The Ultimate

Interrelationships

- Commentary

Luk1:37**“For nothing is impossible with God.”**

- angel Gabriel talking with Mary about the birth of Christ,
who was conceived in her by the Holy Spirit.

Mar1:14 ..... Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. [15] ..... **“The kingdom of God is near. Repent[4a] and believe the good news!”**

Luk17:20 ..... “The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, [21]nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because **the kingdom of God is within you.”**

The Holy Spirit living inside us.

' "Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." By this he meant the Spirit.' (Joh7:38-39)

Mat13:33 ..... “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough.”

The kingdom of God is the Holy Spirit living inside you. He starts as a mustard seed and then over time sanctifies your entire being; permeating throughout your heart, mind, soul, spirit.

' "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all your seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches."
' (Mat13:31-32)

Each person is like a city, and God is going through it.

Purifying and perfecting, making you whole, all that you were designed and intended to be.

Luk3:16“ ..... **He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.** [17]His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” - John the Baptist speaking of Jesus

After you believe and receive the Holy Spirit, there are battles. You must overcome the fire:

' "Remain in me, and I will remain in you.

If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit;

..... If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned." ' (Joh15:4-6)

' "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful." ' (Joh15:1-2)

' "This is my command: Love each other." '
(Joh17:17)

'This is love for God: to obey his commands.

And his commands are not burdensome, for everyone born of God overcomes the world.

This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.' (1Joh5:3-5)

'The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.' (Gal5:6)

'But if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him.' (1Joh2:5)

'You yourselves have been taught by God to love each other.' (1The4:9)

'If we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.' (1Joh4:12)

Stick with, follow, and obey God. Do not set your heart on evil things, do not let yourself be given over to slavery to sin. God will enable and help you tremendously, and is extremely patient, tolerant, and long-suffering.

After you receive the Holy Spirit, you will be tested with fiery trials (this is what happened to Jesus when he was tested by Satan in the wilderness).

Whatever trials you go through ('Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. ..... God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness.' (Heb12:7,10)), when by, through, because of your faith in Christ you make every effort to live according to God's principles and commands, you will indeed overcome, because God will enable and help you.

' "The good news of the kingdom of God is being preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it."
' (Luk16:16)

' "From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it." ' (Mat11:12)

Joh3:16“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

In addition to believing the fact that Jesus paid the price for our sins so that God can forgive and then live within us, to believe in Jesus means to believe it when He said:

' "I am the way and the truth and the life." ' (Joh14:6),

This is to believe that His way of living is The Way we have decided to live, and to trust and believe that we will be truly alive and loving it when we put His principles and teachings into practice.

1Joh4:10This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning[3a] sacrifice for our sins.

.....

[36]“Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him.” - John the Baptist speaking about Jesus

Joh5:28“ ..... a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his* voice [29]and come out—**those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.”**

* Jesus'

Faith produces action, good deeds of love done through the Holy Spirit; this is how we test ourselves to see whether our faith is real.

Real faith in God Almighty and Jesus Christ can not help but produce real changes in your life, good changes.

'Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. This then is how we know that we belong to the truth.' (1Joh3:18)

'Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test? ..... For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth.' (2Cor13:5-8)

2The2:10 ..... They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. .....

[12] ..... all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.

Loving, believing, and obeying God are all very closely related to each other, connected. They cannot help happening simultaneously.

If you love the truth and believe the truth,

then you will live by the truth.

Mar12:28 ..... “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?”

[29]“The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: .....

[30]'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' ” (Deu 6:4-5)

To believe to obey to love God is to give yourself over to Him.

Joh5:42“ ..... I know you. I know that you do not have the love of God in your hearts. ..... [44]How can you believe if you ..... make no effort to obtain the praise that comes from the only God?”

Again: believing in, loving, and being obedient to God all happen together simultaneously.

Our love for and attraction to God, for what He did for us in Christ, causes us to turn and follow Him, His ways, and then He reveals Himself to us vividly, which makes our faith real, strong, and lasting.

Joh7:17“If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own.” - Jesus

Repenting is choosing to to God's will. We offer ourselves as slaves of obedience Rom6:16 and yet eternal life is still a gift of God, for we have sinned much and do not deserve to live with God, and we so often miss the mark while offering ourselves to God each day. 'Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.' (Jud1:21)

' "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.

If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love,

just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love."
' (Joh15:9-10)

' "This is my command: Love each other." '
(Joh17:17)

'But if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him.' (1Joh2:5)

'No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.' (1Joh4:12)

'God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.' (1Joh4:16)

When you repent and turn to God, turn from sin and do good, God will reveal Himself to you in a way that is real to you, you will encounter Him, so that you will believe in Him far beyond anything you could come up with on your own, or what anyone else could do or say to convince you.

His making Himself real to you is a gift.

Strive and learn to love God and his holy ways, seek Him out, seek righteousness, seek to be righteous, to love people. Then you will walk with God:

'God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth.

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.' (1Joh1:5-7)

You are saved by grace, all your past sins, all your present, all your future must be paid for with blood, death. Only because of the holy Christ's sacrifice for your sins can you be forgiven and reconciled to your Creator, and cleansed so clean and pure by His blood that He will come to live inside you forever:

' "If you love me, you will obey what I command.

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be

with you forever— the Spirit of truth. .....

you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you." ' (Joh14:16-17)

Eph2:8For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— [9]not by works, so that no one can boast.

When we repent, God, Jesus, reveals Himself to us in a way that is real to us, and we sense God's presence and love for us, His forgiveness through Jesus Christ, and then we truly believe.

In this way faith is a gift (because of our sinfulness we do not deserve to be with God), and the only way to have this gift is to repent, and true repentance is accompanied by actions of leaving one's sinful ways and obeying God's commands as best as possible. When God sees the evidence of your change of heart, He will enable you to believe, forgive your sins, and put His Holy Spirit in you to enable you to become sanctified.

1Tim1:14The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

Luk5:31Jesus answered them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. **[32]I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance[4b].”**

Act26:20“First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that **they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds.”**

Luk3:8“Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. ..... [9]The axe is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.” - John the Baptist

Luk1:17“And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, **to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”** - angel of the Lord speaking about John the Baptist

From the earliest Bible Study on Jesus Christ section, accessed from the lower left panel of the home screen, the two things at the core of what keeps people from believing in Jesus are hardness of heart and closing our eyes to the truth. Here John is softening people's hearts when he turns the hearts of the fathers to their children, as opposed to being absorbed in worldly things, and he opens their eyes to the truth when turning the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous.

This turning to follow God's ways, loving people, is repenting.

Act10:34Then Peter began to speak: “I now realize how true it is that **God** does not show favoritism [35]but **accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right.”**

Act3:19Repent[4c], then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, [20]and that he may send the Christ, who has been appointed for you—even Jesus.

Luk24:46 ..... “This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, [47]and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”

Repentance and believing are inextricably linked.

Inextricable: forming a maze or tangle from which it is impossible to get free, incapable of being disentangled or untied.

Hence: above - forgiveness of sins is tied to repentance
below - forgiveness of sins is tied to believing

Act10:43“All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

1Pet3:18For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, ...

Christ could pay the penalty of death for our sins
because
he did not have to pay for His own,
because he never sinned.

1Joh2:1 ..... Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. [2]He is the atoning[3b] sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

Rom3:23for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, [24]and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption[6a] that came by Christ Jesus. **[25]God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. .....**

Eph1:7In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins [and **without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness** Heb9:22], in accordance with the riches of God's grace [8]that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.

Act20:21“I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that **they must turn to God in repentance[4d] and have faith in our Lord Jesus.”**

Rom4:3What does the Scripture say? **“Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”** (Gen 15:6)

[4]Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. [5]However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness. [6]David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works:

[7]“Blessed are they
whose transgressions are forgiven,
whose sins are covered.
[8]Blessed is the man
whose sin the Lord will never count against him.” (Psa 32:1,2)

[9] ..... We have been saying that Abraham's faith was credited to him as righteousness. ..... [11] ..... he is the father of all who believe .....

God is holy. Our sins must be paid for, and that payment is death and separation from God, and punishment in the form of pain and torment. We can not work our way to salvation because our works are as filthy rags:

'All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.' (Isa64:6)

Note: Sinning is non-sustainable; it does not perpetuate life.

Our 'righteous acts' do not make up for or cancel out our many sins. We must turn to God and believe in Christ, which means following Him, making changes toward becoming like Him, for real faith produces real change in the way we think, speak, and act. We can not do this on our own, but God's Spirit is in us and ' "nothing is impossible with God."
' (Luk1:37) Believe it, because:

' "Everything is possible for him who believes." ' (Mar9:23)

Note: Gen15:6 is the Scripture reference for both the above and below passages.

Jam2:14What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? [15]Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. [16]If one of you says to him, “Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? **[17]In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.**

[18] ..... Show me your faith without deeds, and **I will show you my faith by what I do.**

..... [20]You foolish man, do you want evidence that **faith without deeds is useless**? [21]Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? [22]You see that **his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did.** [23]And the scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,” (Gen 15:6) and he was called God's friend. **[24]You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone.**

..... **[26]As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.**

'The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.' (Gal5:6)

'Everything that does not come from faith is sin.' (Rom14:23)

'Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.' (1Cor13:6)

Act5:32“ ..... the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.”

Faith and obedience go together, happen together.

Repenting and believing happen together, because real faith in God, believing it when Jesus said ' "I am the way and the truth and the life."
' (Joh14:6), produces action; we turn away from our sinful thoughts and ways and pursue being like God, pure and full of love, because we know that God's way is the way and we have decided, committed, to follow Him.

Gal3:11 ..... “The righteous will live by faith.” (Hab 2:4) .....

[14] ..... by faith we ..... receive the promise of the Spirit.

It takes faith in Christ, trusting that His way is best, to turn from our sin.

When we receive the Holy Spirit, we go from trying to follow God's commands, having limited success, to actually being able to do it, actually becoming righteous in our ways, though in the tests and trials, it still requires our effort, our unrelenting faith in Christ Jesus, which He helps us maintain.

.....

[22]But the Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that **what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe.**

Those who believe stand out from the rest of the world because their faith causes them to leave their sinful ways, and their love for God causes them to pursue becoming righteous, full of love toward others; so God cancels their debt of sin through Christ Jesus and puts His Spirit in them.

'God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth.

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.' (1Joh1:5-7)

Rom3:21But now a righteousness from God ..... has been made known, ...

[22]This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.

The Holy Spirit is this righteousness from God, who comes to live in us after we are cleansed from our sins through faith in Christ when we repent and set out to follow His teachings. The Holy Spirit helps and enables us to learn to actually live like Jesus, like God.

With the Holy Spirit dwelling in us as we strive to live like Jesus, we have success, actually live righteously, love people.

Joh6:63“The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing.”

Joh3:6“Flesh gives birth to flesh, but **the Spirit gives birth to spirit.”**

Joh6:27“Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. ..... ”

Sex, drugs, worldly power and status, worldly things, our bodies, all fade over time, but the Holy Spirit in us does not, and He is with us forever:

' "If you love me, you will obey what I command.

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. .....
you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you." ' (Joh14:16-17)

For example, if you're stuck on the sexiness of girls and women, fixated to the point that having a sexy woman is a must-have or that not having one is making you miserable, if you're doing all you can do to have a relationship with a sexy girl or woman, keep in mind that it will not last, it will not endure, it will end. For our bodies wear out as they age, loose their appeal.

Rather, make your 1st priority being filled with the Holy Spirit and loving people, who they are.

[28]Then they asked him, “What must we do to do the works God requires?”

[29]Jesus answered, **“The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.”**

.....

and

'Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. .....

As the body without the spirit is dead, so

faith without deeds is dead.'

(Jam2:17, 26)

[33]“For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

Jesus gives us the Holy Spirit, who is God, who is life.

"Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God,
and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent." ' (Joh17:3)

' "Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." By this he meant the Spirit.' (Joh7:38-39)

Joh1:33“ 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' ” - John the Baptist saying what God told Him about Jesus

.....

[35]Then Jesus declared, **“I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.”**

We come to Jesus by seeking to obey His commands (repenting); this is the result of our believing in Jesus. Then he gives us the Holy Spirit of God, life, to live inside us.

Mat5:6“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,

for they will be filled."

We show that we are hungering and thirsting for righteousness by turning from our evil and sinful ways, (repenting), and actively living according to God's ways. This takes forcefulness to do, fighting to 'stand firm in the faith' (1Cor16:13), because we must resist the temptation to act on and gratify our worldly cravings and urges, passions, desires, and thoughts by putting our faith in Christ, believing His ways are superior and are true life, what will most fulfill and satisfy us, even though our worldly inclinations are strong and worldly pleasures are right in front of us, so easy to become fixated on.

You cannot want God in your life without wanting righteousness in your life, because God and His Spirit and Jesus are righteous and holy. You must 'hate what is evil; cling to what is good.' (Rom12:9), not delight in wickedness, wicked ways, for:

'All will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.' (2The2:12)

'Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.' (1Cor13:6)

Give it all you've got:

' "The good news of the kingdom of God is being preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it." ' (Luk16:16)

' "From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it." ' (Mat11:12)

Joh7:37 On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, **"If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. [38]Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." [39]By this he meant the Spirit, ...**

..... thirsty for righteousness. ' "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled." ' (Mat5:6)

Believing in Jesus means believing it when He said ' "I am the way and the truth and the life." ' (Joh14:6), that His way is THE way to live, the true best way, the way that makes you alive the best. This, of course, makes you His disciple, makes you want to be like Him.

Joh4:14 "but **whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."**

He/she will never thirst, if he/she is thirsty for righteousness.

Gal5:5 **But by faith we eagerly await through the Spirit the righteousness for which we hope.**

Rom10:4 **Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.**

The power of the gospel, the cross of Christ, His blood and sacrifice, is so strong that we can now actually become actually righteous.

We receive the Holy Spirit and live righteously, full of love for people, in addition to having our sins forgiven.

Believing is shown by turning to God, changing the way we live.

Gal3:26 **You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, ...**

Gal4:6 **Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts .....**

Rom8:12 **Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation—but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it.**

[13]For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die;

When you receive the Spirit you can still decide not to live like God, not to obey His commands, you can still decide not to love the truth, to no longer believe and be living in Christ. You can decide not to allow God to lead you.

but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.

It is not enough to sense the Holy Spirit, you must follow His lead to be God's child.

'For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, that our forefathers were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ. Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them; their bodies were scattered over the desert. Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did.' (1Cor10:1-5)

'Though you already know all this, I want to remind you that the Lord delivered his people out of Egypt, but later destroyed those who did not believe.' (Jud1:5-6)

'And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who disobeyed? So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief.' (Heb3:18-19)

'If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them.' (2Pet2:20-21)

[14]because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. ..... [16]The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. [17] ..... we are ..... heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, ... if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

Part of sharing in Christ's sufferings is in resisting temptations. 'He himself suffered when He was tempted.' (Heb 2:19)

1Pet4:1 **Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin. [2]As a result, he does not live the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God. [3]For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do—living in debauchery[2a], lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry. ..... [5]But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.**

For example, resisting sexual immorality causes suffering in our bodies, denying our fleshly cravings and urges, desires and passions, when women sexually stimulate us by the way they dress, look, act, sound, smell, talk, the expression on their face, their posture, etc., etc., etc.

