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Introduction

God ordained that each generation of Christians should value, grow, and faithfully pass on its precious godly heritage to the next, in order that each following generation could, with confidence, build on the last. Whether you are a young student or a leader in the Body of Christ—this course is meant to serve as an exercise (training for some, refining for others) for those who take that responsibility seriously. And of course God expects us all to take it seriously, echoing David's grateful statement in our own hearts... “Indeed, my heritage is beautiful to me.” (Psalm 16).

Have you ever played the old game of “telephone?” In that game, we pass a message through a number of people and hope the message makes it to the very last person with untainted accuracy. It almost never does, of course, which is hilarious in the context of a game, but not in the context of discipleship. In this course we will be honing our own ability to effectively relay God's truths by taking the “middle man” position of “Timothy,” meaning we will simultaneously learn truths about God’s nature and Kingdom, and communicate them with accuracy to our “Faithful Man or Woman.” And we will test our effectiveness in relaying that truth by asking that “Faithful Man or Woman” to repeat back to us what we have communicated to them. If you are married, it’s a good idea to ask your spouse to participate with you as your “Faithful Man or Woman.” If you are not married, please ask a Christian parent, coach or pastor—A spiritually mature person who will listen well to your explanations and who can offer you thoughtful feedback in addition to that of your instructor. This approach will greatly enhance your experience in this course.

I pray that God’s precious, holy, spiritual, and eternal truth will shine through these temporal pages into our hungry hearts. No matter how long we live on this earth, we should always be in both positions of humble learner/mentee and conscientious, God-honoring teacher/mentor.

Mentoring (in both directions) is best learned through first-hand experience, which we will certainly be getting in this course. We all must be somebody’s “Timothy” before we can ever hope to be a real “Paul.” But God expects nothing short of our becoming a faithful servant leader (mentor) who can also one day say, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing” (II Tim. 4:7–8).
PART ONE

Chapter 1

From Thought to Destiny

Our thoughts and questions determine our words and choices, which determine our habits, which determine our character, which determines our destiny.

If you do not believe that God created everything, including people, you are hardly yet ready to appreciate most of what we will be covering in this course. I recently heard a story about an atheist who demanded to know why no national holiday had been set aside for atheists who “felt” discriminated against because of the Christian holidays of Christmas and Easter and the Jewish holidays of Hanukah, etc. To his amazement, the judge told him that he should be happy with April 1. For many years that has been set-aside for him and his fellow atheists.

“The fool has said in his heart, ‘There is no God’” (Psalms 14:1; 53:1). For everyone else (which still is most of us on Planet Earth), it is God who has given us the mental faculties with which we think, so that we can have the means of operating, discovering, remembering, relating, communicating, determining, enjoying, etc.

Whether we believe that God enables us to think, or that we just randomly developed the ability on our own, we must agree that there would be absolutely no meaning to us outside our God-given ability to think. Whether people think wisely or foolishly with their mental faculties, we are all thinkers. Our thinking leads to our choices, expressed through our words and actions. Our choices determine our habits. Our habits determine our character. And our character determines our destiny. What we think is so all-important.
“As a man thinks in his heart, so is he” (Proverbs 23:7). “From the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks” (Matthew 12:34). Our thoughts, if entertained for any length of time, begin taking root in our heart, which is our “seat of affection.”

Some thoughts may appear to originate with our own imagination. God created our imagination to be used for good. There is good imagination that is of God, by God, and for God, and there is vain imagination that comes from any source outside of God.

For the highest, immediate and long-term good of God, others, and ourselves, we must learn how to discern and nurture our Godly imaginations and thoughts while discerning and rejecting all vain imaginations and thoughts. We certainly cannot allow any vain imagination and thought to stay with us for any amount of time, because it will take quick root in our hearts. When once it has taken root, it is so difficult to uproot. Yet, at any time, it is still better to uproot vain thoughts than to allow them to develop into bad choices, which ultimately lead to the wrong habits, then character, then destiny.

Our thoughts have everything to do with our destiny. “There is a way that seems right unto man, but the end (destiny) thereof, is the way of death” (Proverbs 16:25). And, along the way, we can add that the man headed in the wrong way will experience failure after failure, which is God’s way of trying to slow him down by these “speed bumps” long enough to get his thoughts right.

Failures are meant to be only experiences, not persons. But the person who refuses to learn from the failures he experiences is driving hard to become the failure himself. God is trying to save us from ourselves and our own foolish thinking.

“God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). God has created us “in His own image” as spiritual beings with the capacity to discern and value on several levels in order to best communicate with Him in His language and live in His culture as we were originally created to be and do. “The Lord God has given me the language of disciples that I may cause the weary one to rest with a word” (Isaiah 50:4). He will enable us to speak clearly the language of His heart with less and less accent of the world system around us.
My prayer is that MENTORING FOUNDATIONS will help us better discern and value the precious Godly thought over the worthless vain thought, the holy thought over the profane thought, the spiritual thought over the carnal thought, and the eternal thought over the temporal thought. As we listen more closely to our Father-God’s voice and imitate the lifestyle of Heaven’s culture, we will learn to speak with less and less accent of the surrounding world’s accent and fit better into the culture of our dear Father-God’s Kingdom.

As our loving Father’s dear children we are to discern and reject the language and lifestyle of the world system’s false cultures. “You are the light of the world. ...let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father Who is in heaven” (Matthew 5:15, 16).

Our thoughts are often responses to spoken or unspoken questions or curiosities. Every thought tries to provoke another question or curiosity. Our mind seems to be on a quest to always know more. “Inquiring minds want to know!” God designed us to be on an enjoyable, eternal quest to know Him and His inexhaustible truth. All truth is God’s truth! And, since He is Creator of all, there is nothing true outside of Him and His unlimited domain. He created us in His own image for the purpose of our enjoying Him as He enjoys us both now and forever without even one boring moment.

How, then, can we learn to discern and separate what is the highest good for God, others, and ourselves from what is not? Somehow, we must begin with our thoughts. We do well to pray along with David, “Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, oh Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer” (Psalms 19:14). “Teach me to number my days that I may apply my heart unto wisdom” (Psalms 90:12). David’s son, Solomon, has a collection of proverbs that contrast the wise and foolish man’s thoughts and choices. We say to God with David, “Your word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path” (Psalms 119:105).

It seems, nowadays, that so much scripture, if not all, jumps out at me with the same underlying message from our Father-God about how to discern and value the worthy thought over vanity, the holy over the profane, the spiritual over the carnal, and the eternal over the temporal. How grateful I am for this God-given advantage to replace vain thoughts with good ones in order to be the success
He designed me to be both now and forever! This is also your advantage! He wants to turn your losses and mine into successes! This course is intended to help us to become the winners God designed us to be. It is not too late!

Most, if not all, of my thoughts appear to come from questions that may arise from any situation at any time, even very unexpected questions. It is possible to sleep at night and wake up the next morning with all kinds of thoughts having continued developing in your head. Our thought processes, like computers, run while we sleep, either for good or bad. So, we ask God to help us, as Paul says, “to bring our thoughts into captivity [under His control]” (II Corinthians 10:5). This can make the difference between a restful night’s sleep and a bad night, a productive outcome and a tumultuous experience.

The King James Version of the Bible says that “God gives His beloved sleep,” while the New American Standard Version says, “God gives to His beloved in His sleep” (Psalms 127:2). Language scholars assure us that both versions work together to give us the full meaning. God who gives His beloved sleep also gives to His beloved child in his sleep. And God only gives good gifts to His beloved children. While we are asleep, Our Father–God communicates to us in His pure heavenly “language of disciples” without a worldly accent in order to impart to us restful thoughts while training our minds to speak the same restful language to others who are weary of the world system’s frustrating noises.

So, God Himself is already communicating with us as we sleep. Sometimes I am tempted to wish that all learning would be this easy, but we are reminded that in our waking hours we are to “study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needs not be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth” (II Timothy 2:15). David tells us the best time to “meditate in His law,” His Word of Truth, is “day and night” (Psalm 1:2), leaving no time or space to “give place to the devil” (Ephesians 4:27).

There is no such thing as an “empty head.” Either good and restful thoughts or vain unproductive thoughts are trying to thrive in our minds all the time. “Whatsoever things are good, pure, lovely, and of good report, think on these things” (Philippians 4:8). These come from God’s language and culture of disciples, which trumps all the world’s vain, manmade cultures.
Chapter 2

“The Five Ts”

Thought, Time, Talent, Treasure, and Trust

God has trusted us to be His faithful stewards of what I call the five Ts, our thought, time, talent, treasure, and trust. The more we think of these five Ts the more we see that they all interrelate with one another. There is no way we can have a thought without involving time. There is no way our talent or treasure can be applied outside of thought and time. There is no way that our treasure has any meaning or usefulness outside time. There are many more ways to relate these, but we must be considerate of our time even in the writing and reading of this text.

Let us give brief consideration to each of these five Ts. Even though we will never exhaust the understanding that can be reached, it would be good to dedicate a few minutes each day to consider these wonderful gifts of God. When one day we enter the ceaseless ages, we can only then begin to really appreciate the thought, time, talent, treasure, and trust grid, these precious God-given T-quintuplets that enable us to live, learn, know, and serve glorifying God. Hopefully, this little chapter will inspire us to see and hear the importance.

Let us walk through this together to insure a clear picture. Under our Creator God, each of us is what we might call our own General Life Manager. This responsibility breaks out into five areas called the five Ts, which are our thought, time, talent, treasure, and trust. Each of these Ts has a manager who reports directly to the General Life Manager. So, now we each have six job titles, which are General Life Manager, plus his Thought Manager, his Talent Manager, his Time Manager, his Treasure Manager, and his Trust Manager. Without faithfully overseeing each of our “Ts,” we cannot fully actualize all we were created to be and to do in the image of our Creator God.

This is not complicated. It can really help us to bring ourselves back into more simple living. Yes, the thief, disguised as an angel of light, “has come not but for to kill, steal, and destroy” (John 10:10). He especially raided the five T offices,
ransacking files, and destroying records while seriously damaging sensitive
equipment. But our loving Father-God is restoring us to abundant life through
“Christ in us the hope of glory.”

And Christ is retraining us to be the best managers regarding our thought, time,
talent, treasure, and trust. This is so absolutely necessary! And the sooner we
face it the better for all concerned! The Lord will lead some of us into an
exhaustive study of the five Ts. But all of us must at least know about them as
valuable things for which we are responsible and accountable under God. God
has the ways and means of teaching us more in-depth about the “why,” “what,”
and “how to” of the five Ts. At Ecclesia College we have an ongoing
commitment to searching out and passing on God’s ways and God’s means.

There is a great vacuum in today’s world for God-centered studies in the areas
of Thought Management, Time Management, Talent Management, Treasure
Management, and Trust Management. The better we are managed from the
inside through “Christ in us the hope of glory,” the less control we will need
from outside sources. But we do need management from somewhere. It is the
out-of-control individuals that form our out-of-control society that feeds our
out-of-control families, government, educational institutions, arts, sciences,
entertainment, media, and economics. God is intent on restoring excellence,
integrity and order built on faith, virtue and knowledge to His people and
through His people.

1) Thought Management
Sober Thinking

12:3–4; “They think they will be heard because of their many words.” “What do
you think?” “Who do you think you are?” “What made you think of doing such
a thing?” “You have not lied to men but to God.” “Who was I to think that I
could oppose God?” “Who do you think I am?” “We should not think that the
divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by man’s design and
skill.”

“Since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave
them over to a depraved mind to do what ought not to be done. They have
become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are
full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they are senseless, faithless, heartless, and ruthless. Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.”

Romans 12:3–4; Romans 13:14, “Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.” “Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.”

I Corinthians 1:26–31, “Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him. It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. Therefore, as it is written: ‘Let him who boasts boast in the Lord.’”

Philippians 3:15–16, “All of us who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you. Only let us live up to what we have already attained.”

I Timothy 6:5, “...who have been robbed of the truth and who think that Godliness is a means to financial gain.”

Matthew 9:4, “Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?”

Zechariah 11:12–13, “And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the LORD said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was priced at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the LORD.”
Philippians 4:8, “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.”

The above quotes are just a few heavy-duty scriptures on thoughts and thinking. But, they are enough to get us started in allowing the Lord to direct our thinking. Our minds are always thinking even when we sleep. We do not stop thinking. But, our thinking can be, and must be controlled.

God’s Spirit will steer our thinking, if we will practice allowing Him to do so. Sometime, somehow, in some way we must learn how to accept and nurture the thoughts that seed good results and reject every other vain thought that brings forth vain fruit ultimately wasting good and precious time, talent, treasure, and trust. Let us ask God’s Holy Spirit to help us do this as we learn together some of His Grids for Life and Learning.

2) Time Management

“Teach me, Oh Lord, to number my days that I may apply my heart unto wisdom. Oh, satisfy me early with Thy mercy that I may rejoice and be glad all my days. And let the beauty of the Lord, my God, be upon me, and establish Thou the work of my hands” (Psalms 90:12). “ Redeem the time, for the days are evil” (Ephesians 5:16).

The above scriptural phrases on time give us the idea that, with any understanding of time and its value, we are expected by our Creator–God to give serious thought to the management of our time. There are books, even classes, on time management. We have all been made aware to some extent that time never repeats itself. Our today was yesterday’s tomorrow, just twenty-four hours ago.

Once a minute, an hour, a day, a week, a month, a year, a decade, a millennium, an eon of time is gone, we never get that time back. How do we use our time? We owe it to God to ask ourselves this question. Since there is just so much time in each day, He tells us to “Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness” (Matthew 6:33). If we do not choose what comes first, it will be
chosen for us. So much can be said here about time, but we just want to assure ourselves that we will give attention to this irreplaceable gift of God. He cares ever so much how we use the time He allots to us.

3) Talent Management

Both talent and treasure are God’s enabling ways and means allotted to us to make us successes. King James in his day used the word “talent” as a financial value or trade medium of exchange. However, for the sake of clarity in our text, we will narrow the term to its contemporary sense meaning natural and trained ability. Popular, easy-to-recognize examples might be those of public speaking, cooking, music, planning, decision-making, problem solving, sports, etc.

Has God entrusted everyone with some talent? Most people have much more talent than they ever use. And most people have more talent than they use for God’s glory. God tells us that if we faithfully use what we have, He will give us even more. You have more talent than you recognize. Johann Sebastian Bach had a good idea. He wrote a dedicatory phrase at the end of his compositions, “To the glory of God.”

Some talents in use get more attention than others. Sometimes people say to me, “I wish I could play the piano like you do!” I think to myself, “If their parents had faithfully directed them to start lessons when they were six and practice daily through grade school, junior high, and high school, then major in piano in college, practicing sometimes more than eight hours a day before their senior recital, and then, keep playing for the rest of their life, they could probably do it as well or even better.”

Of course, being born with a good ear for sound, with good finger dexterity, a musical family, especially a mother who made me practice piano each day before I could go out to play with the other children, did help a great deal. Being the son of a pastor who assigned me to play for church on a regular basis before the age of twelve helped also. Then, playing trombone in junior high and high school bands, bass violin and other instruments in college orchestras, and adding a college music major to ministry and education studies including numerous required and elective music classes and activities helped even more.
Furthermore, paralleling with our early ministry development, a professional music career including demonstrating and selling pianos and organs, composing, doing concerts, arranging, orchestrating, directing, recording, producing, publishing, and marketing music and records through our own companies contributed even more. All of this helped contribute to our talent development. We pray with J. S. Bach that it has all been “to the glory of God.”

God will help us all to further prioritize the management of our talent use and development as we better learn by “Christ in us the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27) to discern and value its use and development in light of the precious over the worthless, the holy over the profane, the spiritual over the carnal, and eternal riches over temporal values.

How beautiful it is when “Christ in you the hope of glory” actually has full management of all your talent “to the glory of God!” It is at that point that men are able to “see our good works and glorify the Father in heaven.” Like our thought, time, treasure, and trust, how we manage our talent is just as important to God as the talent itself. Let “Christ in you the hope of glory” insure your talent management “to the glory of God.”

4) Treasure Management
Godly Financial Management, etcetera

“Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” “Store not up for yourselves treasures on earth where moth and rust corrupt and where thieves break through and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven where moth and rust do not corrupt and where thieves do not break through and steal” (Matthew 6:19–21, 24). Also see Luke 12:16–21; 12:33–34; James 4:17; James 5:3.

The word “treasure” taken in the broadest sense could mean anything dear, precious, or highly valuable. In that sense, every gift of God is good and valuable. However, we are going to use it to zero in on property and financial assets.

Some years ago, a well-known church in Kansas City lost its sanctuary in a fire. The congregation had to meet the next Sunday in a nearby high school auditorium. I was visiting the service and heard the pastor friend of mine read a
special letter from another church of a different denomination across town. The letter expressed their love for this part of the Body of Christ that had lost their facilities and included a check for a very large sum to help my church friends rebuild. From that time on, both churches were strongly bonded, because, “Where a man’s treasure is, there will his heart be, also.”

The practice of giving has made it so much easier for me to care about others and to look forward to heaven. Also, “A man’s gift makes room for him” (Proverbs 18:16). Have I already mentioned how the Lord uses Ecclesia Relief & Development ministries to get our missionary efforts into countries that would not otherwise be as open? Treasure, depending on how it is used, is power for good or evil. It is a very powerful asset when used for the advancement of God’s Kingdom and His glory! Much more can be said about multiplying your treasure by being faithful over what God has given you. “Faithful over a few things—ruler over many” (Matthew 25:21-23)!

5) Trust Management

“A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches” (Proverbs 22:1; Ecclesiastes 7:1). “Men of good report” (Acts 10:22; 22:12; Philippians 4:8; I Timothy 3:17; Hebrews 11:2, 39; III John 12)! David prayed, “May they see me and be glad, because I wait for Your word” (Psalms 119:74)! “Trust in the Lord with all your heart; lean not to your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct your paths” (Proverbs 3:5). “And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And, if we know that He hears us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him” (I John 5:14). “Do not let your good be evil spoken of” (Romans 14:16). See also II Corinthians 2:3; 7:16; 8:22; 5:10; Philemon 21.

For our discussion purposes here, trust means the honorable confidence, goodwill, reputation, and favor among people that God has allotted to us in this world. “Jesus grew in favor with God and man” (Luke 2:52). “A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches” (Proverbs 22:1). Our good name is not our own any more than anything else God has given us to steward. He has the right to take our name and give us another.

Trust is truly an asset given us by God. Without trust, the Christian has no testimony before God or man. Because of Creation and Calvary, our Father–God
has the right to our reputation on behalf of Himself and His Kingdom. It belongs to Him and not to ourselves to use as we see fit.

It is like finding gold when we find someone we are sure that we can trust under any and all circumstances. It is so comforting when we know a confidant whom we can trust to know our very hearts and not betray us. Everybody despises a Judas, even the high priests who connived with him in the great betrayal. Judas ruined that name for everybody. God’s name is certainly associated with trust. Is ours?

God’s faithfulness linked with our faithfulness is a guaranteed success. We worry about God’s faithfulness. How many people are not yet aware that the words, faith and faithfulness, are just two sides of the same coin? I have noticed that my faith in God is linked with my own faithfulness. And it seems that my distrust of God’s word stems from my projecting my own unfaithfulness onto God Who has never failed anybody at any time to this day.

We have a tendency to judge God and others by ourselves. This must be the reason that we find it easier to believe God when we have been faithful to Him. Trust is an absolute necessity in the restoration of excellence, integrity, and order of God in His universe. Let us in Christ’s Ecclesia give more serious thought to the area of personal and corporate Trust Management beginning with ourselves. See also Job 1:1; I Timothy 2:10; Luke 1:6; Titus 1:6,7.
Chapter 3

The Three Major Life Questions

Why, What, How to?

Speaking of thoughts as responses to questions, I find three major questions that God put into every human being when He created us. These three questions of “why,” “what,” and “how to” form a super grid for life and learning! Our very hearts and minds put us on a life quest for the answers. We, by the very nature God put into us at creation, are not satisfied until we believe we have the answers to these three questions. This is good! For no matter how far we travel and how many loops and detours we make, our journey to answer these three questions will ultimately lead us face to face with one Person, our Father, God.

We will look at these three major life questions of why, what, and how to, as a good God–given grid for processing our thoughts, words, and choices in whatever stages of development. This will help us to please and glorify God in all we think, say and do, while having a more successful grip on the practical handle of life, learning, decision making, planning, problem solving, etc. You and I will enjoy a better quality, more productive life in the here and now as well as with God forever. And nothing could ever be better than that! We will even enjoy our days and rest better at night with confidence in accessing His understanding.

We can actually know the why, what, and how to, although we may also learn patience as we wait for it. Men and women have written song lyrics, “We’ll understand it better bye-and-bye; farther along, we’ll know all about it; farther along we’ll understand why.” We are designed of God to desire understanding, which is what He wants to give us as we faithfully obey Him in the peace that precedes that understanding. This is how we show God we trust His mind above our own. This is true faith and trust in Him. “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not to your own understanding. In all your ways, acknowledge Him, and He will direct your path” (Proverbs 3:5).
Yet, until we do understand the why, what, and how to, we have His “peace that passes (our) understanding” going on ahead of us in our upcoming experiences by which we gain His understanding of the why, what, and how to. This true peace that only He gives, which the world cannot, provides the much-needed rest to our hearts where His faith, hope, and love are at work. I recall the words of one of my earlier songs, *I Have a Peace in My Heart*. Like elevator music in the back of my mind, the music still stirs up good memories of God’s peace that passes understanding.

**I Have a Peace in My Heart**

**Verse 1**

*I have a peace in my heart that the world never gave me,*  
*And a peace it cannot take away,*  
*An everlasting peace and I know that it’s there to stay.*  
*My heart is bubbling over with the living water,*  
*And I’m happy that I can say,*  
*I’m filled and thrilled with the joy of the Lord*  
*Since I found His way.*  
*If you could meet the Lord,*  
*And really know the Lord,*  
*Then, you would love the Lord,*  
*And you’d feel the way I do today.*  

*I have a peace in my heart that the world never gave me,*  
*And a peace it cannot take away,*  
*An everlasting peace,*  
*And I know that it’s there to stay.*

**Verse 2**

*I’ll say, I don’t feel the same since the Lord changed my name,*  
*Because He took all my sins away.*  
*Now you know Who made me feel so new.*  
*What a happy day!*  
*His perfect generous giving made my life worth living.*  
*I’m delightfully pleased to say*  
*That He will do just the same for you,*  
*if He only may.*  
*If you could meet the Lord,*  
*And really know the Lord,*
Then, you would love the Lord,
And you’d feel the way I do today.

I have a peace in my heart that the world never gave me,
And a peace it cannot take away,
An everlasting peace,
And I know that it’s there to stay.

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Rest your mind, soul, and spirit in your Father—God’s “peace that passes all your understanding.” Yet, remember that He says to you, “With all your getting, get understanding.” This means for you to keep moving ahead in faithful obedience to Him in the peace that He gives you in order to eventually reach the promised understanding. This understanding is a rewarding outcome of our faithful obedience to God’s bidding, which Paul in Romans calls “the obedience of faith.” People of true understanding have been faithful people in order to reach this place of spiritual rest.


See “rest” also in Hebrews 3:11,18; 4:1,3,5,6,8,10,11; I John 3:19.

See “peace” also John 14:27; 16:33; 20:19,21,26; Acts 10:36; Romans 1:7; 2:10; 5:1; 8:6; 10:15; 14:17,19; 15:13,33; I Corinthians 1:3; 14:33; II Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 1:3; 5:22; Ephesians 1:2; 2:14; Philippians 4:7,9; Colossians 1:2; 3:15; I Thessalonians 5:23; II Thessalonians 1:2; 3:16; I Timothy 1:2; II Timothy 2:22; Titus 1:4; Philemon 3; Hebrews 7:2; 13:20; I Peter 1:2; 5:14; II Peter 1:2; II John 3; III John 14; Jude 2; Revelation 1:4.
Our thoughts can come to us from so many unpredictable directions. Some thoughts may originate from our own questions of why, what, and how to. Some come from experiences and sensations while other thoughts are suggested to us by what we see, hear, imagine, or read or learn through other people. Some of our thoughts are generated by a combination of any or all of the above.

It seems impossible to single out a thought by itself or to analyze a single thought unrelated to any other. It is hard to determine the source sometimes. Some of us have no idea where some of our thoughts originated. Some thoughts are actually planted in our minds by our loving Father–God. We would actually do better to derive more of our thoughts from Him.

“Let this same mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:5). We will see later how we can have the “mind of Christ” with His ideas. It is amazing how our brain works. From our thoughts come our ideas. And our ideas grow into something either good or bad. We will learn how to discern and value the good from the bad for the highest good of all concerned: God, others, and ourselves.

What about these three major life questions of why, what, and how to?

The simplest of these three major life questions may be the “what” question. It seems that we hardly have to think about this one because we, as well as God, others, and even the devil are ready to tell us what to do, even though the One and only we should be listening to is God. The “what” question cannot best be answered without first considering the “why” question, because the “why” question is always the source of our “what” questions. Also, the source of the “how to” question is the “what” question.
Therefore, let us look at the three major questions we always face. “Why? “What?” “How to?”

The question, “Why,” is asking for that which motivates us and keeps us motivated, but we must choose the right “why” over the wrong “why.” The question, “What,” is that which clarifies our objective, so that we are on target with our thought, time, talent, treasure, and trust. But we must choose the right “what” over the wrong “what.” And the question, “How to,” is that which shows us the way to do the “what” for the reason “why.” Yet, we still must always choose the right “how to” over the wrong “how to” in order to be successful. We will explore further these three major life questions as we go along.

Have you ever noticed that the prevailing question of any small child is “Why?” This is as natural to him as anything. This question was put into his very nature by His Creator God to draw and keep his attention on Him as His Father. You know how it works. You tell the child “what” to do, and he wonders “why?” You give him the reason, if you can, and he follows it by another “why,” which you answer, if you can, until you both finally arrive at the ultimate “why.” The ultimate “Why” is always God, Himself, which is what He always intended.

Psalm 19 tells us that all God’s creation points right back to Him. Incidentally, those of us who know a little Spanish remember the words, “porque” and “por que.” They are both made of the same two smaller words, “por” and “que,” and in both cases they mean “for what,” meaning “why.” When “por” and “que” are joined into one Spanish word, “porque,” meaning “for what,” they are asking the question, “why.” When “por” and “que” remain two separate words, meaning “for what,” they are answering the question with our word, “because.”

The “why” question points us to the reason or the cause behind the “what” question. We can ultimately trace every good thing (what, object, objective, etc.) back to God, Who is the First Cause of every good thing (what, object, etc.). This is important in order for us to maintain our motivation to complete the “what” (object or objective).” It is naturally easier to maintain our motivation when we know why we are doing the task (the what). This is just one of the reasons I keep reading, memorizing, quoting, studying, and meditating on God’s Word as often as I can. His living Word, which is so full of the highest “Why,” just keeps feeding my positive motivation. It is not hard to stay on course when I am motivated by Him Whom I love and need.
The true “what” is our “to do” list from God. So many homes, churches, and schools can unintentionally make their “to do” lists so boring. And “why” is that? Because, the first generation who understood “why” as they practiced their “to do” list either took for granted that the next generation would automatically understand “why” without being informed. But that does not happen on its own. The children also must know “why” just like the first generation who experienced the “revival” that led them to their God-given “to do” list.

We are called to “return to our first love” (Revelation 2:4-5). What is that first love? Fulfilling our God-given “to do” list motivated by God’s reviving in us His original reason “why.” Tradition in itself is not enough to motivate us to swim against the tide of our surrounding world system.

When we were very young, it was enough for our parents to answer our “why” with their “because I said so.” While we were small enough to be motivated by their “because I said so,” they were also using the time to prepare us for our futures by giving us God’s big picture. For a short while, it might have seemed to them that the “might makes right” motivational theory was sufficient for our good behavior. However, wise parents gave us God’s big picture from our earliest days, so that our motivation would be for Him and His reasons. God is good, and His reasons are always for the highest good of all, including ourselves.

It is important that our small child first learns to obey us “on a dime” just “because I said so.” What if he is running into a street of busy traffic? There is no time at that moment for us to explain to him God’s big picture. He must be motivated to obey us without the least hesitation or exception, even if he does not know God’s big picture of “why.” He must be willing to do the “what” without understanding the big picture.

To your child right now you are his big picture, and that is enough motivation. But, after you have stopped him in his tracks or even effectively disciplined him for not responding quickly enough to you, you must sit down with him and give him the big picture including “why.” Keep preparing his heart to be motivated by personal loving trust for God and His ways. He must know that this is not only “the right thing” before God, but also his only guarantee for success.
Yes, God says, “With all your getting, get understanding” (Proverbs 4:7). But loving faith and trust as demonstrated through our obedience almost always precedes the understanding that will come. Wisdom and understanding are not the same. God promises wisdom to us just for the asking when we need it to succeed in His purposes for us. Understanding, on the other hand, usually comes to us as an outcome (or fruit) of our faithful obedience in the processes of our experience. It comes as a result of faithful obedience to God in His purposes for us.

God gives wisdom for “how to” do something in His ways that we do not adequately understand. Many things your child does not understand. If he demands understanding before demonstrating his faithful trust in you by obeying your “because I said so,” he displeases God. “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother which is the first commandment with promise that it may be well with you and that you may live long on the earth” (Ephesians 6:1–3). God expects faithful obedience to Godly parents. You must leave your child no room to disobey you just because he is not yet satisfied with his understanding of your reason “why.”

