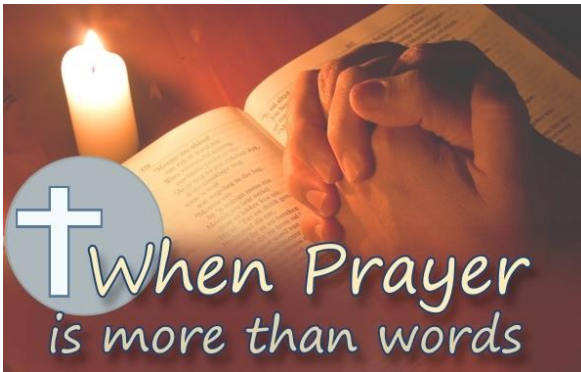


Real Prayer



While knowledge of God can broaden wisdom,
the *Real Prayer* booklet can touch the heart.

realprayer.org



How many of us are hesitant to prepare for our future with God because we are unsure of what He wants or how to get there? Or, perhaps certain habits get in the way.

Growth in the love of Jesus can take up to a lifetime. [1 Corinthians 13:4-7](#) Change from any darkness that may be holding us back, need not be overwhelming.

Let God do the work!

We think in the *short* term unable to comprehend how to get past things that hinder our spiritual growth.

God thinks in the long term, over our lifetime, with *salvation* being His goal.

Our choice:

- ✚ Are we going to be the obstruction to God's *offer* to live in his presence for eternity? Place our pride aside and provide the willingness to ask Him to *teach us*, how to receive this *gift!*
- ✚ God wants us to give Him consent to change our heart so that He becomes our motivation in life and sin becomes of *little value*.

How to step toward the light of Jesus Christ.

1. *First, accept yourself as a sinner.* We are likely to have repeated sin in our future. Rather than love the sin or wrap our self-identity around it, regard it as an infirmity or an unattractive weakness.

How self-righteous might we become by choosing to justify sin? Approach it with humility which is an initial step to repent and become more motivated to turn away from it.

Is this really necessary? As our health deteriorates in the aging or dying process; greed, control, lust or whatever other form sin takes; it will be of little meaning to us when our soul comes before God.

Sin is forgivable, however as in the Lord's prayer: **His will is done** in heaven. If we spend a lifetime focused on self-centeredness or earthly things, *who will be in control of our heart that motivates us; our self or God?* [Matthew 6:19-24](#). Repentance is a necessary first step in turning from our own will to His will. (Chapter 3 has more detail.)

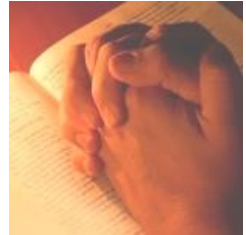
2. **Place and keep yourself in a learning environment** on the teachings of Jesus Christ. Faith-based churches are made up of sinners who are seeking to take another step towards the light. A portion of the congregation contains people with empathy. They know where less mature Christians are coming from; for they have been there themselves. We may come to enjoy the company of others during this journey while realizing the warmth of God's love as we develop new friendships.
3. **Recognize the danger signs.** Sin is attractive. It is appealing. Various forms of media and societal pressures support sin and if allowed; will promote its growth within us. Come to recognize which temptations make it grow. Such temptations should not be taken casually, but be a focus of concern. When such thoughts arrive, consider creating a habit of jumping into prayer rather than allowing the temptation to escalate unchecked. (Chapter 6 has more detail.)
4. **Look to the Master.** The entire booklet shares *how to develop a heart that is accepting of God's will.*
5. **Look towards God's timeline** rather than our own expectations. This allows Christ's yoke ([Matthew 11:28-30](#)) and *our anxiety* to become much lighter. Whether change comes in an instant or over a lifetime, *our focus needs to be on God.*

We provide the [willingness to learn](#), [place ourselves in a learning environment](#), and [pray](#) to a God who teaches us love, by first loving us. 1 (John 4:19) [1 John 4:7-30](#)

Why seek "to know Jesus" with this deeper love?