' "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross [daily Luk9:23] and follow me." ' (Mar8:34)

"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." (Mat4:19)

' "Any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple." ' (Luk14:33)

Jam1:12 **Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.**

The crown of life is the Holy Spirit, 'by faith we ..... receive the promise of the Spirit.' (Gal3:14). Repenting, turning from our own ways to be obedient to God's ways, itself is a trial, as is resisting temptation. 'This is love for God: to obey his commands.' (1Joh5:3)

Through the Spirit, God frees us from our bondage to sin,

'Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." ' (Joh14:34-36)

'Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.' (2Cor2:17)

' "The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing." ' (Joh6:63)

Then we are free to love people with the love He fills us with, which is rewarding in many ways to the extreme. We also have the peace of God and joy in His presence, and God blesses us in so many ways. It is not possible to express in words the fullness and expansiveness of this life from God; it can only be experienced.

There is another level, a higher level, of living that the world does not know, God's level, that can only be found through active faith in Jesus Christ.

This level is truly mind blowing,
far beyond what men can imagine.

[13]When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; **[14]but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed.** [15]Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

1Cor10:13 **No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.**

Heb2:18 **Because he* himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.**

* Christ

Christ knows the suffering involved in resisting temptation; he experienced it, as we do, but always remained obedient to God the Father.

' "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.

If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love,

just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love." ' (Joh15:9-10)

' "I love the Father and ..... I do exactly what my Father has commanded me." ' (Joh16:31)

'And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." ' (Mar1:11)

' "The one who sent me is with me;
he has not left me alone,
for I always do what pleases him." (Joh8:29)

Heb4:15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. **[16]Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.**

Christ could pay the penalty of death for our sins because he did not have any of his own to pay for.

Heb3:1 Therefore ..... **fix your thoughts on Jesus** .....

Heb4:14 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, **let us hold firmly to the faith we profess.**

Rom13:14 **..... clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.**

Rom14:23 **..... everything that does not come from faith is sin.**

Gal5:6 **..... The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.**

1Cor13:6 **Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.**

[7]It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

[8]Love never fails. .....

1Cor16:14 **Do everything in love.**

1Tim1:4 **..... God's work—which is by faith.** [5]The goal of this command is **love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.**

Love comes out of our faith. 'make every effort to add to your faith ..... love' (2Pet1:5-7), and 'The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.' (Gal5:6) To love we must purify ourselves with God's help from anger, sexual immorality, greed, selfish ambition, conceit, etc., and wholeheartedly obey, which is the only way to have and maintain a clear and good conscience.

'But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted.' (Rom6:17)

When your faith in God is shown by the way you live, you will have a good conscience.

.....

[18] ..... fight the good fight, [19]holding on to faith and a good conscience. Some have rejected these and so have shipwrecked their faith.

As we know, as soon as we start sinning we no longer have a good conscience about ourselves*. Stand firm and 'fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called.' (1Tim6:12). Apply your faith, it is work, ' "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent." ' (Joh6:29) and takes every effort, much energy.

* Unless we have sinned so much that our conscience has become seared:

'The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a s hot iron.' (1Tim4:1-2)

Heb13:18 Pray for us. **We are sure that we have a clear conscience and desire to live honorably in every way.**

The only way to have a clear conscience is by doing what is right, putting your faith into action.

Heb9:14 **How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!**

Here again when we believe in Christ, we leave our life of sin.

When and as we repent and put our faith in Christ, God completely clears our conscience of all guilt; we know we have been forgiven through Christ. Then we feel and are free; we know the way has been cleared for us to serve God, interact with Him.

.....

[26] ..... But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself.

Not only are our sins forgiven, cleared out of the way, washed away, so that they no longer obstruct our relationship with God, but they are done away with, because Christ has cleared the way for us to be filled with the Holy Spirit of God. Through Christ we now have intimate daily fellowship with God, and He gives us the knowledge, wisdom, and power to stop sinning and live for righteousness, live to love people unselfishly.

We are not only forgiven our sins but gradually made to sin no more.

How much more precious that sacrifice is to us when we know that by it we actually are made holy in the way we live.

How deeply we desire to honor Him for what He did for us on the cross.

Heb10:10 **..... we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.**

Jesus paid a heavy price for us to be able to live a holy life. Of what extreme worth and value is his blood that it can so cleanse us filthy sinners that the Holy Spirit of God may dwell in us, the same Spirit who searches the deep things of God,

'The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. ..... no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.' (1Cor42:10-11)

Through Christ our sins are forgiven and we are given the Holy Spirit to sanctify us as we put our faith and trust in Him.

..... **[14] ..... by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.**

Christ's sacrifice was powerful.

God already sees the people He is making us into.

God is transforming us into people who live holy lives, because the blood of Christ brought us together with Him, canceled our debt of sin.

.....

[23]Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.

Heb13:12 **..... Jesus ..... suffered ..... to make the people holy through his own blood.**

Of what extreme worth is His blood, the suffering he went through for us, that we may have the opportunity to live a holy life of love:

Precious beyond measure.

Freed from sin; forgiven our sins and enabled to sin no more, purified and set apart for a noble purpose:

Sanctified.

1Pet2:21 **..... Christ suffered for you .....**

[24]He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

Christ paid the price for our sins by his sacrificial death on the cross so that we can be cleansed of all guilt, forgiven, and have God's Holy Spirit living in us.

We can then die to our sin, be freed from its pull and live righteously, free to enjoy a life of love.

Heb10:26 **If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, [27]but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God.**

Phi3:18 ..... many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. **[19]Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things.**

1Cor6:9 **Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders [10]nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. [11]And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified[1a], you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.**

Eph5:3 **But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people.**

Even a hint of these will do a lot of damage to the good God has for you to do.

.....

[5]For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person —such a man is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

When we lust after women/girls we are being greedy because we want to have sexual relations with every attractive one we see, and we are idolizing sex by wanting it so badly, intensely.

[6]Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient.

'It is by faith you stand firm.' (2Cor1:24)

2Tim2:19 ..... God's solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: "The Lord knows those who are his," (Num 16:5) and, **"Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness."**

'Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. .....

As the body without the spirit is dead, so

faith without deeds is dead.' (Jam2:17, 26)

Act3:26 **"When God raised up his servant, he sent him first to you to bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways."** - speaking about Jesus

Jam4:7 **Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. [8]Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ..... [10]Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.**

We must put energy, effort, into living a life of love like Jesus, and not sinning; then through the help of the Spirit of God we will succeed.

When we humble ourselves we admit that someone else knows what's best for us, God, and we submit to and obey Him. This is opposite to hardening our hearts towards our Creator, being indignant toward Him and stubbornly going our own way, doing our own thing, seeking pleasures and satisfaction our own way.

1Pet5:8 **Be self-controlled and alert.** Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. **[9]Resist him, standing firm in the faith, ...**

Eph6:16 **..... take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.**

The arrows come in the form of trials and temptations, and persecutions.

We simply believe that God will provide what is best for us while we continue to live according to His ways and do His will. This is childlike faith,

' "I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." ' (Mar10:15)

1Pet1:6 **..... now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. [7]These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.** [8]Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, **you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, [9]for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.**

.....

[10]And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. [11]To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

'For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast.' (Eph2:8-9) God himself restores us, as we hold on to the faith He has given us,

'But Christ is faithful as a son over God's house. And we are his house, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast.' (Heb3:6)

and stand firm in it,

'Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong.' (1Cor16:13)

'Stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.' (1Cor15:58)

Do what someone who trusts that God Almighty is on their side would do. Do His will amidst the fiery trials and temptations.

.....

[12] ..... this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it.

The grace of God is that he provides a way for us to become what he wants us to become, holy and righteous, loving and kind, full of faith. We go through trials, hardships, and sufferings in order for him to make us what he wants us to be ('Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. ..... God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness.' (Heb12:7,10)), and by His grace, his help, his involvement, we are sucesssful. And we would not even be in position to do any of this if it were not for the fact that He sent His own Son to die for, pay the price for, our sins, in order to restore our relationship with Him.

More on: The Grace, Mercy and Compassion of God

2Cor1:21 Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ.

.....

[24] ..... it is **by faith you stand firm.**

1Pet1:4 ..... you, **[5]who through faith are shielded by God's power** .....

Again, 'Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.' (Jam2:17), 'The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.' (Gal5:6) Therefore when we turn from our selfish sinful ways and live a life of loving others, this shows that we love God, because this is what He does ....

1Cor8:3 **But the man who loves God is known by God.**

'This is love for God: to obey his commands.' (1Joh5:3). These commands cause us to reject selfish harmful indulgences and behaviors so that we are free to love people, do good to them:

'And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother.' (1Joh4:21)

'Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.' (Phi2:4)

'Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others.' (1Cor10:24)

'For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved.' (1Cor10:33)

' "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." ' (Mar10:45)

'For Christ's love compels us, ... he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.' (2Cor5:14-15)

' "For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous
and his ears are attentive to their prayer." ' (Psa 34:12-16 OT) (1Pet3:12)

2Joh1:6And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands. As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love.

Rom13:9The commandments, “Do not commit adultery,” “Do not murder,” “Do not steal,” “Do not covet,” (Exo20:13-15,17; Deu5:17-19,21) and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” (Lev19:18) [10]Love does no harm to its neighbor.

1Cor7:19 ..... Keeping God's commands is what counts.

1Joh5:3This is love for God: to obey his commands.

And his commands are not burdensome, [4]for everyone born of God overcomes the world.

This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. [5]Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

The world consists of things that get in the way of obeying God's commands, things we crave and lust for like sex (outside of marraige), money, status, power, prestige, and behaviors of the world like anger, malice, slander, devisiveness, envy, greed, selfish ambition, conceit.

Overcoming the world is overcoming the desires, urges, and cravings to gratify these things and indulge in these behaviors.

.....

[13]I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.

.....

[18]We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the one who was born of God keeps him safe, and the evil one cannot harm him.

back to keep yourselves in God's love Jud1:21

1Joh2:14 .....

you are strong,
and the word of God lives in you,
and you have overcome the evil one.

[15]Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. [16]For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world. [17]The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.

2Cor4:18So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

2Cor5:7We live by faith, not by sight.

2Cor5:16So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view.

Mat5:28“But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. [29]If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.”

2Pet2:14With eyes full of adultery, they never stop sinning; they seduce the unstable; **they are experts in greed—an accursed brood!** [15]They have left the straight way and wandered off to follow the way of Balaam son of Beor, **who loved the wages of wickedness.**

Lust is a greedy thing.

Eph4:17 ..... you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. [18]They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. [19]Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more.

'The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools .....

Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.

Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.

Furthermore, 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, 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.' (Rom1:18-32)

..... [18]by appealing to the lustful desires of sinful human nature, they entice people who are just escaping from those who live in error. **[19]They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of depravity[5a]—for a man is a slave to whatever has mastered him.**

'Evil men and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.' (2Tim3:13):

Promising freedom, but really it's slavery.

[20]If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. [21]It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them.

[22]Of them the proverbs are true: “A dog returns to its vomit,” (Pro 26:11) and, “A sow that is washed goes back to her wallowing in the mud.”

Jam4:4You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God?

Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.

3Joh1:11Dear friend, do not imitate what is evil but what is good.

Anyone who does what is good is from God.

Anyone who does what is evil has not seen God.

1Joh3:29If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who does what is right has been born of him.

Joh8:31To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, **“If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. [32]Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”**

The Holy Spirit is the truth, ' "the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father" ' (Joh15:26), ' "But when he, the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth." ' (Joh16:13)

'Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. .....

As the body without the spirit is dead,
so faith without deeds is dead.' (Jam2:17, 26)

' "This is my command: Love each other." ' (Joh17:17)

'But if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him.' (1Joh2:5)

'Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. This then is how we know that we belong to the truth.' (1Joh3:18)

True faith in Christ is shown by making every effort to obey His teachings, because we believe it when He said ' "I am the way and the truth and the life." ' (Joh14:6).

By this same faith our sins are forgiven and we receive the Holy Spirit, who is the Truth, who gives us the power to be set free from the sins that bind us.

'You yourselves have been taught by God to love each other.' (1The4:9)

'If we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.' (1Joh4:12)

'God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.' (1Joh4:16)

'Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.' (Eph5:1-2)

Joh14:

We obey, this is repentance, and receive God into our life.

[15]“If you love me, you will obey what I command.

[16]And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever— [17]the Spirit of truth. ..... you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. ..... [19]Before long, the world will not see me anymore, **but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. [20]On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.”**

We obey, this is repentance, and receive God into our life.

[21]“Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me.

He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.”

We obey, this is repentance, and receive God into our life.

.....

[23]Jesus replied, “If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching.

My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.

[24]He who does not love me will not obey my teaching.”

If God has not come into your spirit, into your life, you have not really obeyed, loved, or put your faith in God; keep at it in earnest,

' "Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.

You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

I will be found by you," declares the LORD, "and will bring you back from captivity." ' (Jer29:12-14)

.....

[34]Jesus replied, **“I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin.** [35]Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. **[36]So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”**

We want to have a permanent place in God's family! When we become saved we are freed from our bondage to sinning by the Holy Spirit's presence in our lives, as we seek to obey God.

2Cor2:17Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

The blood of Christ not only provides forgiveness for our sins but freedom from our sins. 'To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood.' (Rev1:5)

1Tim6:12Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called .....

When we fight we will be filled with God's Holy Spirit, have the life of God in us forever:

' "If you love me, you will obey what I command.

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. ..... you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you." ' (Joh14:16-17)

Through our faith, applying it to our deeds (of love), our lives, repenting (turning from self-centered sinful passions and behaviors to love our neighbor), we receive the Holy Spirit, eternal life with God.

The eternal way of God is above sin, on a higher plane, better. Trust Him by leaving your sin (repent and believe) and He will show it to you through His Spirit.

Fight, 'stand firm in the faith.' (1Cor16:13): 'And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

..... this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it.' (1Pet5:10-12)

.....

[18]Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. [19]In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

Act14:21 ..... they returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, [22]strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. **“We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God,”** they said.

' "He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." ' (Luk3:16-17)

We must remain true to God to the end of our lives; trusting Him, which is shown by obeying Him, overcoming by living a pure and loving life through many trials and sufferings, denying our worldly and fleshly desires and behaviors, resisting the devil.

' "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross [daily Luk9:23] and follow me." ' (Mar8:34)

"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." (Mat4:19)

' "Any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple." ' (Luk14:33)

The rewards are well worth it.

' "Remain in me, and I will remain in you.

If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit;

..... If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned." ' (Joh15:4-6)

' "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.

If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love,

just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love." ' (Joh15:9-10)

' "This is my command: Love each other." ' (Joh17:17)

Heb12:7Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? ..... [9] ..... **submit to the Father of our spirits and live!** [10] ..... **God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness.**

It is still up to us to submit ourselves to God's will, obey, often in the midst of hardship and suffering, temptation, difficulties, troubles.