When God told the parents in Israel to teach their children, He meant for them to teach them the “why,” the “what,” and the “how to.” The children were to learn the “why” in order to be motivated for the right reason, which was the highest good of all. They were to learn the “what” in order to clearly focus their hearts, minds, speech, deeds, and strength on the right objectives. They were to learn the “how to,” so that they would always succeed by doing God’s thing in God’s way, which is always for the highest good of all.

God has lovingly provided for each of us the “why,” the “what,” and the “how to” for everything He ever expects us to do in order that we are always insured success. “In all your ways, acknowledge Him, and He will direct your path” (Proverbs 3:6). “Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.” “Show me Your ways, oh Lord” (Psalms 25:4; 81:13; 95:10; 103:7). “The secrets of the Lord are with them that fear [reverence] Him” (Psalms 25:14).
When I think of the letter, “C,” my mind is drawn to Creation, Calvary, and Christ. It also helps me think even more specifically of Colossians 1:27 to which we will refer often. We can hardly wait to talk about Calvary and Christ, but we must understand more about our creation to more fully appreciate the effectiveness of Calvary on us and in us. Psalm 139 is a good starting place for describing our creation. The King James Version reads, “We are fearfully and wonderfully made” (Psalms 139:14).

When something or somebody is made or created, naturally we know that it took somebody to create them. Therefore, without disturbing the meaning of the passive tense at all, we can say it in the active tense this way: “God fearfully and wonderfully made us.” It might help our understanding if we express the words, “fearfully and wonderfully” in today’s vocabulary as “reverently and awesomely.” So, God reverently and awesomely made you and me.

According to Genesis, God made us in His own likeness (Genesis 1:27). He, as our Father—God, wanted to enjoy us while we enjoy Him now and forever, so He made us with the ability and capacity to do so. He did such an excellent job in creating us that He actually reverences us as the fantastic work we are.

Can you imagine God reverencing you and me? I know, we are supposed to reverence our Creator—Father—God. But why would He ever reverence us? Yet, He does, for He knows just how valuable we are to Him because He is the Artist Who created us. God is the universe’s greatest Artist, so as His art fashioned in His own likeness, we are worth more than any other thing in His universe. He
says that just one of us is worth so much more than all of Planet Earth. So, why should He not reverence us as the creation of His own hands?

Not only does God continue to reverence us as His most valuable creation, we are breathtaking to Him, too. “Awesomely” comes from the root word, “awe.” Awe and awestruck are related words. The “awe” word is the sound that comes out of your mouth when something wonderful takes your breath. You took your Father-God’s breath when you were born. You continue to take His breath. We are breathtakingly made.

Now, this gives us another whole level of appreciation for who we are and were created to be. Also, it should throw a whole new light on all the precious people around us and all over this whole Planet Earth. Each and every one of us is reverentially and awesomely made. Our Creator-Father-God still reverences us, no matter how sinful we have become, and we still take His breath because of who we are.

No matter how much we have “sinned and come short of the glory” of our Creator-Father-God, He sent His Son Jesus to reach His hand into the filthy mud where we had thrown ourselves pulling us out so that we could be washed clean again to shine as the sons and daughters of God we were born to be. From now on, “You are not your own, but you are bought with a price. From now on, you should not live unto yourselves, but unto Him Who died for you and rose again” (I Corinthians 6:19).

This helps us to see everybody like God sees them. They are just diamonds in the rough, fallen into the mud, needing to be picked up and cleaned to be made like new. Diamonds do not lose their value when they get dirty. They just need to be cleaned so that the value that is always there is better seen.

Jesus was not out of His mind when He died on the cross to save us. God says that we were valuable to Him. We were not worthless but extremely valuable, so valuable, that only His sinless Son could be trusted to redeem us from the dirt where we were (John 3:16–17). Never see the drunkard, the harlot, or even the worst criminal as worthless. They are still as valuable in God’s eyes as the day they were born. They are just dirty and need to be washed so that the Creator-Father-God can have the breath-taking sons and daughters restored that He has always reverenced.
Every lost sinner has great potential. It wasn’t the sinners and publicans who bothered Jesus, but the blinded self-righteous Pharisees who in false pride undervalued everyone else (Matthew 9:10–13; 23:16:24; Luke 18:11). Christ has not come to call the [self] righteous but sinners to repentance (Matthew 9:13; Mark 2:17; Luke 5:32). Do we share His broken heart over the wayward ones?
Chapter 6

Calvary! We Owe Somebody Everything.

“You are not your own; you are bought with a price. Henceforth, you should not live unto yourselves, but unto Him Who died for us and rose again”

Paul tells us, “You are not your own; you are bought with a price. Henceforth, you should not live unto yourselves, but unto Him Who died for us and rose again” (I Corinthians 16:19). Never judge God as unwise. He knew what He was doing when He “so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world but that the world through Him might be saved” (John 3:16-17). We are part of an overall redemption plan. Calvary was necessary in the heart and mind of God. Among many other things, it shows the extent that our Father-God would go to get us back.

It was costly and humbling enough for Jesus to die to save us, to redeem us. But it was even so much more awful for Him, the Holy sinless Son of God, to have to reach into the filthy mud to rescue His priceless creations from the dunghill, you and me and everybody else. But He did it (II Corinthians 5:21). We would be dead without Him. We live only because He has given us new life. We are clean only because He has washed us. We are alive only because He gave us new and eternal life in Him. So, we do not own ourselves. He actually saved us from ourselves...our own destructive self-centeredness.

If we draw a spiral from the inside out, we can see the liberating effects of what Jesus has done for us. This constantly enlarging spiral will go on throughout our lives here on Planet Earth and the ceaseless ages to come. It gets nothing but better all the time. If we draw a spiral from the outside in, we can see how eventually there is no place else to go but tightly bound and stuck in the middle of oneself. This is the difference in the liberty Jesus initiated for us at Calvary as contrasted with the ultimate miserable hell of self-centeredness from which we are saved.
Self-life to Hell
Ultimate misery

Christ-life to Heaven & Freedom
Unending
Every time we make a choice, we are either choosing God's widening liberty for us, or the narrowing self-inflicted misery of ultimate failure and death. “God was not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance” (II Peter 3:9). “The enemy has come but for to kill, steal, and destroy; but I am come that you might have life and that more abundantly” (John 10:10). But, we do not use this blood-bought freedom for self-centered choices that can only hurt the heart of our loving Father-God but also cripple us to the point of total paralysis.

Because of Creation and Calvary, we definitely owe to God all our thought, time, talent, treasure, and trust. Having already discussed to some degree our thought, we will next hurry on to a brief discussion of time, then on to talent, treasure and trust.

We owe God all our time. Whatever else time is, it is a duration. It has a beginning and an end. The study of time is a vast thing in itself. After we understand a little about time, we are instructed by our Creator-God toward good time management. Just a glance at a few well-known scriptures tells us that God is greatly interested in how we value and use the time He entrusts to us as good stewards.

The why, what, and how to questions have to do with time. Without time we have no reason to ask or receive answers to the questions of why, what, or how to. Without time, there is no duration in which to do anything and no way for us to do anything. We do everything in time. And we have only so many days on earth! “Teach me to number my days that I may apply my heart unto wisdom.” “You know the number of my days” (Psalms 90:12). “Redeem the time, for the days are evil” (Ephesians 5:16).

Time should serve a good purpose. Thinking, improving and using our talents, treasure, and trust are good purposes. Working and resting can be good uses of time. Praying, eating, sleeping, fellowshipping, studying, worshipping, and recreation can be good uses of time. We should just be aware that our Creator-God expects us to value time more and more the way He does as we mature in Him.
Chapter 7

The Anointed One

“Are you the Anointed One, or do we look for another?”

The big question to Jesus was, “Are you the Christ, or do we look for another?” (Matthew 11:03). Later, we will look into what the writers of the Old Testament meant by “Seeking God’s face.” I believe that may be the key phrase to the Old Testament itself. It was truly relevant to man’s relationship with God. If there is a fulfillment of “Seeking God’s face” in the New Testament, it must be “Christ in you the hope of glory.” I think of it as the key phrase to the New Testament. He is truly one hundred percent Father-friendly, and it is in His name that we ask whatever we desire of the Father (Matthew 18:19; 21:22; John 15:16).

We must begin with the Hebrew title, Messiah. Messiah means the Anointed One, not an anointed one but The Anointed One. When the expected Messiah, the Anointed One would come, he would completely fill all three most important positions of prophet, priest, and king of Israel. Israel means man of God. The Messiah would come once and for all as the Anointed One over Israel. What a great plan God had in mind. Then, under His direction Israel would share their blessing with all the other nations of the world. Through Abraham’s Seed via Israel would all the nations of the earth be blessed.

As God moved toward the coming of the Messiah, He would have the leaders of Israel anoint with oil the prophets, the priests, and the kings. The anointing oil was poured over them signifying the spiritual anointing of God for their particular office. The prophet’s anointing allowed God to speak His words through him into the lives of the people. The priest’s anointing let God use him as a mediator to bring peace between Himself and man. The king’s anointing denoted God’s authority on him to rule the people on His behalf. But, over and over, all these failed in that they either died or misused and abused their offices.

All Israel looked forward to the coming of The Anointed One who would be the Prophet, the Priest, and the King. Once appointed He, The Anointed One, would never again have to be replaced. He would be perfect and sinless and eternal.
There would never be need of another. Israel prayed for the Messiah, the Anointed One, the Prophet, Priest, and King to come in great power and rescue them once and forever, demonstrating them to be God’s chosen people.

However, He arrived in a very unexpected way, being born in a lowly manger. For 33 years He failed to fit their mold of a prophet, priest, and king. They were so disappointed as a whole. “He came unto His own, and His own received Him not, but to as many as received Him, to them gave He the power to become the sons of God” (John 1:11). He wept over them saying, “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered you as a hen gathers her brood, and you would not” (Matthew 23:37; Luke 13:34). They cried out, “We have no king but Caesar” (John 19:15). “Crucify Him” (Matthew 27:22–23). “Let His blood be upon us and upon our children” (Matthew 27:25).

We need to know that the Greek word for the Hebrew, Messiah, is Christ. And as Christ, the perfect once-and-forever Anointed One of God, promised, He arose victorious over the grave. He ascended to His Father and sent the Holy Spirit back to those Jews and Gentiles who would receive Him on the Day of Pentecost. The Holy Spirit, as He promised, took the things of Christ, the Anointed One, and has distributed them, both character and giftings, among those who believed and received the promise of the Father. And the church was born! (Acts 2; John 16:13–15; Romans 12:4–13; I Corinthians 12, 13, 14.)

The Lord Jesus Christ had promised that “Upon this rock will I build My church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18). On the day of Pentecost they were all with one accord in one place when the Holy Spirit came to empower them all together to become God’s newly authorized agency on Planet Earth to bless all nations. They had been commanded to “Go into all the world and preach the good news to every person” and “teach all people groups whatsoever He commanded them.” And the Lord Jesus Christ, the Anointed One, had promised to go with them until it was all done (Mark 15–20; Matthew 28:18–20).
Chapter 8

The Anointed One Within

“Christ in you the hope of glory”

When we read Paul’s writing in Colossians 1:27 of “Christ in you the hope of glory,” it is all that we can do to stay calm. This has to be the key to the Christ’s New Testament with us. As John says, our “joy is full” (John 15:11; 16:24; Acts 2:24). Peter says, “Joy unspeakable” (I Peter 1:8). What can Paul mean by His mysteriously powerful phrase in Colossians 1:27 (“Christ in you the hope of glory.”)? (See also Colossians 1:27; John 14:20; 15:4; Romans 8:10; I Corinthians 14:25; II Corinthians 13:5; Galatians 4:19; I John 4:4.)

We have already seen that the Greek title, Christ, is the same as the Hebrew, Messiah, meaning the “Anointed One,” not plural “anointed ones” but one single Person Who is now and forever the Anointed One, God’s Anointed One. So, it is Christ Who is our Father—God’s own chosen perfect, sinless, and eternal Father—friendly Anointed One as our Prophet speaking into our lives, our Priest eternally bonding us to our loving Father, and our King ruling and reigning over us in peace and righteousness.

Now, this Christ, the Anointed One Prophet, Priest, and King all in One, is in us the hope of glory. When he walked the shore of Galilee, “In Him dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily” (Colossians 2:9). The Holy Spirit through Paul tells us that is all about “Christ in you the hope of glory.”

But, did not Paul also say with Jesus, John, and Peter that we are in Christ? (John 6:56; 14:20; 15:6,7.; 16:33; Romans 8:1; 12:5; 16:7; I Corinthians 1:30; 3:1; 4:15,17,18,22; II Corinthians 1:21; 5:17; 12:2; Galatians 1:22; 3:28; Ephesians 1:3; 2:6; 2:10,13; Philippians 1:1; 4:21; Colossians 1:2,28; I Thessalonians 2:14; 4:16; II Timothy 3:12; Philemon 6,23; I Peter 5:14.)

Now, which is it? Are we in Him, or is He in us? Jesus and John say that both are true at the same time. (John 15:4; I John 3:24; 4:13, 15, 16.) How can this be?

Well, this may look difficult to understand at first. But we can use the example of a lake to show how both can be true. Get in a boat and go to the middle of the lake. Now, jump overboard into the lake over your head. Now, while you
are in the lake, swallow as much of the lake as you can. Now, the lake is in you while you are still in the lake. Keep swallowing! But, you say, “I’ll drown!” I say, “That’s the idea!” “Dead to self and alive to Christ!” (Romans 6:2). It is no longer I that live now, but Christ that lives in me.” “I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me. And the life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God Who loved me and gave Himself for me” (Galatians 2:20).

So, it is possible to be in Christ and have Christ in me at the same time! This is my eternal state from now on. I have invited Christ in, and He has fully taken over my life at my request. He sits on the throne of my heart. My heart, which was my seat or throne of affection, is now where I have invited Him to sit forever. He is altogether Father-friendly, so I ask in His name; “And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him” (I John 5:14).

Sometimes I forget and begin to move toward the throne of my own heart. Like the Gentleperson He is, He allows me the right to my own heart. Then I am suddenly awakened to the fact that I am taking the controls back! I call on Him to please take His place back on the throne of my heart! Paul calls this my spirit “warring” with my flesh. It is so important to keep Christ on the throne to keep me from error, and because His name is effective for whatever I need. Also, I am learning to let Him answer the doorbell and the phone in my place when it rings. His answers through me are so much better.

Christ’s attitude in me is right when my attitude without Him might not be. Yes, I am still practicing to let Him be in charge for the highest good of all. “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God who are the called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28). It helps me to practice this, when I remember to “Be doers of the Word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves” (James 1:22).

People begin going spiritually blind by simply not believing and obeying God. Always obey the truth you know to avoid self-deception so that your own eyes will not be blinded to the blind guides who will, themselves, blindly mislead you. There are spiritually self-blinded guides ready to lead other spiritually self-
blinded people further astray. “If the blind lead the blind, they both fall into the ditch” (Matthew 15:14; Luke 6:39).

It is important to consider the word “glory” in our phrase, “Christ in you the hope of glory.” It makes more sense to define glory as, “a measure of God’s value or significance on display.” God really has to measure it out, or too much of His glory at one time would kill us. We are definitely going to need our glorified bodies in order not to explode when we see Him face to face in all His glory.

And isn’t it terrible that Israel “valued” their Creator at only thirty pieces of silver? As far as they were concerned, this bought them the full right to crucify Him. How about you and me? Many people do not know how to begin to value Who God is. The least measure of His value or significance on display calls sinners to repentance and saints to fall before His throne in wholehearted worship. One day the whole earth will be filled with His glory! Isaiah prophesied that “The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it!” (Isaiah 40:4).

The word, hope, also, must be given great consideration from several angles for us to get the true picture. Paul is saying here that God pins not only His hope for the revelation of His glory on Christ in us. He pins the hope of a lost world on Christ in us the hope of glory. And He pins our hope of meeting His expectation for us on Christ in us the hope of glory.

Christ’s coming through in us is that which calls men and women to note: “we have been with Jesus” (Acts 4:13). It is the same measure of God’s value on display through us that excites men and women to “ask about the hope that lies within us.” So, we would do well to “be ready to give an answer for the hope that lies within us” (I Peter 3:15; John 1:22). It is “Christ in ‘us’ the hope of glory.”

John recalls for us how Jesus anticipated an ongoing miracle of Himself living in us by the Holy Spirit. “Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.' But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified” (John 7:37–39).
By God's Holy Spirit, Who has now been given to us, we have Christ in us the hope of glory and call Him our Lord (Colossians 1:27; I Corinthians 12:3). Now it is that rivers of living water are flowing out of our innermost beings. And Who is this Living Water but Christ in us the hope of glory (John 4:14)!
LVVRI Compatibility Grid

Whole-hearted Involvement

Godly Relationships

God-Given Vision

Foundational Values

The Christ Life
Chapter 9

Compatibility Grid

Life—Values—Vision—Relationships—Involvement

Let us be sure that Christ is always seated on the throne of our hearts, because from our Christ-life flows forth our core foundational values. From our core foundational values flows forth our God-given vision. From our God-given vision flows forth our godly relationships. And from our godly relationships flows forth our whole-hearted involvement. All the thoughts and activities of our lives are easily traced back to our Christ-life!

Most of us are familiar with the biblical, rhetorical question, “Can two walk together unless they be agreed?” (Amos 3:3). We know that this is good and logical, because God is the Author. Agreement is basic to all contracts, verbal, written, or assumed. It is easier for people to do things together when they are agreed. Most of us believe and want to practice this. But, agreed on what? The question is not whether or not we want to agree. The question is what must we agree about?

This is why I believe the Lord has built in me over the years through the school of hard knocks what I now refer to as the LVVRI Compatibility Grid. I call it my “LVVRI stable” (pronounced “livery”). I have come to believe that all teams and groups of any kind will find that they are only as compatible and effective to the degree they share the same life, values, vision, relationships, and involvement. The weaker they are together on any or all of the above, the less compatible and effective they will be together.

“Can two walk together unless they be agreed?” This is a reasonable principle to most people. “But, agreed on what,” you may ask. This compatibility principle is true about every friendship, every marriage and family, every church, every sports team, every business, every school, every government, every joint project. The Lord has especially obligated me to emphasize this LVVRI
Compatibility Grid with every couple who is considering marriage. The same principle works wherever it is honestly applied.

Christ by the Spirit of unity has called us all to His team under His Lordship in the advancement of God’s Kingdom. Was not our compatible effectiveness against the gates of hell one of His good reasons to pray in John 17 that we may all be one? As we are focused on our Christ-life, why will not our Core Foundational Values, our God–given Vision, our Godly Relationships, and Whole–hearted Involvement in the advancement of God’s Kingdom be compatible and effective?

Our Christ–life is the fountainhead for rivers of living water. His Life is our Life. His Values are our Values. His Vision is our Vision. His Relationships are our Relationships. And His Whole–hearted Involvement is our Whole–hearted Involvement. God’s “Spirit of unity” is at work in us both to will and to do His good pleasure together! Oh Lord, let the world see Your glory and believe!
Chapter 10

God’s Valuable Temples

You and I are God’s valuable Temples.

“No one can say, “Jesus is Lord” except by the Holy Spirit” (I Corinthians 12:3). “Know you not that your body is the temple (dwelling place) of God?” (I Corinthians 3:16–17). “You are the temple(s) of the Holy Spirit” (I Corinthians 6:19; II Corinthians 6:16). We are living and moving temples (dwelling places) of the Holy Spirit by Whom Christ is in us the hope of glory. It is a matter of fact that one day “the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it” (Isaiah 40:5; Romans 8:18; I Peter 4:13; 5:1). Yes, every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of the Father” (Isaiah 45:23; Romans 14:11).

Inasmuch as we have been bought with a price of the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, we are not our own. Therefore, we are never again to live unto ourselves but unto Him Who died for us and rose again. Paul asks, “Know you not that you are the temple of the Holy Spirit?” Again, we are told that, “we are the temple of God.” Not only is our personal value established by the fact that God Himself created us in His own image. It has been underlined forever by Christ’s death on the cross to redeem us back to Him. We are twice His.

God insists that we see each other the way He sees us...through His eyes. I am beginning to see you and everyone else more clearly through His eyes. Of course, we have to continually desire to please Him in order to walk closely enough with Him to see through His eyes. How do we see one another? Oh, how important this is! Our view of each person we meet or hear about, whether or not we know them personally and whether or not they are living up to God’s expectations and ours as believers, is the measure God uses to verify our ability to value Him.

About fellow believers, He says, “As much as you have done it unto the least of these, my brethren, you have done it unto Me” (Matthew 25:40,45). Regarding the lost and seeming “worthless,” who, with no sense of his own value, is throwing
himself away, Christ in us would really yearn for this person and intercede for his eternal welfare as well as his days on earth. To some degree, many Christians understand more each day of what is meant by the word, “outreach.” We have the amazing “Answer,” the very Lord Christ Jesus, within ourselves for every need in this world.

God in creation and Calvary has established the innate value of each person on earth. When we fail to honor His high value of others we begin to lose sight of the value God places on us as well as the value we should be placing on God Himself. We must be careful not to drift into the self-made blindness of the people two thousand years ago who finally came to the place that they valued God’s eternal Son at only thirty pieces of silver. What “shock and awe” it will be to them when one day they see Him coming in His glory (Zechariah 12:10)?

So much even in the here and now rests upon the value we see in God, ourselves, through God’s eyes. What value do we see today in light of the ages to come? If we are not to embarrass our Father-God while living on this planet, we must begin to see more clearly through His eyes not only Him for Who He is but also His valuable saved and lost ones.

To the lost minds of the world system around us, that, which makes a person or thing precious and valuable is its scarcity in view of the law of supply and demand. However, what makes all human beings precious and valuable to the minds of God’s children is that our Father-God Himself created us in His own image. God expects us to value ourselves and our brothers and sisters not only for His image in us but also for the present and eternal fellowship and effectiveness we share together with Him in His kingdom.

The fact that some people are lost does not make them any less valuable. Whenever we lose anything precious, we actually become more keenly aware of its value. Jesus chose to illustrate this principle in the stories of the Lost Coin, the Good Shepherd, and the Prodigal Son (Luke 15). And, of course, in each of these stories He was communicating God’s heart for His lost people.

Our original God-given value is what made the cost of our salvation so high. Each human soul is more valuable than this whole earth on which we live. “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. God sent not His
Son into the world to condemn the world but that the world through Him might be saved” (John 3:16:17).

Every human being is valuable and always will be. This is why it breaks the heart of God to lose just one. “God was not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance” (II Peter 3:9); and neither should we be, if we see them and their age-abiding potential through His eyes. The cross was not a foolish investment on God’s part. God knew what He was doing to reach down into the filth where we had fallen to retrieve His priceless creation. He knew the value of His own image that He had created in us and gave nothing short of His only Son to redeem and restore us to Himself entirely healed and whole.

Father-God, please let us see through Your eyes and Your heart! Your Great Commandment (Matthew 22:37; Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27–28) and Your Great Commission (Matthew 18:19; Mark 16:15) are not optional.
Also, when we begin to value our Father-God, others and ourselves as He does, we truly will rededicate our bodies a living sacrifice to Him, which is the only spiritual and reasonable thing to do with them. “We are not our own” (Romans 12:1). Our bodies as His temples do not belong to us. We have a God–given responsibility to keep His temple fit for His dwelling, which is to keep ourselves healthy and fit for His service through us. Does God’s value keep going down with the way we value ourselves and everyone else? Or can we begin to see our worth through His eyes?

Now, allow us to look at our own health fitness through God’s eyes. He created our bodies to need the right balance of oxygen, water, food, exercise, and rest, while avoiding stress. So we need to get the oxygen, water, food, exercise, and rest right. What is stress? Why do we avoid stress? And how do we avoid stress?

First, what is stress, and what causes stress? Stress is simply the result of two or more conflicting pressures exerted in or on the same object. Pressure in itself is good. It takes the pressure of the wind in the sails of a boat to take it across the water. But two conflicting winds on the boat at the same time can put it in jeopardy. When the wind blows the boat up against the rocky shore, the conflicting pressure of the wind and the rocky shore will crush the boat. This is more stress than the boat can endure.

There can be any number of word pictures to explain how two or more conflicting pressures result in stress. Remember the phrase, “between a rock and a hard place?” That results in stress. Or, stress results from the irresistible force meeting the immovable object.
So it is with worry, fretting, and anxiety. When God impresses (pressures) us to pray, and we continue to resist, stress can result. When one parent pressures us to do one thing and the other pressures us to do the opposite, stress can result. Anxiety is stress. Fretting is stress. Worry is stress. When we worry or fret or become anxious, we are moving into God’s arena of responsibility. The pressure is more than we were created to bear. The pressure is too much. We are caught in the middle. This is stress. (Psalms 37:1,7,8; 139:23; Proverbs 24:19; Isaiah 35:4; II Timothy 1:7; Philippians 4:6.)

However, if we just “leave it up to the Lord” by “casting our cares upon Him who cares for us,” the stress is relieved. As long as we go with the flow of God, the one-way pressure is good and takes us where we are meant to be. But, when we struggle against Him, we are under stress. When we struggle against the world system in our own power, we are under stress.

But when we allow Christ in us the hope of glory to press against the world system, He who can handle the pressure will overcome while we continue in His spiritual “rest” “Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for My yoke is easy and My burden is light” “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Matthew 11:29; Philippians 4:13).

But what a tool is stress in the hands of God! Christ asked a stressed-out Saul, “Why are you kicking against the goads?” Later, as a fully converted and renamed Paul, he is able to say to us, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13). The spiritually, emotionally, and physically healthy one-way pressure of doing God’s thing in God’s way for God’s reason does not stress us out. But living, learning, and ministering in the flesh will always take its stressful toll on us. “Christ in you the hope of glory” gives us His peace in our life, learning and ministry.

David, in His Psalms, seems to be crying out in pain, distress, under just plain stress. Then, he remembers to give it over to the Lord Who will again and again rescue him from his fears, his fretting, his anxiety, his worry, his “enemies,” and bring him back into a calm, restful, peaceful, mindset. “I will look unto the hills from whence comes my help. My help comes from the Lord who made heaven and earth.” We are given strict orders not to fret and to be anxious for nothing (Luke 21:23–26; Psalms 121:1–2).
Health experts tell us that stress causes an overflow of acid to be released in our bodies. This oversupply of acid, in turn, lowers our immune system for fighting off bacteria, virus, mold, parasites, and even cancer cells. We must balance this excess acidic condition with sufficient alkalizing nutrition to bring our bodies into their proper PH balance. Otherwise, we open ourselves up to all kinds of illnesses.

There is a loving reason that God told Israel what to eat to prevent illness and make strong bodies for His glory. “None of these diseases” was a promise to those who would sincerely follow His orders not to fear, fret, or fall into anxiety while fully trusting in Him (Exodus 15:26). “In Thee, Oh Lord, do I put my trust” (Psalms 7:1; 16:1; 31:1; 71:1). This is not just a nice way to live. This is important to good health fitness for our bodies, which are the temples, dwelling places, of God.

Many of us have discovered God’s way for us to avoid stress. This is keeping our eyes on Him, resting in His peace, trusting in Him alone, leaning not to our own understanding, filling our minds with His blessings, remembering all His benefits, meditating on His great grace, etc. Remember His “peace that passes understanding?” (Philippians 4:7–8; Colossians 3:5). We must think on the right things to avoid stress. We must learn to take everything to Him, to cast all our cares on Him, for He cares for us.

“Christ in you the hope of glory” brings the New Testament advantage to “seeking God’s face.” God’s peace is in His face. “And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things” (Philippians 4:7–8). All this while “seeking His face.”

It is best to always let God speak to us before we converse with anybody else or think of anything else at the beginning of each day. When our Father–God gets to speak to us first, the day takes on the right perspective. When He does not get to speak to us first, something else can get our day off to a wrong start.
Remember to “seek God’s face.” His peace is in His face along with every other good thing in this universe is in His face. We cannot name one good thing that is not in God’s face. His will is in His face. His love is in His face. His mercy is in His face. This is why we are encouraged to pray His prescribed benediction...“and make His face shine upon thee and give thee peace” (Numbers 6:25). Be content with what you find in His face. Nothing good is outside His face. “Godliness with contentment is great gain” (I Timothy 6:6).

Now that we know how to appreciate and use good pressures while avoiding stress, let us learn (and practice what we learn) about the other needs of our bodies, such as oxygen, adequate water, proper food, ample exercise and rest. God wants us to care about the way we treat His temple. It is not ours. It is His. Therefore, we show our love and respect to Him by treating His dwelling place with all proper care. It is a part of our worship to Him.

Do not tackle all this within your own strength. Ask Christ in you the hope of glory to do it through you as you practice completely yielding your desires to His desires. As you learn to do this, you will become less and less stressed out, more and more rested in your spirit, and grow healthier for His glory (Hebrews 3–4). If you are healthy, then, by His grace, stay healthy. If you are not, then let “Christ in you the hope of glory” begin your road to health–fitness.
PART THREE

Chapter 12

The Pearl, Our Father’s Business

Matthew 13:45–46

Jesus used word pictures in His teaching to describe the Kingdom of God. I also like using word pictures, which are sometimes called parables. Jesus knew that a few word pictures get through to people better than words only. Matthew 13 is famous for illustrating the advantageous use of word pictures by the Master Teacher, Jesus Himself. The chapter contains seven of His word pictures describing His most favorite subject of all, the Kingdom of God.