- Chapter five contains a true story of a WWII bomber pilot questioning his acceptance into heaven.
- During our experience on earth, we as human beings have caused much *hurt and injustice* toward one another.

How can the souls of some of these *same* individuals later unite in heaven and live together in the *total harmony of agape love?*



Because, those in attendance accepted the gift of Christ's sacrifice allowing them to be carried over the threshold to a perfect love and ability to follow the *will of the One*.

There is a *reason why* Jesus taught the degree of *forgiveness and love* that he did. Rather than living in spiritual blindness, our hearts **need to be serious** in seeking these initial lessons God would first have us learn here on earth.



What Might our Priorities be?

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Introduction

A church youth director spoke to a grade school age child of Jesus dying on the cross and being raised again. The child responded, *"Is that like a zombie or something?"* Our learning may be similar to that of a child when it comes to things of heaven. An example is in [Matthew 17:1-8](#) when Moses and Elijah came from heaven to speak with Jesus. One of the disciples volunteered to meet the needs of their guests in an earthly way; however, it was naive as their guests exist from a completely different perspective. It turned out the disciples' role was simply to listen and learn a spiritual lesson.

In later pages, certain concepts require only a second or two to read. To absorb a spiritual lesson into one's life, however, requires reflection: *"What direction has my life or those around me taken because I am lacking in this quality?"* **Comprehending the need** is a prerequisite in seeking His guidance to change.

Chapter 1



Priorities & Heaven

What is success? For the high school teen, it might be popularity. For the intellectual, attaining knowledge. For the worker, advancement. For the politician, power. For the businessman, wealth and social status. Any such priority might be socially acceptable; however, when one's ego becomes overly focused on oneself, that can result in a sense of emptiness.

Rather than bow before Satan, Christ declined an offer of ALL earthly kingdoms. ([Matthew 4: 8-10](#)). In the "Sermon on the Mount" ([Matthew Chapters 5-7](#)). Christ's priority was not of events of this earth. He offered encouragement in obtaining a heavenly destiny (ref to [John 18:36](#)).

Within a hospital waiting room, there were eight or ten young Amish women. Each one was pregnant or holding an infant. They were there to give support to their mother or mother-in-law who was receiving radiation treatment for incurable cancer.

Even with her limited days upon this earth, there was no somberness within the German chatter in that waiting room. Every one of those young women had a smile and joy written on her face, which reflected *faith in a heavenly life*. Initially, this mother had turned down her husband's suggestion to seek treatment to extend her life. To convince her, he responded, "Being winter, it's a slow time of year." The mother then accepted treatment because it would not be an undue burden upon her family.

By recognizing that life extends beyond our time on earth, our immediate ego fulfillment can give way to questioning the focus of our lives.

Chapter 2



Does God exist?

Rather than attempting to wrap one's head around this topic, many find it easier going from day to day by **ignoring** whether or not God exists.

In lieu of God, something is going to become the most important thing in one's life. Many times, *that something* has the potential of being empty or becoming rather dark. (Ref. to [Matthew 6:24](#))

Sin can be enticing for the moment; however, consequences can lead to unhappiness or hopelessness. Going to a therapist can offer worthwhile tools to cope with the symptoms. However, the first step in dealing with *the source* of the symptoms, may be **facing if God exists**.

A reader on Facebook referred to a recent mass shooting as being proof that *God does not exist*, for if there is a God, he would not allow such evil to occur. A reply to the post stated, "If such logic were true, Christ would have died from old age rather than on the cross."

Some conclude God does not exist because they do not recognize him with any of their five senses. With such reasoning, anything beyond the pitch of our hearing or wave length of our sight, does not exist.

Many parents teach their children that this world is too complex to have occurred by chance. From electrons spinning around an atom which form objects, to the genetic biological structures determining traits, to the arrangement of the universe, it is a statistical impossibility that our planet just got lucky. Their conclusion is that God created the beauty within nature which did not occur by chance, but by intelligent design.