It is still up to us to apply the faith He has given us.

(This shows you love Him.)

Rev3:19“Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent[4e].” - Jesus

1Cor11:32 ..... we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world.

Heb5:8Although he was a son*, **he learned obedience from what he suffered [9]and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him .....**

* Jesus

Again, true believing produces action, obedience.

'For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.' (Rom8:29)

As His brothers, we suffer many of the things He suffered, to learn obedience and be made perfect.

Heb2:10In bringing many sons to glory, **it was fitting that God ..... should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering. [11]Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers.**

If God used suffering to perfect Jesus, what's that tell us ??

1Pet4:19So then, those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.

2Cor12:7To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. [8]Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. [9]But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. [10]That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

2Cor11:29Who is weak, and I do not feel weak? Who is led into sin, and I do not inwardly burn?

Our weaknesses help us be humble,

yet we must not give in to temptation, don't let yourself get involved in worldly sin; endure the hardship, the suffering, keep God's commandments through faith in Jesus Christ, and you will receive the prize:

to be filled with God.

2Tim2:3Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. [4]No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs—he wants to please his commanding officer. [5]Similarly, if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not receive the victor's crown unless he competes according to the rules.

'Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. ..... God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness.' (Heb12:7,10)

It's hard to resist indulging in and fixating on worldly pursuits, passions, pleasures and behaviors, to resist following the cravings and desires, urges.

'Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.' (Jam1:12)

'This is love for God: to obey his commands.

And his commands are not burdensome, for everyone born of God overcomes the world.

This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.' (1Joh5:3-5)

The crown of life is the Holy Spirit, promised to those who overcome by faith in Jesus.

' "The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing." ' (Joh6:63)

'by faith we ..... receive the promise of the Spirit.' (Gal3:14)

1Cor9:24Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize.

' "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it." ' (Mat7:13-14)

'Someone asked him, "Lord, are only a few people going to be saved?"

He said to them, "Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to." ' (Luk13:23-24)

[25]Everyone who competes in the games goes into **strict training.** They do it to get a crown that will not last; but **we do it to get a crown that will last forever.** ..... [27] ..... **I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.**

Pride and sinful desires sometimes flare up after we do good things in God's service.

Overcoming our sinful nature, denying ourselves, involves suffering and self-discipline.

' "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross [daily Luk9:23] and follow me." ' (Mar8:34)

"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." (Mat4:19)

' "Any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple." ' (Luk14:33)

'Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.' (Gal5:24)
This is painful.

Put your faith in Jesus Christ and you will succeed.

Rom5:18I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

1Cor4:17For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.

Rom5:2 ..... we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. [3]Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; [4]perseverance, character; and character, hope. [5]And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.

2Cor4:16Therefore we do not lose heart. **.....**

inwardly we are being renewed day by day.

1The4:9 ..... you yourselves have been taught by God to love each other. [10] ..... Yet we urge you, brothers, to do so more and more.

1Cor13:4Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. [5]It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.

Takes faith in Christ to do this.

'The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.' (Gal5:6)

1Cor14:1Follow the way of love .....

2Joh1:3Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, will be with us in truth and love.

Benefits to those who 'stand firm in the faith.' (1Cor16:13)

Jam1:21 ..... get rid of all moral filth ..... and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

[22]Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

Joh12:47“As for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it. **[48]There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day.”**

Keep God's word in your heart, mind, and soul, so that you follow it, live by it, do it.

' "For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. I know that his command leads to eternal life.

So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say." ' (Joh12:49-50)

Mat12:50**"For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother."**

Luk8:21He replied, **"My mother and brothers are those who hear God's word and put it into practice."**

.....

[19]My dear brothers, take note of this: **Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, [20]for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.**

Mat5:22**"But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment."**

[23]"Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, [24]leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift."

Eph4:29Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

.....

[26]**If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless.**

Real faith produces action,

a life lived according to God's way of love,

words spoken in conformance with the will of God.

Mat12:36**"But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. [37]For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned."**

Jam3:2 **..... If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to keep his whole body in check.**

Our faith in Jesus shows up in the words coming out of our mouth, for

' "For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks." ' (Mat12:34)

[27]**Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.**

Heb10:35**So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. [36]You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.** [37]For in just a very little while,

Doing God's will comes from our faith,

'I will show you my faith by what I do.' (Jam2:!8)

'by faith we ..... receive the promise of the Spirit.' (Gal3:14)

'The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.' (Gal5:6)

Repenting is not a one time event, but changing our ways and living for God is an every day occupation.

"He who is coming will come and will not delay.
[38]**But my righteous one will live by faith.**
And if he shrinks back,
I will not be pleased with him." (Hab 2:3,4)

'And without faith it is impossible to please God,

because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists

and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.' (Heb11:6)

'Those controlled by the sinful nature can not please God.' (Rom8:8)

'Stand firm in the faith.' (1Cor16:13)

' "Remain in me, and I will remain in you.

If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit;

..... If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned." ' (Joh15:4-6)

' "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.

If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love,

just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love." ' (Joh15:9-10)

' "The one who sent me is with me;
he has not left me alone,
for I always do what pleases him." ' (Joh8:29)

[39]**But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved.**

'If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them.' (2Pet2:20-21)

'Though you already know all this, I want to remind you that the Lord delivered his people out of Egypt, but later destroyed those who did not believe.' (Jud1:5-6)

'And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who disobeyed? So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief.' (Heb3:18-19)

Disobedience and unbelief are inextricably linked.

If we give ourselves over to sin, or give in to fear, not exercise our faith, this leads to destruction. ' "For many are invited, but few are chosen." ' (Mat22:14) Hence, in the Scriptures there are many admonitions to persevere in our faith to the end.

Eph6:23Peace to the brothers, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. [24]Grace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love.

Heb12:1 **..... let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. [2]Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, ...**

'It is by faith you stand firm.' (2Cor1:24)

'You, who through faith are shielded by God's power.' (1Pet1:4-5)

'Take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.' (Eph6:16)

'God's work—which is by faith.' (1Tim1:4)

'Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called.' (1Tim6:12)

Eph2:10**For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.**

Tit2:11**For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. [12]It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age,** [13]while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, **Jesus Christ, [14]who gave himself for us to redeem[6b] us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.**

The grace is that on the cross Christ paid the price for our sins, so that we may be forgiven, cleansed, and have God's Holy Spirit living inside us, enabling us to live a holy life of love. Once again, we see that we become pure in this life, eager to do what is good.

When we are saved, we are saved from our sin, we are saved from sinning, set free to no longer be under the bondage of slavery to sin, so we can live true life, like God.

'Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." ' (Joh14:34-36)

2Cor9:8**And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.**

.....

[10]**Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness.**

[11]**You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, ...**

Act15:8**"God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, ... [9] ..... he purified their hearts by faith."**

'By faith we ..... receive the promise of the Spirit.' (Gal3:14), who sanctifies us as we follow Him.

'From the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.' (Tit3:12-13)

Sanctify: to free from sin, purify, and set apart for a noble purpose.

Act26:17" ' **..... I am sending you to them [18]to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified[1b] by faith in me.' "** - Jesus speaking to Paul

We are saved when we have truly, in our actions, turned from dark ways to living in the light of God's ways; this shows that we really believe in Him, and we then receive forgiveness of our sins and the Holy Spirit.

Again, until we truly repent, turn, we do not truly believe,

' "If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own." ' (Joh7:17)

God reveals Himself to those who choose to do His will.

Joh8:12 **..... "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."** - Jesus

"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." (Mat4:19)

To believe in Jesus is to turn from our worldly ways and follow Him (repentance), and to have Jesus and the Holy Spirit, life from God, daily guiding us into true living, true righteousness, true loving.

Act2:38Peter replied, **"Repent[4f] and be baptized,** every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. **And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."**

Repent and receive forgiveness of sins.
Believe and receive forgiveness of sins.
Repent and believe and receive forgiveness of sins.

Faith and repentance are inextricably linked:

One cannot repent without believing,

Turning from our sin pleases God,

'And without faith it is impossible to please God,

because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists

and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.' (Heb11:6)

One has not truly believed until he has repented,

' "If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own." ' (Joh7:17)

Gal2:20"I have been crucified with Christ and **I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God,** who loved me and gave himself for me."

We give up our own worldly pursuits and follow Jesus, trusting this will lead to a better life for us.

Crucifixtion is agonizingly painful, and so crucifying the flesh, putting the sinful nature to death, our desire to gratify sinful passions and cravings, urges and thoughts, and to indulge in sinful behaviors is nothing to take lightly. Some things will take everything you've got, all the forcefulness

' "The good news of the kingdom of God is being preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it." ' (Luk16:16)

' "From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it." ' (Mat11:12)

you can put together, but with God's help, and only in this way, you will in fact overcome. Typically you can resist temptation a lot more than you think, just like you find out you can run a lot faster and farther than you think you can if you are being chased by an enraged wild bear.

Living by faith requires repenting, dying to self, denying yourself, denying your sinful nature, serving and loving others. In that sense, therefore, I no longer live. As we do this God comes to live in us and does His will through us, because we are willing to do His will.

' "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross [daily Luk9:23] and follow me." ' (Mar8:34)

"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." (Mat4:19)

' "Any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple." ' (Luk14:33)

Rom6:6For we know that **our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with,**

that we should no longer be slaves to sin .....

.....

[12]Therefore **do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.**

[13]Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness,

but rather **offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as ins**truments of righteousness.

'Offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.' (Rom12:1)

'Since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our "God is a consuming fire." ' (Deu 4:24OT) (Heb12:28-29)

[14]**For sin shall not be your master,** because you are not under law, but under grace.

The grace of God is that having believed in Jesus and repented, turned our life over to living according to God's ways, being committed to it and putting effort and energy into it, that by His Spirit who dwells in us, we will be successful at breaking away from our sins, and be free!

Rom6:16**Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey—whether you are**

slaves to sin, which leads to death,

'Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin.

Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever.

So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." ' (Joh14:34-36)

or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?

[17]But thanks be to God that, **though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted.**

The only way to get set free is to completely give up all your sin wholeheartedly. This is to no longer let any sin hold a place in your heart, no longer harbor a desire for it, or keep feeding it (go back to it) or hiding some small piece of it in reserve for later possibilities, for,

' "Any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple." ' (Luk14:33)

The way must be cleared in your heart for harboring the Holy Spirit.

[18]**You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.**

[19] ..... **Just as you used to offer the parts of your body**

in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness,

so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness.

There is no neutral position, you must decide and fully commit yourself, devote yourself to obeying God.

'For a man is a slave to whatever has mastered him.' (Eph4:19)

.....

[22]**But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God,**

the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life.

[23]**For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Even though we must forcefully change our ways and seek to live for God's purposes, being saved is still something that we do not deserve. Jesus Christ **gave** Himself up for us, let Himself be crucified to pay for all our sins, so that we could have our sins forgiven and receive God's Holy Spirit to live in us forever and enable us to live as children of God, live like God and with God forever.

' "The good news of the kingdom of God is being preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it." ' (Luk16:16)

' "From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it." ' (Mat11:12)

back to finding out that Jesus and God are real Joh5:42

Rom7:

[5]**For when we were controlled by the sinful nature, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in our bodies, so that we bore fruit for death.**

[6]**But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law** so that **we serve in the new way of the Spirit .....**

We must put to death our sin *, which requires effort on our part **, perserverance, and as we do this God sends His Spirit to help us succeed.

Repenting is dying to what once bound us.

*
'Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation—but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it. For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.' (Rom8:12-14)

'Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: [bitterness Eph4:3], anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.' (Col3:5-10)

**
' "I know you. I know that you do not have the love of God in your hearts. ..... How can you believe if you ..... make no effort to obtain the praise that comes from the only God?" ' (Joh5:42-44)

'Someone asked him, "Lord, are only a few people going to be saved?" He said to them, "Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to." ' (Luk13:23-24)

'There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God ..... Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience.' (Heb4:9,11)

'Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.' (Heb12:14)

'His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness ..... you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. For this very reason, make every effort to

add to your faith goodness;

and to goodness, knowledge;

and to knowledge, self-control;

and to self-control, perseverance;

and to perseverance, godliness;

and to godliness, brotherly kindness;

and to brotherly kindness, love.

For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.' (2Pet1:3-11)

Rom8:2

..... through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.

As we receive more and more of the Holy Spirit, sin after sin that used to have a hold on us starts to no longer have a hold on us, losing its power over us, we are not bound by it.

[3]For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man, [4]in order that

God's law is perfect,

'The law of the LORD is perfect,
reviving the soul.
The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy,
making wise the simple.

The precepts of the LORD are right,
giving joy to the heart.
The commands of the LORD are radiant,
giving light to the eyes.

The fear of the LORD is pure,
enduring forever.
The ordinances of the LORD are sure
and altogether righteous.'

(Psa19:7-9)

'So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good.' (Rom7:12)

but we were not able to keep it because of our sinful nature. But now our sin is condemned because through Christ Jesus they are forgiven and we receive the Holy Spirit to live in us. We then have the power to overcome sin, no longer sin, though there will still be battles.

the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us,

who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.

[5]**Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires;**

but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.

Loving people, and saving them.

'Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.' (Phi4:8)

The Spirit desires us to live a life of loving others, unselfishness, humility and gentleness, and He will give us large quantities of strength, joy, peace, inspiration as we follow Him.

[6]The mind of sinful man is death,

but **the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace;**

So we must set our minds on doing God's will, being pure and loving others. Then the Spirit will have control and will enable us to succeed. Setting our minds on doing God's will: this is the result of and what happens when we have true faith in Christ, this is what it means to believe in Jesus, this is real believing.

' "I am the way and the truth and the life." ' (Joh14:6)

[7]**the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. [8]Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.**

[9]**You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit,**

if the Spirit of God lives in you.

And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.

2Cor13:5Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. **Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test? ..... [8]For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth. ..... [11] ..... Aim for perfection, ...**

When we become Christians, we are forgiven our sins and become like Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit. If you do not see yourself becoming like Jesus, you know that your faith is not real:

'Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. .....

As the body without the spirit is dead,
so faith without deeds is dead.' (Jam2:17, 26)

'Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. This then is how we know that we belong to the truth.' (1Joh3:18)

Rom2:29 No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and **circumcision is circumcision of the heart**, **by the Spirit**, ...

Tit3:5 **..... He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, [6]whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior**, ...

To be reborn to live with God, be saved, we have to become righteous in our ways.
This became possible when Christ's sacrifice cleansed us of our sins (through repenting and believing in Him), enabling Him to put the Holy Spirit of God inside us.

'But now a righteousness from God ..... has been made known, ...

This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.' (Rom3:21-22)

'By faith we ..... receive the promise of the Spirit.'
(Gal3:14)

' "The Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him." ' (Act5:32)

'But by faith we eagerly await through the Spirit the righteousness for which we hope.' (Gal5:5)

'Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. He who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous.' (1Joh3:7)

'No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him.' (1Joh3:6)

'But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.' (1Cor6:11)

Sanctify: to free from sin, purify, and set apart for a noble purpose.

'But if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live. .....

