p><b>PHILIPPIANS 2:1-4 NKJV</b></p>
<p><b>4.</b></p>	<p><b>IMPACTING FAITH</b></p> <p><b>I BELIEVE GOD.</b> <b>I BEHAVE ACCORDING TO MY FAITH.</b> <b>I TRUST HIM FOR THE OUTCOME, AS BEFORE, REGARDLESS OF WHAT THE CURRENT SITUATION SEEMS TO BE - BUT NOW I AM MORE FOCUSED ON THE OUTCOMES IN OTHERS, INSTEAD OF MYSELF.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>My faith impacts others, so they are transformed and fully committed to their faith-walk - <u>regardless</u> of the outcomes for them.</li> <li>What happens <u>TO OTHERS</u> is still of great concern. What happens <u>IN OTHERS</u> because of my faith - that's the ultimate issue!</li> </ul>	<p><b>COLOSSIANS 1:9, 10 NLT</b></p>