The Bible describes God's first relationship with man in the garden of Eden, ([Genesis 2:15-17](#)). God then cast Adam and Eve out of the garden to face a life of toil *because they chose not to abide by God's will*. ([Genesis 3:17-23](#)).

Today, those of us who have yet to believe, are confronted with the same dilemma. To have a relationship with God, requires us to be *subordinate* to him.

Whether God actually exists, has nothing to do with our conclusion. Our conclusion simply positions us to what relationship we will have with this existent or non-existent God.

Coming to *know* God will never be realized by attempts to analyze his existence. **To discover God, requires a step of faith into the unknown.**

If God does exist, could one *ease* into such a commitment? What would it hurt to **ask God to change one's heart so that someday, one might learn to love God, to trust in him, and to come before him in submission?** If God *does not* exist, nothing will happen! If God *does* exist, one has made the request for God's grace that circumstances may be brought together so that one's heart may be softened enough to desire him. *What is the downside to praying such a prayer once or twice a week?* If done in private and God does not exist, the worst case scenario is that one has wasted a few minutes of their week. A step further might be read the book of John in the New Testament or to take one hour a week to visit a faith-based church.

Chapter 3



Experiencing God

One of the most profound statements in the Bible is contained in the Lord's prayer, "Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" ([Matthew 6:9-13](#)). We are to ask for God's will to be done on earth, and it is made *very clear* that *God's will* is done in heaven.

If earth is a training ground for God to teach us his will, there are two groups of us: *those willing to learn* and those who turn a deaf ear, insisting things be done *their* own way.

If one were forced to abide by God's will, would it not fill one with *animosity*? If animosity is not allowed in heaven, then those in attendance are likely to *desire* God's will.

Some have it in the back of their minds in that small chance that God exists, then salvation can be obtained by "*being good*." When our human nature promotes failure in such an effort, one can become dismayed, and angrily reject God. So why does the failure occur? Those individuals *depend upon themselves* rather than realizing that *God is alive*.

A relationship with God is a gift. God has given us the freedom to choose. The gift is not forced upon us. One must ask for it. ([Ephesians 2:7-9](#)) This gift is not given lightly for it was paid through God's son, Christ Jesus, who went to the cross. For those who accept this gift, he offers us moments within the presence of the Holy Spirit ([John14:15-21](#)), and to be in the eventual presence of God for eternity.

Experiencing God requires a step into the unknown beyond simply asking for forgiveness. It requires repentance, which includes *the desire to turn away from sin*.

If **your heart** does not yet to know Jesus, **this can be your moment**. He is waiting for your consent to come into your life. Bow your head and fold your hands in humility. Praying the following prayer is submitting your heart before a God who loves you.

Dear Heavenly Father,

I ask your forgiveness through Jesus to be forgiven of my sin where I have placed my self-centeredness ahead of your will. I give to you my entire existence, my hopes, my dreams, and my ambitions. Please be my "Lord" so that I may submit to your desires ahead of my own. Allow "your will" to become my motivator for the remainder of my life.

Amen

Each day is no longer about you. This prayer is the first step in opening up to a new world of learning. God has the patience to rebuild your life, however it requires that you first allow Him in. He does not force, it is your choice.

Some having been "born again" ([John 3:3-21](#)), at a young age have expressed no recollections of the moment being profound, that they have always known God.

The other end of the spectrum is that the experience of being born again, is one's most personal and private moment within his or her life. This moment may include physically experiencing the presence of the Holy Spirit for the first time ([Acts 8:14-17](#)). For many, this is the moment when they go from believing that God is just a theory to realizing that God exists.

[Ephesians 2:8-9](#) states: "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast." ([full context](#))

Chapter 4



Seeking God's Will

Many of the religious rulers of Christ's day were fixated on the ten commandments ([Exodus 20:1-17](#)), and based *their inflated egos* on how closely they could follow "the law." What did Christ say about their ridged hearts and *self-righteousness* image?