Jesus often spoke in word pictures, so that He could satisfy the curiosity of His true disciples by further explanation at a later time. He might even repeat the story to insure their understanding. Yet, He would not explain His word pictures to those whose heart were not ready to receive. He mercifully did not cast His “pearls” before the critical ungrateful, self-centered “swine,” who did not value His truth (Matthew 7:6). Rejected truth fed to hardened, self-centered hearts only dulls them all the more.

Like the great word picture painter He was, who had already painted several good pictures of his favorite subject from various angles, Jesus aims again from another angle saying, “Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it” (Matthew 13:4–5). His Kingdom of God word picture album is full of great masterpiece word pictures. Let us allow Him to focus our attention together with Him on this one for now. What a view!

The important character in this picture is a merchantman. We know that a merchantman is a businessman who buys goods in order to sell them at a profit. The idea of being in business is not new to Jesus. Since Jesus was a boy
The Pearl of Great Price

Matthew 13:45-46

Kingdom of God

KING

CEO

OUR FATHER'S BUSINESS

JESUS

HOPES

PLANS

RIGHTS

DREAMS

ME

HOPES

PLANS

RIGHTS

DREAMS
of twelve, He has been excited about His Father’s business. Thinking of God’s Kingdom as a business may be a great adjustment for our minds, but it has never been for Him. He has always thought of the Kingdom of God as a business.

The Kingdom of God is definitely not a “non-profit” business! We know that Jesus went into business with His Father—God in order to make a profit. And we know from His several profit-and-loss related comments that He cares a lot about our profit as well as His own. “What does it profit a man, if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul?” (Mark 8:36). “You should have put My money to usury in order to grow a profit.” Note His disappointment in the “unprofitable workers” in His Father’s business. There is no place for “unprofitable” workers and profit losses. The Lord thinks “profit” and wants us to think “profit” also.

In this particular case, He is a pearl merchant whom we would call a jeweler. He goes to the trade show or even the seacoast where pearls are harvested looking for fine pearls. When He has found one of great value, he returns to his store and liquidates all his stock and assets and invests all He has into this one, expensive pearl. And He gives it a name after His own Father’s business, Kingdom of God. It becomes His one and only business. From now on, it is His business to grow the value of this one, single pearl.

In liquidating all His holdings in order to invest in this one pearl, He gave up all His rights, His plans, His hopes, and His dreams and invested all that He had into His Father’s business, the Kingdom of God. Then, He turned and invited me to do the same. So, I liquidated my rights, my plans, my hopes, and my dreams and co-invested with Him all that I had into our Father’s business.

But how easy was Christ’s liquidation process? Extremely much heavier than we can imagine! His liquidation process included the cross of Calvary. How easy was mine? Mine included being crucified with Christ. Although He put in the major investment, and mine was so small compared to His, it was all we had. He invested everything, and I invested everything. It is either an all-or-nothing investment, but it is worth it. He was appointed by our Father to be Chief Executive Officer. The Chief Executive Officer is called the King, when it comes to Kingdoms. So now I know that my investment is as safe as His. Taking into consideration who He is, I know that my investment is entirely secure.
May I tell you more about our Father’s business and how you can co-invest with us in most secure get eternally richer multi-level marketing plan? It is the only foolproof business plan in the whole universe. This is the only multi-level marketing plan I have ever been satisfied with, because there is no way God as our eternal Source can ever run out of resources. Like Paul, whom Christ got in on the ground floor of this business, I am already rich beyond measure and getting richer. As Jesus said, I am “laying up treasure in heaven where moth and rust do not corrupt and where thieves do not break through and steal”

My assets in this business are growing every day and are in no way affected by the volatile rising and falling markets of the everyday temporal world. I don’t wonder about my assets. They are in the best hands managed by the Perfect CEO who has everything of His invested right back into our Father’s Kingdom of God business. He is not a loser. Since my stock is connected with His, it rises every time His does, and His keeps rising. How can anybody beat that? We’ll be talking more about the very good accrual systems in later chapters.
Chapter 13

The King of the Kingdom, Our Father’s Business CEO

Jesus said, “I must be about my Father’s business.” Our Father–God has established His Son and our Lord Jesus Christ as the King over His Kingdom, which is Our Father’s business. So, our Lord Jesus Christ as King over our Father–God’s Kingdom is CEO (Chief Executive Officer) over His Father’s business. Now, through our own transformation into sons and daughters of our Father–God, we not only call Him Father but also find ourselves fellow heirs, joint heirs, and workers together with Him in the advancement of our Father’s business. Actually, I have been closing my letters for many years with the phrase, “About our Father’s business” (Romans 8:17; Galatians 3:29; Titus 3:7; Hebrews 1:14; 6:7; 11:9; 1 Peter 3:7).

As we see through our Lord Jesus Christ’s eyes the amazing Kingdom of God as a real and practical business in action, in fact, the first business, the model business, and ideal business of our Creator–God’s universe, we gain better understanding of the scripture as the Official Company Handbook for our Father’s Business. And this Business is the best–run business in the universe. It is just a matter of time until our Father’s Business takes over the whole world as the one and only business. Our Father–God, the Creator of all things, is of course the Creator of business, His own business.

What kind of business is this fast growing Kingdom of God business? We know that the Person described here is a merchant. We know that a merchant buys and sells to make a profit. We know from other statements of our CEO how He feels about “profitable” and “unprofitable” workers. So, there is no doubt that our Father–God has commissioned His Son, our Lord, to see to it that this business is profitable. We know also that this merchant deals in pearls. Our Lord Jesus Christ is not only the first business CEO but also the first Jeweler.

Remember, this Jeweler, who deals in pearls, went looking for more pearls for His business. He did find the most expensive Pearl of all, which would cost Him
all the stock that He had in the store, if He decided to buy it. He was so impressed with the value of this one “Pearl of great price,” that He went back to His store and liquidated His entire inventory of pearls in order to reinvest everything into this single, extremely wonderful, but pricy Pearl. The pearls he sold in order to buy the big One included His rights, His hopes, His plans, and His dreams. This great storewide liquidation day took place on the cross of Calvary!

He finished selling all His rights, His hopes, His plans, and His dreams and reinvested everything into His Father’s business, the Kingdom of God. Then, as CEO, he turned and invited me to do the same. With the omniscient, omnipotent, ever-present, all-loving, infinite and eternal Son of God as Chief Executive Officer over His Father’s Business, how could I lose? So, I liquidated all my rights, my hopes, my plans, and my dreams, and co-invested with Him in what I consider to be my best business decision of all time.

Now let us look into our Father’s Kingdom of God business. Let us adjust our thinking to the fact that our Father’s Business is definitely a family business (Romans 8:14, 19; Galatians 4:5–6; Hebrews 2:10; 12:7,8; I John 3:1–2). All our Father’s sons and daughters are also our brothers and sisters who with us are co-owners in the Family Business. As I said earlier, I have been closing my letters, “Yours for the Kingdom” or “About our Father’s business.”

I got into our Father’s Kingdom Family Business early by adoption, like you. Although I did not understand everything about it, I sold out everything and bought in. I did and still do thoroughly trust the CEO, the King, our Father’s Son, our elder Brother, Jesus Christ. Why, because it is a Kingdom in business with the perfect King of the universe as CEO.

I wish I had the time, the space, and the ability to describe this King-CEO to you, but you already know Him yourself, if you are a co-investor with Him in the Kingdom. And if you have not yet liquidated all your rights, your hopes, your plans, and your dreams to be adopted into this joyful eternal family by our Father and to co-invest with us in His extremely substantial and profitable business, I invite you to do the same as we have done. The growing value of your investment is guaranteed by the One who already owns all things.
Yes, we are not only sons and daughters of our Father–God but also fellow workers in our Father’s Kingdom Family Business (II Corinthians 6:1). Would you like to know about the inner workings of this Kingdom of God business? It is all through the handbook, but we will take a quick tour together through what we call the anatomy of the Kingdom. (And you will please excuse me if I seem as excited about our unique family as I do our work (Ephesians 3:15). We get our joys out of who we are as much as what we do.

We all have been given certain abilities, which increase with our faithfulness so that we can effectively fulfill our assigned responsibilities in the Kingdom. As we faithfully fulfill the responsibilities we are assigned, we are given more responsibilities by our loving Chief Executive Officer: “faithful over a few things, ruler over many” (Matthew 25:21–23). He promises that if we will be faithful throughout our temporal years, He will give us a crown of life that fades not away.” At that time, He will say, “Well done, good and faithful servant! Enter thou into the joys of Thy Lord!”

I used to think that those words would only be a onetime possibility at the very end of our earth years. But many of us in the family have often heard those words from our dear CEO at the end of some task or even a day. I believe that He is so happy to encourage us in our hearts. How do we know when we are hearing the word, “Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter thou into the joys of thy Lord?” As we read and use the handbook together in company meetings with our CEO, we all understand our parts and are encouraged and empowered to faithfully and effectively fulfill our assignments for the success of the company. And then we hear again deep in our hearts the “Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter thou into the joys of thy Lord”

Why do I need a crown? Is it just a sign of honor for a job well done? The word, “crown,” stands for our God–given responsibility with the corresponding ability and authority to accomplish it. Today, we say we wear a certain “hat.” Some of us because of our faithfulness are now wearing several “hats” just like He said. When Jesus comes back to Planet Earth, He will be “crowned with many crowns” (or hats) Himself.

Our crown is the delegated responsibility for which Jesus Himself is ultimately responsible. He entrusts each of us with at least one of these crowns and some of us with more. What crowns do you now wear in the Kingdom of God? What
responsibilities has He entrusted you with? Are we being faithful? Are we ready to receive more responsibilities or hats because of our faithfulness? Does it surprise you to know that “the joys of Thy Lord” are additional crowns? And isn’t it the most wonderful thing to be trusted by God?

Never dread or complain about your workload. When He gives us more responsibility, He always furnishes more grace to match the workload. But, if you ever decide you don’t want any more responsibility (another hat) from Him, all you have to do in stop being faithful, and it will stop. I know of so many people who are now taking on more responsibilities and doing them faithfully and well by His amazing grace.

Those “extra” responsibilities are coming to us from two directions: 1) additional new things that God wants done, with which He is entrusting us, and 2) responsibilities that He had to take away from some unfaithful or complaining people. At least you are being faithful. And because you are, you will hear Him say those most cherished words, “Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter Thou into the joys of Thy Lord!”

I do not wonder anymore about what those “joys of the Lord” are. He guarantees us even more ever-increasing responsibilities with matching grace. Real sons and daughters of God will never be without responsibilities. They just get more grace with which to carry them. And this will go on through the endless ages long after we are gone from this Planet. Even though I remain evermore curious, I do not claim to know even the smallest thing about all we will be doing. And there is more to come! I am so eager to see what is next in the mind of our Father-God.

When these days on earth are past and we transition from this temporal planet into the ages to come, we will have just begun to get on with what God had planned before He was so rudely interrupted by sin. Definitely, the party He had planned will go on with many more additional wonders! We will be in for more wonderful surprises! We’ll see more about this, too, in later chapters. Suffice it to say for now that, our “eyes have not seen, nor our ears heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man what God has planned for those who love Him” (I Corinthians 2:9). This brings us to something extremely key Jesus says to us regarding our Father’s Kingdom.
He says, “Seek you first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:33). Now, what things could He be talking about? What about all those good things, not the bad ones, that you gave up when you liquidated all your rights, your plans, your hopes, and your dreams, in order to co-invest with Him in Your Father–God’s Kingdom? He says that you get all these good things back and more in time as they are good for you and as you have need of them if you just seek first or go after just two things: 1) The Kingdom of God, and 2) His righteousness. Now, what could that ever mean?
Chapter 14

Projects and Relationships

Let us understand that God has designed His universe to run on two things: 1) relationships and 2) projects. When I was in college, I met the most wonderful girl I had ever met. I wanted to begin a relationship with her, but it did not automatically work out. First, I bought her a Dr. Pepper. This was a very short project, but it opened the gate for the beginning of our relationship. By the end of that week the relationship had grown just enough to allow for the next project, a real date to have dinner out followed by a game of miniature golf. The time we spent together on that project of dinner and miniature golf fed the growing relationship until it was strong enough for her to agree to the next project: another date with me.

As our “projects” increased, our “relationship” grew over time to the point that I finally got up the courage to ask Inez Vines to marry me. Asking for and receiving her “yes” was the project that thickened our relationship for a whole year right up to our wedding day (project), and the relationship kept growing. By God’s grace our relationship grew stronger until it was able to support a great project, the awesome birth of our first-born, Twila. Additional years of continued ministry together helped prepare our relationship to support three more beautiful births, Starla, Oren III, and Angie. All three of these events were awesome life-changing projects!

This past year Inez and I were able to celebrate fifty-three years of blessed marriage and ministry together all because of the project–relationship grid that God invented. All four of our children are wholeheartedly serving with their wonderful spouses and children in the advancement of God’s Kingdom. Inez and I rest very well at night. The bridge of relationship just has to be strong enough to support the next project using the bridge, but it takes a project to start building the bridge. Project by project, the bridges of relationships are made stronger.

The same project–relationship principle works for pastors who want to see unity of the Body of Christ in their city. When they share a project such as breakfast,
coffee, golf, prayer meetings, their growing relationships increase until, if they continue the process, they allow the Holy Spirit to grow them and their congregants into a city-wide Body of Christ relationship that will support the next major event (project), which will only feed and strengthen their ever-increasing relationships.

Over our years of ministry together, the Lord has allowed Inez and me with our children and mentoring teams to facilitate just this kind of thing to God’s glory in such places as Northwest Arkansas, Oklahoma City, Los Angeles, Miami, St. Louis, Kansas City, El Paso, Tijuana, California Baja Peninsula, Juarez, Mexico City, Monterrey, Guatemala City, San Salvador, Buenos Aires, Mar del Plata, Cordoba, Rosario, Mendoza, Belarus (Former Soviet Union), etc. Now our children, with their families and teams, are wholeheartedly involved in the same growth and advancement of God’s Kingdom.

All these are joys for the Kingdom of God, because we are co-invested with the King in our Father’s business! Paul was smart enough to “count it all joy.” Jesus, our CEO King, led the way by enduring the cross, one of His Father–given responsibilities, for the “joy” that was before Him. I believe that one of the greatest contributors to what we call “burnout” in this Kingdom of God family business can be the losing sight of the “joy” that is before us. It is so important to make the “meetings” where our CEO King has promised to be in the middle of those who gather in His name. It is in those family of God times that He clarifies our assignments, equips us with matching grace, and refreshes our vision with those “joys” that are set before us.

Now, may we apply this project–relationship principle to our own personal choices? When Jesus urged us to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, He was speaking of God’s project and our relationship with God. The Kingdom of God is His one big project, because He is totally invested in His Kingdom over all other things. “His righteousness” speaks of focusing on our “right standing” relationship with Him.

We should not confuse God’s righteousness with His holiness, although all His attributes are closely related and seem to overlap. For our understanding, we see God’s righteousness and His holiness as complementary attributes, with each having its specific definition. The meaning of God’s holiness includes His completeness, His wholeness.
The meaning of God’s righteousness includes “right standing.” God is not only in right standing with Himself, but now, because of Calvary, we can be in right standing with Him. The right standing of Christ with the Father has now been imputed to us, so that we are also in right standing with our Father-God (Romans 4:11, 22–24; James 2:22–24). Right standing with God is all-important to us. It is one of two things He expects us to focus on as family members in His Kingdom of God business. Fellowship is necessary to keep relationships in tact for the sake of “right standing.”

The question is, “are we in right standing with God through Jesus Christ?” Once, we were enemies with God, because we did not discern and value the precious over the worthless, the holy over the profane, the spiritual over the carnal, and the eternal over the temporal. Now through Jesus Christ we are in right standing, being adopted into the family of our loving Father-God. We are therefore righteous in Jesus Christ. He is our Righteousness.

We are urged to always seek first God’s top project, His Kingdom, and His righteousness, our right relationship with Him through Christ’s righteousness. As we are so focused on God’s Kingdom project and our relationship with Him, all these other things that are good for us including our assigned place(s) in the Kingdom of God service with matching grace abilities will be added to us as they are good for us. It is so great to know that He eliminates the bad giving us only the things that are good for us, as we need them. Seeking first God’s Kingdom and His righteousness was the smartest thing we could have ever begun doing.

“And we know that all things work together for good to them who love God who are the called according to His purpose.” Note how Paul’s use of the word, “things,” in Romans 8:28 develops off Christ’s word, “things,” in Matthew 6:33. See the correlation. Jesus promises that “these things” on our list that are good for us will be added to us as we seek first God’s kingdom (project) and His righteousness (relationship.). Paul declares God’s guarantee that “all things,” whether combined or not, from our personal list, others’ lists, God’s list, and even Satan’s list, will have to work together for good to us, because we “love God and are the called according to His purpose”

There are many times, when we have no idea who or what is feeding into our minds, our paths, and circumstances, but in every single case, God is ever so personally at work to insure our ultimate good. Think of how it was after the
first day of God’s six-day creation procedure. God said, “It is good.” At the completion of the second day, “It is good.” At the end of the third day, “It is good,” etc. He is Creator by His very nature, so why would He ever stop creating? It is nothing extra for Him to create and/or recreate something good out of the best or more chaotic situations. However, this promise of all working together for good is insured to a certain group of people, “those who love God and who are the called according to His purpose.”

Well, here we have a match for sure! Paul in Romans is only enlarging on what Jesus promised in Matthew. “Loving God (relationship) and “being the called accord to His purpose (project) is the same as “seeking first the Kingdom of God (project) and His righteousness (relationship). This simplifies our lives so very much. All we have to focus our full attention on is our relationship with God and His Kingdom business project. As we do this, everything else that is good is added to us as we need it. And we can always count on Him to be working miracles for our good out of all the varied agendas that come into our lives. At the end of our day, it will be “good.”

God is still on the throne. God is in control. Yes, it takes all the trust we have to believe this, but what other intelligent choice do we have? So far, God has always come through without fail. “For I know that He is able to keep that, which ‘we’ have committed unto Him, against that day” (II Timothy 1:12).
Chapter 15

One Pearl, One Kingdom, One Purpose

Note that Paul uses the singular form of the word, purpose, as Jesus uses the singular form of the corresponding word, Kingdom of God. God has given us only one purpose to focus on, His Kingdom. How simplifying to our complicated lives is this? Along with everything else, Christ’s command to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness simplifies our lives.

All other related sub-purposes must come under our focus on this one in order to be legitimate. And all other relationships must come under our focused relationship with Him in order to legitimize them. Otherwise, we do not have His all-sufficient corresponding grace to qualify for these particular “God promises” through Christ and Paul to have all things added and to have all things work together for good to us.

Now, are we ready to review what we know as the Lord’s Prayer with fresh eyes? It is within the context of Our Father–God’s Kingdom business that we pray, “Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” Most of us picture something of what we are praying in these words. We start out by acknowledging both our Father–God and His family by the words, “our” and “Father.” This is important to Him, because He is surely a Family Person, the Father of fathers.

God is so absolutely firm on our being a family in all we are, say, and do. “As much as you have done it unto the least of these, you have done it unto Me” (Matthew 25:40,45). He takes very personally how we treat our brothers and sisters. If we want to hurt Him, all we have to do is hurt any brother or sister, and He feels it.

Our CEO–King guarantees to be with two or more of us coming together in His name. “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous [right standing with God] man avails much” (James 5:16). One righteous man can put a thousand to flight, but He promises that two will put ten thousand to flight. Yes, He answers
prayer for one individual, but there are times He withholds the answer to call our attention back to relationship with Him and the family (Deuteronomy 32:20).

Remember the sick person James tells us about (James 5:14–16)? He should pray for himself and expect to be healed, but if not, then call for the elders of the church. Of course, this is for more than one reason. One is so that the Father’s family has to come together for His answer. Another is so that they can help the sick person discern and be forgiven of any sin. In some cases, it might even be the sin of “forsaking the assembling” of himself with the family in the presence of the CEO–King. Remember the relationship factor? Our Father insists on His family both relating and working together.

Jesus Himself sets the standard for the rest of us. He says, “Go into all the world...and lo, I am with you always...” Again He says “In my Father’s house are many mansions...that where I am there you may be also” (John 14:2). His name, Immanuel, means God with us. Notice words like “with,” together,” “one,” and “unity.” See how He loves family! It is our family togetherness that the lost world will not be able to resist when we come together speaking the same thing...with one voice...in the spirit of unity” (I Corinthians 1:10; Ephesians 4:3).

In John 17, Jesus prays, “Father, I pray that they may be one as we are one...that the world may believe!” See how His heart yearns for this. See the implications of God’s family ethos. How this will change our lives, our churches, our communities, our nation, and our world! As personal to me as God is, He is not just “my Father!” He is “our Father!” When I say, “this Thy son,” He replies, “this, thy brother” (Luke 15:30–32). If we would like more of our prayers answered, we must look at the family factor, for this is how our Father thinks.
Chapter 16

Kingdom of God Family Business—Requisitions

It has been made plain to us that we, as our Father’s own children, make up the fellow shareholders and personnel with His CEO–Son in His family business. He also makes it exceedingly plain to us that we are to requisition Him through our CEO for whatever we need and want (Luke 11:9; James 4:2). We all know by now that it takes workers and money to run any business. Listen to the company handbook: “The Father knows what you have need of before you ask.” Yet, He says, “You have not because you ask not.” Again, “Ask; and it shall be given unto you.”

We learn that it helps to know that we are requisitioning in line with our Father’s business plan: “And this is the confidence that we have in Him that if we ask anything according to His will, we know that He hears us. And if we know that He hears us whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him” (I John 5:14–15). “And my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory” (Philippians 4:19).

At this point, we already know several things about how to get our needs supplied in our Father’s Kingdom of God family business. We know that the requisitions have to be countersigned by our official CEO–King, so we ask in the name of Jesus. We know that it is improper to requisition something just to consume it on our own lust, which is to please our own flesh (James 4:3).

We know that we are supposed to “ask largely” so that there is no lack of supply for the “great and mighty” things He is showing us. We know that our relationship with Him will guide us to desire what is on His heart and that Father always knows best. We know that He wants us children to work together as He leads the family business.

Now, we are ready to ask in the name of Jesus. We know that God’s supply of all our needs will be “according to His riches in glory.” And we know that “He will not withhold any good thing from those who love Him.” Has there ever been a
time when we have asked God why He has not answered our requests for supply, when we wonder whether or not He has even heard us, and what might be the reason? Could it be that we may have discovered at least one possible reason why for a season our Father might withhold something from “those who walk uprightly” (Psalms 84:11)? Maybe it is not good for us in the long run.

Remember that our Father—God loves His family as much as His project. His project is really calling His lost ones back into the family. He is always watching out for us as well as the family of God project we are working on. Another reason might be that He is trying to get our attention, because we are so involved with His good project that we have forgotten Him. Also, it could be that He is waiting to synchronize our part of the project with others so that the overall outcome will be timed according to the greatest effectiveness.

We can all think of several good reasons why at times we have actually been blessed by God’s delay in filling our requisition at the very time we requisitioned it. He knows and appreciates our hearts and what we can see from our perspective, but He sees much better and does what is best. We must agree in the end that our loving Father knows best, and it’s not as often about things as our little hearts might think, especially temporal things.

He does not want us to go without anything we need, but He does not want to sacrifice His highest good for us to something second best. There are times when what seems “good” to us can undermine His “best” for us, and God knows when that is. This is a good reason to remember that our Father—God loves us.

Often, we have discovered that one reason for what might seem like a delay to our request may be that when we requisition something we need even for the project God has assigned us, He may withhold it just to motivate me to rush into His office. Then, He smiles and says, “Sit down, and let’s talk.” Remember how He made such a big deal about how Mary had chosen the good thing by spending time with Him.

Some of us more project-oriented Martha types may need Him to remind us to think “relationship” with our Father and the family while some of us Mary types may eventually need Him to remind us, “If you love Me (relationship), you will keep My commandment” to also be workers together with Me.” “How can you say that you love Me and do not the things I say?” He did tell us to seek first His
Kingdom or His righteousness. No, it is not either/or but both/and. God's grace is sufficient to train us into His ways.

Rest assured that our Father-God will see to it that we always have all that we need when it is countersigned by Jesus Himself, the Chief Executive Officer who thinks just like His Father and ours. It may take us a while to adjust to all the policies, procedures, and protocol of our Father-God’s Kingdom family business, but it is worth it. On this earth, as we advance the Kingdom of God, we are just getting warmed up for His eternal purpose.

If at first we do not understand why a particular requisition did not get answered immediately, we can call for our brothers and sisters to help us understand. It might be that the Father wants more of His children involved with the requisition so that more of us will enjoy the abundant answer together when it comes. Whatever His reason, we are learning to trust Him more, are we not?

Could it be time to pray further into our Lord’s Prayer outline? “Our Father Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.” Now it emphasizes our Father’s holiness. It is so important that we come to our holy Father-God in the righteousness of His dear Son who is our Righteousness. “Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” “If we ask anything according to His will He hears us. And if we know that He hears us whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.” Are we requisitioning in line with His will and the coming of His Kingdom on Planet Earth?

“Give us this day our daily bread.” Here we understand that some things are to be requisitioned daily so that we are daily in touch with Him. Note how our asking each day for our daily bread will keep us in daily touch with our Father, which is important to Him.

The next phrase, “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us” will be considered in a later part of this work. Forgiveness is one of the greatest things we can ever learn on this earth. It is the key to many wonders of our Father with His dear children. So much hinges on our understanding of the why, what, and how to of forgiveness.
Chapter 17

Kingdom of God—Dynamics and Scope

We will let Paul introduce the Dynamics of the Kingdom of God in Colossians 1:24, “Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His Body's sake, which is the Church.”

Remember The Little Mermaid movie, so full of imagination with a song, Under the Sea? Well, how about another little “under the sea” story! Let us imagine a little baby oyster that is happily enjoying his home surroundings. He and all his sea creature friends are playing together. It’s like a party at home all the time with seemingly everything going his way. What a wonderful, beautiful life!

Suddenly one day, with no warning, a sharp pain strikes! He rushes screaming to his mother with this unbearable pain. “Oh, help me, help me, mother! It hurts; it hurts!” “What’s the problem, son? Let mother see what I can do to help you, Baby!” On close inspection as she listens to his description of how and where it hurts, it does not take long for this mother oyster to home-diagnose the problem. Trying to console the little guy as best she can, she tells him the stories of other relatives in their family along with some friends and neighbors who over the years came down with the same symptoms.

Through sobs, he hears about his uncle Joe and older cousins, even his own father who had to endure the same pain and suffering. “It always seems to begin with a sharp pain,” she explains, “caused by a tiny grain of sand, which has somehow gotten lodged inside your oyster shell. When you are almost ready to think that nothing will ever make the pain subside, it will finally become a little more bearable. Just hold on and be brave.”

We all know the discomfort of a tiny grain of sand that gets lodged in our shoe as we walk or run. It seems like it must be a very large grain of sand to the threatened sole or heel of our tender foot. But when we stop to pull off our shoe to shake out the little irritant, we hardly believe the tiny size. How could that little grain of sand cause so much pain?
Oh yes, we remember now! Back in science class we learned how glass is made of sand. Sand can cut. Sand can be harsh. Sand can hurt! It’s not surprising to hear that one tiny grain of sand lodged within the shell of an oyster can be such an aggravating irritant.

Well, just as the mother oyster promised her little baby oyster, he began to feel a little better. The discomfort was still there but not nearly so bad. What happened? We are told that God has provided the oyster with the ability to secrete a fluid around those sharp edges of the tiny sand grain in his shell. As this secretion from the oyster’s own gland hardens to cover over the sharp edges of the sand, the level of discomfort is reduced. However, the object, although more rounded than sharp, is still there and still quite irritating. So, the secretion continues to build and harden around the object.

This, of course, shapes and grows around the tiny thing as the process continues. This little object is what we call a pearl. People harvest oysters from the ocean in search of pearls. Pearl diving is a regular business. The size and quality of the pearl will help determine its value. A lot of work goes into the pearl. We could say that the oyster works hard and so do the pearl divers. We should have a great appreciation for all that has gone into the next beautiful pearl we see.

There are real pearls that have become such by a long and painful process. These truly have a great price. But there are man-made synthetic pearls, which can be purchased for very little money. What is the difference? And why does the real pearl cost so much more than the synthetic one? The real difference is that the synthetic pearl is so much easier to make, and nobody suffers! But, what about this “Pearl of Great Price?”

A pearl is born and grows through suffering. Christ is my example. I suffer, not to attain salvation, but to demonstrate to others the great value of God’s grace. Is this not what Paul is saying in Colossians 1:24? “Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His Body’s sake, which is the Church.”
Christ has suffered once and for all for our salvation and to establish His Kingdom. There is nothing more we can or ever should try to do to save ourselves. “We are saved by grace through faith and that not of ourselves. It is a gift of God, lest any man should boast” (Ephesians 2:8). Accept His free gift with thanksgiving. It is free to us, but it was expensive to Him. “We have been called out of the world system into the Kingdom of His dear Son,” from death to life, from evil to good, from loss to gain, etc.

But I want to do something! It is in me to do something! What can I do in response? Am I to suffer? And for what? Would there be any value in my suffering since Christ has already paid it all? Physical pain and death are not the only ways to suffer. What Christ needs of us is the display of His nature in us that would say, “Suffer the little children to come unto Me; and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven” (Mark 10:14). Here, He does not mean to beat the little things until they are in pain. He rather means for us to allow them to come, to yield to their coming, even “go out of our way” to help them come.