Because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.' (Rom8:13-14)

'You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit,

if the Spirit of God lives in you.

And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.'
(Rom8:9)

'So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.' (Gal5:16)

'Those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.' (Rom8:5)

'But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.' (Gal5:22-24)

'The one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.' (Gal6:7)

This is what happens when a person is getting saved.

'Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. This then is how we know that we belong to the truth.' (1Joh3:18)

'Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test? ..... For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth.' (2Cor13:5-8)

This is the test; are you indeed being reborn and renewed into living a new life of love and purity, doing good, what's right?

If you take a fall, fail, think about what led you to it, change something so that it won't happen again (repent), and immediately return to a closer walk with God; he will take you back !!

One thing that really helps; read a lot of Scripture every day:

' "Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth." ' (Joh17:17)

' "Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified." ' (Act20:32)

[13] ..... from the beginning **God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying[1c] work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.**

Our believing results in us living a pure and righteous life of loving people.

Col1:21 **Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. [22]But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation— [23]if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel.**

We must remain in Christ,

' "Remain in me, and I will remain in you.

If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit;

..... If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned." ' (Joh15:4-6)

' "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.

If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love,

just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love." ' (Joh15:9-10)

We must persevere by faith in Jesus; then by His enormous great grace we will become holy in God's sight.

As God works with us over time, as we continue with him, we actually become holy, live holy lives, ' "For nothing is impossible with God." ' (Luk1:37) and ' "Everything is possible for him who believes." ' (Mar9:23)

'But by faith we eagerly await through the Spirit the righteousness for which we hope.' (Gal5:5)

In the meantime we are fighting many battles to overcome our sinful nature, the pull of the world, Satan, and we sometimes lose. But over time we lose less and less, and win great victories.

1Cor15:1 Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. **[2]By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.**

Heb3:6 But Christ is faithful as a son over God's house. **And we are his house, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast.**

Eph3:14 For this reason I kneel before the Father,

..... **[16]I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, [17]so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.**

This strengthening may come as a small still (yet forceful ' "the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing" ' (Mat11:12)) voice (the Holy Spirit) that you must seek to listen to; He is very powerful.

'The LORD said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by."

Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind.

After the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake.

After the earthquake came a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire.

And after the fire came a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave.

Then a voice said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" ' (1Kin19:11-13)

And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, [18]may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, [19]and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

[20]Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,

[his incomparably great power for us who believe. Eph1:19]

The Holy Spirit is this incomparably great power at work within us, astonishing!

[21]to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Col2:9 For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, [10]and **you have been given fullness in Christ**, who is the head over every power and authority. **[11]In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature**, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but **with the circumcision done by Christ**, [12]having been buried with him in baptism and **raised with him through your faith in the power of God**, who raised him from the dead.

Once again it is by faith in God that our sinful nature is put off, discarded.

Our faith in God is manifested through doing the following:

Col3:1 **Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above,** where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. **[2]Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. .....**

The Heavenly: loving people and helping them get saved.

The Heavenly:

'Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.' (Phi4:8)

[5]Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. [6]Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. [7]You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. [8]But now **you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: [bitterness Eph4:3], anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. [9]Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices [10]and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.**

.....

[12] ..... clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. [13]Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

Mat6:14 **"For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. [15]But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins."**

Mat7:1 **"Do not judge, or you too will be judged. [2]For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."**

Jam5:9 **Don't grumble against each other, brothers, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!**

Luk6:37 **"Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven."**

Jam2:13 ..... **judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment!**

Mat5:7 **"Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy."**

Luk6:36 **"Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful."**

Rom12:18 **If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.**

Mat5:9 **"Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called sons of God."**

1The5:15 **Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong [evil for evil Rom12:17], but always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else.**

1Pet2:23 **When they hurled their insults at him*, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.**

*** Christ**

1Cor4:12 ..... when we are persecuted, we endure it;

[13]when we are slandered, we answer kindly.

1Pet2:19 **For it is commendable if a man bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God. ..... [21]To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.**

"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." (Mat4:19)

2Tim3:12 In fact, **everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,**

[13]while evil men and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

Phi1:29 **For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him, ...**

Rom12:14 **Bless those who persecute you;**

bless and do not curse.

Mat5:10 **"Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

[11]Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me*. [12]Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

Luk6:22 **"Blessed are you when men hate you,
when they exclude you and insult you
and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man."**

[23]"Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven."

***** Christ

' "Everything is possible for him who believes." ' (Mar9:23)

Mat5:44 "But I tell you: **Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, [45]that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. ..... [48]Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect."**

Being perfect is about loving people.

' "Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell." ' (Mat10:28)

And yet,

'God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him. In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him.

There is no fear in love.

But perfect love drives out fear,

because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.' (1Joh4:16-18)

If we love and therefore no longer need to fear God,

then we do not have to fear people.

'If God is for us, who can be against us? .....

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written:

"For your sake we face death all day long;
we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." (Psa 44:22)

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.' (Rom8:31,35-39)

Luk6:27 "But I tell you who hear me: **Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, [28]bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. .....** [30]Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back."

Luk6:35 "But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, **and you will be sons of the Most High**, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked."

Mat5:39 "But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. [40]And if someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. [41]If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles."

An example of someone forcing you to go a mile might be when someone is very pushy about wanting you to do something for them that is a real inconvience for you; do twice as much for them.

2Cor11:20 **..... you even put up with anyone who enslaves you or exploits you or takes advantage of you or pushes himself forward or slaps you in the face.** [21]To my shame I admit that we were too weak for that!

Even though you may be persecuted, you're still on top of things because you're saved by God, you're with God, now and ultimately.

Eph6:10 **..... be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.**

Col1:11 **being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully [12]giving thanks to the Father,** who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. **[13]For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves,** [14]in whom we have redemption[6c], the forgiveness of sins.

This power may come in a

quiet, calm, and gentle way,

yet be an incredible power.

Phi4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!

[5]Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.

It takes real faith in Christ to always rejoice in the the Lord, and to be gentle to all.

But we know the Lord is near,

'Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them.

And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.' (1Joh3:24)

He watches over us closely,

'And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him.' (Rom8:28)

1The5:13 **..... Live in peace with each other. ..... [14] ..... be patient with everyone.**

1Tim6:11 **..... pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.**

2Cor3:18 **And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.**

Col1:27 ..... God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles **the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.**

[28]We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so **that we may present everyone perfect in Christ.** [29]To this end **I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me.**

Proclaim, teach everyone..... God will empower you.

Admonish:

1. To reprove or correct gently, mildly, and kindly but seriously, out of earnest concern, attentive care, protectiveness.
2. To counsel against something, caution, express disapproval.
3. To point out something forgotten or disregarded, indicate duties or obligations by means of a friendly earnest/urgent warning, reproof, exhortation-advice, encouragement.

Act1:8 "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses ..... " - Jesus

The following is what people will witness from you: love:

1The2:10 **You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed. [11]For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, [12]encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God,** who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

Here is an example showing we can actually live holy, righteous, and blameless, because others have done it in the past. This passage shows that living in this way is done by living a life of love for others.

When we go and make disciples, we do it gently in love.

Mat28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **[19]Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, [20]and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."** - after Jesus' resurrection from the dead

A giant test of our faith; if we believe all authority in heaven and earth has been given to Christ, why then would we be afraid to proclaim and teach everyone the gospel ??

'Perfect love drives out fear.' (1Joh4:18)

1Tim2:3 ..... God our Savior, [4]who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. [5]For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, [6]who gave himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time.

Act4:12 **"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."**

No one else has come down from heaven, someone who does not sin, God actually, to pay the penalty for our sins for us by dying; a painful death.

Joh20:21 Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." [22]And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

Jesus received the Holy Spirit before he was sent out into public ministry; and so do we.

'When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." .....

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry. .....

Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. He taught in their synagogues, and everyone praised him.' (Luk3:21-22, 4:1-2, 14-15)

'Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. ..... "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!" '
(Mar1:14-15)

Act20:26 "Therefore, I declare to you today that **I am innocent of the blood of all men. [27]For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God."**

Col4:5 **Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. [6]Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.**

We are gracious, regarding others as better and more important than ourselves, kind and gentle, patient, merciful, non-judgmental and non-condemning, and forgiving, but at the same time remind people of the true righteous and holy ways of God that we must follow, and

to believe in Jesus (make the most of every opportunity).

1Cor15:58 **..... stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord,** because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

1Tim4:12 **..... set an example** for the believers **in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.**

.....

[15]Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. [16]Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.

Rom12:11**Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.**

Act5:20“ ..... tell the people the full message of this new life.”

.....

[42]Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ.

1Cor16:13**Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong.**

'Perfect love drives out fear.' (1Joh4:18)

2Cor4:13**It is written: “I believed; therefore I have spoken.” (Psa 116:10) With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak, ...**

Real faith comes out by telling others about salvation through Jesus Christ:

'The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.' (Gal5:6)

and

' "Love your neighbor as yourself." ' (Lev19:18 OT) (Rom13:9)

If we love people we will want them to get saved and talk with them about it, pray for them, and do this on an ongoing basis out of earnest concern, with gentleness and respect.

Mat10:32**“Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. [33]But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven.” - Jesus**

When people see us sinning, they see us disowning or dis-acknowledging Jesus as the one we are following.

Act4:31 **..... And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.**

2Tim1:7For **God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.**

[8]So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, ... join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God, [9]who has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but **because of his own purpose and grace.**

Rom1:16I am not ashamed of **the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: ..... [17]For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.” (Hab 2:4)**

'But now a righteousness from God ..... has been made known, ... This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.' (Rom3:21-22)

'By faith we ..... receive the promise of the Spirit.' (Gal3:14)

He sanctifies us, enables us to live righteously.

'Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. He who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous.' (1Joh3:7)

We are also forgiven our sins.

And so we are cleansed and purified,

made whole.

2Cor2:14**But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him.** [15]For we are to God **the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing.** [16]To the one we are the smell of death; to the other, the fragrance of life. .....

2Cor3:12 **..... we are very bold.**

2Cor4:2 **..... by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. .....**

1Pet3:15 **..... But do this with gentleness and respect, [16]keeping a clear conscience, ...**

2Tim2:24And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. [25]Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance[4g] leading them to a knowledge of the truth, [26]and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.

2Cor10:1**By the meekness and gentleness of Christ,** I appeal to you .....

Tit3:2 **..... show true humility toward all men.**

Being humble helps us love people:

'Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.' (Phi2:3)

'Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.' (Eph5:21)

[3]At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures.

The free gift and grace of God is that through Jesus Christ we can be reborn through the Holy Spirit; live a new life, overcome sin (that which does harm to self and others) and start loving.

Eph2:1As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, [2]in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.

[3]All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.

2Pet3:9The Lord ..... is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

You must turn from your sin and evil ways in order not to perish; this is what goes along with real faith and believing in God, in Jesus.

' "But unless you repent, you too will all perish" ' (Luk13:32)

..... [15]Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, ...

Rom2:4 ..... the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, ... God's kindness leads you toward repentance .....

Phm1:9 ..... I appeal to you on the basis of love.

2Cor4:5For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and **ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.**

[6]For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” (Gen 1:3) made his light shine in our hearts .....

People see and know and can tell we are but human, with flaws and imperfections, various sin problems. So when God shines through us by His grace and mercy as we diligently repent daily, though our life history has its ups and downs people are surprised, shocked even, that such good could eventually come out of us. Then it becomes strikingly apparent to people that it is God Himself shining His love through us, because they know we are too imperfect to generate such perfect love.

[7]But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that **this all-surpassing power is from God** and not from us.

1Cor4:20For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.

1Cor2:4My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with **a demonstration of the Spirit's power, [5]**so **that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power.**

This demonstration is not always a profound physical miracle, but just as much the love and purity and faith coming out of us, the things we say and do exuding from the power of a transformed life, affecting everyone around; it is not of this world, and people can sense this, sense the power of God.

2Cor13:3 ..... Christ is speaking through me. He is not weak in dealing with you, but is powerful among you. [4]For to be sure, he was crucified in weakness, yet he lives by God's power. Likewise, **we are weak in him, yet by God's power we will live with him to serve you.**

The power of serving, not beating people over the head with the Bible, but gently and respectfully admonishing, demonstrating genuine friendship and concern, being humble, that is, considering others better than ourselves and being submissive.

It takes power to deny ourselves,

' "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross [daily Luk9:23] and follow me." ' (Mar8:34)

"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." (Mat4:19)

' "Any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple." ' (Luk14:33)

and help meet the needs of others,

'Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.' (Phi2:4)

'Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others.' (1Cor10:24)

'For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved.' (1Cor10:33)

' "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." ' (Mar10:45)

'For Christ's love compels us, ... he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.' (2Cor5:14-15)

People will recognize that something is different, see God in you, see this demonstration of the Spirit's power: loving and serving.

' "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." ' (Joh13:35)

Just because you feel weak, that is not necessarily a problem keeping you from serving the Lord! It may be the plan:

'To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.' (2Cor12:7-10)

'Who is weak, and I do not feel weak? Who is led into sin, and I do not inwardly burn?' (2Cor11:29)

Phm1:5 ..... I hear about **your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints.** [6]I pray that you may **be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ.**

1The2:2We had previously suffered and been insulted in Philippi, as you know, but **with the help of our God we dared to tell you his gospel in spite of strong opposition. .....**

[4] ..... We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts.

Eph6:19Pray also for me, **that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, [20]**for which I am an ambassador in chains. **Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.**

'Perfect love drives out fear.' (1Joh4:18)

Once people know we are Christians, everything we say and do can declare the presence of our Lord to them.

.....

[6] ..... As apostles of Christ we could have been a burden to you, [7]but we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children. **[8]We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us.**

Again, the power of love. Genuine friendship. Those in leadership positions sometimes use their power to dominate and burden. A true believer would not do this, but rather, as a result of being taught by God and acting out his faith serves in humility, gentleness, and respect. This shows God to people, this is powerful.

'You yourselves have been taught by God to love each other.' (1The4:9)

[9]Surely you remember, brothers, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you.

Act20:34“You yourselves know that these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions.

[35]In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' ”

2Cor12:15So I will very gladly spend for you everything I have and expend myself as well.

1Joh2:10Whoever loves his brother lives in the light, and there is nothing in him to make him stumble.

When we live lives of love, we live to serve and assist others,

'Serve one another in love.' (Gal5:13)

' "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." ' (Mar10:45)

God comes and lives inside our hearts.

'God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth.

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.' (1Joh1:5-7)

and

'God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.' (1Joh4:16)

When this happens we no longer pursue selfish sinful cravings.

'So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.' (Gal5:16)

'Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God.

Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.' (1Joh4:7)

In order to love, in order to be with God, we must give up our selfish sinful ways, we must turn away from them, repent, and trust our lives to God. This is true believing.

And then this is what we become:

Mat5:14**“You are the light of the world.** A city on a hill cannot be hidden. [15]Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house [Luk11:33...,that those who come in may see the light]. [16]In the same way, **let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”**

The world is so lost, so not seeking Jesus: it needs all the help it can get. We must love and serve people, pray for them to find Jesus, find the true God.