"For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven."
([Matthew 5:20](#))

Simply following a rule list does not "cut it." Jesus wants us to be righteous, so that our *hearts may wish to please God by possessing a longing to fulfill what God desires for us.*

Jesus added "Grace" (from [Matthew 22:37-39](#)) to "The Law" ([10 commands](#)) when "Jesus replied:

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment.

And the second is like it: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Jesus stated that his *yoke is light* in [Matthew 11:29-30](#). Following God should not be overwhelming. As a Born Again Christian, there is a reason God does not instantly reveal one's life plan. God allows us to seek his plan in tiny pieces so that we may be grateful in our relationship with him rather than dread it because we are overwhelmed. Like a student, our role is to listen and learn. God's role is to determine our lesson plan and rate of learning.

Chapter 5



Forgiving & Praying for others

A well-respected elderly gentleman who was approaching death confided to a friend, that he could not comprehend how God could forgive him for the things he did as a bomber pilot during WWII. When one reflects on the history of that war, the man could have played a role in killing thousands of civilians. The lives of these elderly, women, and children ended along with their hopes, dreams, ambitions, and the potential to carry on their family lineage.

In the afterlife, a natural reaction would be that the will of the many thousands of victims, would chase down that pilot and give him an eternal beating. Within such an afterlife, would the will of the many give the appearance of being a place similar to *Heaven or Hell*?

In contrast to retaliation, [Matthew 18: 21-35](#) states:

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?”

Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

“Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold was brought to him. Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

“At this the servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ The servant’s master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go”. “But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded.

“His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.’

“But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt.

When the other servants saw what had happened, they were

outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened.

“Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to.’³³ Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’³⁴ In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

“This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

What if one *hasn't been able* to forgive? An example might be, the buildup of frustration after a family member does not return love or acceptance. How about that lack of acceptance or respect from a boss, supervisor, government official, parent, or other authority figure? Might these individuals have their own shortcomings and such expectations are *beyond the capacity* of those individuals?

Consider:

- ✚ no longer projecting those expectations of personal support from such individuals.
- ✚ *seeking approval from God* as one's authority figure in fulfilling these emotion needs of love and acceptance.
- ✚ Removing this expectation for others to fulfill *one's own* emotional needs, may promote a greater *emotional self-sufficiency*.

Struggling with a severe heartache such as a spouse's unfaithfulness, the murder of a family member, one's childhood rapist, or anger at God? Consider *one's self as a branch*, Christ is the vine, and God desires one's life to bear much fruit. ([John 15:1-17](#)). Does fulfilling this mission in life require forgiveness to again *focus on what God desires*? Consider bringing the struggle to forgive to God in prayer and request his will. Ask for your heart to become open to recognizing and accepting help when an opportunity arrives.

This chapter began with a portrayal of that WWII bomber pilot being met with *animosity* as the *will of the many* got some payback on the streets of hell. Consider what might occur in heaven where the *will of the One* prevails ([Matthew 6:10](#)). Imagine thousands of victims standing in a line as the bomber pilot greets each individual, one at a time. As their eyes meet, the pilot offers a sincere apology with each victim extending forgiveness.

Because God's mandate for us to forgive; in heaven, we may become humbled by the undeserved degree of love extended to us.

In the Lord's prayer, we are taught to pray; "*Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*" ([Matthew 6:9-13](#)). On earth, we are instructed to pray that God's grace might touch others. Next time we see a person with a troubled heart walking across the grocery store parking lot, pray that "*God's will be done.*" Here, we are given a choice to seek *His will*. However, God can create special moments to soften our hearts allowing us the opportunity to accept his grace. Our society is in need of such prayers.