Some of the greatest pain and suffering is emotional and spiritual. How do we feel when some drivers on the highway give us difficulty, when the other person in the dormitory snores, when people’s ways get on our nerves and everything doesn’t go our way? How about when it rains on our picnic or parade, or when the waitress doesn’t serve our table in just the right way? Do the little children or even the adults hear our complaining? They will take their cues from our behavior. Where is the suffering, yielding nature of “Christ in us the hope of glory?” Where is “this little light of mine?”

Suffering is the act of giving up my rights, hopes, dreams, and plans—my very life (spirit, soul, and body)—for the one great pearl, the Kingdom of God. If Christ’s sufferings include the giving up of His rights, His hopes, His dreams, and His plans, then this defines my suffering. The suffering Christ needs of me to grow this great pearl, the Kingdom of God, is my giving up of my rights, my hopes, my dreams, and my plans and yield to His will and His ways (Colossians 1:24).

And I shouldn’t think for a moment that the little children and even adults around me won’t notice the next time I close my mouth instead of letting fly with those words about the driver who cut me off or the rude clerk in the store. They might even begin to think that I really am a “new creation in Christ Jesus,
that my old things have passed away and that all things have become new” (II Corinthians 5:17). They may begin to “see my good works and glorify my Father who is in heaven.” They may begin to see “the Light of the world” in me to the glory of God Himself. Wow! This could be far reaching in itself.

As this goes on by the power of “Christ in me the hope of glory,” even I may be able to see the change. “But we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord are being changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord” (II Corinthians 3:18). “Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, Oh Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer!”

This pearl, the Kingdom of God, born through the sufferings of Christ, continues to grow and grow through the willing sufferings of His believing followers. We must continue to remember that we are co-invested in business with our own Father-God and that the business will only grow as we model what we sell. We say, “Come buy without money and without price” to those who need salvation. Why should they want what we have? Because, we are modeling His robe of righteousness, and it’s looking better on us each day! “Christ in us the hope of glory” is beginning to shine through to the outside where they can see it.

The Kingdom of God will grow until “The earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea” (Isaiah 11:9).

When we read how the early Christians wisely exchanged their profane lives for the holy, their carnal desires for the spiritual, and their temporal rights, hopes, dreams, and plans for the eternal, or as we hear how Corrie Ten Boom lovingly forgave her prison guard for her sister’s death, how pioneer pastors have given up riches to spread the gospel, we can see the “Christ in you the hope of glory” that has drawn many to come out of the world system into the Kingdom of God. I have observed many of our Christ-like, Ecclesia College Royals athletes and fans resist badmouthing poor calls by the referee and am greatly impressed by the “Christ in [them] the hope of glory”

It is everywhere! Christ’s people are yielding to His Spirit in them, so that the world sees a holy, spiritual, eternal Jesus shining through me where once they saw just another ungratefully profane, carnal, temporal–hearted rebel like
themselves. Somebody say, “I'm beginning to get the picture. It’s not all about me. It's about my Father-God and His Kingdom.” Since I am a fellow family owner with Jesus in “Our Father’s business,” the better the family business does, the better we all do!

It is definitely worth the exchange! What kind of a job do we family members have in our Father’s business? Adding as many new co-investors as we can just a fast as we can! While we are doing them a favor by getting them to liquidate their little, failing temporal businesses to re-invest it all into our Father’s family business as they, too, become our adopted brothers and sisters. We are giving our Father His greatest joy as He sees his lost kids coming home. We are beginning to see His children as our brothers and sisters in His growing family.

How happy we are becoming as we are leaving the vanity of this world system for the ever-increasing eternal riches of our Father’s business, the Kingdom of God. We can only feel sorry for those who fearfully hang onto their failing, little mom and pop “stores” that are worth less and less with each passing day. Contrast this with what they can have, if we can show them how to sell out their cheap little storefront while they can re-invest into our Father’s business and become His sons and daughters with us. Most people are emotionally tied to the little they have, and telling them our own stories could help their decision-making.

“The kingdoms of this world are becoming the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever” (Revelation 11:15). It is just a matter of time until our Father’s business has put every little, independent business out of business. When our Father’s business comes to town, it is time for those who would be wise to sell out all their rights, hopes, dreams, and plans and co-invest with us into our Father’s business where the eternal riches are.

These new co-investors will soon find, as we did, that “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” And they will begin to encourage everybody else to buy in, too. This is just what’s happening over the whole world right now, even as we speak. Example: The most conservative estimate of new Christians “being added to the church” each day in China is 20,000. This would be no less than an increase of 7,200,000 again this year in China. (If you wish to be a part of the China Project, you may call Strategic Missions at Ecclesia International
Headquarters.) “The kingdoms of this world are becoming the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. And He shall reign forever and ever.” Hallelujah! Amen.

If you have sold out everything and wholeheartedly re-invested in the Kingdom of God, you know what we’re talking about. You do know that God Himself invented multi-marketing! He invented it for selling stock in the Kingdom of God although we know people who have used the same plan to make money in this temporary world. It works for those who can demonstrate that they have bought in and are helping their “friends” to buy into God’s marketing plan for His Kingdom. Everybody is to get a “down-line” of customer-salespeople going who use the product and sign on new salespeople to do the same. The idea is that the “up-line” people make a “cut” off each sale from their own “down-line” personnel.

Believe it or not, it is the same in our Father’s business, the Kingdom of God! Paul says that he has accruing to his account something from every real Kingdom of God “sale” by His “Timothy,” “Faithful Men,” and “Others” and the countless many whom they have signed on. So, when we hear Paul speaking of his eternal riches, we may begin to grasp just a tiny bit of what he is trying to tell us. Jesus actually started the “down-line,” as we might hear it called in today’s multi-level marketing. Paul got in right at the first and brought Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and others on board.

Paul’s faithful ones delighted him, but one dropout especially broke his heart, “Demas has left me having loved this present world” (II Timothy 4:10). Identifying with Paul’s tears over his dropout, Demas, I have yet to know anyone whose “Demas” dropped out for any other reason than the love for this present world over God and His Kingdom. Judas, who did not value God’s eternal riches in Jesus over his love for this present world, was a tragic dropout. To this day nobody wants to be called a “Judas” whose name has come to mean “betrayer.” Everyone who drops out has betrayed somebody!

Many others close to Jesus Christ got in on the ground floor when it seemed harder. But by the “power and demonstration” of His gracious Holy Spirit of “Christ in them the hope of glory” they were able to gain many true stockholders into our Father’s business. By the same means, Timothy’s generation was successful in recruiting “faithful men” who in turn brought in “others.” On and on, generation after generation, our Father’s business has grown.
Now, it’s our generation’s turn! We have been promised that there is a generation that shall see the whole earth covered with our Father’s business, the Kingdom of God, “as the waters cover the sea.” And it’s all about “Christ in you the hope of glory” shining out so that “The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it.” Not only does He shine out through you and me but also through His whole Body of faithful and true believers.

The Body of Christ is letting our collective light so shine before men. God’s value is on display in us as the Body of Christ. His glory is being revealed. Add to this His second coming in the clouds, and then Isaiah’s prophecy will never again be doubted, “And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed; and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it.” Hallelujah!

A personal note: Sign on as many co-investors as you can. This can only increase your eternal riches and theirs, which you will enjoy with your Father-God as He enjoys you forever. Teach them to “Store not up for yourselves treasures on earth where moth and rust do corrupt and where thieves break through and steal, but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven where moth and rust do not corrupt and where thieves do not break through and steal.” “The enemy has come but for the kill, steal, and destroy, but I (Christ) am come that you might have life and have it more abundantly.”

Teach your Timothy to teach faithful men to teach others to keep signing on serious stockholders into our ever-increasing Father’s business where everybody gains. It’s the only true win-win-win business opportunity in God’s universe. It’s just a matter of time until all others eventually fail.

“The meek shall inherit the earth” (Matthew 5:5). Like Peter who struck off the ear of the high priest’s servant with his sword, some of us still conjure up the old leftover carnal images of artillery when we think of winning the war against the world system, the flesh, and the devil. But as we examine closely our godly armor in Ephesians, we see it as the belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, shoes of preparation of the good news, shield of faith, helmet of salvation, sword of the spirit, and heaven’s communications system of praying in the spirit.
And Christ’s spirit is the spirit of meekness. Meekness is not weakness. It takes a strong person to be meek in tough situations, but it is worth it to inherit this Planet Earth away from the devil. Everyone we help defect from the world system into God’s Kingdom changes the difference by two. The devil loses one and God gains one. That’s a difference of two. The meek are winning! This is God’s planet, and He’s taking it back.

“His Kingdom will have no end” (Luke 1:33). Another great thing about our Father’s family business is that it has no end. It certainly is hard for us to even imagine something without an end. But, this is the way it is. Ages upon never ending ages! Let our imaginations go as far as they can, and we still cannot grasp what will be like to enjoy this ever-increasing Kingdom with our eternal Father–God and all His children, our brothers and sisters. What a family business! It is so far worth much more than all the God–given thought, time, talent, treasure, and trust we have co-invested. Our co-investments with Jesus in our Father’s family business far exceed all we put in.

“But seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:33). Knowing what we know, how can we ever want to do otherwise? Yet, remember that we know the why, the what, and the how to. Let us be absolutely sure, however, that our Timothy is teaching this just as it is to faithful men and that they in turn are teaching others to maintain only these two goals: the “Kingdom of God and His righteousness,” love God and remain “called according to His purpose.”

“And we know that all things work [are working] together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28). We might wish that we had all the understanding about everything we face, but God knows when it is best for us to understand. Meanwhile, we have the peace (from Him) that actually passes understanding.

Our Father’s peace through “Christ in us the hope of glory” will hold us steady until He sees fit to give us the understanding. Meanwhile, “with all our getting we are to get understanding” as He makes it available to us. God’s understanding is good when it comes. His understanding is partly what Mentoring Foundations is all about, as is His peace, which He provides ahead of and surpasses understanding. Accepting first His peace is the surest way to true understanding.
“And this gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all the nations; and then shall the end come” (Matthew 24:14). Count on it! This good news of our Father’s business, the Kingdom of God, shall be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a witness (first hand testimony of all its benefits) unto all the people groups, for “God is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”

Our Father’s big loving heart desires to adopt every one of these valuable persons He has created into His wonderful family. Can the “Christ in us the hope of glory” see these precious lost ones as our Father does? Do we share our Father’s broken heart for these hopeless ones? When and if they ask us about the “hope that lies within us,” because they see “Christ in us the hope of glory,” are we ready with the right “Answer?”

“And Jesus came and spoke unto them, saying, ‘All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost’” (Matthew 28:18-20). Here again, “Christ in us the hope of glory” is calling us who have made the great exchange from our old self-centered rights, hopes, dreams, and plans to His Kingdom and righteousness to join Him by accessing His empowerment to advance His Kingdom throughout the nations.

“And He said unto them, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15). You can be a part of taking our Father’s business into the whole world. People you may never even know on this earth can be part of your our “down line,” if we may again borrow that expression. They will be simultaneously adopted and co-invested into our Father’s business with us. What a joy to see this as it takes place all over the world. “In My Father’s house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you. I go away to prepare a place for you that where I am there you may be also” (John 14:2). How’s that for the best choice you ever made?

The story is told of an evangelist who was scheduled to preach one night. Only one little boy showed up, and the evangelist was tempted to just dismiss. But he stayed to preach his sermon. When he was finished, he invited the little boy to accept the Lord Jesus as His Savior and Lord, which he did. I understand that the little boy grew up to be one of North America’s most effective evangelists.
Thousands of missionaries have gone out through the influential work of this one faithful man of God “into all the world” and have spread the good news to ultimately millions more. Can you imagine the eternal riches that have accrued to the account of that one evangelist who helped the one little boy co-invest into our Father’s business, the Kingdom of God? The best time for us to work is now. “Today is the day of salvation. Now is the accepted time” (II Corinthians 6:2)!
Chapter 18

The Only Authorized Agency for Kingdom of God Advancement

The only authorized agency for the advancement of the Kingdom of God is Christ’s Body, His “called out ones,” His Church. “Upon this rock I will I build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18). Notice that the Church is singular. This is God’s world, and He’s taking it back through one singular force who is Christ in His Church, the hope of glory. His church is singular and always has been one.

Allowing for the varieties of Christian professions under His Lordship based on the varieties of understandings and preferences, some Christians emphasize their respective distinctions through separate names. Yet, most Christian believers today acknowledge that the Church, Christ’s Ecclesia, is His whole Body of believers under His Lordship all over the world expressed through a plurality of branches and congregations.

Originally, there was only one church per locale such as the Church at Corinth, the Church at Ephesus, etc. The early Christians did not yet have (and not encumbered by) corporate worship facilities dedicated to that purpose. They gladly met in homes and wherever they could find meeting places. Yet, all the Christians of a city saw themselves as one local body of believers. They were instructed, “Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is.”

Assembling together is still more than a good idea. Coming together often and staying together is essential to sustaining the very life and growth of Christ’s believers in any locale. It affects them all, from the whole congregation down to each smaller group and individual member. Also, it shows a more united front to remove the excuses of the world.

Paul begged the Corinthian church not to divide over their various views of truth perceived from the variety of preaching and teaching styles and emphases of
Peter, Apollos, himself and others. We learn early on from his appeal to the Corinthians that church divisions in history were rooted more in pride than understanding. Paul had urged them to stick together so that they could humbly learn from one another, eventually “speaking the same thing”...with one voice...“in the spirit of unity”

It is so difficult for any of us not to see ourselves as the center of things. Babies are an example of this, and some people never grow up. I can say that it took me some time to see Christ as the one and only, truly and perfectly, balanced Person in the universe with all the rest of us needing one another to be a part of a balanced thing under His Lordship called His Church, His Ecclesia.

Remember the days when the families of a town would bring their tasty dishes together for a picnic? Everyone could have some of every food on the table. Then, they all went back to their homes to digest the larger and better-balanced variety of foods with deeper appreciation for one another’s recipes. We need what our brothers and sisters bring with them of Christ in order to enlarge the blend of our spiritual nutrition for strength and growth. The Lord has designed that I do not get all I need from Him when I remain aloof.

The Church comes together in order for everyone to bring and share what he has received from the Lord in his personal “closet” times at home so that, having shared together, everyone can return home with a better balance of spiritual nutrition. This was good for the individual and good for the congregation. But, if somebody had not the patience of Christ’s Holy Spirit to show his brother the same wonderful truth he held personally, he might be tempted to divide and meet only with those who agreed with him. Needless to say, their diet was no longer balanced, even though from their perspective they saw themselves at the center of truth.

This is what we of our generation have all inherited. I see more and more good spiritual nutrition in each group and the great blessing of getting us all together from time to time. One such blessed occasion is when my daughter, Twila, comes to a city to present a concert. There I see people from all Christian confessions under His Lordship coming together and going away more greatly blessed than when they came. And it’s not only Twila Paris who brings something to the occasion. It’s all those wonderful Christian believers who
bring Christ in their hearts and minds to participate with one another. Therefore, He is in their midst as He promised.

It is easy to be tempted to imagine that our denomination or group is at the center of truth with all the others needing some day to see the light we already have. I have so many wonderful brothers and sisters of all denominations, confessing Jesus Christ as Lord, that have come to accept the rest of our Father–God’s family. This is all—important to the revelation of the fullness of Truth, who is Christ Himself. He is not only the Living Truth to all of us but also to the whole world through all of us. He prayed to this effect in the garden, and His prayer to the Father is being answered.

God will not allow any of us to make the final “touchdown” of the game all by ourselves. He insists that we all cross the finish line together so that Christ in us the hope of glory truly receives the glory. And this is how we all share in His glory! There is no room for pride in Christ’s church, His greater Ecclesia. We are all called and redeemed out of the world system where we were once dead in our trespasses and sin into His Kingdom where His Spirit is changing us back into His very own image.

No one here is calling for anybody to renounce or despise his particular Christian confession, denomination, or understanding. God has not authorized any of us to judge our precious Christian brother’s heart, or peel off his denominational tag. Although many of us might be tempted to want the assignment, this could only hurt when done by man. This must be left to the Holy Spirit to do in His own way and in His own time; when tag–pealing time comes, it will come to all of us.

We may not know when it will happen, but one day in heaven, or maybe sooner, we will note those differentiating marks and one–time scars are all gone, and that our complexion is again as unblemished and beautiful as the face of our Creator, Father–God. Paul writes to these same Christians, “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord” (II Corinthians 3:18).

With or without our differentiating tags we still all bring something good to the table. Let us begin pointing out the blessings we are to one another instead of
majoring on those fewer things that may tend to irritate. As we begin by removing the beams in our own eyes, perhaps our brothers will desire our help with what seems to us like a beam in their eye. Only by God’s Holy Spirit can you do this kind of surgery without causing more harm than good. Always be very sure that we follow the early church model of decision making in Acts, especially in these things. “It seems good to the Holy Spirit and to us.”

The Church, Christ’s Ecclesia, not only has been proved through Him to have full authorization, but also the ability and equipping for the advancement of God’s Kingdom. When Christ says, “the gates of hell shall not prevail against it,” He knows that God’s thing done God’s way for God’s reason by God’s power and authority cannot and will not fail.

So, let us see this more practically. God’s Anointed One, “Christ in you [individually and corporately] the hope of glory” is on the offensive, storming the very gates of hell to deliver those who are entrapped. And those gates cannot endure the united pressure of the whole Body of Christ under His Lordship. Hallelujah! This is God’s thing done God’s way by God’s power and authority for God’s reason. Count on it when all of us stand in our hearts together!

Christ prayed this prayer of unity, and there is no earthly power that can keep our Father–God from answering His perfect Son. What we ask in His name, He hears us whatsoever we ask. Let us pray and respond with Christ to the will of our Father–God who is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance (a complete turnaround).
Chapter 19

Yes; But Let’s Get Practical

Have you ever heard someone say, “Yes, but let’s get practical. Spiritual things are good, I’m sure, but I’m a practical person.” I have concluded that “spiritual is practical.” And those who do not observe this are lacking in sufficient foresight to the point that God views them as impractical thinkers. Like Esau, they tend to sell out the precious for the worthless, the holy for the profane, the spiritual for the carnal, and their eternal riches for temporal values. Now, is that really practical?

God is spirit, and God is practical. He is the most practical Person in His universe, and they that would be like Him must be spiritual in order to be truly practical. Do we really believe what we read in God’s word? Then, we have no choice but to be spiritual. God’s Holy Spirit speaking through Paul in Romans 8 helps us with this, “Walk in the Spirit, not in the flesh,” etc. Being practical means that we actually practice what we claim to believe, preach and teach, and find it to work just as God says. “Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.”

The most impractical thing you can do is to disobey God either by omission or commission. To omit following His word is just as impractical as anyone can ever be. “Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against Thee.” “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my pathway.” “If we walk in the light as He is in the light we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin.” God’s word was written by “holy men of old as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.” This spiritual word of God is practical to everyone’s ultimate good.

Truly, God has ordained that Christ’s Church, His Ecclesia, is spiritual. All His Church’s members are to be spiritual. His Holy Spirit places each of us into His
Church. And His Holy Spirit administers His Church so that we are all fitly joined together. The strength is in the joints of the Body of Christ where each is interconnected with the others—all by God’s Holy Spirit. We keep His dynamic only as we remain spiritual.

Ultimately, spiritual is as real or more so than physical. It existed before the physical matter and was the source of all physical things. God, who is Spirit, spoke all physical things into existence. We must get used to the fact that we are the spiritual Body of Christ. This is the only practical way that the spiritual gates (plural) of hell cannot prevail against us as Christ’s one singular, undivided Church, His Ecclesia, His Body.
Chapter 20

Kingdom of God Culture Is Normal

Throughout my lifetime, I have had opportunity to discuss “cultures” with many people of many cultures. We have always tried to be considerate of the cultures of other people groups with whom we are working. Yet, in our eagerness to be thoughtful, we must always keep in mind that the culture of God’s Kingdom always trumps all other man-made, man-developed cultures. In heaven, every kindred, tribe and tongue will be represented around the throne, but God’s culture will trump all of these. One thing we will all have in common is the mind of Christ. We will share an overwhelming desire to do God’s thing in God’s way for God’s reason. And we already have the earnest of His Spirit with us now.

Actually, when Israel became dissatisfied with God’s employment of His judges and demanded of Him that they have a “real” king, they already had the perfect King in God Himself. They just did not recognize Him as He should have been recognized. So many people have been tempted to think that changing their form of government, reflective of their own man-developed cultures, might improve their conditions. However, it is the culture that is reflective of a people’s religion that determines how well they will do as people. In our nation’s case, biblical Christianity was the basis for our culture, which was the basis for our government.

In this nation, the founding fathers formed a republic, which some call democracy. Note even the line in our pledge of allegiance, “and to the republic for which it stands…” Our republic, “democracy,” is just as important to me as it is to you or anyone. However, the strength of our nation was not as much in the form of government as it was in the recognition of God.

The best form of government, even our republic, often called democracy, cannot afford to be without God, or the people are guaranteed to flounder and fall. Eventually, with all the propping up we can do, we cannot sustain ourselves without God. God’s culture is the only normal culture in all creation. Where it
differs from any man-developed culture, it must have the last word.  **God’s culture trumps all other cultures.**

Generations after the founding of our nation, some thoughtful people had the good sense to add to *The Pledge of Allegiance* the reinforcing phrase, “One nation under God,” because they realized that this was the heart of our founding fathers for the endurance of our nation.  “America, America, God shed His grace on thee and crown thy good with brotherhood from sea to shining sea!”  “God bless America, land that I love.  Stand beside her and guide through the night with the light from above.”  Our legal tender bears the mark, “In God we trust.”

There are still traces of the Godly principles of our forefathers in our culture and government, as well as our families, our educational systems, our arts and entertainment, our media, our economics.  And God’s word is still in effect that “If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”

We should not bow to the fools among us who “feel” self-sufficient without God.  If we concern ourselves with God’s exaltation and glory today, we shall not have to worry about the welfare of our children and our children’s children.
Chapter 21

Precious, Holy, Spiritual and Eternal Are God’s Norms

“Joy to the world! The Lord is come! Let Earth receive her king! Let every heart prepare Him room, and heaven and nature sing. He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the nations prove The glory of His righteousness and wonders of His love. No more let sin and sorrow grow, nor thorns infest the ground. He comes to make His blessings flow far as the curse is found”

Heaven’s culture is normal, and it is coming to Planet Earth as it has always been in Heaven. Heaven’s culture will restore normality where sin’s abnormalities are exposed, rooted out and obliterated forever. Our Father-God is determined to restore His norms in every part of His Planet Earth. As our Father’s God children in His family, as citizens in His Kingdom, as workers together with Him in the family business, we are expected to be holy like our Father who is holy.

We are expected to be wholeheartedly involved in the advancement of His good and pure Kingdom standards where the disobedient self-blinded are led by self-blinded leaders of like kind. “Be ye holy, for I am holy.” “Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord” (Leviticus 20:7; I Peter 1:15–16; Hebrews 12:14). What a heavy expectation! Within my own power, I cannot be holy. “When I would do good, evil is present with me.” Romans 7:24 asks, “Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” Christ (who is holy) in me the hope of glory is the only true hope we have of ever discerning, valuing, and meeting His holy norm under His Lordship.

My holiness is His holiness, the completeness of my Holy Lord Jesus Christ in me. He is not profane, not unholy, so Christ in me is holy. And “as I behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord, I am being changed from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord” (II Corinthians 3:18). Any holiness ascribed to me is therefore of God, by God, and for God, or there is no holiness in me. Recall the
song, “Wisdom, Righteousness, and Power, Holiness forevermore, my Redemption full and sure, He is all I need.” Christ is “finishing that good work that He began in me.”

The same is true of the holy over the profane, the spiritual over the carnal, and the eternal over the temporal. The norm is the precious, holy, spiritual and eternal, not the worthless, profane, carnal and temporal. “Ye are the salt of the earth.” Have we been losing our saltiness or regaining and growing in it? “Ye are the light of the world” (Matthew 5:13–14). Christ in us the hope of glory is the Salt and Light that lights every man and re–salts with God’s norm to preserve and keep us.

God does not have multiple standards. He has only one standard that we can meet only through God Himself in us. We have used God’s attribute of holiness as an example. Everything else that God expects of us can be met when it is of Him, by Him and for Him.

“The wicked shall be turned into hell and all nations that forget God” (Psalm 9:17). What a chilling statement right out of God’s Word! Yet, “God was not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.” Further, only “Godly sorrow works repentance” (II Peter 3:9; Matthew 18:14). I remember hearing Billy Graham retell the story of walking in one of London’s parks and coming upon the most embarrassing scenes of unashamed sexual promiscuity. When God’s norm is known, there should be shame of sin.

It is so popular today for somebody to say, “Well, at least we are honest!” But honesty is not all that God requires. Some, flaunting their sin in God’s face in the name of honesty, is even worse! Yes, we must be honest and confess our sin as sin. Then we must also follow this by sensing shameful sorrow for our sin against God and ourselves. Only then are we grac ed by God to repent or make the turnaround. Jesus says, “Neither do I condemn you,” but He doesn’t stop there. He adds, “Go, and sin no more!” “Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord.”

The same grace of God that empowers us to make the 180–degree turnaround is the same grace that can keep going in God’s direction. Again, knowing what I have learned about “seeking God’s face,” I repeat that I would rather be the
furthest away from God facing toward Him than to be like Lucifer, standing in His very presence, facing the other way.

The quickest way to lose God’s norm in our hearts is to allow ourselves to face away from Him. This goes for the individual, for the communities where we live, for our nations, and for the world. Have you ever wondered how our government leaders could make such unreasonable decisions as they are making today? One might be prone to think that children could do better.

Remember how Romans 1 reminds us that we as a nation have not honored or even recognized God and given Him thanks? The demise in Romans 1 starts with anybody or any group that forgets 1) to recognize God for who He is, and 2) to give Him thanks (Romans 1:18–21). To neglect recognition and gratefulness toward Him is a sure guarantee of the deterioration of the intelligent and wise productivity of brain cells.

It is amazing to hear that an “expert” recently appearing on the Oprah show is reported to have said that at a certain point the average person begins losing 50,000 brain cells daily for the rest of his life. Are we not totally dependent on God’s creative Spirit to sustain the “mind of Christ” in His faithful people?

Read all of Romans 1 again. Note how simple it is to understand why we do “dumb” things from the top down. Look at our families, our churches, our educational institutions, our government, our arts and entertainment, our media, our economics! Do not be amazed! Romans 1 warned us that this would happen. The only way to begin restoring productive “brain cells,” intelligence, wisdom, and understanding to any family, any church, any educational institution, any government, any of the arts and entertainment, any media, or economic system, is to acknowledge God and give Him thanks.

Have we lost even our ability to grasp this simple statement? God has given us free wills. But why do we play with our freedom? We can almost turn our productive brain cells on and off like a light switch. God’s word is true. Don’t just hear it. Do it, if you do not want to be self-deceived! Nobody can deceive you until you first deceive yourself through your own disobedience. “Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.”
When people begin deceiving their own selves, they do not know where to stop. Note what some are calling the “dumbing down of education.” As today’s students are unable to read, write or do math on the level of their forefathers, the next generation of less learned leaders of our educational systems simply keep lowering the standards to their new comfort zone. With lower educational grading standards we make “better” grades. Wow! Talk about “deceiving our own selves!” Example: The state of Pennsylvania is changing the term, “public schools,” to “schools.” Will the simple name-change improve public school education? While we are at it, let’s look at all eight primary “mountains” of society.

You be the judge! In which of the following have the standards not been adjusted downward so that we could “feel” more comfortable where we are:

1). Family
2). Church
3). Education
4). Government
5). Arts/Entertainment
6). Media
7). Business/Economics
8). And how about the Science community?

Is there anything crazier than trying to fool your own self? We might want to read Romans 1 again, this time more carefully and aloud to our family, church, educators, government leaders, artists/entertainers, media, the business community. I am seriously considering adding the science community to this list.

Our Father–God, who created us in His own image to be and do with Him both now and forever, classifies the why, the what, and the how to of our thoughts, time, talent, treasure and trust as precious over worthless as they meet His standard of the holy, spiritual and eternal, over the profane, carnal, and temporal. The only way to know that we are pleasing our Father–God by allowing Christ in us the hope of glory to be and do through us in accord with His why, what, and how to is to trust our Spirit/Word frame of reference, “It seems good to the Holy Spirit and to us” (Acts 15:28).
Only that which is made precious, holy, spiritual, and eternal through the Holy Spirit can serve that which is precious, holy, spiritual, and eternal of the Holy Spirit. Again, if it is of God, by God, and for God, it is precious. If it is not of God, by God, and for God, it is worthless.

Never allow yourself and those for whom you are responsible to be “dumbed down” along with the “dumbing down” of the world system around you. David said, “I will put no worthless thing before my eyes.” To Jeremiah, God said, “When you can discern the precious over the worthless you can be My spokesman. They who discern and value the precious with you may turn to you, but you must not turn to them who do not discern and value the precious over the worthless” (Jeremiah 15:19).