Joh13:34**“A new command I give you: Love one another.**

As I have loved you, so you must love one another.

'This is how we know what love is:

Jesus Christ laid down his life for us.

And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.

If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?' (1Joh3:16-17)

Seems impossible for us to think of loving others the way Christ loved us, His love, the love of God, being so perfect and pure, and yet, ' "Everything is possible for him who believes." ' (Mar9:23), ' "For nothing is impossible with God." ' (Luk1:37), and the believer is with God. How much more then, what He commands us to do, what to Him is so important.

'You yourselves have been taught by God to love each other.' (1The4:9)

'But if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him.' (1Joh2:5)

'If we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.' (1Joh4:12)

[35]By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

Case in point for doing the impossible, here we see the grace of God again toward true believers:

Joh17:22“I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: [23]I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.” - Jesus praying to God the Father about believers

To think that we can have the same unity the Father and Son have!

Therefore, people know that God is in our midst because there is no other way we could love each other like we do, and live in such complete harmony.

1Pet3:8 ..... all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble.

Perhaps we have to be humble in order for the mustard seed to grow, to hear and honor God's soft, still (yet forceful, ' "the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing" ' (Mat11:12)) voice. Wisdom produces humility Jam3:13.

and, 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.' (Psa111:10)

Repent.

Mat13:31 ..... “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. **[32]Though it is the smallest of all your seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches.”**

By the time it's over many will come to this sturdy person in whom the Holy Spirit has grown, for relief from the world, to find God.

The Holy Spirit is planted in us, and He does not barge in, but rather is a soft voice guiding us, so we must be careful to listen, and to obey, because He does not yell at us. When we set the conditions right for Him to grow in us by our faith in Christ, then He gradually works all through us,

' "The kingdom of God is within you." ' (Luk17:21)

' "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough." ' (Mat13:33)

so that others see God in us in many ways and come near to try to get close to Him.

2Cor5:17**Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! [18]All this is from God,** who reconciled us to himself through Christ ..... [21]God made him who had no sin to be sin for us [OR, be a sin offering], so that **in him we might become the righteousness of God.**

When we get reconciled we get made right,

right in Jesus,

straightened out to walk with Him,

'God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth.

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.' (1Joh1:5-7)

This is what it is all about.

Through Christ our sins are forgiven and the way we live life is cleansed by the Holy Spirit, as we trust him to fulfill us and make us what he wants us to be, make our lives what he wants them to be, trust that we will be satisfied living like God.

And so being reconciled is being made to actually live like God in righteousness and holiness, love, with nothing between us or keeping us apart. This is the power of Christ's blood sacrifice, the power to do the impossible.

1Cor6:19 **..... your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you .....**

We could not do the following without the Holy Spirit living in us:

2Cor6:4 **..... as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses;** [5]in beatings, imprisonments and riots; **in hard work,** sleepless nights and hunger; **[6]in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love;** [7]in truthful speech and **in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left; .....**

The Holy Spirit can do amazing things through us:

To be able to do all the above, and much of it simultaneously, loving and doing God's work in spite of the hardships, is walking on water. Here we see people actually living and becoming the righteousness of God.

God wants to get a lot out of us, use us to do a lot. He is shrewd and tough: ' "I am a hard man, taking out what I did not put in, and reaping what I did not sow." ' (Luk19:22), and He can do it, ' "For nothing is impossible with God." ' (Luk1:37)

Believe: ' "Everything is possible for him who believes." ' (Mar9:23)

2Cor10:4**The weapons we fight with ..... have divine power to demolish strongholds. [5]We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.**

2Cor6:16 **..... For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: “I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people.” (Lev 26:12; Jer 32:38; Eze 37:27)**

[17]“Therefore come out from them
and be separate, says the Lord.
Touch no unclean thing,
and I will receive you.” (Isa 52:11; Eze 20:34,41)
[18]“I will be a Father to you,
and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.” (2Sam 7:14; 7:8)

Repenting again, passage above and below. Below, with God's Holy Spirit in us we move toward perfection, ' "For nothing is impossible with God." ' (Luk1:37), and ' "Everything is possible for him who believes." ' (Mar9:23), and Jesus said ' "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect." ' (Mat5:48)

'But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do;

for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy." '

(Lev 11:44,45; 19:2; 20:7 OT) (1Pet1:15-16)

2Cor7:1**Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.**

And so again, we must make the effort, every effort, to be holy, coming out from worldly lifestyles; this is repenting, the result of true believing, and then God will receive us, forgive us through Christ's sacrifice for our sins, and live in us by His Spirit.

We become His temple.

1Tim4:7 **..... train yourself to be godly.**

He said to train yourself, which requires effort on your part to obey God.

1Cor6:13 **..... The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. .....**

[17]**But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit.**

[18]**Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body.** [19]**Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;** [20]**you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.**

Rom12:1 **..... offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.**

Heb12:28 ..... since **we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken,** let us **be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe,** [29]**for our "God is a consuming fire."** (Deu 4:24)

Our bodies are fragile and vulnerable, easily shaken and damaged, destroyed.

But in heaven our immortal bodies remain intact forever, and we will always be with God.

'So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.

I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed— in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory." ' (1Cor15:42-44,50-54)

'And so we will be with the Lord forever.' (1The4:17)

For this we are tremendously and inexpressibly grateful.

Mindful of this we want to be close to Him now, ready at any time for Jesus' return, and therefore stay pure.

'But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.' (1Joh3:2-3)

God is totally worthy of all our worship, reverence, and awe. It is good to have a way to show it, and keeping ourselves pure is the way.

Heb12:16**See that no one is sexually immoral, or is godless like Esau, who for a single meal sold his inheritance rights as the oldest son.** [17]Afterward, as you know, when he wanted to inherit this blessing, he was rejected. He could bring about no change of mind, though he sought the blessing with tears.

Don't give up what you have with God to lust after a woman.

1Tim5:1 **..... Treat .....** [2] **..... younger women as sisters, with absolute purity.**

Don't lust after a single one, rather, love them as you would your sister.

' "Everything is possible for him who believes." ' (Mar9:23)

1The4:3**It is God's will that you should be sanctified**[1d]**: that you should avoid sexual immorality;** [4]**that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable,** [5]**not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God; .....** [7]**For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life.** [8]Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but **God, who gives you his Holy Spirit.**

Here again, we actually learn to be holy in this life, live a holy life of love. How else could we walk in fellowship with God's Holy Spirit, how else could we be a temple for God's Holy Spirit to live in, how else can we bear good fruit to God? For people must see God in us, not sin.

God's Holy Spirit will not live in an impure person; live a holy life and the Holy Spirit will live in you,

'God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth.

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.' (1Joh1:5-7)

Gal5:16So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.

'Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.' (Rom8:5)

'Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.' (Col3:1-2)

'Therefore ..... fix your thoughts on Jesus.' (Heb3:1)

.....

[19]**The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery**[2b]**;** [20]**idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions** [21]**and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.**

We can idolize many things. Giving an inordinate amount of our time, money, effort, care, attention and focus shows this. Things we 'have to have' and go after with so much zeal, vigor, and preoccupation, things we put on a pedestal have higher value and are more important than others.

Lusting after women is idolatry because we want them so intensely, it dominates our thinking, and leads to other sins like jealousy, greed, and envy, selfishness, anger. Lusting is like have a spell on you. It is very powerful and controls our thoughts and actions; we are no longer free.

If we are married and lust after and idolize other women, this may lead to hatred of our wives, discord with our wives, make us jealous for other women, make us angry and short-tempered, feed our selfishness, create a dissension between us and our wives, make us split apart emotionally, make us envious of what we do not have, and we may become so unhappy and frustrated with ourselves, our life, our relationship with our wife that we turn to drinking, illicit sex, and the like. As said in the above passage: 'those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.'

Note with respect to hatred: 'Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him.' (1Joh3:14)

[22]**But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,** [23]**gentleness and self-control.** Against such things there is no law. [24]**Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.**

This takes dedicated effort and we would never succeed without God's Spirit,

but ' "Everything is possible for him who believes." ' (Mar9:23)

' "For nothing is impossible with God." ' (Luk1:37)

Luk14:33 ..... "any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple."

This includes all our desires, urges, and cravings to gratify our sinful passions, pleasures, and thoughts, and to indulge in worldly behaviors; not dwelling on these things or living them out.

This is what it takes to live a life of loving and serving others.

Mat13:44"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and **then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field."**

Phi3:7**But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ.** [8]What is more, **I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things.**

I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ [9]and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—**the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.**

'By faith we ..... receive the promise of the Spirit.' (Gal3:14)

The Holy Spirit is this righteousness from God, through whom we become sanctified over time, actually living righteously in pure love as we learn to be more and more willing to go God's way.

Phi3:10**I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings,** becoming like him in his death, [11]and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.

Phi1:21For to me, **to live is Christ** and to die is gain.

Act20:24"..... I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace."

1Cor10:33 ..... For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved.

Cor5:14**For Christ's love compels us,** ..... [15] ..... he died for all, that **those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.**

Mar8:34 ..... "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross [daily Luk9:23] and follow me. [35]For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but **whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it.** [36]**What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul [very self Luk9:25]?** [37]**Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?"**

'The cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.' (Gal6:14).

"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." (Mat4:19)

Taking up our cross, in addition to being bold for Christ in the face of persecution, also means to daily abstain from sinful desires, from dwelling on them and thinking about how to gratify them, longing for things that are sinful, and to abstain from behaving sinfully in how we treat and think about people. Whoever wants to preserve his sinful ways and the sinful things he wants, and pursues to have and keep them, will loose it all, even their very self.

But he who loses them, gives them up, will find true life forever.

Joh12:25"The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life."

This refers to loving the things worldliness has to offer: lust and debauchery, drugs and alcohol, money and luxury, power and status, conceit and selfish ambition, deceit and falsehood, anger and malice, hatred and slander, complaining and devisiveness, etc....

Luk14:26"If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters—yes, even his own life—he cannot be my disciple."

What we hate is the sin in all of us, wrongdoing, how messed up we are, the messed up things we all do and the bad ways in which we often interact with each other and treat each other, the harm we do to ourselves and others.

Heb11:24By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. [25]**He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time.** [26]**He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.** [27]By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; **he persevered because he saw him who is invisible.**

'Now Moses was a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth.' (Num12:3)

Humility is being submissive and counting others better and more important than ourselves; in this case that other is God.

Mat6:24"No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. **You cannot serve both God and Money."**

Luk12:33"Sell your possessions and give to the poor."

Luk19:8But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! **Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount."** - Zacchaeus was a wealthy chief tax collector

[9]**Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham.** [10]**For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."**

True salvation comes when you truly repent.

Zacchaeus truly repented, therefore it changed his actions. This showed he believed in God, just as Abraham did when he went to sacrifice Isaac (Jam2:21, Gen15). His heart change was real because it changed his life.

'Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. This then is how we know that we belong to the truth.' (1Joh3:18)

'Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test? ..... For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth' (2Cor13:5-8)

Turning to God, Zacchaeus changed from serving self to loving others.

'But if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him.' (1Joh2:5)

'Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.' (Eph5:1-2)

How you act shows how you believe.

Luk16:10"Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. [11]**So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?"**

True riches = the Holy Spirit.

Having God in and with us in all the things we think and feel and do and say, experiencing His presence and insights, His thoughts and ideas and feelings, His continual newness and creativity, the atmosphere(s), ambiance(s), and all the inspirations that come from being around Him, all the things that are inexpressibly fantastic, marvelous and good, the strength and energy, joy and peace, becoming complete in His love, and bearing much fruit in the Kingdom.

Mat7:13"Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. [14]**But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it."**

By all means, go all out in your faith; this is really the only way to do it because:

' "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?"

"The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: .....

'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' " ' (Deu6:4-5 OT) (Mar12:28-30)

God gets what he wants, he is shrewd and tough: ' "I am a hard man, taking out what I did not put in, and reaping what I did not sow." ' (Luk19:22).

Err on the side of without question doing right according to God's written Word! God wants people who love Him with everything they've got, and in the end you can be certain that's what He will have.

Mat7:21"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven."

God can tell by what you do whether you really believe in Him, love Him. These are inextricably linked together, though sometimes you must obey by brute force, trust him by brute force, and the faith that makes it easy and the love will come along, from God and from the effects or fruit of obedience, soon thereafter.

' "The good news of the kingdom of God is being preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it." ' (Luk16:16)

' "From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it." ' (Mat11:12)

This is the grace of God; he puts us through the trials to discipline us, to make us holy,

'Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. ..... God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness.' (Heb12:7,10)

and then after we have suffered a little while restores us and makes us strong, firm, and steadfast.

Fight, 'stand firm in the faith.' (1Cor16:13): 'And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

..... this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it.' (1Pet5:10-12)

God makes us strong by bathing us in His presence; divine inspiration.

' "For the joy of the Lord is your strength" ' (Neh8:10)

" 'You have made known to me the paths of life;
you will fill me with joy in your presence.' "
(Psa 16:8-11OT) (Act2:28)

- King David speaking of Jesus talking to God the Father

Luk6:46**"Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?** [47]I will show you what he is like who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice. [48]He is like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. [49]But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete."

Luk13:23Someone asked him, "Lord, are only a few people going to be saved?"

He said to them, [24]**"Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to."**

Making every effort requires forcefulness.

' "As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man." ' (Mat24:37-39)

' "However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?" ' (Luk18:7)

Beware the teaching that 'believers' who have no fruit are saved but just 'not living in the blessings', as if you can decide to keep some of your sins in trade for having to lose some of God's blessings. The gospel of God does not teach this. It is non-sense; it may make sense according to human reasoning, but God thinks in a different way, operates on a higher plane, accomplishing His perfect will through us, 'his good, pleasing and perfect will.' (Rom12:2), ' "For nothing is impossible with God." ' (Luk1:37) Do you believe this?

Mat11:12"From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it."

Mar10:15"I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."

Ultimately you may not be able to reason your way out of sinning, but must simply obey, like a little child. And it may take forcefulness to do this as an adult, to object to and reject your own reasoning (what makes sense to you) and desires, passions, urges, cravings, sinful behaviors and pleasures, fixation on pleasure, selfish over-indulgences, in order to simply obey the authority of God.

Luk16:16" ..... the good news of the kingdom of God is being preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it."

Rev1:5 ..... To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, [6]**and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father**—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.

'Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." ' (Joh14:34-36)

'To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." ' (Joh8:31-32)

' "If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. ..... you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you." ' (Joh14:15-17)

' "Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." By this he meant the Spirit.' (Joh7:38-39)

'Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.' (1Cor2:17)

A slave to sin has no permanent place in the family, but he who overcomes through faith in Jesus Christ will be saved. 'This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.' (1Joh5:4) 'I will show you my faith by what I do.' (Jam2:18) We must make every effort to overcome, being driven by our faith in Christ Jesus, knowing that through Him the Holy Spirit will enable us to succeed in overcoming. Overcoming means giving up every hint of worldliness, sin:

'But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. .....