Chapter 6



How to Forgive Ourselves

Less than compassionate demonstrators in front of a "Women's Health Clinic" might speak out, "Don't kill your baby" as a woman walks by. *After the act is completed, what might be the most disheartening result?* Imagine the soul of the fetus waiting in heaven for an opportunity to follow God's teaching of extending forgiveness to the mother. A true tragedy might be *if out of guilt, the mother turns her back on God and **rejects the opportunity** to be forgiven.*

Three common ways of dealing with guilt include:

1. Deny there is a God and maintaining that no moral wrong ever occurred. Denial may be the easiest way of dealing with guilt here on **earth**; however, there may be some serious repercussions if eternity does exist.
2. Allow the guilt to become overwhelming and lead to self-destruction. (*When we give our hearts to Jesus, where in the contract does it say we can **trade our focus on God** for self pity and self-righteousness?*)
3. Seeking forgiveness through repentance before God.

After one repents, how does one separate from the guilt? *Giving up self-blame* may be easier said than done. If accomplished, the *sadness* for having committed the sin is likely easier to live with than guilt. A major difference between guilt and sadness is whether *one accepts the gift* of God's forgiveness. As mentioned in the prior chapter, **God forgives completely.**

When such thoughts appear rather than re-living that cycle of guilt, how about "*thanking God for his forgiveness*"? If guilt cannot be overcome through prayer, consider consulting a trusted mentor, or a professional counselor who is also a Christian.

In a multiple victim investigation, a police officer interviewed a young sexual abuse victim for the third time after she claimed nothing happened. This time, the officer emphasized that prior to the abuse, the victim had asked a friend for a ride home but was turned down. The victim recognized her attempt to avoid the situation, the self-blame disappeared, and she provided details of the molestation.

A good counselor can aid not only with coping skills, but also share insights while placing things into perspective.

Feeling overwhelmed, but not up to personal counseling? Consider that this day is not about you; it is about Him. Read the New Testament and pray. Seek the support of other Christians who have overcome a similar struggle and organizations which do the same. A prudent search

on the internet may be "faith based _____ recovery". Volumes have been written on various struggles.

Why do we have to face temptation and guilt? Simple answer: *God created us this way. Have you ever become frustrated over a desire to change, but faults kept getting in the way?* Then read over the New Testament and focus on how many times the disciples, who Jesus selected, were wrong. One such example was Peter, a man who witnessed Christ's teachings and matured to the point he was about to go into his own ministry. During the "last supper," Peter spoke of his loyalty toward Christ ([Matthew 26:33-34](#)). Christ then informed Peter, he would deny knowing Christ on three times during that same night. ([Matthew 26:69-75](#))

Isn't it rather egotistical to expect one's abilities to be greater than those of the disciples? Next time that frustration builds, show some compassion towards oneself. God created us this way as a motivator to come to him in prayer with humility and a desire to turn toward his light.

Jesus teaches that sin can start within one's thoughts prior to physically acting upon the sin. Jesus taught, "You have heard that it was said, You shall not commit adultery. But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart." ([Matthew 5:27-28](#))

Sin and guilt can sometimes be avoided. Prior to considering performing a sin, create the habit of jumping into prayer when such a thought first arrives. Such prayer may begin with, "Dear Heavenly Father, allow my eyes to focus upon you." Then surrender to him what is on your heart.

Topics such as ego or self-righteousness may become more prevalent in one's prayer life when facing down issues which motivate temptation.

Chapter 7



Learning how to pray

If we pray to God on how we want things to be, our prayer life may be rather silent. This may be similar to a barking puppy telling his master what needs done despite the puppy's lack of experience and wisdom.

Consider how Jesus prayed in [Luke 22:42](#) at the Mount of Olives, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." Jesus' prayer included:

- ✚ Expressing a concern to God
- ✚ *Completely* placing it in God's hands without expectation
- ✚ Asking for God's will to be done.