As early as we can we should grasp the picture of “Christ in us the hope of glory” regarding all being, belonging, doing, decision-making, planning and problem solving. “Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, Oh Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer.”
Chapter 22

Holy over Profane is Normal

“Be ye holy, for I am holy.” “Without holiness no man shall see God” (I Peter 15:16). Our Father–God expects us, by His all–sufficient grace, to be holy, because He is holy. His DNA sets the pace for every person He has created in His own image. Holy is normal for God. It is His very nature. With Christ in us the hope of glory, it is our very nature.

Just because almost everybody around us is profane does not mean that everybody around us is normal. Profane is not normal. It is abnormal. Average and normal are not synonyms and should not be used interchangeably. See how our “religion” has changed our culture, which in turn has changed the meaning of words in our language. You might want to think of other words that have come to mean something different even in your lifetime because of lowered Christian standards.

We can lower our standards, but God’s standards are unchanging. He still has the same norms for us as described in His word, and only by God’s all–sufficient grace can we meet these norms. “God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble.” We might want to humble ourselves to receive His grace, for His grace is guaranteed only to the humble. The reason God resists the proud is that He cannot afford to identify His standards with the proud. “Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall.”

God is not here to push us down. He is here to raise us up. But His grace is to the humble.

“If My people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and forgive their sins and heal their land”

(II Chronicles 7:14).
Chapter 23

Spiritual over Carnal is Normal

God is Spirit. The order of creation was spiritual. When the earth was without form and void, “the Spirit of God moved over the face of the earth” to bring form and order. Christ’s lordship over us is only by the Spirit. “No one can call Jesus Lord but by the Spirit” (I Corinthians 12:1). Our worship must be spiritual. “God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). Our guidance must be spiritual. “It seems good to the Holy Spirit and to us” (Acts 15:28). Our salvation must be spiritual. “So is everyone that is born of the Spirit” (John 3:6–8). We cannot be holy without being made spiritually righteous. Our own self-righteousness “is as filthy rags”—profane! (Isaiah 64:6).

Our submission to Christ's Lordship is spiritual. “No one can call Jesus 'Lord' but by the Holy Spirit” (I Corinthians 12:3). Our walk must be spiritual. “There is therefore now no condemnation to them, which are in Christ Jesus who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit” (Romans 8:1). Our work and service must be spiritual. “It is not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts” (Zechariah 4:6). It is not even enough to know and desire what is holy. Holiness can only be actualized by our Holy God’s spiritual work in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. We cannot be holy apart from Him.
God expects us to discern, value, and practice the eternal over the temporal. He expects us by His grace to live our lives now in light of eternity. He wants us to see past our own noses. It is very much the story of Jacob and Esau. They were twin boys. Esau was born first, so he was in line to receive the God-given blessing and birthright passed to him from his grandfather, Abraham, through His father, Isaac. Both grew up to be sinful, young men. Esau’s sin was to make decisions according to his temporal senses. (II Corinthians 4:18; Genesis 25:31-34; 27:36; Hebrews 12:16.)

Esau lived by the code, “If it looks good, feels good, smells good, tastes good, etc., it must be good.” This is like Eve to whom the fruit from the forbidden tree looked good and tasted good, so she chose it against the will of God. The Bible tells us that “we sin when we are drawn away of our own lusts.” The devil does not make us do it. We could resist the devil by the power of God’s Spirit in us, but we trust our own senses instead of Christ in us. Not to discern, value, and practice the eternal over the temporal is abnormal.

We must remember that God created us originally to live normal lives. It is the sin, self-centeredness and shortsightedness in us that is abnormal. Know that normal and average are not the same. We are wrong to interchange these two words. Let us look at the people in a hospital, for instance. Is the average person in the hospital sick or well? We say that the average person is sick. The only people who are normal in the hospital are the medical staff, not the patients. There are fewer medical staff than patients. The patients are abnormal while they remain sick. Average is not normal.

Just because the majority is doing something does not mean that it is normal. As sinners, we are living abnormal lives. Jesus came to redeem and restore us back into what was meant to be normal. To be like Him is to be normal. It is to be holy, spiritual, and eternally minded. “Turn your eyes upon Jesus. Look full in His wonderful face. And things of earth will grow strangely dim, in the light of His glory and grace.”
We have lived abnormal, shortsighted lives so long on this earth that we have adjusted ourselves to this abnormal mindset. But when we get Christ’s eternal vision to live by, we will see so much further and more clearly. Yet, “eyes have not seen, nor ears heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man what God has prepared for those who love Him.”

Both Jacob and Esau were sinners. Esau was a self-centered, shortsighted sinner who cared nothing of breaking God’s heart by despising his birthright and blessing. His twin brother, Jacob, was a sneaky conniving, lying sinner who did not mind cheating his own brother for what he wanted for himself. Yet, God was pleased to lay his hand on Jacob.

The big difference in these two sinners is that Jacob could at least see past his own nose. Jacob discerned and valued the God-given eternal birthright and blessing over some temporary self-pleasure. From then on, the blessing and birthright came down through Jacob to Jesus, and to us through “Christ in us” the hope of glory. We have the birthright and eternal blessings in Christ. Esau made an awful decision that he could never change, though later “he sought it with bitter tears.”

Esau traded both his blessings and birthright for that which tasted good to him for a few minutes. “What a fool,” we would say! Yet, are we not tempted to trade our eternal Kingdom of God birthright and blessing for some passing temporal thing? When we do not see the big picture, we will make foolish decisions every time.

None of us are worthy of God’s blessing or birthright. “All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23; 5:12). Can we give ourselves anything? No! But God is looking for those who will discern and value the eternal riches with Him over the deceitful vanities of this present world. He so desires to share His riches with those who have the heart and mindset to appreciate both Him and them. Oh Lord, give us Your spiritual eyes to see and value according to Your eternal value system!

Let us memorize the Crazy Poem below to help us keep eternal values.
Jacob and Esau

“Crazy Poem”

By Inez and Oren Paris

Esau and Jacob were twins and brothers,
But one man was chosen over the other.
With birthright and blessing the ultimate prize,
Who would inherit future earth and skies?
They were both such profane and carnal men.
So how would God choose who would lose or win?
Esau made choices by what he could feel,
Sold out birthright and blessing for one temporal meal.
But Jacob, who was able to see past his nose,
Was the winner his omniscient Father–God chose.

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PART FIVE

Chapter 25

Domain and Domains

A home place for everything and everything in its place

I would say that one simple but good definition for domain would be “a home place for everything and everything in its place.” Some might say that this would also be a good definition for order. Definitely, domain is essential to all order. The Inventor of order is God Himself. The success of His entire universe demands order. Can you imagine for a moment what chaos would exist without order?

Domains are defined spheres of responsibility over which God has ordained stewards. Everything and everybody is under His domain. Lucifer had a domain, which he left as he crossed the line into God’s domain by choosing to exalt himself as equal with God. One cannot leave one’s own, God-ordained domain without crossing the line into one or more other domains. And one cannot cross the line into another person’s domain without also trespassing against God as well, because God’s master domain always includes all other domains.

Have you ever wondered what God had planned before He was so rudely interrupted by sin, which was initiated by the first trespass from one domain into another? The first sinner was Lucifer, because he was the first trespasser. Before Lucifer trespassed there was no such thing as sin. Jude says that Lucifer left his first estate or domain. He unfaithfully reached outside his God-given domain into God’s domain. And what great chaos followed!

Until that moment, God’s entire universe was running perfectly smoothly like a clock with no interruptions, rattles or bumps. What a beautiful sight! Then, when Lucifer stepped out of his designated place, God’s universe experienced
the first noisy rattle. When a third of the angels followed him, the rattle became
oisier. When the fallen Lucifer as Satan entered the serpent, the shaking grew
worse.

When Satan, through the serpent, convinced Eve to trespass outside her domain,
the awful problem increased. When Adam trespassed outside his domain, the
whole human race within him (and all of creation around him) began to break
down and groan under the devastating effect of multiplying trespasses. More
and more, things were no longer in their place. Oh, the terrible disorder
everywhere! What was once God’s perfectly ordered creation was falling apart.

Today, the terrifying mess that we see all around us is the accumulative domino
effect of trespasses. You hit me! I hit you back! Someone steals from me. I
must have vengeance. Trespass upon trespass! How does this ever stop? Oh,
Father–God, reestablish respect in our hearts for domain throughout this world
and Your universe!

The eternal Son, Jesus Christ, submitted Himself to a domain under the Father.
Notice the contrast in these two persons! We are indeed like one or the other.
Lucifer who was less than God was discontent to remain in his domain under his
Creator–God’s authority. But the Son of God, who was equal with the Father in
loving humility, submitted Himself to a domain under the Father to begin the
full restoration, excellence, integrity and order of the Kingdom of God.

And “This old world will never be the same since the Son of God was born a little
baby in Bethlehem.” He is set on delivering back to His Father a fully restored
Kingdom with all things in their perfected state of excellence, integrity and
order. What a momentous occasion when we shall all celebrate together when
Christ one day turns the completely restored Kingdom back over to the Father! (I
Corinthians 15:24–28.) This surely will be! But we are not there yet.

Your own God–ordained domain consists of your God–given responsibility with
corresponding ability and authority. God instructs us to honor all delegated
authority. Not to do so is the trespass against Him and disturb His order in
some part of His universe. The root of all problems in the universe is the out–
of–order interrelationship of one domain to the others. It is absolutely
necessary for the sun, stars, planets, moons, etc. to stay in their places. It is
all–important for the elements to be reliable to God’s intent. All creation must
follow God's laws of domain for there to be order. Outside of God there is no creation or maintenance of order. Outside of God there is the seed of ultimate chaos.

By illustration, God controls inanimate, natural domains by His established, natural laws (such as gravity, centrifugal force, inertia, etc); He adds to His control over animate domains His laws of instinct, etc. And God appeals to the conscience He created in man to know and reverence the domains He has established. This is always for the highest good of all—God, others, and ourselves.

Love is not a feeling, but a choice. Love is choosing the highest good for God, others and myself. Love will not knowingly choose to neglect one's own domain only to cross into the domain of another. Love will not choose to bring disorder. Love will choose, as my father used to say, to "Tend to your own business." It is much more difficult to do than one might suppose.

Not tending to one's own business leaves him feeling freer to interfere with someone else's business. The neglect of my own responsibilities is known as the "sin of omission." The interference into someone else's responsibilities is known as the "sin of commission." It seems that we take one's "sin of commission" more seriously. However, was it not in the context of the "sin of omission" that God said, "Be sure your sins will find you out?" (Numbers 32:23).

Both omission of one's own responsibilities and commission of trespasses into the responsibilities of others bring disorder and break the heart of our God of excellence, integrity and order. Paul pleads with the Corinthians (and with us), "Let everything be done decently and in order" (I Corinthians 14:40).

When, in the early 1980s, we were surprisingly invited by the presidents of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras to help “turn their nations around,” we were made to face our own understanding of domain. It was in my hotel room in preparation for the first meeting with Guatemala’s president that I clearly heard the Lord speak, “Strategic Missions for Strategic Nations—Front Door Policy!” God was emphasizing that He expected us to always honor domain in these awesome beginnings to affect many nations. He reminded me how Jesus warns that a person trying to gain entry by other means than “front door"
permission or invitation should not be surprised to be treated as "a thief and a robber."

God’s order in all creation is established through domain(s); He either smiles or frowns on the way we enter His delegated domain of another. He does not approve of entering by the back door (or through the window) as many of us have been tempted to do in our work for Him. God’s work must be done in God’s way, and this includes respect for His established domain(s). To do otherwise demonstrates lack of our faith and faithfulness.

God faithfully opens doors that no man can shut and shut doors that no man can open. The question is: Do we want God’s smile or His frown on our style of entry? We honor God’s “Front Door Policy,” which is key to domain, which in turn is key to His excellence, integrity and order. Also, David knew the responsibility, authority and access in serving as a “door keeper” on the Lord’s behalf, and preferred that awesome trust above being served anywhere else. “I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord than to dwell in the tents of the wicked.”

The Front Door Policy holds true with God regarding the pastor who is the under-shepherd of the church, the parents of the home, and all institutions. For this reason, Ecclesia always tries to respect the position of the pastor in relating to the churches, and the parents in relating to a member of their families. God honors those who honor domains wherever they are in His creation. **God created and established domain(s) for the high reason to determine and maintain excellence, integrity and order.** It is therefore for the highest good of God, others and ourselves to respect His ways with domain.
Chapter 26

No Trespassing!

God told Adam and Eve not to eat fruit from a certain tree. Eve saw that the fruit was “pleasant to the eye” and “to the taste,” so she ate. She chose to please her senses of sight and taste at the expense of God’s clear order not to eat of that tree. This is just the way we trespass. It looks good, smells good, sounds good, tastes good and/or feels good, so we proceed to eat.

Being tempted by our hearing, sight, smell, sound and/or feeling is not yet sin. But when we are “drawn away by one or more of our own senses” at the expense of God’s word, we trespass out of our domain into another. This is sin. This is trespassing. Later we will emphasize why we pray, “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.”

It is not enough to do the right thing for the right reason. We all seem to learn appreciation for the right “what” and the right “why” before we learn the right “how to.” We can do the right thing for the right reason and still do it the wrong way. The wrong way is any way but God’s way. God’s “ways are higher than our ways and His thoughts higher than our thoughts” (Isaiah 55:9). This is why we need Christ in us the hope of glory doing the thinking. This is what Paul means when he says, “we have the mind of Christ” (I Corinthians 2:16; Philippians 2:5). Otherwise, we are living in what Isaiah calls iniquity.

I have sung Handel’s Messiah with many choirs composed of a mixed group of Christ’s followers and people in iniquity. Every week, both followers of Christ and the disobedient sit side by side in the same worship services. The first group understands the word, “iniquity,” while the second group only knows there is a word called “iniquity.”

The word, “iniquity,” gives us insight into how important it is to do God’s thing for God’s reason in God’s way. How we do the right thing for the right reason is ever so important. Anything we do in our own way is called iniquity. God has ordained right ways to do things. Going outside those ways is called iniquity. As we have already observed, the hit song, I Did It My Way, was great music by a
talented singer, but with bad words. The words glorify a person doing it his own way. We do well not to take the words of that song to heart, because, describing the Messiah, Jesus Christ, Isaiah writes, “He was wounded for our transgressions [an expression of trespasses]; He was bruised for our iniquities.” Here is the word, “iniquities,” which mean doing it my way instead of God’s way.

Great questions would be, “Why do we insist on doing things our way, when we know that this is the sin of iniquity itself for which Jesus was bruised? And why did He have to be bruised for my iniquity? And why would I, as Paul says, “crucify to [myself] the Son of God afresh” over and over again by continuing to do things my own way instead of His? Do I care at all? (Hebrews 6:6.)

Why can I not win the battle over my own self-centeredness that pained Christ on the cross and refreshes the wound again each time I insist on my way instead of His? How much longer am I content to break the heart of our Father-God and contribute to more pain and suffering in His universe by doing it my way? If I were willing to learn at this point, what does His word have to say about it? “Who can deliver me from the body of this death?” (Romans 7:24).

“Herein do we know the love of God” (I John 4:10)! “He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned everyone to His own way [iniquity]. And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all” (Isaiah 53:5-6,11). We no longer have to do it our way instead of His. We are set free to obey God through Christ in us the hope of glory for the highest good of God, others, ourselves and His whole universe.

We might list some examples to help us better identify our own trespasses against God’s established domain(s). His basic Ten Commandments were a simple list of what to do and what not to do (Exodus 20:1-17). We learn from these that trespassing takes the form of stealing, which is helping ourselves to something within someone else’s domain without having the proper authorization. God has entrusted this thing to every person, fully expecting us to steward it on His behalf. However, for whatever reason, we invent an excuse to trespass in order to access it ourselves.
It was morally wrong against God and others for Robin Hood even to access what was not his, although he distributed it freely to others. The so-called “good end” does not justify the “ill means.” This was outside that thief’s domain. Had he left it alone, God Himself would have dealt with the trustees of the items Himself in His own right way and right time. This is always to the highest good of Himself, others, the trustee over the particular domain, and His universe. He could and would have done this while, at the same time, not sacrificing His excellence, integrity and order.

Gossiping is in the same category. When we take information from one person’s domain and transfer it to ourselves and/or the domain of another without proper authorization, we have just trespassed, no matter what our intentions were. It is possible that many of the current media are nothing more than the problematic village gossip of Paul’s day who was instructed to quit being a busybody and go home to her own domain where her real duties lay waiting for her. We are accountable to God for all the time with which He has entrusted us. Everyone who finds a moment to gossip has just neglected another one of his own responsibilities to do so.

God has not authorized the public to have the “right to know” everything and pass it around indiscriminately. This is taking things too far. This is trespassing for sure! No congress or interpretation of our laws can ever justify the breaking of God’s law. “Be you doers of the word and not hearer only, deceiving your own selves.” Our societal culture is greatly trumpped by heaven’s culture. We are one nation under God, not equal with God.

Trespassing is always contrary and harmful to God’s loving excellence, integrity and order. Lying, coveting, murder, etcetera are trespassing for which we must pray God’s forgiveness, and which must also be forgiven by us in others.

Some have abused their consciences so badly that they are no longer dependable to alert them to trespassing or sin. They may need further illustration. There was a time in every person’s conscience when it was tender enough to sense guilt for what he knew to be wrong and peace in doing what he knew to be right. Guilt is our friend in the sense that it alerts us to our trespass, so that we can ask forgiveness and be restored to right relationship with our Father–God and the person or persons against whom we have trespassed.
“At one time God winked at their ignorance” (Acts 17:30). I once responded to an inquirer without having thought my answer through. Then, almost immediately, I went to the Lord for verification, which is better than not going to Him at all. I should have asked Him before answering, and I am learning better to do this.

The inquirer was reasoning with me that he could not help his decision. He was wondering how he could be held responsible for something that he was facing. What I said to him was, “You are either ignorant or guilty. Which is it?” Well, his pride did not want to allow him to be called ignorant, which is simply the lack of pertinent information, or guilty, which is the responsibility for a fault. He finally chose ignorance. And he was right, in his case.

This was the case in Jacob and Esau’s day. One time, God winked at their ignorance, but now that God has furnished them with the information and frame of reference, they can no longer claim ignorance. The next time they trespass, they are guilty.

I have always had a hard time appreciating guilt. It is so uncomfortable. Yet, God furnishes us with the information and frame of reference so that we are no longer ignorant. Now guilt sets in so that we are led to repentance praying forgiveness for our trespasses and forgiving others their trespasses against us. We should let guilt help us by leading us to confess our trespasses and pray forgiveness for them. For me, even my unforgiveness of the trespasses of others against me becomes a trespass against God Himself who is the only Person in universe who has the right to judge the hearts of people.

When my heart is again clean and pure before God, there is no more need for guilt, so He takes it away again. My comfort is no longer in my ignorance or my hardened heart. It is only in the peace that I know I have with God through His “Christ in me the hope of glory.” Remember the old hymn below?

There is a Fountain

There is a fountain filled with blood drawn from Immanuel’s veins.
And sinners plunge beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains.
    Lose all their guilty stains, lose all their guilty stains.
And sinners plunge beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains.

Dear dying Lamb, Thy precious blood shall never lose its power
Till all the ransomed church of God be saved to sin no more,
Be saved to sin no more, be saved to sin no more.
Till all the ransomed church of God be saved to sin no more.
Chapter 27

“Forgive Us Our Trespasses As We Forgive Those Who Trespass Against Us”

It is often easier to say, “I forgive you,” than to actually forgive in our hearts. And it is often easier to give forgiveness than to maintain forgiveness. Can it sometimes be easier to forgive than to ask for it? Both trespassing and forgiveness need more understanding on our part. We can sometimes get more serious about learning something by praying it. Some trespasses are real while others are only in our hearts. For which do we ask forgiveness and forgive?

This is one reason why Jesus instructs us to include in our prayer, “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.” What causes us to trespass in the first place? “We sin when we are drawn away of our own lusts” (John 1:14). Our lusts are allowing our senses rather than Christ in us the hope of glory by the Holy Spirit to drive our choices. When I would do good, evil is present with me. In other words, me first!

My own, biggest problem is self-centeredness, me first! Ego-centrism! Everything centers on me and is all about me! With Paul, we cry out, “Who shall deliver me from this death?” Then, with Paul we thank God that “The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death!” We can get out of this tailspin if we really want to.

So we pray with Jesus, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” And with Stephen we pray, “Lay not this sin to their charge.” Paul says, “If they knew they were crucifying the Lord of glory they would not have done it.” Here is some understanding from God’s own word that we all can use. We are all still learning (while others of us are relearning) about domain, trespassing and forgiveness. To help me in respecting the domains of others, I can review from time to time my own current, God-assigned domain.

We, as the redeemed sons and daughters of God by grace through faith, are of His Royal Family with authorized domains and crowns. We are issued crowns (“hats”) designating our domains of responsibility with corresponding ability and
authority. This is not uncommon to most people’s vocabulary. Everyday I hear people talking figuratively about the “hat” or “hats” they wear, meaning their responsibility with corresponding ability and authority.

Some jobs actually require material hats, but whether material or figurative, all of us have been assigned “hats” to cover our job titles and descriptions. Most businesses have an administrative handbook that includes the job titles and job descriptions of all employees, from the board of directors and boss to the last person.

Think through all the “hats” you have worn or still wear. Since you wore the “hat” of a first grade student, you have worn so many. Some (maybe all) of these jobs you have faithfully fulfilled correctly, according to the job description. Were you ever unfaithful to some of those hats with which you were entrusted? Even if nobody said anything, God noticed, because He is committed to restoring excellence, integrity and order in His universe, even down to the least of us. Any disorder is enough to get His attention.

Now, the question may arise, “Who should be responsible to correct or help bring faithfulness and respect where someone has been unfaithful to his responsibility?” This is a good question. You have heard the phrase, “Everybody’s job is nobody’s job.” Whereas my job may be to transport messages from one department to another, it is the job of someone in the company to see that I do my job well. This is called accountability. Responsibility needs accountability to succeed.

Hopefully, we all get the picture. Domain means our sphere of responsibility with corresponding ability, capacity, authority and accountability. Crown, which today we call “hat,” is the respectful term for our job title with job description of that particular domain. Some may have only one crown over one domain while others may have more than one crown over each of their respective domains.

Everything is within God’s domain. He communicates to and governs the natural universe by natural laws such as chemistry, gravity, centrifugal motion, etc. He adds the feature of instinct to His governing of the animal kingdom. Inasmuch as He is Spirit, He employs conscience in His governing of people whom He created in His own image. God in love placed a conscience into every person by which He could lovingly communicate with them and govern them.
So much depends on how each of us treats his own God-given conscience. With His word we have access to His Truth in Jesus Christ and can conscientiously follow His design of excellence, integrity and order, or not.

But, “We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God.” In other words, we have all disobeyed His Holy Spirit’s speaking within our consciences. Even before the Bible was written, David tells us in Psalms 19 that honest people could observe with their natural eyes and know in their consciences of a good God. Once, when there were only Adam and Eve, it could be said that all people knew God and walked with God. However, they sinned by unfaithfully reaching outside their assigned domain into God’s own domain. God’s domain included and still includes the “knowledge of good and evil” (the ability to judge between right and wrong, holy and profane).

However, Lucifer, whom Jude describes as having unfaithfully “left his first estate” including domain in his desire to “be like God” in responsibility and authority, lied through the serpent, convincing Eve who convinced the first man of the human race to “become like God” in investigating both good and evil for himself rather than to trust in God over him (Jude 6).

Stepping out of line cost Adam, and all his offspring, their delegated place to rule over the earth on behalf of God. To prevent further disaster, God sadly had to remove them from their first intended domain and actually put them outside the garden. Their domain was to stop short of investigating evil along with good. But they were not content with faithfully fulfilling their original job description.

Domain is important to God. Respecting domain is key to excellence, integrity and order in every part and throughout His whole universe. And forgiveness on every hand at every level is the only thing that can restore a deteriorating person, family, or universe back to excellence, integrity and order.

However, God was not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. Yet, only “Godly sorrow works repentance” (II Corinthians 7:10). How can we ever comprehend what a universe-shaking thing it is for one person to get outside his domain? How can my conscience be so impressed with the awfulness of trespassing, the disrespect for God-given domain, the terrible cost of breaking God’s heart, the ugliness of self-centeredness, and the damaging
spread of just one sin, just one trespass? “For God so love the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world but that they world through Him might be saved” (John 3:16–17).

Like Jesus said, “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.” We need Christ in us the hope of glory to keep His commandments, which are good for us and everyone and everything around us. No commandment has ever been given by God that is not at the same time for the highest good of God, others, our own selves, and His whole universe.

God’s ways do not make sense to self-centered people. If we are self-centered, our conscience is out of good working order so that we cannot see this ourselves. The quickest way to go spiritually blind is to disobey or ignore the last thing God told us to do. Every scripture in the Bible makes better sense to us when we see it through God’s eyes with Christ in us the hope of glory. Every scripture starts making sense as we respect His domain.

Christians, followers of Christ, are never left on our own to investigate both good and evil, because we are not capacitated or equipped for it within ourselves. We are rather called to what Paul calls “the obedience of faith” over “knowing good and evil.” Only our Father–God is capacitated and equipped to handle the investigation of good and evil.

God created us with the capacity to obey Him, but not the capacity to investigate both good and evil. This is why He insisted in the garden that Adam and Eve not touch the tree of good and evil. It was intentionally their domain because He knew that He had not created them with the capacity to handle evil but only good as they obeyed Him. They were to leave the knowledge of evil to Him alone, because He alone had the capacity to know it and keep it out of His universe.

Then, why did not God keep the tree out of their reach? Why did God ever allow them to have to choose to obey Him? And why did Lucifer even have a choice to obey or not obey God? Why does God give us choices? Because our conscience was adequate to keep us in an attitude of respect and obedience to God Who would reserve that “knowledge of good and evil tree” within His own domain. He
lovingly did it for our good. Everything He does is always for the highest good of Himself, others, and us.

We do not understand this, because God has not capacitated us to see all that He sees. Therefore, He has not given us the responsibility for His whole universe. When we worry, we take that responsibility. And when we take that responsibility, we have entered into His domain. God operates by providing “information on a need-to-know basis.” This fact really burns some curious souls, but it is still true. Some things are just outside our domain. The fastest way to be trusted with more hats over more responsibility with corresponding ability, capacity, and authority is to be faithful where God has us at the time.

If you are tired of your domain growing and even getting more domains added to you, then all you have to do is to stop being faithful. Then, as God says, He will take what you have and give it to another who is faithful. We increase by faithfulness and decrease by unfaithfulness. “Let no man [have to] take your crown” (Revelation 3:11).

However, our Father–God says that we can pray for one another and lift up one another, encouraging one another, because we are all of one family with the same purpose. We all share our Father–God's heart to see His salvation of those who have strayed outside their domains. Christ has come to restore all who will believe in Him and trust Him.

Dear reader, if you have never prayed, “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us,” you will never know the joy of the “obedience of faith.” We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God. We have all trespassed. Do not settle for temporary peace from knowing that all of us have sinned against God and one another. Receive your lasting peace by praying, “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.”

Your only real and lasting peace will come from Jesus Christ Himself being in you your hope of glory. Keep your fellowship with Jesus true and honest. Do not trespass. Stay within your domain. But, if and when you trespass, be quick to pray, “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.” This is God’s great key to excellence, integrity and order and our key to peace with God and one another. Your heart can turn the key that unlocks the flow of
forgiveness from your Father-God through you to others, and He will smile on you.
Chapter 28

Praying, “Our Father, Who Art in Heaven,”
Line on Line

We have attempted to address the Creator—God as our own all-loving Father. Our dear Father—God, who loves us more than we can comprehend, is Holy. We are of His DNA through Christ in us the hope of glory. We are seen by Him as His holy sons and daughters and can therefore freely abide in His presence. In His presence our heart’s desire from His is that His Kingdom come and His will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Continuing, Christ in us (by His Holy Spirit), totally Father-friendly, prays, “Give us this day our daily bread”—fresh provision sufficient for the day. This is so much for us to understand. But it is a fact. Christ asks, and He gets. His heart and the Father’s are perfectly united. Truly, by this prayer He is teaching us to pray as He prays. He never asks amiss to consume it on Himself. He always prays according to His Father’s will, and therefore, knows that He hears Him, whatsoever He asks. He knows that He has the petitions that He desired of the Father.

Now we have been praying, “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.” These two prayers of the greater “Lord’s Prayer” are so important to the advancement of our Father—God’s Kingdom under the Lordship of Christ. As we gain better understanding of domain, we are better able to understand God’s “daily bread” principle of requisitioning provisions, as well as how He uses His key of forgiveness (regarding domain and relationships) to build and strengthen our united confidence and morale. Domain and relationships are basic to the excellence, integrity and order of everything and everybody in His universe.

“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.” We must know by now that we are promised that our loving Father—God will never lead us into temptation. First of all, “God tempts no man” with evil (James 1:13). And “With every temptation He provides a way of escape” right into Him Who is our
best escape (I Corinthians 10:13). Yes, “Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil” (Matthew 4:1). But, by the same Spirit, He resisted the devil who had to flee from Him.

It is the same Holy Spirit by whom we have Christ in us the hope of glory. And this Christ in us is well able to resist any temptation. As we allow Christ in us the hope of glory, who has for all time conquered the world, the flesh, and the devil, to sit on the throne of our hearts, we have dominion over the world, the flesh, and the devil. Christ in us the hope of glory is delivered from the evil one. Even further, He has the keys to death, hell, and the grave. “Oh death, where is thy sting? Oh grave, where is thy victory?” Hallelujah!