For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a man is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.' (Eph5:3-5)

sexual immorality, lust, greed

loving money and materialism, idolatry

deceit and lying, loving and practicing falsehood

stealing and swindling

hatred, anger, malice, envy

selfish ambition, conceit

slander, complaining, arguing, devisiveness

drunkenness, and the like

(Gal5:19-21, Phi2:3, Col3:5-10, 2Tim2:3-4)

Overcoming means standing up for Christ and being a light to the world by telling others the gospel of Jesus,

and becoming loving toward all people:

completely humble - submissive, considering others better than yourself

gentle, patient, kind, compassionate, peacemaking, forgiving, merciful

giving to, and doing good to, and bearing with others

(Gal5:22-24, Eph4:2,32, Luk6:36, Mat6:14-15, Phi2:3,14, Col3:12-13, Rev21:8)

Overcoming means:

'Be joyful always, ... give thanks in all circumstances,

for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.' (1The5:16,18)

Rev2:1"To the angel of the church in Ephesus write:

These are the words of him who ..... walks among the seven golden lampstands*: [2]**I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked men, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false.** [3]**You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary.** [4]**Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love.** [5]**Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent**[4h] **and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.** [6]**But you have this in your favor: You hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.** [7] **..... To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God."**

* the words are Jesus', and the lampstands are the churches

Repenting means giving your all to God.

The lampstand is in the presence of Jesus, so for it to be removed from its place is to be removed from Jesus' presence.

So unless they repented Jesus was going to remove them from His presence. We must overcome, by faith.

'This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.

Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.' (1Joh5:4-5)

In Genesis we are told that anyone who eats of the tree of life lives forever:

'And the LORD God said, "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever." ' (Gen3:22)

The tree of life was in the garden of Eden. Adam and Eve were not allowed to eat from that tree, once they had sinned, because this would cause them to live forever, and God did not want people who live in sin to be living with Him forever....... That's why we need Jesus, to provide the way for us to be cleansed of our sin through His death on the cross, and then be purified by the Holy Spirit, made to sin no more.

.....

[11]" ..... **He who overcomes will not be hurt at all by the second death."**

We see a little below that the second death is being thrown into the fiery lake of burning sulfur and remaining there forever. This is known as hell.

.....

[17]" ..... **To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give him a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to him who receives it."**

Possibly this may mean we will learn, possess secret things, be given insight into mysteries, and that we will know a secret thing about a specific and unique role we play, who we are, in Christ's kingdom.

> We receive something hidden, and perhaps we learn something about ourselves (Biblical names show something about the person, what they are like, what they do) that others will not know, we become something others will see only by what comes out of our lives, but that we know inwardly from the time he gives it to us.

.....

[26]**"To him who overcomes and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations—**

[27]'He will rule them with an iron scepter;
he will dash them to pieces like pottery' (Psa 2:9)

— just as I have received authority from my Father. [28]I will also give him the morning star."

Suspect morning star is about a new fresh light of inspiration coming to us each day, that is part of something that has been around from ancient days.

> New revelations like this coming to us every morning, forever.......

[Rev3:1]"To the angel of the church in Sardis write:

..... I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. [2]**Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God.** [3]**Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; obey it, and repent**[4i]**. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you.** [4]**Yet you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes. They will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy.** [5]**He who overcomes will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out his name from the book of life, but will acknowledge his name before my Father and his angels."**

Repenting leads to being complete in deeds. Giving your whole heart, mind, soul, and all your strength to God produces results.

Living a life of faith enables us to persevere and complete our service; 'For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.' (Eph2:10).

This brings glory to God, just as Jesus did; ' "I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do." ' (Joh17:4)

'Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. This then is how we know that we belong to the truth.' (1Joh3:18)

'But if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him.' (1Joh2:5)

'If we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.' (1Joh4:12)

Jesus comes like a thief to people who are not ready, have not lived a life of faith that produces good fruit; they are taken by surprise, not prepared to meet their maker.

Soiling our clothes means sinning. Being dressed in white refers to righteous acts:

> ' "For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear." (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.)' (Rev19:7-8)

When by the grace of God we get the sin out of our lives (we overcome), He gives us righteous things to do: 'If a man cleanses himself from the latter, he will be an instrument for noble purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work.' (2Tim2:21). As said before, we must get the sin out before we can effectively and consistently live a life of love, doing good to others.

'Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.' (2Cor7:1)

'This is how we know we are in him: Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did.' (1Joh2:5-6)

' "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, ... he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him." ' (Act10:38)

'But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.' (1Joh3:2-3)

Having one's name 'blotted out' of the book of life implies that one can be removed from the kingdom of God,

> ' "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful." ' (Joh15:1)
>
> ' "Therefore consider carefully how you listen. Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has will be taken from him." ' (Luk8:18)

If your repentence does not result in obedience and bearing good fruit and not bad, good deeds and not bad, then your believing, faith, is not real and you're not alive with God:

> ' "No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thornbushes, or grapes from briers. The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks." ' (Luk6:43-45)
>
> ' "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." ' (Mat7:19)

'You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit,

if the Spirit of God lives in you.

And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.' (Rom8:9)

'God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth.

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.' (1Joh1:5-7)

.....

[12]**"Him who overcomes I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will he leave it. I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on him my new name."**

Since we are the temple of God, He lives in us, and there will be no actual temple building in the city, the new Jerusalem (discussed below), the above passage probably does not mean that we will live only in a single building for all eternity, but rather that God's Spirit will live in us forever no matter where we are in the universe.

' "If you love me, you will obey what I command.

> And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. ..... you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you." ' (Joh14:15-17)

'Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit,
who is in you.' (1Cor6:19)

'For we are the temple of the living God.' (2Cor6:16)

A pillar implies something that is strong and reliable that God uses to build up the Kingdom; not in and out, back and forth, 2 steps forward 1 step back type of walk with God.

It takes strength to be a pillar, it takes faith (a very strong thing) to overcome,

> 'This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.' (1Joh5:4-5)

'I can do everything
through him who gives me strength.' (Phi4:13)

' "Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say? I will show you what he is like who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice. He is like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete." ' (Luk6:46-49)

Putting our faith in Christ into action makes us strong.

.....

[20]**"Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.** [21]**To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne.**"

We open the door by truly repenting, which is shown by our actions. This shows we believe in Him, this opens the door.

We hear His voice by repenting:

> ' "If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own." ' (Joh7:17)

We will eat together; possibly our food is the Holy Spirit, whom we share in together. Also,

> ' "My food," said Jesus,"is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work." ' (Joh4:34)

We share together in the work of the Father.

> By faith in Christ we overcome our sinful nature, and bear fruit in this lost world.

[Rev15:2]And I saw what looked like a sea of glass mixed with fire and, standing beside the sea, **those who had been victorious** over the beast and his image and over the number of his name. They .....
[3] ..... sang the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb:

"Great and marvelous are your deeds,
Lord God Almighty.
Just and true are your ways,
King of the ages.
[4]Who will not fear you, O Lord,
and bring glory to your name?
For you alone are holy.
All nations will come
and worship before you,
for your righteous acts have been revealed."

We see that God himself does righteous deeds, lives righteously.

> Therefore he wants his children to do the same.

God is shrewd and tough: ' "I am a hard man, taking out what I did not put in, and reaping what I did not sow." ' (Luk19:22)

Therefore in the end God gets what he wants, children who live holy and righteous lives like Him, who love Him ('This is love for God: to obey his commands.' (1Joh5:3)) with their all, the most important commandment:

' " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' " '
(Deu 6:4-5 OT) (Mar12:28-30)

It's those who have been obedient and purified through and through, who have overcome Satan, who can most fully appreciate God.

> We have to get past our sin, stop sinning and start living God's way, before we realize how great God's ways are; they are great beyond comprehension!

We show our fear of God, 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.' (Psa111:10), by obeying him, which also brings him glory: ' "I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do." ' (Joh17:4)

[Rev19:6]Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting:

"Hallelujah!
For our Lord God Almighty reigns.
[7]Let us rejoice and be glad
and give him glory!
For the wedding of the Lamb has come,
and his bride has made herself ready.
[8]**Fine linen, bright and clean,**
was given her to wear." (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.)

'His bride has made herself ready', again this involves conscious effort on our part to make ourselves ready. When we put effort into purifying ourselves from sin, sex immorality, anger, etc..... God enables us to succeed by the Holy Spirit.

Do not be like the man in the parable of the king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son:

> ' "But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. 'Friend,' he asked, 'how did you get in here without wedding clothes?' The man was speechless.
>
> Then the king told the attendants, 'Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'
>
> For many are invited, but few are chosen." ' (Mat22:11-14)

Without a life of good deeds, love, righteousness, one's faith in Christ is shown to not be real.

As said above, when we make ourselves ready by overcoming our sinful nature by the power of God, getting the sin out of our lives and living according to the Holy Spirit,

> 'Those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.' (Rom8:5)

then we will be given righteous things to do, work in the Kingdom of God:

> 'For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.' (Eph2:10)

[9]Then the angel said to me, **"Write: 'Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!' " And he added, "These are the true words of God."**

[10]" **..... hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."**

Worship God. Do not worship or idolize people or worldly things: sex, food, money, power, prestige, cars, tvs, computers, technology, anything.

Jesus was a prophet, The Prophet, speaking by the Spirit of God, ' "The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life." ' (Joh6:63).

God gave Jesus the Spirit without limit, ' "For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit [OR: to him God gives the Spirit without limit]." ' (Joh3:34).

Jesus told us exactly what God told Him to tell us:

' "For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it.

I know that his command leads to eternal life.

So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say." ' (Joh12:49-50)

and

' "everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you." ' (Joh15:15)

' "For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does." ' (Joh5:20)

When we testify to others about Jesus, by word and/or deed, God's Spirit flows through us.

[Rev21:1]**Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth,** for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. [2]**I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,** prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. [3]And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, **"Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.** [4]**He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."**

[5]He who was seated on the throne said, **"I am making everything new!"** Then he said, "Write this down, for **these words are trustworthy and true."**

[6]He said to me: **"It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End."**

"To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life."

Thirsty for righteousness.

If you want God you want righteousness,

because God is righteous,

and He will give us the righteous Holy Spirit to live in us.

The Holy Spirit is free because Jesus paid the price for us, for a Holy God can not live in someone who has not been cleansed of their sin.

spring of the water of life = Holy Spirit

'On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." By this he meant the Spirit.' (Joh7:37-39)

> ' "But whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." ' (Joh4:14)

To believe in Christ is to be living according to Christ.

The more you overcome the sinful nature, by putting the faith God has given you into action and with His help, the thirstier you will get for God and His righteousness,

> 'until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.' (Eph4:13)
>
> 'For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ.' (Col2:9-10)

Therefore,

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled." (Mat5:6)

[7]**"He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son."**

We must get the sin out of ourselves through the Holy Spirit by continually repenting and believing in Jesus in order to live forever with God.

'No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him.' (1Joh3:6)

' "If you love me, you will obey what I command.

> And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. ..... you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you." ' (Joh14:15-17)

True faith results in receiving God's Holy Spirit, and true love for God results in living according to His Spirit and overcoming our own sinful nature, the world, and the devil in order to live a life of love, doing good to others.

' "Everything is possible for him who believes." ' (Mar9:23)

[8]**"But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death."**

Those who do not believe do not obey, they follow their own evil desires and live lives of sin, do harm to themselves and others.

'Anyone who does not love remains in death.

> Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him.' (1Joh3:14)

.....

[22]**I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.** [23]The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for **the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp.** [24]The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. [25]On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. [26]The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it. [27]**Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.**

True believers get the sin out of their lives through the incredible power of God operating in their lives, ' "For nothing is impossible with God." ' (Luk1:37)

[Rev22:3]**No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him.** [4]**They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.** [5] **..... And they will reign for ever and ever.**

[Rev22:10]Then he told me, "..... the time is near. [11]Let him who does wrong continue to do wrong; let him who is vile continue to be vile; **let him who does right continue to do right; and let him who is holy continue to be holy."** - angel speaking to John

Again, it is possible to do right and it is possible to be holy in this life, for

> ' "Everything is possible for him who believes." ' (Mar9:23)

[12]**"Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done.** [13]**I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End."**

'Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. .....

As the body without the spirit is dead,
so faith without deeds is dead.' (Jam2:17, 26)

God knows what you do and why you do it.

He knows.......

[1Cor4:4] **..... It is the Lord who judges me.** [5] **..... the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God.**

[Heb4:13]Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. **Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.**

[Rev2:23]" **..... I am he who searches hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds." - Jesus**

' "I the LORD search the heart
and examine the mind,
to reward a man according to his conduct,
according to what his deeds deserve."
' (Jer17:10)

[2Cor5:11]**Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade men. .....**

If we really love people as ourselves and do to them as we would have them do to us, then we will alert them to the fact that they are headed for hell, try to save them, try hard.

[Luk6:31]**"Do to others as you would have them do to you."**

[Rom13:9] **..... "Love your neighbor as yourself." (Lev 19:18)**

[2Cor5:10]**For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.**

'God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.

In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him.' (1Joh4:16-17)

'Be imitators of God, therefore,
as dearly loved children and live
a life of love, just as Christ
loved us and gave himself up for
us as a fragrant offering and
sacrifice to God.' (Eph5:1-2)

Showing our love for people by trying to help them get saved is a real good thing to do.

[14]**"Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city.** [15]**Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood."**

Washing our robes is cleaning up our acts and flying right, that is, repenting and believing, with God's help.

Faith causes us to do something, put forth effort to wash our clothes, which means to become pure and holy, live a life of faith and love, bear fruit, do righteous deeds, do good to others.

[16]"I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. ..... "

[17] **..... Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.**

Thirsty for righteousness, because that's what they are going to get when the Holy Spirit comes to live in them. For you to take it you've got to want it.

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled." (Mat5:6)

We come by repenting, we thirst for righteousness, the water of life is the Holy Spirit, given to live in us forever.

Being thirsty for righteousness is shown by how we live our lives, and is the outcome of faith in and love for God.

You may have to forcefully overcome your sinful nature (repent) in order to experience God enough, or enough of God (' "If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own." ' (Joh7:17)) to get thirsty:

' "The good news of the kingdom of God is being preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it." ' (Luk16:16)

' "From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it." ' (Mat11:12)

One might theorize that people can not actually become holy, that at the end there are not 2 groups: good people and evil people. But with God all things are possible, the precious blood of Christ cleanses us so that the Holy Spirit can come live inside us and purify us so that we become holy, blameless, faultless, righteous,

'Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. He who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous.' (1Joh3:7)

The water of life is a free gift because there is nothing we could do to earn having the Holy Spirit.

> That the water of life is the Holy Spirit living in us:
>
> ' "Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." By this he meant the Spirit.' (Joh7:38-39)
>
> ' "But whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." ' (Joh4:14)

We believe, and that is work,

> ' "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent." ' (Joh6:29)

But forgiveness of sins is given to us, a gift (we do not deserve it), through our faith, which manifests itself as we repent, turn from our own sinful ways to live according to God's ways, 'For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.' (Rom6:23)

Jesus GAVE himself for us on the cross to redeem us. He never sinned, so therefore He could pay for our sins because He did not have to pay for His own.