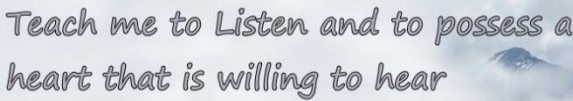
God's heart must have ached during his beloved Son's pleas prior to man's crucifying Christ. Yet, if **God had yielded**, *the gift of salvation God offers us* would not have occurred. The gift required Christ to give himself for the sin of man. ([1Timothy2:5-6](#))

There was once a young Born Again Christian. He prioritized his life to do things he thought God would want and asked God for direction.

Twenty years passed as he listened to hundreds of sermons on *God's will* and had prayed the "Lord's prayer" a thousand of times. The man was okay with the concept of *God's will* prevailing over his own; however, there was still some reluctance.

One day, the man shared a conversation with a church youth director who had taken a shortcut in life involving a pregnancy and once struggled with drug addiction. *Her approach to prayer was a complete submission before God. She possessed a selfless humility in desiring that God's will be done as she expressed her concern.*

The concept of herself was non-existent as she laid out her heart before God. The man finally recognized his own unenthusiastic hesitancy toward God when compared to the youth director's free flowing desire to have things done God's way. This man now prays;



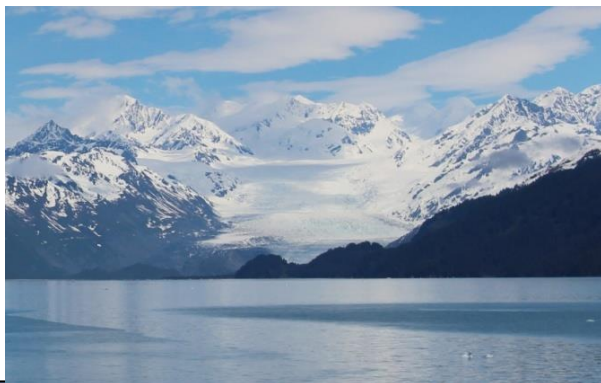
Teach me to Listen and to possess a heart that is willing to hear

Teach me to Listen and to possess a heart that is willing to hear.

Some skip directly to this chapter expecting to find a few "secret words." Consider: "How does God hear our prayers?" Is it by sound waves? Or, by thought? God *knows* the thoughts that we are not proud of. His goal is to raise us up to be *acceptable* in his presence. Humility in prayer is the first step in placing *His priorities* over our self-interests.

The *entire* booklet (*when blended with prayer*) is designed to help remove the barriers that each of us has placed between ourselves and God.

Chapter 8



An opportunity to believe

A more appealing name for this chapter might have been, "Miracles." However, earthly miracles that God performed back in biblical times and those of today may be a secondary to God's intervention.

Ever wonder *why* Jesus performed miracles during his ministry? *Was the healing primarily to upgrade the quality of life of those individuals? Or was the primary reason spiritual so that all generations thereafter would come to believe in Christ's message?*

Gratitude for miracles varies. Once there was a man who received an abdominal injury. As time went by, his wife recalls him feeling bad, throwing up, losing weight, and his skin turning yellow. Yellowish skin is common to liver failure. The liver is an organ that is prone to secondary cancer when cancer-infected blood cells flow from other parts of the body. The man had surgery with eight inches of his colon removed. This era was prior to radiation and chemotherapy.

After surgery the surgeons simply told the man to come back in a year and they would attempt to get some of the cancer that re-spread. The church congregation where the man's sister attended, prayed for him. When the surgeon operated a year later, no signs of cancer were found.

The man died from old age a half century later. The man's wife and some of his children considered it a miracle to have the man in their lives. One child who had prayed for his father's recovery in childhood, later as an adult, attributed the event to early medical technology not knowing the difference between cancerous and non-cancerous polyps.

Details of a more recent "healing" are an extreme condensation from a mother's journal. Parts of the journal were written within the regional hospital while not knowing if her son would live or die.

The young man entered the coronary ICU, with a severe shortness of breath and was placed in an eleven-day drug-induced coma. The doctor told the parents he could not guarantee to bring the man through the infection.