“For Thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever!” Yes! Yes! Yes! I know! I know! I know! Hallelujah! It is Your Kingdom, Lord! It is Your power, and it is Your glory forever! And Jesus brings us back to the fact that we are now co-investors with Him in our Father–God’s–Kingdom–Family–Business that never ends. Our Father’s Business is in the middle of a world take-over. It’s His world, and He’s taking it back. What a day this is!

“Amen.” Amen means, “so be it.” What a word our Lord has put into our hands. What we ask according to our Father’s Business policy, with the signature of our CEO who indwells us, is being done. Add the word, amen (so be it) and there is nothing more left to do than expect to receive what we ask. I remember ordering an item one time without making space for its arrival. When it was delivered sooner than expected, we were not ready for it. Good advice; if you have asked anything of our loving Father–God, you had better make place for its arrival, because you added the amen, meaning, “so be it.” Now, you expect it! Give God glory!
Chapter 29

“Because They Don’t Know What They Are Doing”

“Oh, what liberating words! “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34). Jesus realized something that no one else at the cross realized. He realized that those contributing anything to His crucifixion did not know what they were doing. Certainly the false accusers did not. Caiphas and Annas, the priests, did not know what they were doing. The Sanhedrin had no idea of what they were doing. Judas had no understanding of the ramifications of his own involvement. I am not saying that they were justified in what they did.

Pilate did not know what he was doing. The crazed crowd could not imagine the implications, either. The Roman soldiers had no understanding of the depth of their involvement. One Roman soldier cried out, “Truly, this was the Son of God!” (Matthew 27:54). But, beyond that he had little realization. The temple guards? Herod? What did they really know?

God’s Son, the Truth, says that they did not know what they were doing. This is why He prayed, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” What part of Christ’s atonement for their sins do you imagine they understood? Yes, And what about ours? Were we not included among those who did not know even the simplest meaning of God’s eternal Son, the Anointed One, the Christ on the cross?

It was our sins that put Him on the cross. That day the Jews and the Gentiles, who were not ordinarily compatible, crucified to themselves a Savior, Christ the Lord. Paul tells us that the middle wall of partition dividing Jew and Gentile was broken down at that time. (Ephesians 2:4). This, by the way, is how Christ’s Ecclesia can be composed of all people groups. There are numerous implications of which we have not fully comprehended the depth, height, and breadth. One thing is plainer to us now. The cross also carries a message with it to them that believe. “Hereby do we know the love of God!”
"Lay not this sin to their charge"—Stephen

Saul of Tarsus, before he became Paul, was glad to join the Jews in persecuting Christians, even talking himself into believing, as he says, like so many others, that he was doing God a favor in so doing. He stood by to hold the coats of those who stoned Stephen. But what he saw in Stephen that day must have had something to do in preparing him for his own radical, Damascus experience.

This may help us understand what Jesus was saying on the cross. In some twisted way, had not those contributing to Christ’s crucifixion convinced themselves in their own hardened hearts that they were doing God a favor?

When Stephen, at his stoning, had clear view of the Lord’s revelation to him, he looked into the face of the Lord, and the Lord saw Stephen.

“If they had known they were crucifying the Lord of glory, they would never have done it”—Paul

Paul was not physically standing at the cross when Jesus was crucified, but in his pre-Christian Saul days he certainly got the message from heaven on his way to Christ the hope of glory in the Christians. “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?” (Acts 9:4; 22:7; 26:14). You know the radical change from Saul to Paul, when he realized what he had done and was doing. Even the born again Christians were amazed and many disbelieving when they heard the news of his conversion. That made Saul into Paul, which took the Christians by surprise.
Chapter 30
Maintaining Forgiveness

I know what it is like to forgive from my heart on one day, and then have to repeat the forgiveness again the next day. Jesus told Peter that he should be ready to forgive over and over again seventy times seven. How do I maintain forgiveness? I made the discovery years ago, but I have to practically apply it or it does no good. It is important that I keep my heart clean of the offense that may keep trying to return. Otherwise, there is not enough room left in my heart to accept forgiveness of my Father-God or anyone else.

Jesus gives three things to do, one upon the other, in order to maintain forgiveness. First of all, I am to choose to love my enemies, those against whom I have taken up an offense. (Matthew 5:44; Luke 6:27; Romans 12:14.) Remember that love is a choice, not a feeling. Love is choosing the highest good for God, others, myself...even His whole universe. To choose the highest good for God is to choose the highest good for everyone else. It just works that way, God’s way.

There is always only one highest good for all, and God, who always knows it, will show it to us as we honestly and humbly ask. Willing the highest good for our enemies, those who have offended us in any way is the first step to maintaining our forgiveness toward them.

The second step is to bless and pray for our enemies (Luke 6:28). I know what it is like to pray for my offenders, my enemies, those who are my continual sources of irritation in any way (Matthew 5:44). Jesus says to pray for my enemies, those who despitefully use me or curse me, and say all manner of evil against me, falsely even for His sake. Yes, I forgave them once, but the offense kept coming back into my heart.

So, I began letting Jesus love them through me. Then I added letting Jesus pray for them through me. I am to pray for them, not about them, nor against them, but for them. I am to pray blessings upon them, positive things for them. I am to desire and pray for good things for them from the Lord leaving no place for judgment in my heart toward them.
Third, Jesus tells me to do good to them (Matthew 5:44; Luke 6:33). I recall one time when I had forgiven a man but was unable to maintain an attitude of forgiveness toward him. I finally began repeating over and over again that I love him in the name of Jesus—that Jesus is loving him through me. Then I added that Christ in me the hope of glory was blessing and praying His goodness on the man through me.

As I kept blessing and praying for the man without maintaining real forgiveness in my heart toward him, the Lord showed me to write his Christian bookstore a check for the last hundred dollars in our personal bank account. I sent the check to him with a note saying that we loved him and wanted him to be abundantly blessed.

“Where a man’s treasure is, there will his heart be also” (Matthew 6:21)! From that time on, I maintained forgiveness in my heart toward the man. I truly wanted the best for him. I found myself praying for him and loving him and wanting him to succeed, whereas before I had been tempted to want his downfall so that he could learn his lesson the hard way. I had been tempted to be ready to “rejoice at a brother’s calamity,” which God commands against.

A side note! Sometimes we may even see obvious chain reactions. In this man’s case, this act also changed his life dramatically. He was so moved in his heart, that he became one of the most ardent supporters of Ecclesia saying nothing but good about us all over the area. What a change from his past! Before he died he was urging people everywhere to get wholeheartedly involved with Ecclesia. Sometimes this kind of extra bonus comes along with your obedience! Not always will someone respond in goodwill to you, but your heart will be free!

Oh, how glad I was when I learned this lesson on how to maintain forgiveness. I have shared this lesson with thousands of people since that time, and many lives have been changed for eternity because of it. God’s special blessings are outpoured upon all those who find it in their hearts to forgive their greatest or least offenders as He has forgiven them their offenses.

Pray again right now with me, “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.” Repeat this as often as you need to do it while remembering to also 1) love your enemies who irritate and offend you, 2) pray
for those who irritate and offend you, and 3) do good to those who irritate and offend you. If not today, maybe tomorrow, you will want your Father in heaven to forgive you your reckless trespasses of entering into His domain as a self-appointed judge of your fellow men and women.

Also, please do not take up an offense for anyone else. The most difficult position on earth must be that of a pastor’s wife. She has to see people offend her husband but forgive them for what she sees. To offend him is to offend her, for they are one. Yet, it is so difficult for her to observe her husband forgiving some offender and to also forgive the offender herself. She is thinking in her heart, “Look at those bad people who offended my dear husband who is so loving and forgiving toward them. They are so evil. My husband is so good, because he forgave them anyway in spite of their evil deeds.”

This kind of circumstance can easily feed into more hurt and offense in her heart against those “bad” people on behalf of her precious husband. But, if she does this, she is taking the Lord’s domain. He is the judge of that person, and she is not. If she does not forgive that offender on her husband’s behalf, she is trying to remain in God’s domain where she is not qualified or welcome as the person’s judge. “Judge not lest ye be judged.”

One more thing! Our Father-God has taught me not even to be offended in my heart because of Him. He can take care of Himself. In fact, I need Him to take care of me. He does not need me fighting His battles. I need Him fighting mine. And the only way I can see this done right is to stay in my place. Twila Paris repeats the words of King David in her song, “The Battle is the Lord’s; and He will conquer all His enemies with His right hand and His holy arm! He will obtain the victory!” President Rios Montt of Guatemala suggested making the Spanish version of Twila’s song, “La Batalia Es Del Senior,” Guatemala’s national anthem during her tour there.

I must forgive even God’s enemies if Christ is truly in me the hope of glory. How can I say that Christ in me the hope of glory hates anybody when He proved His love and forgiveness once and for all on the cross? “If you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you your trespasses.”
Staying occupied with my domain while staying out of the domains of others, as well as forgiving and asking forgiveness, fairly well occupies me nowadays. Seeking God’s face (New Testament style) by allowing Christ in me the hope of glory to express His glory through my thought, time, talent, treasure and trust rightfully takes up all my being, belonging, learning, living, associating, speaking and doing. Christ in me the hope of glory discerns and values the precious over the worthless.

“Turn your eyes upon Jesus. Look full in His wonderful face. And things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace.” Oh, may we all live to hear His “Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joys of thy Lord!”
PART SIX

Chapter 31

Not Many Fathers—Paracletive Mentoring

“You have many teachers but not many fathers” (I Corinthians 4:15; I John 2:13–14). Paul refers to one of his mentorees as “my son, Timothy,” and also Titus as his son. Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and others needed spiritual parenting from a spiritual father’s perspective. The Holy Spirit “gave teachers.” Spirit anointed teachers are necessary in the Body of Christ. But all teachers are not necessarily mentors (fathers). We have many good teachers in the Body of Christ. Yet, we need fathers—mentors like Paul to Timothy—who are not only “apt to teach,” but who can also be there for us.

Many teachers love us and are glad to endorse us, but are not there for us to hold up our hands as a paracletive mentor, father type. Many works have failed, and many people have felt like failures without the “fathers.” Most of all, God’s heart is broken and His kingdom advancement delayed because of the lack of Godly mentors. God loves us enough to delay His work if needed in order to help us grow. But woe to that man who would image himself as a father yet does not faithfully mentor the person.
Chapter 32

Moses, Christ, and Paul Define Godly Mentoring

At the word of the Lord, Moses instituted mentoring among God’s people in order to sustain God’s ways across time. Christ reinstituted Godly mentoring bringing back God’s ways by word and deed among His disciples ordering them also to “Go and make disciples of all nations.” Paul added clarity to the definition for the sake of spreading the church throughout the world without losing any original DNA or meaning.

The mentoring order in Paul’s heart and mind was 1) Paul, 2) Timothy, 3) Faithful Men, and 4) Others! Take what you have seen of me and grow it as you pass it along to the next generation, etcetera, without spilling anything. Adam Clarke, in his commentary, says, “Ever since the time of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, man has always been busy trying to improve on the ways of God.” Yet God says, “My ways are above your ways. My thoughts are above your thoughts.”

As a new mentoree, your first step to becoming a mentor is to humbly ask someone, “May I share with you from time to time what I am learning from my mentor?” If the answer is “Yes,” then do so and get his feedback on a regular basis. If the answer is not a firm “Yes,” find some other person you know with whom you can share what you are learning from your mentor. If, in time, the feedback is not positive, find another person until you are sharing with a faithful person who sincerely appreciates what you are learning from your mentor.

In time, ask him/her if he/she would be willing to share with someone else what you are relaying to them and give you their feedback, etc. You are beginning a mentoring chain, which will please the Lord and effectively bless many to come.

Eventually, you will develop a mentoring dialogue with a “faithful” person. You do not need to declare yourself his/her mentor. Like Peter, just humbly impart, “pass along,” what you are learning. Peter says, “Such as I have, give I unto thee.
In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk” (Acts 3:6). The title of mentor is not as important as the deed. Paul became “all things to all men to win some” (I Corinthians 9:22).
Chapter 33

Mentoring Goals

“Follow me as I follow Christ”

Ecclesia is called, committed, and positioned to faithfully serve the whole Body of Christ under His Lordship in the mentoring of faithful men and women in biblical Christ-centered life and learning according to their gifts and callings (II Timothy 2:2).

Ecclesia is called, committed, and positioned to faithfully serve the whole Body of Christ under His Lordship in the mentoring of faithful men and women in a biblical, ever-increasing Christ-life.

Ecclesia is called, committed, and positioned to faithfully serve the whole Body of Christ under His Lordship in the mentoring of faithful men and women in their core foundational values, issuing from the Christ-life.

Ecclesia is called, committed, and positioned to faithfully serve the whole Body of Christ under His Lordship in the mentoring of faithful men and women in true vision, issuing from the Christ-life and foundational values.

Ecclesia is called, committed, and positioned to faithfully serve the whole Body of Christ under His Lordship in the mentoring of faithful men and women in relationships, embracing the Christ-life, foundational values and true vision.

Ecclesia is called, committed, and positioned to faithfully serve the whole Body of Christ under His Lordship in the mentoring of faithful men and women in their wholehearted involvement in the advancement of God’s Kingdom, issuing from all of the above.
Chapter 34

Mentoring Path

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart; lean not to your own understanding. In all your ways, acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths.”

Most of us have heard this key verse all our lives. Many of us have even memorized it. “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, lean not to your own understanding. In all Your ways, acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths” (Proverbs 3:5). To help each mentoree reach his God–given goals, he is helped to follow a Mentoring Path. This Mentoring Path will grow an ever-increasing heart for God and His ways, which in turn leads to the discerning and valuing of the precious over the worthless (Jeremiah 15:19).

The Mentoree appreciates that his/her discerning and valuing the precious over the worthless qualifies him/her to be God’s spokesperson. The mentoree is encouraged to discern and value the precious over the worthless. He is encouraged to discern and value the holy over the profane. He is encouraged to discern and value the spiritual, which is of God, by God, and for God, over the carnal, which is of self, by self, and for self.

The Mentoree is further encouraged to discern and value the eternal riches over temporal values—to live his life now in the light of eternity. “Store not up for yourselves treasures on earth where moth and rust corrupt and thieves break through and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven where moth and rust do not corrupt and where thieves do not break through and steal” (Matthew 6:20).

With all of the above, the mentoree is provided a growing knowledge, wisdom, understanding and competence in his selected field(s).
Chapter 35

Mentoring Team

Ecclesia takes the team approach to mentoring. By the team method we better insure faithfulness and success in all facets of the mentoring process. A mentoring team might be more accurately called a mentor-to-mentoree chain or mentoring line. Would it be respectful to term it a mentoring down-line?

Remember that God Himself invented the multi-level marketing of His Kingdom Family Business. Just because the world system has been wise enough to use His wonderful plan for making money does not mean that it is not His way. His way of mentoring faithful men and women is always the best, so Jesus, Paul, and we use it.

If we may use Ecclesia College’s mentoring program as an example, our president under our Board of Governance is their chief appointed mentor. The president’s Vice Presidents are the next links each for the continuation of that Vice President’s mentoring chain. Then, each Vice President’s director, then each staff person, then each assistant, etc.

Every person in Ecclesia College, whether board member, faculty, administration, staff or student is included in this Mentoring Program through a specially selected Mentoring Team. Also, the Mentoree’s Pastor/Nominator is always kept in the Mentoring Team loop.
Here we are considering Mentoring Approach levels (directive, coaching, supportive, delegative) according to Mentoring Standards and Mentoring Measures (lists of Ps and Cs), clear job descriptions, Ecclesia Success Formula, etc.

Ultimately, the emphasis laid on mentoring by Moses, Christ, and Paul must be seen as God’s way of sustaining His old landmarks (eternal principles and ways) through the years, centuries, millennia, and ages of ever-changing times as His Anointed One, Christ in us the hope of glory refines us into His own image. God does not endorse institutions, programs, projects, or events that do not adhere to His principles. Let us seek the blessed endorsement of God upon our mentoring as we endeavor to follow His lead with those appointed by Him to lead us.

Our Father–God gave His Anointed One, Jesus Christ, the language and culture of disciples (mentorees), that He in us the hope of glory may cause the weary one to rest with a word (Isaiah 50:4). Let us not depart from His ways and means of mentoring in order to guarantee the success of the next generation and the generations to come.

There is no good reason why we cannot see the fulfillment of our Lord’s vision for mentoring individuals, groups, communities, nations, and the world as we endeavor to do it His way. “Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, Oh Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer.”
Chapter 37

Mentoring Standards Checklist of Ps

Ecclesia’s Mentoring Standards Checklist Related to Aptitude

Years ago, I was inspired to write to my son what has become the Ecclesia Mentoring Standards Checklist, which, at the time, I simply called the Checklist of Ps. I do not perceive this Mentoring Standards Checklist of Ps to be a human invention, but rather our discovery of God’s simple logical, step-by-step revelation of Himself and His ways to honest-hearted and reasonable-minded mankind to provoke us all to seek to know Him and His ways. David offers clear traces of this unfolding revelation in Psalm 19.

Ecclesia’s Mentoring Standards Checklist Related to Aptitude, which I call the checklist of Ps, is the logical revealing of God’s truth that applies to all things known. You may be introduced to the list at any point along the way, but your honest-hearted desire and need for understanding will eventually call for filling in all the Ps to the satisfaction of your own thinking.

“My dear son, Oren,

Based on our understanding of God and His ways from His holy word by His Spirit through both revelation and experience, this Ecclesia Mentoring Standards Checklist Rated to Aptitude has developed through the years with us as we have developed. You will find this list useful. Nothing we write is static, so you want to allow it to grow with us. As you practically apply your checklist, you will give it more frequent use. Ecclesia’s Mentoring Standards Checklist Related to Aptitude below is a well-developed tool to which your personnel, clientele, and constituents may use your Ecclesia Mentoring Measuring Checklist Related to Attitude to measure themselves:”

1. **Presupposition**: A required or implied preceding condition leading to our philosophy (theology), belief or belief system or a part or aspect thereof (Example: I presuppose a loving, creative, and sustaining Being who rules over His creation in excellence, integrity and order.)
2. **Philosophy:** Our philosophy is more accurately our **theology:** Who God is and how He relates to man. Philosophy falls far short of this. All intelligent thought must be based in theology. (Example: I embrace the biblical account of truth believing that all truth is God’s truth and biblically consistent.)

3. **Principle:** A fundamental truth, law, doctrine, or motivating force clearly issuing from or leading to our theology upon which other truths are based and rooted. (Example: Ecclesia embraces God’s truth as expressed in His Bible as the final authority over all others.)

4. **Precept:** An established rule of belief or conduct derived from a principle of our philosophy (**more accurately, a precept of our theology**). (Example: Ecclesia believes that God’s eternal Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, is Head of the Church, His only authorized agency for the advancement of His Kingdom on earth.)

5. **Purpose:** Our mission statement, issuing from our biblical life in Christ, with its accompanying foundational values, plus our vision statement with its forward-moving, seven-year plan to accomplish that vision. (Example: As the arm of higher education for Ecclesia, and on behalf of the local, national and international facilitated and cooperative ministries, institutions, enterprises, associations and networks of the Ecclesia Network, Ecclesia College exists to prepare all students with an academically challenging faith and character-based biblical higher education and relevant continuing resources for meaningful life-purpose with personal growth, productivity and blessed fulfillment in their foretaste of God’s eternal riches to His pleasure and glory in the advancement of His Kingdom.)

6. **Policy:** Our officially established course of action for holy, expedient, and prudent conduct and/or management. (Example: All Ecclesia mentoring teams, coaches, instructors, and trainers fully embrace our biblical life in Christ, our foundational values, our God–given vision with its mission statement and seven-year plan, our Godly relationships, and our wholehearted Kingdom of God involvement policy.)

7. **Procedure:** Our officially established method or manner of proceeding
in a particular course of action. (Example: First, we scripturally look to God [seek His face: His will is in His face] with resolve to do what we understand to be His will, then obey “what seems good to the Holy Spirit and to us.”)

8. **Protocol:** The code of forms and courtesies accepted as proper and correct in our official dealings. (Example: Ecclesia’s teaching on domain emphasizes the importance of focusing on one’s own assigned sphere of responsibility in order to be most effective and avoid conflict. We reference the biblical principle of domain that all people are equal in value but not in responsibility and authority.)

9. **Practice:** Our officially established, ongoing life and work through the particular actions, ways, and means to which we are accustomed. (Example: “That we speak the same thing”...“in the Spirit of unity...with one voice” in excellence, integrity and order as exemplary of Christ’s nature, character, and effectiveness.)

10. **Precedent:** An officially endorsed existing practice resulting from earlier precedent. (Example: As faithful Ecclesians, we endeavor with excellence, integrity and order to faithfully teach what we are taught to faithful men (and women), so that they may in turn teach others to be true followers of Christ that He may be glorified.)

11. **Progression:** The ongoing forward movement toward perfection and a higher and better state. (Example: That Ecclesians continue our forward, onward, and upward gaze and movement with God toward all desirable ends embracing His eternal purpose, including next the completion of His Great Commission followed by all He had planned with mankind before He was so rudely interrupted by sin.)

12. **Program:** A planned logical sequence of operations with activities to be performed toward God’s desired end(s). (Example: Ecclesia’s Mentoring Program in which one’s mentoring coach on behalf of his/her mentoring team helps him/her progress on his/her mentoring path toward his/her greatest effectiveness of God, by God, and for God, and fulfillment and joy in God to His eternal pleasure and glory.)
Chapter 38

Mentoring Measures Checklist of Cs

Ecclesia's Mentoring Measures Related to Attitude

In accord with the Ecclesia Mentoring Standards, I was also obliged to write and recommend to my son in the Flying Wing series this checklist of Ecclesia Mentoring Measures Related to Attitude, which, at the time, I simply called the Checklist of Cs. The Ecclesia Mentoring Standards, or checklist of Cs, as I call it, is the appropriate attitude checklist of an individual's or group's readiness for a domain. Board members of any group would be wise to use it to choose their president who should use it to choose the officers and staff, etc. According to Chairman of the Ecclesia Board of Governance, Dr. John Tate, all members of the board, president, CEO, faculty, administration, staff, and students are expected to be evaluated by the Checklist of Cs for the ideals of excellence, integrity and order.

“My dear son, Oren,

You may want to think in terms of Ecclesia's Mentoring Measures Checklist Related to the Mentoree's Attitude, Progress, and Effectiveness when contemplating majors within Ecclesia. I invite you to employ this checklist under your directive, coaching, supportive, and delegative mentoring styles. The list is likely to grow in number and meaning with you as you go along.”

1. **Conscientiousness:** Is this person truly of sound conscience before God? Does he have a moral sense of right and wrong with a compulsion to do right; a moral judgment that opposes the violation of a previously recognized ethical principle and that leads to feelings of guilt if he violates such principle? Does he know right from wrong, and does he faithfully practice walking in the light of his current frame of reference? With freedom in Christ, is he yet scrupulous, honest, showing care and precision, painstaking?

2. **Conviction:** Is this person truly and easily convicted or convinced of the Holy Spirit so that you are not always dealing with his flesh? Does he truly care to biblically discern the Spirit from the flesh, and is his spirit
growing stronger to provoke humility? Does he live and serve with sound conviction?

3. **Conversion:** Is this person truly converted in his heart so that he is not from time to time riding the fence with God and us but walking in the Spirit of Christ? Is he truly under the Lordship of Christ, and does he truly respect the leadership of Ecclesia, faithfully praying to God for his imperfect leaders while honoring and submitting to God through his imperfect leaders?

4. **Calling:** Is this person truly called in his heart to God’s single purpose, the Kingdom of God, and specifically with us? Whereas one’s calling is specific within God’s mission and vision for him, is he ready, willing, and able for us to help him discern his calling?

5. **Confirmation:** Is this person truly confirmed in the will of God by his leadership and his home pastor to be here? Does the guidance seem good to the Holy Spirit and to us? Does he clearly differentiate with us between confirmation and blessing? Are we not enjoined by the Lord to lovingly bless everyone? Yet, in all good conscience, are we not to reserve honest-hearted confirmation to “that which seems good to the Holy Spirit and to us” only for those within our sphere of responsibility?

6. **Commitment:** Is this person truly committed to God and His kingdom and specifically as an Ecclesian? Does he fully embrace our biblical Christ-life, our foundational values, our vision (including mission statement and plan), our relationships, and our wholehearted Kingdom of God involvement? Is he wholeheartedly with us here? Is he in full agreement with Ecclesia’s mentoring aptitude profile checklist of Ps?

7. **Competence:** Is this person truly competent in his field and specifically in his officially assigned responsibilities with us? Is he generally acknowledged as such by proven experts in his field and by his leadership here? Does he fully embrace Ecclesia’s Mentoring Aptitude Profile checklist of Ps, and can he successfully navigate our systems? If not now, is he learning accurately and rapidly?

8. **Credentials:** Is this person truly credentialed in his field and specifically
for his officially assigned responsibilities with us (as applicable)? Is he
officially acknowledged as such by recognized experts in his field? To
what plan is he committed in order to insure his credential within the
specified time?

9. Certification: Is this person truly certified in his field and specifically
for his officially assigned responsibilities with us (as applicable)? Are his
credentials currently certified by the proper authorities? To what plan is
he committed in order to insure the certification of his credentials within
the specified time?

10. Continuation (steadfast growth and endurance): Is this person truly
meeting his current schedule of progress in his officially approved
continued growth program? Is he growing in both grace and knowledge
according to Ecclesia's foundational values?

11. Commission: Upon fully embracing Ecclesia's five basic tenets, is this
person fully and officially commissioned by our leadership to the
responsibilities he is now covering? Does he continue to grow with his
new post? Is his new post in step with Ecclesia's drumbeat?

12. Contentment: Is this person truly contented in his spirit being with us?
"Godliness with contentment is great gain." Is Christ in him the hope of
glory truly being expressed through the fruits and gifts of the Holy
Spirit? Does Christ in him exude the "love, joy, and peace" of God?
"Peace that passes," (transcends, and eventuates) in "understanding!"
Does his contentment contribute to excellence, integrity and order?
Does his contentment affect his effectiveness positively? Has he entered
God's Spiritual rest described in Hebrews? Is he an exemplary part of a
mentoring team?

Postscript

The full lists of Ps and Cs are considered in what seems good to the Holy
Spirit and to us. The understanding we do not currently have by the
Spirit on these, the Holy Spirit still has. He will tap it for us, if He has not
yet given it to us. He will always give us the benefit of His understanding
by giving us the actual understanding and/or the peace that passes it so that we can use our faith in Him until He gives us His understanding necessary for the decision making, problem solving, or planning.

Because He is God Who is always ahead of us in more understanding. But the understanding we need will be provided either by spiritual knowledge or the Spirit Himself who gives us the peace to have the obedience of faith in Himself on our behalf. His peace really does pass understanding so that we have a "solid" place to make our next step of faith in Him.

When Jesus said, "My peace I leave with thee," He left us the most important thing we needed. It is that peace of His that passes understanding that we need in decision making, problem solving, and planning in order to continue to have confidence, obedience of faith in what we do not yet understand. Understanding follows the obedience of faith.
Chapter 39

Mentoring Approach Levels

The way the mentor approaches his mentoring of an individual mentoree should depend upon his assessment and evaluation of the mentoree’s progress status. Keeping in mind the mentoring goals, the mentoring path, the mentoring standards, and the mentoring measures, to what point has the mentoree progressed? What now should the mentor’s approach be?

Do the mentoring measures when compared against the mentoring standards warrant a change of approach? Should the mentor continue giving simple directives to his mentoree? At first, the mentoree is usually more enthusiastic than knowledgeable, wise, and understanding. He may desire to grow more than he is growing.

The good mentor is wise to find something good for which to applaud and affirm the mentoree before pointing out errors or bringing any needed correction or suggestion for improvement. Regarding affirmation and correction, when he first receives applause from you, he will be more apt to receive correction, if and as needed. Let him know where he stands with you and how well he is doing. Look for the positive and compliment him for it when you honestly see it.

Let him know that you expect him to succeed and that you are here to help him succeed. Help him to be fully acquainted with the mentoring standards and measures you are using. Let him know all about the process, so that he is not in the dark. Let him know where he stands at all times and how you are committed to his meeting the goals.

You may be acquainted with the well-known “One Minute Manager” author, Ken Blanchard. He is famous for sharing his directive, coaching, supportive, and delegative leadership styles with the manager who is training the employee on the job. He looks for competence and commitment, and to the degree he finds these, he adjusts the leadership style of the manager to meet the ongoing
progress of the employee in training. Mr. Blanchard’s employee management method serves fairly well in the business work place.

However, regarding our Father’s Business, the eternal Kingdom of God, we are entrusted with the awesome responsibility of mentoring faithful people to discern and value the precious over the worthless, the holy over the profane, the spiritual over the carnal, and eternal riches over temporal values. In light of God’s expectation of excellence, integrity and order, Ecclesia is better satisfied to use the fuller and more time-consuming Ecclesia Mentoring Measures List of Cs with the Ecclesia Mentoring Standards List of Ps to assess and evaluate the results of our mentors and mentoring program.

We have the biblical need to help the mentoree be a faithful winner of the “Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joys of thy Lord.” So, we get more into the precious, holy, spiritual, and eternal aspects and the development of the mentoree’s knowledge, wisdom, and understanding than may be expected by many managers.