When we repent and put our faith in Jesus, trust in what he did for us on the cross, God forgives our sins and reconciles us to Him, puts His Spirit inside us, and we live with Him forever.

' "If you love me, you will obey what I command.

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. ..... you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you." ' (Joh14:15-17)

Rom12:2 **Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.**

.....

[9] **..... Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.**

But about the Son he* says,

"Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever,
and righteousness will be the scepter of your kingdom.

You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;
therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions
by anointing you with the oil of joy." (Psa 45:6,7 OT) (Heb1:8-9)

* God

.....

[21] **Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.**

Again, there are things we must do to have real faith in God:

We overcome by faith.

Mat13:40 "As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. [41] **The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. [42] They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. [43] Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. ..... "**

Girls should take note, as their sexy looks, clothes, voice, ways, etc.,

when they amplify these things to everyone around, cause men to sin.

Woman who intentionally dress, look, talk, and act sexually provocatively cause men to sin. When people are thrown into the fiery furnace they will spend eternity in it.

Rev20:10 **And the devil ..... was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.**

This is the real place also referred to as hell.

[11] Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. [12] And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. **The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.** [13] The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and **each person was judged according to what he had done.** [14] Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. **[15] If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.**

People in the book of life act right, the evidence of faith. Trusting their life to God, they are willing to be obedient to His commands and be transformed to become like Him. Regarding the city where God lives:

'Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.' (Rev21:27)

At the end of the day,

real faith produces real actions.

We can be judged as to whether we had faith by looking at how we lived our lives,

'Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. .....

As the body without the spirit is dead,
so faith without deeds is dead.' (Jam2:17, 26)

'I will show you my faith by what I do.' (Jam2:!8)

'What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him?

Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it?

In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.' (Jam2:14-17)

When we repent and believe in Jesus, and the Holy Spirit comes to live in us, we go do good and loving things. These are the proof that we really repented and believed.

Gal6:7 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.

[8] The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction;

the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

Those who allow themselves, force themselves,

' "The good news of the kingdom of God is being preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it." ' (Luk16:16)

' "From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it." ' (Mat11:12)

to be led by the Spirit, to follow the leadership of the Spirit, reap eternal life:

'But if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.' (Rom8:13-14)

You can experience the Spirit, Christ, the presence of God, His care and love, but elect to not follow Him, which ultimately leads to condemnation:

'For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, that our forefathers were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ. Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them; their bodies were scattered over the desert. Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did.' (1Cor10:1-5)

'Though you already know all this, I want to remind you that the Lord delivered his people out of Egypt, but later destroyed those who did not believe.' (Jud1:5-6)

'And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who disobeyed? So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief.' (Heb3:18-19)

'If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them.' (2Pet2:20-21)

' "He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." ' (Luk3:16-17)

[9] Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. [10] Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

Do not decide that the Christian life is too hard, too tiring, and go back to giving yourself over to sinning. We must persevere to the end:

'We are confident of better things in your case—things that accompany salvation. God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them.

We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure.

We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised. (Heb6:9-12)

'I can do everything through him who gives me strength.' (Phi4:13)

'By faith we ..... receive the promise of the Spirit.' (Gal3:14)

'I always thank God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus. ..... He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.' (1Cor1:4,8)

2The3:13 **..... never tire of doing what is right.**

It takes grace from God to not tire of doing right, but if we hold on in faith,

'But Christ is faithful as a son over God's house. And we are his house, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast.' (Heb3:6)

and stand firm in it,

'It is by faith you stand firm.' (2Cor1:24)

'Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong.' (1Cor16:13)

'Stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.' (1Cor15:58)

and fight the fight of the faith,

'Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called.' (1Tim6:12)

'You, who through faith are shielded by God's power.' (1Pet1:4-5)

'Take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.' (Eph6:16)

'God's work—which is by faith.' (1Tim1:4)

the grace will be there and we will succeed in becoming Christians.

' "Everything is possible for him who believes." ' (Mar9:23)

Rom1:4 ..... Jesus Christ our Lord. [5] Through him and for his name's sake, we received grace and apostleship **to call people** from among all the Gentiles **to the obedience that comes from faith.**

Rom2:6 **God "will give to each person according to what he has done." (Psa 62:12; Pro 24:12) [7] To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life. [8] But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger.**

Is is not enough to get it right and then stop, we must persist:

'If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them.' (2Pet2:20-21)

2The1:3 We ought always to thank God for you, brothers, and rightly so, because **your faith is growing more and more, and the love every one of you has for each other is increasing.** [4] Therefore, among God's churches we boast about **your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and trials you are enduring.**

Jam1:2 **Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, [3] because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. [4] Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.**

[5] All this is evidence that God's judgment is right, and **as a result you will be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering.** [6] God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you [7] and give relief to you who are troubled ..... **[8] He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. [9] They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord .....**

..... [11] With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, **that our God may count you worthy of his calling**, and that **by his power he may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith.**

Heb6:7 **Land that drinks in the rain often falling on it and that produces a crop useful to those for whom it is farmed receives the blessing of God. [8] But land that produces thorns and thistles is worthless and is in danger of being cursed. In the end it will be burned.**

[9] Even though we speak like this, dear friends, we are confident of better things in your case—things that accompany salvation. [10] God is not unjust; he will not forget **your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them. [11] We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure.** [12] We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who **through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.**

Faith produces work, a labor of love for people.

God responds by giving you the strength and inspiration to pursue becoming holy, full of love, through His Holy Spirit.

This results in productivity, as shown in the parable of the talents:

' "After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. The man who had received the five talents brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.'

His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!' " ' (Mat25:19-21)

The wicked lazy servant is condemned in this same parable for not putting his talent to use:

' "Then the man who had received the one talent came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. So I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.'

His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant!' .....

'Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents. For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' " ' (Mat25:24-30)

If you get lazy or start slacking off, the devil will quickly start winning battles.

'What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? .....

Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.' (Jam2:14-17)

'by faith we ..... receive the promise of the Spirit.' (Gal3:14)

You need breaks, God gives them to you, and times of celebration and rest, but not a break from doing His will, not a break to loosen up and do some sinning.

As faith and obedience happen together, are inseparable, here we see the same for disbelief and disobedience.

We must persevere in our faith to the end.

Heb3:12 **See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.** [13] But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, **so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. [14] We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end the confidence we had at first.** [15] As has just been said:

As repenting and believing are basically synonymous, so are sin and unbelief.

If we believe Jesus when he said ' "I am the way and the truth and the life." ' (Joh14:6), then we follow him, becoming His disciple.

Not following Him is not believing in Him, when we go our own way to satisfy our sinful desires and passions, cravings and urges.

Sin is so very deceitful. As soon as we start turning from God's ways:

Our hearts begin hardening,

and our eyes start closing to the truth.

We become insensitive to the truth,

which makes it easier to go farther down the path of sin.

Remember the confidence you had when you first experienced God and believed. Rise up in faith again.

**"Today, if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts**
as you did in the rebellion." (Psa 95:7,8)

[16] Who were they who heard and rebelled? Were they not all those Moses led out of Egypt? [17] And with whom was he angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the desert? [18] And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who disobeyed? [19] So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief.

In the desert people are thirsty: we are thirsty for lack of the Holy Spirit due to our sin, our unbelief.

Even though these people had God in their midst leading them, this does not mean they were saved, because they did not follow Him or keep His commands, did not really love Him, did not really believe in Him.

Disobedience shows we do not really believe in, follow, love God.

'Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. .....

As the body without the spirit is dead,
so faith without deeds is dead.' (Jam2:17, 26)

Heb4:1 Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest still stands, **let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it. [2] For we also have had the gospel preached to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because those who heard did not combine it with faith. [3] Now we who have believed enter that rest, ...**

..... [9] There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; [10] for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his. **[11] Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience.**

It takes effort on our part, though of course our effort alone is completely insufficient.

We need Christ's sacrifice to clear us of our many sins,

and need the Holy Spirit to enable us to overcome our sins.

1Cor10:1 For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, that our forefathers were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. [2] They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. [3] They all ate the same spiritual food [4] and drank the same spiritual drink; for **they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ. [5] Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them; their bodies were scattered over the desert.**

[6] Now these things occurred as examples **to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things** as they did. [7] Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written: "The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in pagan revelry." (Exo 32:6) **[8] We should not commit sexual immorality, as some of them did—and in one day twenty-three thousand of them died.** [9] We should not test the Lord, as some of them did—and were killed by snakes. [10] And do not grumble, as some of them did—and were killed by the destroying angel.

[11] These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come.

Even though you drink the Holy Spirit from Christ, if you then set your heart on evil things as the Lord passes you through the fire, you will be cast out of God's presence and destroyed by God.

' "He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." ' (Luk3:16-17)

Jud1:5 Though you already know all this, **I want to remind you that the Lord delivered his people out of Egypt, but later destroyed those who did not believe.** [6] And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home—these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day. [7] In a similar way, **Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.**

Just because you by God's mercy and grace experience His presence in your life does not automatically mean that you are saved. If you do not respond in faith shown by obedience to His Word, if you go on living a worldly life, you have gained nothing by experiencing God and His blessings in your life.

Egypt was the land of slavery for the Israelites; they were slaves to the Egyptians. People can get set free from slavery to sin ('Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin." ' (Joh14:34-36)) by God, and later return to it and lose their relationship with God:

'If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them.

Of them the proverbs are true: "A dog returns to its vomit," (Pro 26:11) and, "A sow that is washed goes back to her wallowing in the mud." ' (2Pet2:20-22)

Similarly, some of the angels were in God's system and then later kicked out after they left God. One way we can kick God out of our lives is by letting ourselves be caught up in sexual lusts and perversions.

.....

[14] Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied ..... : **"See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones [15] to judge everyone, and to convict all the ungodly of all the ungodly acts they have done in the ungodly way, and of all the harsh words ungodly sinners have spoken against him." [16] These men are grumblers and faultfinders; they follow their own evil desires .....**

We all at times have evil desires; the question is whether we follow them. The choice is yours whether you follow them, or whether you will 'Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called.' (1Tim6:12), and resist temptation,

'Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith.' (1Pet5:8-9)

and go through the suffering that entails,

'Because he* himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.' (Heb2:18)

* Christ

'Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin. As a result, he does not live the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God.

For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do—living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry. ..... But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.' (1Pet4:1-5)

Don't give up the position, the office, the ministry, the work God has given you talents for, in order to pursue sinful pleasures, or you will be destroyed.

2Tim3:4 **..... lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God — [5] having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.**

The power is the ability to do, and be, like God.

God's power converts us into righteous godly people, loving people, but we can deny this power if we still want to sin, and then can still try to look like we are Christians, come across as one, to those around us.

To know God is to be influenced by Him; you can not know Him without being profoundly affected, changed, because:

'His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.' (2Pet1:3-4)

'No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him.' (1Joh3:6)

'Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.' (1Joh4:8)

'Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God.

Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.'
(1Joh4:7)

'Jesus ..... looked toward heaven and prayed: .....

"Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent." ' (Joh17:1,3)

"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." (Joh10:10)

" 'You have made known to me the paths of life;
you will fill me with joy in your presence.' "
(Psa 16:8-11OT) (Act2:28)

- King David speaking of Jesus talking to God the Father

"I have made you known to them,

and will continue to make you known

in order that the love you have for me may be in them

and that I myself may be in them." (Joh17:26)

- Jesus praying to God the Father about believers

We have little effect serving others as long as we are still predominantly pursuing our own selfish interests, as long as we remain slaves to sin.

'Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin.

Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever.

So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." ' (Joh14:34-36)

Tit1:16 **They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him. They are detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good.**

Again, connection between not believing and denying God by our actions. When we reject the truth and follow wickedness, we are decieved and our thinking is corrupted, distorted.

'God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth.

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.' (1Joh1:5-7)

' "If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own." ' (Joh7:17)

'Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. This then is how we know that we belong to the truth.' (1Joh3:18)

For example, 'If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.' (1Tim5:8)

God does not enter into and sustain fellowship with people who are not living according to His ways. Therefore they cannot know him. When we sin we are denying God's way for our life, and this is denying God. Our actions deny God because they show that we oppose God's ways. God wants His ways to be followed by His creation, and we are denying this from happening, denying His commands. This is the same as denying God:

'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.' (Joh1:1-2)

2Tim3:6 They are ..... **loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires, [7] always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth. [8] ..... these men oppose the truth—men of depraved[5b] minds, who, as far as the faith is concerned, are rejected.**

-

You can read the Bible all your life, and still not acknowledge the truth by living according to it,

' "For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother." ' (Mat12:50)

'He replied, "My mother and brothers are those who hear God's word and put it into practice." ' (Luk8:21)

We must not live our lives opposed to the truth, follow a corrupted, distorted moral code, for then we do not truly believe in Christ.

You will have an evil desire pop up sometimes, passions and sinful pleasures that you have urges and cravings to gratify, sinful ways you want to think about and treat people, but you do not have to be swayed by these things, follow their course, thoughts, actions:

'Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called.' (1Tim6:12)

'Stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.' (1Cor15:58)

We often try to rationalize our sins, somehow find a way to fit them into our 'good' moral structure that we claim is in agreement with God's. But in reality we are corrupting and distorting the truth to fit our sin in, to accomodate it.

2Pet2:9 ..... the **Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment. [10] This is especially true of those who follow the corrupt desire of the sinful nature .....**

.....

[20] But you, dear friends, **build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit. [21] Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.**

We must take action ourselves to build ourselves up by applying our faith in Christ, which takes energy, effort, work, perserverance, suffering, fighting to do, putting our faith into action.

Choose to do God's will Joh5:42

Even though we are saved by God's mercy through Christ, for we have all sinned much, we keep ourselves in His love by obeying His commands, repenting. 'This is love for God: to obey His commands.' 1Joh5:3

' "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.

If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love,

just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love." ' (Joh15:9-10)

' "This is my command: Love each other." ' (Joh17:17)

'But if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him.' (1Joh2:5)

Clearly when we set out to love people, God helps us.

Concerning that which is Most Holy:

'Now the first covenant had regulations for worship and also an earthly sanctuary. A tabernacle was set up. In its first room were the lampstand, the table and the consecrated bread; this was called the Holy Place. Behind the second curtain was a room called the Most Holy Place, which had the golden altar of incense and the gold-covered ark of the covenant. This ark contained the gold jar of manna, Aaron's staff that had budded, and the stone tablets of the covenant. Above the ark were the cherubim of the Glory, overshadowing the atonement cover.' (Heb9:1-5)

'When Christ came as high priest of the good things that are already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not man-made, that is to say, not a part of this creation. He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption.' (Heb9:11-12)

Through faith in Christ we enter the Most Holy Place of God.

Heb10:19 Therefore, brothers, since **we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, [20] by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, [21] and since we have a great priest over the house of God, [22] let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.**

.....

[24] To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy— [25] to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.

When we put our faith in Christ as shown by striving to live for Him, God is faithful to protect us, strengthen us, guide us, and inspire us so that we will be successful.

God helps us become His children.