Over the next two weeks, temperature spikes were treated with either the use of ice, a baffled cold water blanket, or turning the room as low as 50 degrees. Treatment of dropping blood pressure and a racing heart rate were also a life and death balancing act.

In the first days, the volume of IV fluids competed with the degree of fluid buildup around the man's heart.

On day four the man's body deteriorated to the point that weekend surgery was performed to obtain a sample from a pocket of infection. Meanwhile, family and pastoral prayers expanded to various prayer chains. The man temporarily stabilized enough for surgery.

On day six a biopsy was performed along with installing the first of what would be eleven chest tubes to drain the infected odorous fluid. Findings came back that pneumonia had been the initial source of infection and gotten into the man's blood stream, causing his body to become septic. That evening his body continued to deteriorate as his mother increased her prayerful praises and pleas to God.

On day eleven the Infectious Disease Doctor informed the family that their son was on some of the strongest antibiotics; however, the family was in need of "turning this over to something larger than doctors."

The pastor inquired about the family anointing the man, *turning him over to the Lord and praying to accept the Lord's decision on healing or taking him "home."*

The pastor anointed the man as he and the family prayed at the man's bedside. As the family started to leave and a nurse walked to the man's side, alarms began ringing.

The man's eyes opened wide, then closed. The nurse said, "I've never seen anything like this before." The mother thought, "the Lord is taking my son home." Yet the next day, their son was on his road to recovery; however, dealing with scar tissue remained a challenge.

The mother described her son's spiritual health in this way, *"he is in awe of the plan God has for him."* For those who prayed within the room that day, a life-changing event took place that has affected their openness in sharing their faith with others.

That mother later expressed survivor's guilt in respect to her son. She spoke of the same degree of prayer for a pastor at their church; however, he died.

Is there a commonality among blessings?

- ❖ *Praying in the mindset of not desiring a given outcome, while completely placing the situation in God's hands.*
- ❖ *Does God create miracles primarily for the earthly effect or for the spiritual effect?*
- ❖ *When prayers for extended life are not answered, is the individual's earthly life as close to God as it is going to be?*

When tragedy struck for one young boy, he asked God "Why?" See the YouTube video using the key words: Logan faith of a child

Chapter 9



Faith

Sometime ago there was an elderly woman with Lou Gehrig's disease. Her mind remained sharp as her body degraded. When she could no longer speak, she typed into a machine which spoke for her. Then she left her husband's care at home to enter a nursing home. She felt despair, which caused a great deal of anger.

A friend sent her a letter of faith that closed with, "*Be patient, let the closing pages of your life to be the ones God intended for you.*"

The woman's suffering continued until the disease took her life several months later.

The woman's husband had never made God a priority in his life. For twenty-five years the friend had prayed for the man, that he might come to believe. On the two occasions the friend brought up the topic of God, but it fell on deaf ears.

Two years after the woman's death, her husband suffered a severe heart attack, resulting in a few months' nursing home stay. Then he moved to the community where one of his children resided. He commented that this community had nothing but "religious stations" on TV. Members of his child's family took turns visiting him daily. As the weeks went by, he learned of a new degree of love that was within this Christ-centered family.

One day for the third time, the friend approached the topic of God. The friend asked the man if he recalled his wife's anger when she entered the nursing home and the change that came over her during the following months. Then the friend shared a copy of the letter given to his wife two years earlier. *At that moment, the man realized the relationship his wife had developed with God had been the source of the change within her life.*

Two weeks later the man was found dead with the TV tuned to a station preaching the good news of Jesus Christ.

Was it by mere coincidence that:

- ❖ A disease which required his wife to suffer, may have been necessary to soften the man's heart.
- ❖ The man witnessed his wife's transformation from anger to the person she was upon her death.
- ❖ The man later survived a heart attack to then experience daily expressions of warmth from his child's Christ-centered family.
- ❖ The man lived long enough to be approached a third time by the friend who spoke of God's grace.

The gap between our comprehension and our trust in God's judgment is called faith.