As you utilize Ecclesia’s Mentoring Standards and Mentoring Measures you and your employee (or mentoree as the case may be) will know one another and be able to work together even better. We believe that compatibility among all people in life and learning and among personnel in the workplace has everything to do with the stated twelve Mentoring Standards of its life, values, vision, relationships, and wholehearted involvement as understood by the same people and personnel according to the mentor’s assessment and evaluation by the twelve Mentoring Measures.

Whether we divide the progress into four, five, or more stages, we should hope to reach the “delegation” stage with as many as we can help qualify. Christ promised his disciples, his mentorees, another Paraclete, another Mentor, who would run alongside to help them win the race and meet the goals that were set before them and to endure hardness as a good soldier along the way.

Jesus did not promise them or us a bed of roses. He promised them something, “Someone,” even better than roses. “And lo, I am with you, even unto the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20). You can make it. You will make it by God’s sufficient and abundant grace. We are in this together. You are a winner in God’s eyes, and He is for you. Who of any significance can be against you? Be faithful, for it
is for faithfulness that you are rewarded with His “Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joys of thy Lord” (Matthew 25:21–23).
PART EIGHT

Chapter 40

Discover and Declare the Vision

Ezekiel 40:4 declares, “Son of man, see with your eyes and hear with your ears; take note of all that I am going to show you, for you have been brought here in order to show it to you. Declare to the household of Israel all that you see.”

Years ago, I was called upon to help direct an international outreach during the World Cup Soccer Games hosted by Argentina. My part was to head up a pre-outreach team to begin preparation. As our small leadership team met for prayer to discern the Lord’s direction, one team member opened his Bible to find a dead fly between the pages. He was repulsed at the sight and hurried to clean off the disgusting insect stain. Although I do not rely for guidance on what one teacher calls “Bible roulette,” this time I had to stop him for a personal look at the verse under the stain.

Wow! At that moment the Lord definitely spoke to me through “the fly verse.” I could not miss it. We tried laughing off the strange incident, but the verse kept coming back to me. “Son of man, see with your eyes; hear with your ears; take note of all I am going to show you, for you have been brought here in order to show it to you. Declare to the household of Israel all that you see” (Ezekiel 40:4).

To the many local, national, and international outreach teams sent out from Ecclesia, we have always instructed them with the Ezekiel 40:4 mandate. God’s goal is to get His people, which, in our case, are the whole Body of Christ, involved in the vision that His representatives catch where He sends them. He
desires to perpetuate and grow the vision among his people. Dear visionary, review and digest the verse.

It is altogether necessary to have God’s vision, for without a vision the people perish.” And we need to know also that: “the department fizzles, the nation fails, the plan falls apart, the enthusiasts do not succeed, etc” (Proverbs 29:18). Vision is necessary to the life and success of everything. God does not excuse people without a vision. He tells us to see and hear, because He has given us the physical and spiritual abilities to do so. He actually rebukes those who are spiritually blind and deaf to His vision.
Chapter 41

Write the Vision

Habakkuk 2:1–3 (KJV) instructs, “Write the vision, and make it plain...so that others may run with it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry.”

It is just as necessary to write the vision into a clearly defined purpose, as it was to discover and capture the vision in our hearts and minds. And God does not consider the vision adequately written until it is in a form plain enough, so that others on the team can steadfastly run with it toward the goal for the right reason in the right way without confusion, etc.

Writing the vision and making it plain and clearly purposeful according to the above specifications takes more thought, time, talent, treasure and trust than we may first suppose. But God is our Source! And He already has His ways and means available when we are wholeheartedly ready, willing, and able by His grace to launch the vision’s purpose.

Regarding the birth and declaration of a vision, like Ezekiel, we are to begin by sharing with the “household of Israel,” the Body of Christ in our case, all that we see and hear of God’s vision. As we continue to share this vision, our own enunciation will become clearer and firmer to us until we are ready to write it down in purpose form.

Sometimes, beginning to write a rough draft shows us what we, ourselves, still need to see and hear more clearly and commit to more firmly. As we begin to put the vision in writing, we will be working on our wording and organization of the material to insure that it is plain enough for the other team members whom we will need to help us run with it to God’s glory.

As the vision comes clearer and firmer to those who are prayerfully writing it down in clear purpose form, they will be able to break it down into clear major goals, usually no more than three. This process must be careful to make it clear
without at the same time losing any part of the true vision. God has His way of refining the vision and His visionaries through the process. The Lord told us on one occasion, “You will build this building while this building builds you.” Only at the completion of a God–given project can one understand the full meaning of this statement.

Now that we have the vision in clearly written purpose form, and its three major goals, we will be breaking each of these major goals into no more than three objectives. Whereas the goals are general, the objectives must be measurable and manageable. Otherwise, the “others” (our fellow team members) cannot run with it. They will be confused, misunderstand each other’s domain, get bogged down, run in the wrong direction, etc.

God is not the author of confusion. And often, we would like to blame the devil for the confusion we have brought on ourselves through poorly defined purpose, goals, objectives, strategies, tactics, and planning. Please don’t misunderstand: the devil would enjoy having the blame for the “perishing” of our goals. Yet, we must remember, “Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build it.” It is still “not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit says the Lord of hosts.”

This time, we will prayerfully do it right under our Lord’s perfect direction. We will be sure that the writing of all parts of the God–given purpose of the vision is done by Christ in “us” the hope of glory. To please God, which guarantees success, those who write the purpose of the vision at this point, as well as the “others” who are the vision–purpose workers to follow, must be carefully discerning and valuing the precious over the worthless. This means the discerning and valuing of the holy over the profane, the spiritual over the carnal, and the eternal riches over temporal values in order to insure the success of their writing and the work to follow. We are ready to “give no place to the devil” to thwart Christ’s effective endeavor in and through us.

This is always true of any work of God. Otherwise, we cannot expect Him to insure our success. For the ultimate, highest good of our Father–God, others, the whole universe, and ourselves, He will not sacrifice credibility by identifying His nature and character with that which is not of Him. This does not mean that every struggling work of God is founded on the wrong basis. But it certainly does pay to check out one’s own heart before jumping to a wrong conclusion.
Sometimes God really is using us to “build the building and the building to build us.” We can say with surety that whatever we do not have in place before the project starts must be in place before its successful, victorious conclusion.

Now, let us say that we have plainly written down the purpose of the vision; we have clearly spelled out the major general goals and each goal’s measurable and manageable objectives. We are ready to develop strategies for each of those measurable and manageable objectives. Next, we go on to develop tactics for each of those strategies. Then we develop operations to handle those strategies and tactics and put them into activities where the “rubber” actually meets the “road.”

In other words, our activities must be fulfilling the operations, which fulfill the tactics, which fulfill the strategies, which fulfill the objectives, which fulfill the goals, which fulfill the purpose of the vision—this is success. The various personnel will be able to run with the overall vision in this purpose form as the leader(s) continue to see and hear from God. Whether our “others” (our fellow team members) are paid or volunteer, the Lord expects us to be well organized by His Spirit.

Remember that organization is not our enemy. God is the most organized Person in His universe. And His Anointed One, Christ in us the hope of glory, will hold to His principles of form. We are simply instructed not to have a form of Godliness while denying the power thereof. But God wants us to know that His Spirit’s power and form are mutually necessary for the accomplishment of His vision purpose.

It was the Holy Spirit who moved on the face of our Planet Earth when it was without form and void. The Holy Spirit must continue to move on and through every aspect and level of our God-created visions in order for them not to be without form and therefore, void.

God’s mentoring principles are employed at every stage throughout Ecclesia, especially in the development and fulfillment of God-created visions. There are visions formed by the Holy Spirit into purpose, goals, objectives, strategies, tactics, operations, and activities at all levels in every aspect. Ecclesia is available to help facilitate greater understanding of this subject to the reader.
So the Lord expects us to humbly write the vision He has showed us into a plain, clear, and accurate purpose form.

We are expected to break out the firm purpose into its major goals that will accomplish that purpose accounting to God for our thought, time, talent, treasure, and trust.

We are expected to break out those major goals into measurable and manageable objectives that will accomplish those goals accounting to God for our thought, time, talent, treasure, and trust.

We are to develop adequate and effective strategies to successfully accomplish those measurable and manageable objectives accounting to God for our thought, time, talent, treasure, and trust.

We are to develop and employ effective tactics that will support the effectiveness of those strategies accounting to God for our thought, time, talent, treasure, and trust.

We are to keep and manage well the operations needed to affect those tactics accounting to God for our thought, time, talent, treasure, and trust.

And we are to manage well the day to day activities so that they all keep serving the successful completion of the tactics, strategies, objectives, goals, and purpose to which we are called to the glory of God.

We are expected to allow the Holy Spirit to work in and through us to put all of the above into a plan. He expects us to plan the work and work the plan. He also reserves the right to modify the plans He gives us as He guides us with His eye. This, of course, requires that we keep our eyes on Him remembering that God is dynamically working in His dynamic creation.

Ecclesia has a 7-year Planning Document, which is adjusted as we grow and move by that which “seems good to the Holy Spirit and to us.” We are always reviewing our Ecclesia Success Formula as it applies to the plan so that it does not become static and begin to wither.
The way plans work is that, while we take into consideration the purpose, goals, objectives, strategies, tactics, operations, and activities, we determine the personnel that are needed, the materials, and the equipment they need to do the project. Then, we must take into consideration the space needed to house and facilitate the personnel and their equipment. Next come the facilities and needed space on which to build these facilities to house the operations with their projects, personnel, equipment, etc.

**But how can we ever make the budget?**

All of the above finally requires a budget. The Lord Himself commands us to know the cost of whatever we plan to build before beginning the project. So we do our best to gather all the input that will help us know the cost. Facing the facts (in this case, the cost) is necessary for the “obedience of faith,” which the Lord expects of us. There are many details we will not bother to list in this text. Suffice it to say that only now do we know what we are to believe the Lord to supply “according to His riches in glory.”

As we carry on our tiny part of God’s overall Kingdom purpose, it will help us to believe Him for the entire budget of both personnel and finances and in the accomplishment of the developing plan He has laid upon us. Also, we must remember what we have learned about domain, both His and the domain He delegates to us within His greater domain.

God has His very own overall vision, which His Holy Spirit has breathed upon to form it into His Kingdom of God purpose of Matthew 6:33 and Romans 8:28. Imagine the gigantic purpose of His vision, far beyond our imaginations, which He breaks out into goals, objectives, strategies, tactics, operations, and activities into His never ending ages upon ages plan. God’s gigantic overall plan covering the ages—past, present, and future—has a perfect budget, which He Himself oversees and guarantees.

God knows all costs and has already provided for all costs, both obvious and hidden. When He assigns each person his particular part, He sets aside the corresponding amount of His overall budget to fully and adequately cover all that part of the plan to its best success. All other things come into plan as we apply the obedience of faith. True faith (which always results in faithfulness) is rewarded with more responsibility in His ages upon ages plan with the corresponding budgeted provision already awaiting our daily requisitions, etc.
God already knows for what we will ask even before we ask for it, because He not only knows our hearts but also the need for which He has allocated to our part of His overall budgeted project. “Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread.” Why would anyone ever doubt God’s provision for His own project? He most certainly will not under-fund His own Kingdom of God project or disappoint His own child.

How hard is it to have faith and the obedience of faith? Faith does not believe that God can provide—faith knows that God will provide. His name is Jehovah-jireh, and He is not about to change His name. He stays in charge of His own overall budget down to the tiniest detail of each iota of my part.

Remember that God is our one and only Supply. He uses many ways and means, which He reserves the right to change at His discretion so that we will always keep our eyes on Him and not be diverted by any of the ways and means. Note what He says: “Give and it shall be given unto you...pressed down, shaken together, and running over will men [some of His ways and means] give into your bosom.” Never look to men as your source. Keep your eyes on the Lord when it comes to budgeting like every other aspect of the Kingdom of God project.

Because we seek first God’s Kingdom and His righteousness, because we love God and are called according to His Purpose, is it not clear at this point that “all these things shall be added to us” and that “all things are working together for good to us?” Believing God is so simple when we love Him (relationship) and are called according to His purpose (project) when we seek first His Kingdom (project) and His righteousness (relationship). And we have all this guaranteed—not according to some volatile, earthly economic system—but according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Have you ever “seen the righteous forsaken or his seed begging bread?” Paul says, “And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” All you are called by God to do was written into His overall budget when He first created the Kingdom of God purpose. You are not asking to consume the supply on your own self-centered lusts, so just send in your daily requisition according to your Father’s will to fund His own purpose, and know that He is hearing you. Then, prepare to receive that for which you asked.
Chapter 42

Ecclesia Success Formula

Please note: For your convenience the Ecclesia Success Formula is reprinted below. This revolving success formula is essential for an upward spiraling effect as well as the prevention of failure or downward spiraling effect. It finds and stops leaks. The numerical order in which these are listed here is the correct order. When we begin one point we keep it going as we launch the others in order, never letting up on the first point or any point thereafter once it is launched. Heart is the one thing you do not want to leak. Vision and heart are closely related, but all the other things sustain it as they are applied regularly.

1. Regular United Prayer (Jesus left the perfect example of this regarding his vision and projects).

2. Regular Plain and Simple Vision (written vision purpose, goals, objectives, strategies, tactics, operations, activities, budgets, etc.; Habakkuk 2:1–3).

3. Regular Clear Job Descriptions (including domain and related domains).

4. Regular Thorough Training (general and specific, team and individual). A learner’s heart performs better.

5. Regular Review, Feedback, and Accountability (including regular continuing review and personnel conference).

6. Regular Live Testimonies (feedback from and to the people).

7. Regular Grateful Celebration (leader’s acknowledgment, recognition, affirmation, identification, and rejoicing).

• One loses heart and energy (or compression in his/her engine) if any of these are weak, and to the extent they are weak (or leak). Each one of these
may have some little sub-divisions. We look at those things to find the leaks and fix them.

• In your analysis and evaluation, are the greatest leaks in 1) united prayer, 2) plain and simple vision, 3) clear job descriptions, 4) thorough training, 5) regular review/accountability, 6) live testimonies, or 7) grateful celebration?

• We need to rehearse regularly and often the overall and current vision, objectives, and goals and keep them clear, especially the part we want the people to focus on.

• Keep the job descriptions very clear and updated with the slightest change; and changes can be helpful.

• Everything that is of God has to be born out of prayer and sustained by prayer. You want Isaac, not Ishmael. You want Isaac to live and succeed, not die or fail.

• The celebration including the acknowledgment, the reward, and the “well done” is not only helpful and necessary but also right under God.

Until “that which is perfect is come!”

1. Christ has so designed that we are not only the living stones of His spiritual building, His church—His Ecclesia—but also His workers together with Him on the building. We are workers together with God in the building of ourselves into His ultimately perfect church in the advancement of His Kingdom.

2. According to I Corinthians, when that which is perfect is come—And God only knows when that is—the apocalypse (the momentous unveiling of the perfect church in the image of Christ Himself), will take place. Then, the necessary gifts for this work will cease (all tools and scaffolding, etc.) by order of His Holy Spirit.
3. Until Christ Himself pronounces His church perfect, we are to continue working together with God in the building of His church, His Ecclesia, in the advancement of His Kingdom. Each person’s part and each group’s part together in the building and advancement of His work will be building His Ecclesia until that Ecclesia, which is perfect, is come.

4. Building our part of the building and advancing the Kingdom that builds us is like eating a mountain all together that grows us up into His designed perfection.

5. We all eat, and thoroughly digest by God’s grace, our share of the mountain together one bite at a time. Yet, only God knows how much each bite is, how many bites there are, and long it will take. His grace is sufficient!

6. If the Lord were to show you how much we should all eat together of this mountain to perfect us corporately and individually, how much would it be?

7. God never allows us to bite off more than we can chew together even if He has to increase our spiritual metabolism.

8. Now, let us prayerfully consider biting off and digesting just one part of the whole mountain using the lens of The Ecclesia Success Formula. Seek God’s face! His will is in His face! Let Him “guide us with His eye.” His vision, His purpose, His goals, His objectives, His strategies, His tactics, His operations, His activities are in His face! Thy Kingdom come! Thy Will be done!
Part NINE

Chapter 43

So, Who Do We Think We Are?

So, who do we think we are, some integral part of Christ’s greater Ecclesia? Yes! And it “is by grace through faith that we are saved (out of the world system into the Kingdom of God), and that not of ourselves; it is a gift of God, lest any man should boast” (Romans 4:16; 5:15; 11:6; Ephesians 2:5,8). And how do we ever justify using that awesome name, Ecclesia, when we know, good and well, that we are only a small, yet growing part of Christ’s greater (worldwide) Ecclesia? We see you also with all other Christians under His Lordship as integral to Ecclesia, His “called out ones.” We are confident that He is completing the good work that He began in us all at Calvary.

May God protect us from falling into the trap of pride or presumption! Pray for us that we fail not! Respectfully, we see both you and ourselves privileged by His grace to be marching alongside one another in the advancement of God’s Kingdom. Christ Himself has made us all integral to His overall Ecclesia. However else our Lord Jesus Christ calls us to serve and facilitate His magnificent Body under His Lordship, by His grace we are available! Please pray for us that we fail not!

We would describe ourselves as Ecclesia “flag wavers,” waving the flag for Christ’s greater worldwide, ever-growing marching band of Ecclesians, under His Lordship, who are positioned strategically in the advancement of His Kingdom. We are thoroughly convinced of His word and firmly believe that even as we speak, “The Kingdoms of this world are becoming the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever.” Hallelujah! Amen!
As fellow Ecclesians with the whole Body of Christ, therefore, we offer ourselves on the table of our Father-God’s own laboratory as a sampling of Christ in “us” the hope of glory. We are fully committed to Christ in you (and us) the hope of glory, to insure that we do not remove His old “landmarks” in the course of discerning our “times.” Our prayer is that Christ in us the hope of glory will continue refining us into His own image, individually and corporately.

The Christ of John 17 continues to pray in us to have His heart and mind that we all may be one even as He and our Father are One that the world may believe God sent His Son. We humbly offer ourselves so that Christ in us the hope of glory will see that glad day when “The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it.”

As we say, we exist as an integral part of the whole Body of Christ. **We are called, committed, and positioned to faithfully serve the whole Body of Christ under His Lordship in the advancement of God’s Kingdom.** And we are just one of His many, living testimonials of the awesome process.

Acknowledging our shortcomings, we are still determined by God’s grace to enjoy Him and all our brothers and sisters of His great family of which we are an integral part. We pray that this is spelled out clearly in our statement of faith, statement of purpose, educational philosophy, and other documents and materials, but, most of all, our lives.

We truly want it always to be about Christ in us the hope of glory! We endeavor in the spirit of humility to use language that clearly distinguishes us from the world system out of which we were called, without separating us in any way from the whole Body of Christ under His Lordship. At this point, our limited experience demonstrates that the whole Body of Christ can agree on the following statement of faith. We remain open to comments from other leaders within the Body of Christ.

**Ecclesia Statement of Faith**

**We believe** the Bible is God’s inspired and authoritative Word, revealing that Jesus Christ is God’s Son;
**We believe** that man is created in God’s image;
**We believe** that He created us to have eternal life in Him through His Son, Jesus, “Christ in you the hope of glory,” to “separate the holy from the profane,” “extract the precious from the worthless,” discern the spiritual, which is of God, by God, and for God, from the carnal, which is of self, by self, and for self, and to convert our thought, time, talent, treasure, and trust to God’s eternal riches over temporal values;

**We believe** that, although all men have sinned and come short of God’s glory, God has made salvation possible through the death on the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ;

**We believe** that hope, repentance, faith, love, and obedience are fitting responses to God’s initiative of grace toward us;

**We believe** that God desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth;

**We believe** that the Holy Spirit’s power is demonstrated in and through us for the accomplishing of Christ’s Great Commandment to “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself” with His Great Commission to “go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature” and “make disciples of all nations;”

**We believe** that Christ’s Church is God’s authorized model and agency for the advancement of His Kingdom.

*(Luke 10:27; Colossians 1:27; Jeremiah 15:19; Mark 16:15 KJV; Matt. 28:19 NIV.)*

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**Statement of Faith Commentary**

The Ecclesia Statement of Faith is based on scriptural “understandings” that have come to us through what Paul terms “the obedience of faith.” We believe that this obedience of faith precedes Godly understanding. We are urged, “with all our getting, to get understanding.” We are instructed to trust in the Lord with all our hearts and lean not to our own understanding, but all in all our ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct our paths. We are assured that without faith it is impossible to please God. Hence, Ecclesia Statement of Faith!

We declare our Statement of Faith to be a clear word of the Lord to us for our life in Christ, foundational values, God–given vision, Godly relationships, and wholehearted involvement with God in His Kingdom.
Ecclesia Statement of Purpose

As an integral part of Christ’s Ecclesia, we are called, committed, and positioned to faithfully serve the whole Body of Christ under His Lordship in the advancement of God’s Kingdom.

Statement of Purpose Commentary

We emphasize the fact that we are a small but integral part of the whole Body of Christ, His Ecclesia, His “called out ones;” called out of the world system into His greater Ecclesia under His Lordship. We are called, committed and positioned to His purpose. One cannot succeed in His purpose without being called, committed, and positioned. The “called” and “committed” cannot succeed without being “positioned.” The “committed” and “positioned” cannot be successful without being “called.” And the “called” and “positioned” cannot succeed without being “committed.”

What purpose are we called, committed, and positioned to accomplish? It is to faithfully serve the whole Body of Christ under His Lordship in the advancement of God’s Kingdom. We can serve the whole Body of Christ only under His Lordship. And we must faithfully serve the whole Body of Christ under His Lordship in the advancement of God’s Kingdom, because God’s Kingdom is His purpose for which we are called, committed, and positioned to serve. (Matthew 6:33; Romans 8:28.)

Faithfully Serving the Whole Body of Christ Under His Lordship
As He Composes, Orchestrates, and Conducts

Ecclesia is called, committed, and positioned to faithfully serve the whole Body of Christ under His Lordship in the Advancement of God’s Kingdom. And we are to do this as an integral part of the whole. To succeed in our calling, we identify with the whole Body of Christ. So we are inclusive to all the Body of Christ while being exclusive to the world system.

If we have a specialty or special emphasis, it is faithfully serving the whole Body of Christ under His Lordship. We see no need to emphasize someone’s favorite doctrine at the expense of the whole Body of Christ. We see every set of
doctrines under the Lordship of Christ as complimentary and important to the whole.

Much like an orchestra, God has given all of us the joyful experience of playing (serving) with the rest of His symphony orchestra (Body of Christ) the current piece called, “Kingdom of God Advancement.” At times, we all play in simple harmony. Sometimes we are directed to play the theme contrapuntally. And at other times, we have a solo or group quartet. We play loudly, and we play softly, staccato and legato, in three/four time and four/four time, etc.

The important thing is that we all play (at His direction) the symphony number He is currently directing, keeping our eyes on Him, only mindful of being in tune and in sync with the rest of the orchestra. From where our Composer–Director–God stands, directing in the center of the orchestra, He can see and hear best the production He desires from us as a whole. The trumpets do not play all the time and neither do the violins or drums. (Often, new trumpeters think it is all about trumpeting, while new drummers may think it is all about the gift of drumming.)

A rest is just as important as a sound when it comes to a good production effect. And flutes need to be heard instead of the trumpets at times. I have seen the time when prophets have tried to outweigh the other ministry gifts to become the stars of the show.

As God instructs through Paul, I would not be so bold as to despise prophesying or any of the other gifts he lists. Yet, He requires through Paul that we “Let everything be done decently and in order.” Otherwise, there is no clear presentation from this orchestra. Today, we use the word, “tight,” to describe a good solid, well-balanced orchestral group that sounds as one. “Decently and in order” is that!

Others of us want to be “moving in the gifts of healing and miracles,” and this is right so long as we are mindful of Who is in charge of the overall orchestral production. Only the Composer–Conductor understands the whole musical piece enough to draw it out of the members of His orchestra. We must be content with doing our best as He calls on us in Symphony with all the others.
Our job is to blend with the whole orchestra with one accord under His direction, not our own. Even though we can hear the orchestra, we cannot hear it from the central podium as He does. His ear is the only one that can be fully trusted. Other members of the orchestra may give us a reminding glance to look His way, or to remind us to play the music as written without recomposing our own version, etc.

We should not be critical, or even envious, of other members of the orchestra. He does not reward us for doing a better job than the other person, but rather for being faithful in our own post to His direction in harmony with the rest.

We must always embrace the whole orchestra. And we must always embrace the whole Body of Christ as we play the current number on God’s heart and mind entitled, “Kingdom of God Advancement.” It is not for us to choose another number to play at this time, even though it is scheduled for a later hour on His program. Nor should we choose an old number from the past that has already been played. We must stay current with our Conductor. It is important to try to envision things through God’s eyes.

Why does each instrument have a different timber, range (tessitura)? So that it can serve the whole better by being different in order for its participation in the whole orchestra to produce the ideal sound desired by the Composer-Conductor! Trombones, trumpets, saxophones, flutes, clarinets, oboes, tubas, drums, and cymbals are all needed to please the Composer-Conductor.

If you can play more than one instrument well, the Conductor may use you in more than one way. Yet, He may decide at times to give the other player the opportunity. Even different players play differently on the same instruments. Even the player’s personality and embouchure produce a distinguishably different sound.

Also, the Conductor does not want us to tempt other members of His orchestra, or even potential members with our individual preferences, to the point that we drive them away. This is why He told Paul to have the various people “moving in the gifts of the Spirit” to be considerate of all other members as well as the audience. He does not cause us to play according to our desire, but His, for the highest good of all concerned. Ecclesia believes that the highest good, and
therefore overall desire of the Conductor at this time, is to complete the “Kingdom of God Advancement” piece, which He is currently conducting.

We are not babies who are more taken by our instruments than the overall production. We are not to use our spiritual giftings as ways and means to reminisce or display talents or attract attention or satisfy curiosity. It is also important to remember that each member’s identity is not to be found in his gifting, but rather in His relationship with the Conductor, which includes His care about the piece the Conductor is currently playing.

Both Jesus and Paul longed for the day when the whole “orchestra” (Body of Christ) would be playing (“speaking the same thing”…as “one, even as He and the Father are one”…with one voice…”in the spirit of unity,” so “the world will know God has sent His Son” and “believe”). As fellow members of the orchestra, how do we think about this?
Chapter 44

Three Major Ecclesia Branches

In terms of a growing tree, Ecclesia has three major branches with many sub-branches and new buds appearing as the Lord sees fit.

Ecclesia’s Three Major Branches:

1) Ecclesia Networks & Associations
Provides ministers and professionals a way to connect with one another for the purpose of encouragement and godly productivity.

2) Ecclesia Ministries & Services
Provides a way for us to participate in Christian ministry by volunteering, praying and contributing financially to humanitarian and/or ministry oriented projects.

3) Ecclesia Educational Institutions & Programs
Provides Christian students with affordable, private, Christ-centered education.

A trans-denominational institution, Ecclesia has adopted a biblical Statement of Faith and Statement of Purpose which clearly draws a non-negotiable line of demarcation between us and the world system (from which Christ redeemed us) while binding us together with all of our dear brothers and sisters in the Body of Christ, under His Lordship, across time, and throughout the world. What a marvel!

We believe that, as the Body of Christ, the Lord has identified us as “set apart” from the world system while being inclusive to the whole Body of Christ under His Lordship. We are “in the world, but not of the world.” Ecclesia is a small part of the unfathomably vast Body of Christ. And we are happy to participate along with you in the two-fold purpose of abiding in Christ and working with Him.
Ecclesia Networks & Associations

So, let us first browse through the Ecclesia Networks & Associations branch. The real reason for this branch is to help meet the first innate need of every human being—the need to be and to belong. Made in God’s image, we are created with the need to be somebody and to belong to somebody.

Being sons and daughters of our Father-God, He expects us to understand that we are His children and belong to His family. Hence, Ecclesia Networks & Associations! We are, and we belong. We know who we are, and we know who we belong to and with. Our sense of being and belonging are completely satisfied in Him and with the people who have His heart and mind.

The difference Ecclesia makes between Networks and Associations is that Networks are for any individual or group that shares our good will, who uses any of our goods and services, or who contributes in a positive way any of his thought, time, talent, treasure, and trust to any part of Ecclesia.

The Ecclesia Associations are for those who, in addition to being some part of any Ecclesia Network, also embrace our simple Statement of Faith and Statement of Purpose. The Associations are for those of us who find ourselves, to a larger degree, compatible with God’s ways as expressed in Ecclesia and are drawn to a tighter bond. The way into an Ecclesia Association is through relationship with an Ecclesian in good standing with that association.

The compatibility grid is simple: 1) Life in Christ; 2) foundational Values; 3) God-given vision; 4) Godly relationships; and 5) Wholehearted involvement! Remember that we said, “To the degree two or more persons or groups share the same life in Christ out of which flows our foundational values out of which flows our God-given vision out of which flows their Godly relationships out of which flows their wholehearted involvement, to that degree they can compatibly work together.” So often, an Ecclesia Networker soon finds himself an Ecclesia Associate, and this is good for everyone! Nobody coerces anybody. Christ in us the hope of glory by the Holy Spirit is in charge of all this.

We are all of the same family, our Father-God’s family. As we say to Him, “This, thy son,” He replies to us, “This, thy brother.” “Our Father, Who art in heaven!
You are indeed a family Person. You are the Inventor of family. You are the first Father of family. You are the model Father of family! Until we acknowledge with You, our precious family, we get no further in the advancement of Your Kingdom!" Christ in us the hope of glory remains true to the will of our Father doing only His will and nothing outside His will. Do not expect any viable ministry or any “well-done” outside His family.

Before moving on from Networks and Associations to Ecclesia’s second major branch, we may need to mention a couple of examples. A vital Network among many others is the Ecclesia Pastors Network. The same goes for the Ecclesia Pastors Association. Ecclesia believes and practices keeping the pastor in the loop.

Jesus as the Chief Shepherd who serves as the Door, the Entry, the Only Way into the Body of Christ, expects his under shepherds [this is an archaic term] whom we call pastors to be respected as the keepers and doorways into the local congregations of His vast flock. Anyone trying to enter by some other way is, in the mind of Christ, trespassing outside his own domain into another's “the same as a thief and a robber.” Desiring our Lord’s full blessing on all we do in honoring God-appointed domains as He intends, we honor the pastor's domain. My earthly father, who was a pastor, used the term, “ministerial ethics.” Ministerial ethics relates to domain.

The Ecclesia Ministers Conference is a special trans-denominational Association for all ministry leaders, including pastors, missionaries, etc. Yet there is a Ministries Leaders Network specifically for non-pastoral ministers and missionaries. We should also mention the very broad Business Professional Network and Business Professional Association for people who consider their businesses and professional positions as a platform under Christ’s Lordship for the advancement of God’s Kingdom. These stalwarts are truly worthy of recognition and facilitation. The reader may inquire further about other active Ecclesia Networks and Associations or those continually coming on line.
Ecclesia Ministries & Services

The second major branch of Ecclesia is Ecclesia Ministries & Services. Our Creator—Father—God not only is and belongs. He is also a doer. God is and belongs, and God does. Made by Him, therefore, in His own image, we also not only are and belong, and know who we are and belong to, but also are doers. We are and belong, and we do. We call what we do Ecclesia Ministries & Services. The word, “ministry” actually means service. So we group ministries and services together in the same branch. True ministers are servants like Jesus, our model Minister and Servant.

Ecclesia provides opportunities for people to minister and serve. Some of these ministries and services are the serving of others besides Ecclesia Ministries & Services. We want to be available to serve any individual or group or facilitate their ministry or service under Christ’s Lordship in the advancement of God’s Kingdom. You can see how these may often overlap with Ecclesia Networks & Associations.

Among some of Ecclesia’s long time Ministries & Services are Ecclesia Relief & Development with all its sub-ministries: Strategic Missions for Strategic Nations with all its sub-ministries & services—(often condensed to Strategic Missions—example: under Strategic Mission is the current gigantic China Project with all its sub-ministries), Bibles for the Nations with its sub-ministries to see a Bible placed in every home on earth; Ecclesia Children’s Ministries with all its sub-ministries to bring hope to every nation’s children, etc.

Ecclesia Educational Institutions & Programs

The third major branch of Ecclesia is Ecclesia Educational Institutions & Programs. This is for those who realize the strategic importance of a strong God-centered educational root system underlying all else we do to “disciple the nations,” including our nation. Believing that all truth is God’s truth, Ecclesia is committed to provide honest-hearted students with a clear, academically challenging Christ-center educational alternative to the secular humanistic education movement of our day.

Ecclesia College is the higher educational institution of Ecclesia. Many educational programs of Ecclesia are currently included in some facet of Ecclesia
College. However, there are also more institutions and programs designed especially to meet timely needs where they are. Ecclesia College’s education division should be able to cover many Christian Schools and Home Schools—Kindergarten through High School. Ecclesia College has rapidly become a resource to a growing number of homeschooler networks, while laying the foundation for Ecclesia Preparatory School where future teachers have the opportunity to be mentored and to assist in mentoring younger students.

**A Better Picture**

A clearer summarization of Ecclesia’s purpose under the Lordship of Christ is expressed through its three major branches: 1) Ecclesia Networks & Associations to meet the God-given need of identification in being and belonging; 2) Ecclesia Ministries & Services to meet the God-given need to do—“workers together with God;” and 3) Ecclesia Educational Institutions & Programs to train, equip, prepare, and mentor men and women, boys and girls, for their ever-growing life, learning, and ministry in Christ to His glory.

We pray that all networking and association, ministry and service, and education and training are always of Him, by Him, and for Him. We pray that we will always be discerning and valuing the precious over the worthless, the holy over the profane, the spiritual over the carnal, and the eternal riches over temporal values to His eternal glory and the highest good of all.

Hopefully, you now have a better snapshot of the buzzing Ecclesia Mall or Tree as it is at this moment in time. Again, please pray for us that we fail not. We need and welcome your help on a readiness, willingness, ability, and availability basis. We are here to facilitate you to help others find their place in the Kingdom of God, be thoroughly equipped for their place in the Kingdom of God, and fill their place in the Kingdom of God!
PART TEN

Chapter 45

Ecclesia College

Ecclesia College is one of the Educational Institutions in the third branch of Ecclesia. And yes, when you see our website for Ecclesia College, you will note that the college is known among other colleges as the Ecclesia Royals inasmuch as we, like you, are by grace made sons and daughters of the King.

You will also note that our college crest contains a lion and a crown, our motto is “Where Leaders Are Learning!” You will see that our colors are blue and gold, and you will note that our Alma Mater, composed by recording artist, song writer, and longtime spokesperson for the college, Twila Paris, is simply entitled, “Ecclesia.” The Alma Mater was introduced by the Ecclesia Chorale during the 2007 Spring Commencement ceremonies and enthusiastically received as a true expression of our hearts.

We see our need to remain accountable to you, our brothers and sisters in the whole Body of Christ under His Lordship, as we faithfully serve with you in the advancement of God’s Kingdom. We want to glorify God alone. When honoring other persons, may it always be as Christ said, “As much as you have done it unto the least of these, you have done it unto Me” (Matthew 25:40). “Give honor to whom honor is due” (John 17; Romans 12:10; 13:7; Hebrews 5:4; I Peter 2:17). “Honor one another.” We pray for the whole Body of Christ, as we know that the precious Holy Spirit will not allow any of us to cross the goal line of “discipling the nations” without our brothers and sisters, so that the ultimate glory will go to God alone.
Remembering that our Christ-life undergirds our Seven Core Foundational Values, you will find our Seven Core Values listed in this chapter. We sincerely desire everyone to freely analyze them with us to insure that they truly reflect the Word of God. Our vision, vision-purpose, goals, objectives, strategies, tactics, operations, and activities are based upon these Seven Core Foundational Values and must always be in harmony with them.

We also share with you the Ecclesia College Educational Philosophy, which to us should be more accurately termed the Educational Theology. Note our Mission Statement, Educational goals, and a brief History of Ecclesia College. We want to lay ourselves out before you always being transparent with you. With these documents, we lay our hearts open to you.

May God and His ways through this Educational Philosophy be so underlined as the “why,” “what,” and “how to” for Ecclesia College! And may Ecclesia always live by His life! God’s truth belongs equally to you and to us. Let us examine together this set of documents as one example of God’s established educational ways and means for His people.
Ecclesia College
Seven Core Foundational Values

As an Institution of Higher Learning, holding that all truth is God’s truth and biblically consistent, Ecclesia College embraces these 7 Core Foundational Values:

Bible-based Education
We are called to study all disciplines in light of the Holy Scriptures to “show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth,” learning to think and walk honestly before Him in the pure light of His truth according to our ever-increasing frame of reference.

Life-long Learning
Humankind is the highest order of intelligent beings on earth individually created by God in His own image for a unique purpose, higher than ourselves, to enjoy Him and be enjoyed by Him forever. We are called to a wholesome curiosity and continued learning of the why, what, how to, and eventual outcomes of the faithful stewardship of our thought, time, talent, treasure, and trust.

Comprehensive Learning
We are called to the ideal educational prescription of “adding virtue to faith and knowledge to virtue” in that order of cyclical increase through mentoring for life and learning, God-honoring, academically challenging classes, work-learning internships, community service, and Christian outreach.

Inclusion Of The Whole Body of Christ
The family of God under the Lordship of Christ is called to “maintain the Spirit of unity...until we come into the unity of the faith.” We are called to faithfully serve the whole Body of Christ, understanding that our true compatibility is based on our shared Christ-life, core foundational values, God-given vision, godly relationships, and wholehearted involvement.
Practical Norm For Life and Learning
The holy, spiritual, and eternal mindset of redeemed mankind eclipses and surpasses the profane, carnal, and temporal mindset of fallen mankind while reestablishing the only truly practical norm for all things. We are called to live and learn now in light of eternity’s values anticipating God’s “well done.”

Missions Priority
Christ’s Great Commandment and Great Commission are integral to advancing His kingdom within us, and among all people groups in all nations. We are called to prepare and equip faithful ministry-minded persons of excellence, integrity and order for professions across all aspects of society and to grow networking resources for them in their chosen vocations and further study, serving to increase and reinforce their quality of learning and service.

Community and Personal Wellness
We are called to interdependence over isolation based on God’s firm principle of domain with forgiveness of trespasses as the basis for healthy, committed relationships aligned with His heart and ways. We also honor God in preparing for long-term, joyful service by following good healthful practices such as proper diet, adequate rest, regular exercise, and consistent meditation on Him.
Preamble

The Educational Philosophy of Ecclesia College is based on the belief that:

The Bible is God’s inspired and authoritative Word, revealing that Jesus Christ is God’s Son; that man is created in God’s image; that He created us to have eternal life in Him through His Son, Jesus, “Christ, in you the hope of glory,” to “separate the holy from the profane,” “extract the precious from the worthless,” discern the spiritual, which is of God, by God, and for God, from the carnal, which is of self, by self, and for self, and to convert our thought, time, talent, treasure, and trust to God’s eternal riches over temporal values; that although all men have sinned and come short of God’s glory, God has made salvation possible through the death on the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ; that hope, repentance, faith, love, and obedience are fitting responses to God’s initiative of grace toward us; that God desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth; that the Holy Spirit’s power is demonstrated in and through us for the accomplishing of Christ’s Great Commandment to “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself” with His Great Commission to “go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature” and “make disciples of all nations;” and that Christ’s Church is God’s authorized model and agency for the advancement of His Kingdom.

(Luke 10:27; Colossians 1:27; Jeremiah 15:19; Mark 16:15 KJV; Matt. 28:19 NIV.)
Educational Philosophy

In accord with the above preamble of which we are convinced, it rightly and necessarily follows that:

We are to perpetuate and pursue biblical methods and practices in educating and equipping men and women for their chosen fields of service according to their gifts and callings and for the wise conversion of their thought, time, talent, treasure, and trust into eternal riches to enjoy with God forever over passing temporal values.

All truth is God’s truth and biblically consistent, including, theology, the arts, sciences, etc., and should, therefore, be mutually integrated with the principle approach to education from the biblical perspective.

1) God desires all mankind to come to the knowledge of His truth.
2) God intends mankind to know Him and His ways with His creation.
3) God speaks His truth in love through His Living Word.
4) God calls all mankind to believe in Himself through His Son by His Spirit.
5) God calls all believers to their highest good by building virtue on their faith and knowledge of the truth on their virtue (II Peter 1:5–7).

1. God values and blesses for success the historical, distinct, and effective five-point educational approach for learning, growing, and equipping:

1.1. Mentoring Program—Christ-centered mentoring for life and learning according to the student’s giftings and callings (II Timothy 2:2).

1.1.1. Mentoring Goals
   1.1.1.1. A biblical ever-increasing Christ-life
   1.1.1.2. Core foundational values issuing from the Christ-life
   1.1.1.3. True vision issuing from the Christ-life and core foundational values
   1.1.1.4. Relationships embracing the Christ-life, core foundational values, and God-given vision
   1.1.1.5. Wholehearted involvement in God’s kingdom issuing from all the above
1.1.2. Mentoring Path
   1.1.2.1. An ever-increasing heart for God and His ways
       1.1.2.1.1. Discerning and valuing the holy over the profane
       1.1.2.1.2. Discerning and valuing the spiritual over the carnal
       1.1.2.1.3. Discerning and valuing the eternal over the temporal
       1.1.2.2. A growing knowledge, wisdom, understanding, and competence in the mentoree’s selected field(s)

1.1.3. Mentoring Team
   1.1.3.1. Mentoring Coach selected from the President’s Mentoring Team responsible for the mentoree on behalf of the team
   1.1.3.2. Mentoree’s Pastor/nominator in the mentoring team loop

1.1.4. Mentoring Approach Progression
   1.1.4.1. Directive style
   1.1.4.2. Coaching style
   1.1.4.3. Supportive style
   1.1.4.4. Delegative style

1.2. God-honoring, academically challenging faith and character-based classes (II Peter 1:5–7).

   1.2.1. Faith in God, His purpose, and His ways as the basis for all virtue with ever-increasing faith and virtue as the basis for all knowledge
   1.2.2. Virtue, as related to God’s nature and character defining capacity for life, learning, and effectiveness, understanding that one’s character dictates his/her capacity to contain and sustain his/her ever-increasing destiny
   1.2.3. Knowledge, as knowable truth, wisdom, and understanding related to God, His purpose, and His ways in all of life and learning

1.3. Work-Study Internship Program with hands-on in-service related to the student’s chosen field of service and/or further study

   1.3.1. Equipped for field of service and/or further study
   1.3.2. Work ethic
       1.3.2.1. Growing conscience before God and fellow mankind
1.3.2.2. Growing competence in selected field(s) according to gifting and callings
1.3.2.3. Growing commitment to God’s ways with relationships and responsibility in the workplace

1.4. Community Service Program with practical application and outcomes

1.4.1. Growing the student’s heart and mind to give back to the community
1.4.2. Benefiting the community through productive student service
1.4.3. Demonstrating the College’s desire to serve its community

1.5. Christian Outreach Program in response to God’s loving heart for others

1.5.1. Growing the student’s heart and mind to serve God through Christian outreach
1.5.2. Benefiting the church and world through faithful Christian outreach
1.5.3. Demonstrating the College’s heart for effective Christian outreach

2. The indispensable regular Ecclesia College Assembly Program, central to campus life, should also serve as the ideal vehicle for communicating the combined educational philosophy of distinct biblical–historical mentoring for life and learning, God–honoring faith and character–based academically challenging classes, ethical work–learning life–style, community service, and Christian outreach. This assembly–mentoring–classroom–workstudy–internship–community service–Christian outreach approach can more thoroughly address the student’s three deepest heart questions that call for:

2.1. Leading students on their search of the “why” of each truth will inspire a growing knowledge, wisdom, and understanding deepening their
enthusiasm and resolve of heart for excellence, integrity and order to live their lives now in the light of eternity.

2.2. Leading students on their search of the “what” of each truth will clarify their frame of reference to know the highest good with the right objectives.

2.3. Leading students on their search of the “how to” will strengthen their confidence in God’s ways as always best.

Ecclesia College Educational Philosophy issuing from the Seven Core Foundational Values and the Ecclesia Statement of Purpose is incorporated in the Educational Philosophy, Mission Statement, Educational Goals, and Program Objectives and Motto.
Ecclesia Statement of Purpose

Ecclesia is called, committed, and positioned to faithfully serve the whole Body of Christ under His Lordship in the advancement of God’s Kingdom.

Ecclesia College Motto

Where Leaders Are Learning

Ecclesia College Mission Statement

As an institution of higher learning, Ecclesia College mentors effective leaders to strengthen the foundations of society through the life and values of Christ.

Educational Goals

Ecclesia College seeks to provide a distinctive education through its mentoring for life and learning, God-honoring academically challenging classes, work-learning internships, community service, and Christian outreach. Upon successful completion of the Ecclesia College faith and character-based education, graduates should be able to demonstrate:

- Effective communication skills in listening, speaking and writing.
- Necessary critical thinking skills (including analysis, synthesis and evaluation) to interact effectively in a culturally diverse and increasingly pluralistic world.
- Biblical faith and character as the foundation for further spiritual and ethical development and mentoring of other faithful Christians.
- A Biblically formed worldview, integrating the Christian faith, lifestyle, and general educational content.
- Effective leadership skills within diversified ministry/work/vocation and service contexts.
- A commitment to service within the broad context of modern society.
- A commitment to an established pattern of lifelong learning.
Ecclesia College Mission Statement

Prologue

Ecclesia College equips committed students with a biblical higher education designed to build faith and strengthen character. The College is a community where students further discover meaning in their lives and experience fulfillment in their work. The College mentors students to redeem wholesome societal values in the advancement of God's Kingdom while gaining a vision of the eternal riches they will enjoy with Him forever. Ecclesia College establishes life-long relationships with its students for continuing professional development and service.
Ecclesia College Educational Goals

Ecclesia College seeks to provide a distinctive education through its mentoring for life and learning, integrated classroom academics, and student work hands-on in-service program. Upon successful completion of the Ecclesia College faith and character-based education, graduates should be able to demonstrate:

- Effective communication skills in listening, speaking and writing.
- Necessary critical thinking skills (including analysis, synthesis and evaluation) to interact effectively in a culturally diverse and increasingly pluralistic world.
- Biblical faith and character as the foundation for further spiritual and ethical development and mentoring of other faithful Christians.
- A biblically formed worldview, integrating the Christian faith, lifestyle, and general educational content.
- Effective leadership skills within diversified ministry/work/vocation and service contexts.
- A commitment to service within the broad context of modern society.
- A commitment to an established pattern of lifelong learning.
Ecclesia College History

From before its establishment in June 1975, the growing vision and purpose of Ecclesia was to be expressed through three major branches: 1) Networks & Associations, 2) Ministries & Services, and 3) Educational Institutions & Programs to faithfully serve the whole Body of Christ under His Lordship in the advancement of God’s Kingdom.

The Ecclesia Educational Institutions & Programs Branch would educate dedicated men and women to lead in all eight major aspects of society: 1) family; 2) church; 3) education; 4) government; 5) communications; 6) sports and entertainment; 7) business and economics; and 8) the science communities.

In June 1975, Ecclesia President Oren II and Inez Paris with his veteran minister parents, Oren Sr. “Dad” Paris and Marylydia “Mom” Paris, opened the first-year Educational Institution & Program in Springdale, Arkansas. It was characterized by an emphasis on 1) mentoring for life and learning, 2) God-honoring character-based academically challenging classes, 3) practical work-learning internship, 4) local, national, and international Christian outreach, and 5) community service.

In January 1977, Ecclesia added a second-year independent study program, specializing in Bible/Theology. Students were encouraged to summarize each chapter of the Bible before consulting other required library resources in order to build the student’s personal confidence to hear God through His living Word.

In September 1990, the addition of New Testament Greek completed the reality of the four-year Biblical Ministries Program.

In May 1997, the Board of Governance installed Oren Paris III as the new president of Ecclesia College. He was commissioned to lead out in broadening the development of the college’s degree offerings to meet the growing demand for God-honoring leaders in all eight of the above named major aspects of society.

In September 1997, the Board of Governance unanimously reaffirmed Ecclesia College’s calling, commitment, and positioning to educate men and women to
faithfully serve the Body of Christ under His Lordship in the advancement of God’s Kingdom through all aspects of society. Ecclesia College would continue to champion excellence, integrity and order by the proven biblical educational method of “building virtue upon faith, and knowledge upon virtue.”

In May 2003, the Board of Governance bestowed the title of Chancellor upon founder and former president, Oren Paris II.

Ecclesia College is called, committed, and positioned to equip dedicated students with a God-honoring, academically challenging, higher education designed to build faith and strengthen character under the Lordship of Christ for the advancement of God’s Kingdom.

Fully certified and accredited in 2005, and offering a growing number of degree programs, Ecclesia College is a community where students discover the meaning of their lives, experience fulfillment in their work, are mentored to redeem wholesome societal values in the advancement of God’s Kingdom while gaining a vision of the eternal riches they will enjoy with Him forever. Ecclesia College establishes life-long relationships with its students for ongoing professional development and meaningful service.
PART ELEVEN

Chapter 46

Observations and Acknowledgements

“Indeed My Heritage Is Beautiful to Me!”
“It Seems Good to the Holy Spirit and to Us”

We thank the parents, teachers, and leaders who are faithfully serving this generation as mentors and the mentorees who say with David and us, “Indeed, my heritage is beautiful to me!” In this part, we are including testimonials from real mentors and mentorees. Please read on. Thank you for your kind attention. And remember to be prepared to hear Christ’s words, “Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joys of thy Lord.”

Whether or not you find your mentoring testimonies recorded here, Your Father-God is recording yours. It is important to Him, because you and all those you influence are reverently and awesomely made in His own image. He is so pleased that you are seeking first His Kingdom and His righteousness, so that He can entrust you with “all these things.” He enjoys seeing your confidence that “all things are working together for your good, because you love Him and are called according to His purpose.”

We are convinced that Christ’s continuing mentoring chains are the basic structure for growing, multiplying, advancing, and selling our Father-God’s Family Business goods and services. His mentoring chain holds the Kingdom of God together and consistent while each member of the chain may sell the Kingdom of God’s quality goods and services out of his current stock.

Those in the chain through the Spirit of Christ in them the hope of glory keep it consistent and insure the continuing quality of God’s DNA, His nature and
character, His ways, His ultimate purpose focus, His planning document, His name, His life in the Kingdom, His King Jesus in charge, His word, His Christ in you the hope of glory, etc.! They by His Holy Spirit perpetuate worthy over vain, life over death, truth over the lie, holy over the profane, spiritual over carnal, and eternal riches over temporal values via Christ in “them” the hope of glory.

The only consistent One in the universe is God. God is God, and God does not ever change. His Christ is in us to insure His purpose. Christ is central, the only perfectly balanced Person in His universe.

Your loving Father–God stands ready to respond to any request that Christ in you the hope of glory makes of Him. As Twila Paris writes in the song, Bonded Together, you and Your Father are bonded together forever. He will never leave you. Let Him enjoy you now and forever as you enjoy Him.

Now, turn and mentor the next faithful person your Father entrusts to you. Where is your Timothy, your Faithful Man, and your Other? Say with humble confidence to them, “Follow me as I follow Christ.”
HOW FIRM A FOUNDATION

From: A Selection of Hymns from the Best Authors
By the Reverend John Rippon, 1787
Words attributed variously to his assistant, John Keene, Kirkham, and John Keith

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word!
What more can He say than to you He hath said,
You, who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?

In every condition, in sickness, in health;
In poverty’s vale, or abounding in wealth;
At home and abroad, on the land or on the sea,
As thy days may demand and shall thy strength ever be.

Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed,
For I am thy God and will still give thee aid;
I'll strengthen and help thee, and cause thee to stand
Upheld by My righteous, omnipotent hand.

When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
The rivers of woe shall not thee overflow;
For I will be with thee, thy troubles to bless,
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.

When through fiery trials thy pathways shall lie,
My grace, all sufficient, shall be thy supply;
The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.

Even down to old age all My people shall prove
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love;
And when hoary hairs shall their temples adorn,
Like lambs they shall still in My bosom be borne.

The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to its foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no never, no never forsake.
PART TWELVE

Chapter 47

Mentoring Foundations Q & A Project

Mentoring the Faithful for their Crown of Life

DIRECTIONS: Please answer the following questions and turn in your completed paper to Vice President Academics, Donna Brown or her official designate. You may reference your manual and notes and work together with others. Remember that we are here to help you win with MENTORING FOUNDATIONS (Grids for Life & Learning) and not fail!

1. QUESTION: Explain as best you can the sequence of the following:
   a. Our Father Creator–God
   b. His creation of us in His own image
   c. Domain
   d. Trespasses
   e. Forgiveness of Trespasses
   f. Reconciliation
   g. Restoration

2. QUESTION: Describe what domain means. ANSWER: a place for everything and everything in its place.

3. QUESTION: list some crowns (or hats) that you wear in your church, family, & job? ANSWER: be as clear as possible.

4. QUESTION: When was God’s universe in perfect order? ANSWER: before the trespass of Lucifer, then the trespass of one/third of the angels, then the trespass of the serpent, then the trespass of Eve, then the trespass of Adam which brought disorder to everything on Planet Earth.
5. **QUESTION:** Who was the first person to forgive, setting the example of forgiveness by which we are to forgive the trespasses of others and receive forgiveness for our trespasses? **ANSWER:** Jesus Christ.

6. **QUESTION:** Is forgiveness always necessary for true reconciliation? **ANSWER:** Always without exception!

7. **QUESTION:** Must reconciliation to God and one another precede the restoration of God’s perfect order? **ANSWER:** Yes!

8. **QUESTION:** How are we workers together with God? **ANSWER:** What do you think? Is it that important to our Father–God to have His family always doing things together with Him? Is He really a family person? Yes! Absolutely!

9. **QUESTION:** How do we know when something is holy, spiritual & eternal over profane, carnal, & temporal? **ANSWER:** When we can say it is of God, by God, and for God and not of self, by self, or for self.

10. **QUESTION:** Why does God have us mentoring? **ANSWER:** To faithfully help one another value our God–given heritage in Christ so much that we pass it on to our mentoree so that he can be faithful in mentoring faithful people to faithfully pass it on to others following II Timothy 2:2.

11. **QUESTION:** How can we know that our mentoring is effective? **ANSWER:** By keeping our eye on the fourth person down our mentoring chain to see if he is growing even more than we are. Then we know those in between us are faithful and effective too.

12. **QUESTION:** Why did our Creator–Father–God create each of us in His own image? **ANSWER:** so that we would have the ability to commune with Him both now and forever.

13. **QUESTION:** If Christ is the Chief Shepherd & Mentoring Example and Paul is His delegated example for our pastor to follow, how does our pastor fit into God’s mentoring program for this church? **ANSWER:** He is the one God trusts to head up the mentoring for this church. We are to
“follow him through the mentors he delegates for us as he and they follow Christ.”

14. **QUESTION**: What are the three greatest questions for life and learning that we should be asking from our mentors and answering for our mentorees? **ANSWER**: Why, what, & how to.

15. **QUESTION**: Why do you think sneaky Jacob was chosen over shortsighted Esau to receive the Blessing and Birthright and have his name miraculously changed by God to Israel (meaning MAN OF GOD)? **ANSWER**: Because he could discern and value the eternal over the temporal, God chose him and made him a new man. His potential was in his valuing the blessing and birthright which Esau did not value enough.

16. **QUESTION**: According to this text, what could be considered the theme verse of the New Testament? **ANSWER**: Colossians 1:27 “Christ in you the hope of glory?”

17. **QUESTION**: From where will your next additional crowns come as a result of your faithfulness to Christ? **ANSWER**: From new things He wants to add to us plus some crowns He had to take away from others because of their unfaithfulness to Him.

18. **QUESTION**: What words will Christ say to each of us who have been faithful? **ANSWER**: “Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter thou into the joys of thy Lord.”

19. **QUESTION**: Can you describe what John Wesley passed on to Adam Clarke that made the Methodist Church so successful at its beginning? **ANSWER**: John Wesley handed Adam Clarke a tray with God’s eternal heritage, which he faithfully passed on to others through his anointed commentaries and other works.

20. **QUESTION**: This is a big question with several parts. Have you faithfully shared what you learned in this MENTORING FOUNDATIONS COURSE (Grids for Life & Learning) with one or more faithful person(s)? How did they respond? Tell us what they learned from you. How are they showing you how much they value what they are learning from you? Turn in any
photocopy of any assigned papers they wrote or test they took from you on the course after you taught it to them. **Answer:** This is a very important question, because the answers you give to this question will demonstrate how effective you are with them and will help us help you in following through with them. *(You can literally affect their lives forever by what you are imparting to them, how you are imparting to them, and why you are imparting to them. We pray they will faithfully follow the Christ in you, as Timothy, Titus, and Philemon did with Paul, and not sadly become an unfaithful dropout like Demas who was so short-sighted that he chose to love this present world over God’s eternal riches.)*

21. **Question:** Name and defend according to the Master Text the 7 Core Foundational Values of Ecclesia College.

22. **Question:** Name and defend according to the Master Text the five points of the Ecclesia educational approach.

23. **Question:** Write and defend according to the Master Text the biblical prescription for education.

24. **Question:** With so many institutions of higher learning throughout this nation and the world, why should Ecclesia College exist?

25. **Question:** Name some of the truths that are in the MENTORING FOUNDATIONS COURSE (Grids for Life & Learning) related directly or indirectly to mentoring that are not included on this question & answer project. **Answer:** Say as much as you can and wish to say, because your grade will be helped according to what else you write to this question. Better still, you will be continuing your growth, as you can forever, in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ!

*True mentors know that all truth is God’s truth. They also know that they better digest and are transformed by His living Truth (Christ) in the process of living and imparting His Truth to faithful others who desire to grow thereby. Have you noticed yet that mentoring someone else is also one of your best learning tools? All glory to Him both now and forever! Amen.*
Congratulations!

Upon your successful completion of this MENTORING FOUNDATIONS COURSE you have earned three credit hours to be recorded on your transcript in the Registrar’s Office. As a bona fide alumnus of Ecclesia College you are entitled to all the benefits of the Ecclesia Alumni Association. To continue any part of your education or to complete your degree, see the following instructions.
FINAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Complete, and turn in the Ecclesia College Short Form Application to the Director of Admissions, Ecclesia College, 9653 Nations Drive, Springdale AR 72762.

2. Call the registrars of former educational institutions and training programs to send official copies of your transcripts to the Ecclesia College Registrar, Ecclesia College, 9653 Nations Drive, Springdale, AR 72762.

3. Send your complete personal resume of education and life experiences to the Ecclesia College Registrar, Ecclesia College, 9653 Nations Drive, Springdale, AR 72762 for your portfolio analysis, assessments, and evaluation of your status in the completion of your degree.