At the time of this woman's death, the way she died appeared to be tragic. Yet only God knows if circumstances were brought together to create something as *beautiful* as the man's heart softening and accepting Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior.

"I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent." ([Luke 15:7](#))

Chapter 10



Fulfilling God's Will

In my youth when I sang "Father, I Adore You", my thoughts were of love for the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. As humility grows within me and the concept of life extends beyond death, my thoughts change to the following:

Father, I am presently too self-centered to know *how* to adore you, but I have the desire to follow the journey you have for me. One day I will come to know the caliber of love that is appropriate to honor you.

The road to salvation is not limited to our struggles with "being good." Jesus wants us to be righteous, so that *our hearts wish to please God by longing to fulfill what God desires for us*. If one's heart is not there yet, take the burden off one's self. Ask God!

Are you are satisfied with your level of spiritual development, yet feel your life is going nowhere? Have you ever considered God's plan may require additional personal growth *before* taking that next step down His path?

Consider this prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father,

Teach me to listen so that I may grow into the person that you desire. Teach my heart to hear, so that my motivation may be that of humility that is focused upon you. In Christ's **holy** name I pray,

Amen.

If one looks at the frequency of what kind of prayer God answers the most, it is the kind which aids us in growing closer to Him. *God loves us, and desires to share his grace so that we may grow closer to being acceptable in heaven.* What might be a better one-sentence definition of our purpose on earth?

We might imagine ourselves as Born Again Christians in the role of servants. After preparing the master's meal and the fulfilling the routine duties, our role is to *wait and listen*. The less experienced servant may assume he knows what the master desires and acts upon it, only to cause a disruption to the master's plan.

Our own timing to proclaim God's message may fall on deaf ears. However, there are moments when God *calls upon those* children who listen and are willing to respond.

Still, what can be a greater privilege in life than to effectively share the Good News of Jesus Christ at a time and in a way of God's choosing?

How might we receive such opportunities? The introduction of this booklet refers to the disciple, Peter ([Matthew 17:1-8](#)). He asked Jesus if he should set up shelters for Moses and Elijah, who came from heaven.

Peter had the desire to serve God, but had no clue to *how* to do so effectively. How does that knowledge come about? Within [John 14: 15-26](#) during the Last Supper, Jesus said to his disciples,

“If you love me, keep my [commands](#). And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ⁽¹⁵⁻¹⁸⁾

“All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. ⁽²⁵⁻²⁶⁾

In asking God and the Holy Spirit to teach us to listen and possess hearts willing to hear, we may grow in these spiritual lessons. Assuming we know how to serve God can quickly become a barrier. Our approach to serve him needs to be without *our* preconditions while possessing a heart that is *open to learning* his way. Jesus termed it this way, "Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." ([Mark 10:15](#))

Just as God created the garden of Eden where He could walk with man, those of us willing to receive his message, will again have the opportunity to be in his presence. It simply takes a heart that says, "*Yes, God, I will follow you.*"

Conclusion



A life with Christ isn't about sin. It is about submission. *Asking* God to become the first priority in our life.

We may have minimal self-control over habits of temptation. However, we can provide the openness for our love to grow in God through the word of the Son.

Our first priority can then be for God to change us to "his will" according to his timetable. At that point we are facing God rather than turning our backs toward Him.

His response is called "**grace.**"

The difference between knowing it and living it...is prayer.

To touch your heart, re-read a given chapter, review each relevant topic, and blend it in some honest conversations with God.

Who is Jesus?

Jesus Christ is the bread of Life ([John 6:35-40](#)) and his blood the gift to salvation. Jesus is the word revealing the path and his guidance the bridge to heaven. Christ is God's gift to man offering us the opportunity to accept HIS will over our own; that may we come to know the presence of our Father himself.

For Jesus stated: Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden light. ([Matthew 11:29-30](#))

Might this booklet truly help someone?

Consider saving it for that moment when your own words are not enough.

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