'You yourselves have been taught by God to love each other. ..... Yet we urge you, brothers, to do so more and more.' (1The4:9-10)

'Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.' (Eph5:1-2)

Rom15:16 ..... so that the Gentiles might **become an offering acceptable to God, sanctified[1e] by the Holy Spirit.**

..... [18] I will not venture to speak of anything except **what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God .....**

It is one thing to say you believe in Jesus, another to consistently show it through obedience to God, forsaking worldly things, denying ourselves and serving and submiting to others out of reverance for Christ.

"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross [daily Luk9:23] and follow me." ' (Mar8:34)

"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." (Mat4:19)

' "Any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple." ' (Luk14:33)

This is where the rubber meets the road: do we obey God? This is the proof of our relationship, our faith, our love.

'Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. This then is how we know that we belong to the truth.' (1Joh3:18)

'Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test? ..... For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth.' (2Cor13:5-8)

'Dear friend, do not imitate what is evil but what is good.

Anyone who does what is good is from God.

Anyone who does what is evil has not seen God.' (3Joh1:11)

Rom16:25 Now to him who is able to establish you by my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, ... [26] ..... **so that all nations might believe and obey him**— [27] to the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen.

God is wise and powerful and obtains what He wants, what He is after, which is children who love him. This true love for God is shown by acting like him, which He is very pleased and extremely patient and tolerant to help us learn to do, for our sinful nature must be overcome in order to do this.

1Cor1:4 I always thank God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus. ..... [8] He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. [9] God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.

God helps us.

By the time we leave this world, God will have completed us, as we put our faith in Him daily, so that we are blameless in the way we live,

' "For nothing is impossible with God." ' (Luk1:37)

This is the miraculous grace and will of God for our lives, and shows the incredible power of Christ's sacrificial death on the cross.

'But if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him.' (1Joh2:5)

'If we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.' (1Joh4:12)

1Joh2:3 We know that we have come to know him* if we obey his commands.

' "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.

Greater love has no one than this,
that he lay down his life for his friends.

You are my friends if you do what I command." ' (Joh15:12-14)

' "This is my command: Love each other." ' (Joh17:17)

'Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. This then is how we know that we belong to the truth.' (1Joh3:18)

Selfish sinfulness has to come out in order to continually live a life of love.

[4] The man who says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

***** Christ

[5] But if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him.

Only after we leave our life of sin, all our selfish preoccupations, indulgences, and behaviors, do we have the ability to consistently live a life of love for others, seeking their good.

Sin is following our own sinful desires, which hurt and harm ourselves and others. We must overcome these through Christ in order to be able to love people, which is serving them, looking out for them, doing good to them.

When lost in our own selfishness and filled with our lusts and passions, following our cravings and urges, over-indulging in and fixating on pleasure, treating people with anger, malice, hatred, slander, consumed with selfish ambition, conceit, envy, greed, deceit, devisiveness, and loving and practicing falsehood, we do not stop and help people in need:

' "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me." ' (Mat25:35-36)

God's command:

'And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us.' (1Joh3:23)

When we believe we decide to follow God, we become his disciple, child, leave our sinful lusts, desires, passions, behaviors, and live a life of loving and serving others by the power of the Holy Spirit.

This is how we know we are in him: [6] Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did.

Act10:38 ..... God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, ... he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him."

' "The one who sent me is with me;
he has not left me alone,
for I always do what pleases him." ' (Joh8:29)

**Rev4:8 ..... "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty,
who was, and is, and is to come."**

1Joh1:5 ..... God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

[6] If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth.

[7] But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

' " 'I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.' " ' (Act26:17-18)
- Jesus speaking to Paul

'Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, and that he may send the Christ, who has been appointed for you—even Jesus.' (Act3:19-20)

' "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." ' (Luk24:46-47)

Only when we have repented and start walking according to God's ways are we forgiven our sins and do we enter fellowship (only then have we truly believed), and only as long as we continue.....

' "Remain in me, and I will remain in you.

If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit;

..... If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned." ' (Joh15:4-6)

' "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.

If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love,

just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love." ' (Joh15:9-10)

Heb12:14 Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.

We must make every effort to be holy if we want to be with God. This is an expression of our faith. Then God will do the impossible for us by enabling us to actually live a holy life through the power of His Holy Spirit.

' "For nothing is impossible with God." ' (Luk1:37), with God's powerful Spirit living in us, ' "Everything is possible for him who believes." ' (Mar9:23)

.....

**Mat5:8 "Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God."**

1Pet1:15 But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; [16] for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy." (Lev 11:44,45; 19:2; 20:7)

Col3:17 And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

1Cor10:31 ..... whatever you do,

do it all for the glory of God.

.....
[23] Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, [24] since you know that **you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.**

Love God always, All Ways.

[17] Since you call on a Father who judges each man's work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear.

1Pet2:11 Dear friends, I urge you, **as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul.**

.....

[16] ..... live as servants of God.

Eph4:22 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires;

Very very very deceitful,

'The heart is deceitful above all things
and beyond cure.
Who can understand it? ' (Jer17:9)

Depravity is moral corruption, distortion. We still have morals and may think they are good and right in our own eyes, but they deviate from God's and convienently allow us to pursue our own perverse, distorted, and messed up ways, which result in harm to ourselves and others, and are very low quality.

So these depraved morals, what is right and wrong to us, may appear in part to be in common with God's but their true deviation turns things sour, bad.

[23] to be made new in the attitude of your minds; [24] and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

Putting off the old self and putting on the new self takes effort, 'make every effort' (2Pet1:5),

'Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: [bitterness Eph4:3], anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

.....

Clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.' (Col3:1-13)

'in order that

the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us,

who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.' (Rom8:4)

By God's Spirit the miracle of actually living a holy and righteous life of love is achieved, we overcome.

True righteousness and holiness.

.....

[32] Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

The new creation, how we now live in Christ.

Rom8:29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

Gal6:14 May I never boast except in **the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. [15] ..... what counts is a new creation.**

Through believing in Jesus our sins are forgiven, we are cleansed of them, and we can then receive the Holy Spirit and die to the world's ways, leave our lives of sin, become a new person living a life of love forever.

What else could anyone expect? Here is the way of God:

Eph4:2 **Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.**

This is the new creation, what we become after leaving sin.

Eph4:3 **Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.**

'Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.' (Heb12:14)

As living in peace with others and holiness are related,

so peace and living together in the Holy Spirit are related.

We must pursue peace with people.

1Cor1:10 ..... **be perfectly united in mind and thought.**

Col2:2 My purpose is that they may **be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, [3] in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.**

Phi1:9 And this is my prayer:

**that your love may abound more and
more in knowledge and depth of insight,**

**[10] so that you may be able to discern
what is best .....**

One of the great prizes of life:

Being able to tell what is the best thing to do.

Eph4:13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, **attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.**

Sounds impossible, but

' "Everything is possible for him who believes." ' (Mar9:23)

' "For nothing is impossible with God." ' (Luk1:37)

1Joh3:2 But we know that **when he appears, we shall be like him,** for we shall see him as he is.

[3] Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

We must take action ourselves to live pure, believing that God will give us the power and ability through His presence in our lives to succeed.

We want to become like Christ, to follow him, because we love Him, and he is God.

We are able to purify ourselves through our faith in Christ, because then we have power, God on our side.

.....

[5] But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin.

[6] No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him.

[7] Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray.

He who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous.

Right in Jesus.

When we believe in Jesus, the Holy Spirit of God comes to live inside us forever, and ' "nothing is impossible with God." ' (Luk1:37), including living a life of love and purity.

'Get rid of all moral filth ..... and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.' (Jam1:21-22)

[8]He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.

You don't want to be the work of the devil.

You don't want to be developed by the devil.

[9]No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God.

[10]This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother.

1Joh4:19 We love because he first loved us. ..... [21]And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother.

Mar9:23 " ..... Everything is possible for him who believes."

Phi4:13 I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

Tit1:1 Paul, **a servant of God** and an apostle of Jesus Christ **for the faith of God's elect and the knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness—**

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth, teaches us the truth.

' "If you love me, you will obey what I command.

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. .....

you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you." ' (Joh14:15-17)

' "But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come." ' (Joh15:13)

God, the Word, the truth:

'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.' (Joh1:1-2)

'The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.' (Heb1:3)

[2]**a faith and knowledge resting on the hope of eternal life,** which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time, ...

God's Word, The Bible, is The Truth. Staying in the Word, reading it daily, lots of it, will lead you to godliness,

a life of extreme joy and fulfillment.

Joh17:17 "Sanctify[1f] them by the truth; your word is truth."

Act20:32 "Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified."

2Pet1:2 Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

[3]His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. [4]Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them **you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.**

[5]For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; [6]and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; [7]and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. [8]For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

faith >...>...>...>...>...>...> love

Living an effective and productive life of love requires a hefty foundation that begins with faith.

Joh15:4 "Remain in me, and I will remain in you.

[5]If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit;

Extremes, one or the other, no inbetween.

..... **[6]If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.**

We remain in Christ by putting our faith in Him, living in obedience to His Word.

Joh15:1 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. **[2]He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful."**

' "Therefore consider carefully how you listen. Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has will be taken from him." ' (Luk8:18)

Luk13:6 Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree, planted in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it, but did not find any. [7]So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, 'For three years now I've been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?' "

[8]" 'Sir,' the man replied, 'leave it alone for one more year, and I'll dig around it and fertilize it. [9]If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.' "

Mat5:13 "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men."

People who live by God's principles of faith, love, and purity no matter what are the salt of the earth.

Mat21:43 "Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit."

There is a huge contrast between remaining and producing fruit in Christ and not. One is not even saved (previous passage) while the other has whatever he asks (next passage).

It's black and white,

2 extremes.

[7]If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.

[8]This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples."

.....

2Pet1:10 Therefore, my brothers, **be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, [11]and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.**

1Pet1:22 Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart.

We cannot consistently love and serve people unselfishly until we have crucified our worldly cravings, urges, passions and desires and behaviors, our selfish fixation on pursuing pleasures, and set out to live humbly, with gentleness, kindness, patience, and compassion, which becomes quite doable, the natural path when we live with God in our heart.

We must overcome our sinful nature by repenting and putting our faith in Christ, stop doing harm.

We can also start enjoying all the other things in life and in people that our fixations deprived us the joy of.

1Pet4:8 Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.

This is a key thing to keep in mind for judgment day.

Others include being merciful,

'Judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment! (Jam2:13)

' "Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy." ' (Mat5:7)

and being non-condemning,

' "Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you." ' (Mat7:1-2)

' "Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven." ' (Luk6:37)

1Pet2:1 ..... rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. [2] ..... crave pure spiritual milk .....

Jam1:5 If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.

Makes sense, for our fault is usually that we are not obedient, which is not wise, and the point is that we are asking for wisdom, what we do not have, so God therefore does not fault us but is happy that we want what He has.

If you have wisdom, it will show up in you becoming humble.

Jam3:13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.

-

If we have wisdom we will do good things, in a humble way.

If we do not have humility, we do not have wisdom and understanding.

(back to humility needed to grow 1Pet3:8)

[14]But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. [15]Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil. [16]For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

[17]But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. [18]Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness.

1Pet5:5 ..... All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because,

"God opposes the proud
but gives grace to the humble." (Pro 3:34)

[6]Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. [7]Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

Phi4:6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. [7]And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Mat5:3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

.....

[5]Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth."

The poor in spirit and meek are humble, submissive, considering others better than themselves, kind and gentle, patient, and forgiving.

Phi2:3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.

Humble: submissive, of low rank.

Eph5:21 Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Gal5:13 ..... serve one another in love.

Rom15:2 Each of us should please his neighbor for his good, to build him up.

1Cor10:33 even as I try to please everybody in every way.

Mar10:43 " ..... whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, [44]and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all.

Phi2:4 Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

1Cor10:24 Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others.

[45]For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Mat23:12 "For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted."

1Cor9:19 Though I am free and belong to no man, **I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible.** ..... [22] ..... I have become all things to all men **so that by all possible means I might save some. [23]I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.**

Luk17:7 "Suppose one of you had a servant plowing or looking after the sheep. Would he say to the servant when he comes in from the field, 'Come along now and sit down to eat'? [8]Would he not rather say, 'Prepare my supper, get yourself ready and wait on me while I eat and drink; after that you may eat and drink'? [9]Would he thank the servant because he did what he was told to do? **[10]So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.' "**

'Jesus said to them, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working." ' (Joh5:17)

You may have to delay things that you think you need in order to serve God, but should be grateful to do so, that God gives us the grace to allow us to serve Him.

Phi2:12 Therefore, my dear friends, **as you have always obeyed ..... continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, [13]for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.**

God is always at his work and Jesus too is working. So should we, just as the servant coming in from the field above.

The Holy God Almighty lives in you, watches over you, commands you to leave sin and put your faith in Jesus, and love people. We should be fearful to disobey our mighty Creator.

'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.' (Psa111:10)

Eph6:5 Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. [6]Obey them ..... **like slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. [7]Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, ...**

[14]Do everything without complaining or arguing, [15]so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved[5c] generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe [16]as you hold out the word of life .....

Clear again that we become blameless and pure while living on earth.

Joh14:6 Jesus answered,

"I am the way and the truth and the life.

Believing all of this causes us to repent, turn to live as God does.

No one comes to the Father except through me."

When we come to the Father we approach Him in humble repentance,

'During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission.' (Heb4:7)

Submission is shown by cleaning up our acts and living right.

To do this we have to believe in Him, believe in His Son,

'The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.' (Heb1:1)

'For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form,
and you have been given fullness in Christ.' (Col2:9-10)

Joh14:10 " ..... it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. [11]Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves.

[12]I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.

[13]And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. [14]You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it."

Joh16:23 " ..... I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.

[24] ..... Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete."

Joh15:9 "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.

It is overwhelming to know that Jesus loves us the same way the Father loves Him.

[10]If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love,

just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love.

This love is conditional upon obeying.

The same love that the Father has for Jesus, Jesus has for us. What grace!

This presents a problem for the way people often talk about God's unconditional love. God does in fact love us unconditionally, because He sent Jesus to die for our sins and provide a way to be reconciled with Him, live with Him forever, and anyone may choose to take it.

'God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men —the testimony given in its proper time.' (1Tim2:3-6)

' "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved." ' (Act4:12)

Joh16:31 " ..... I love the Father and ..... I do exactly what my Father has commanded me."

Jesus showed His love for the Father by obeying His commands:

We must do the same.

'This is how we know we are in him: Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did.' (1Joh2:5-6)

Mar1:11 And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, **whom I love; with you I am well pleased."**

Joh8:29 "The one who sent me is with me;
he has not left me alone,
for I always do what pleases him."

Joy comes from being in God's presence, Joh17:1.

We must be humble, obey God. God will be with us always, and this will indeed give us tremendous joy.

' " 'You have made known to me the paths of life;
you will fill me with joy in your presence.' " '
(Psa 16:8-11 OT) (Act2:28)

- King David speaking of Jesus talking to God the Father

.....

[11]I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

[12]**My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.**

[13]**Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.**

[14]**You are my friends if you do what I command."**

Jesus laid down His life for those who obey his commands.

Jesus laid down his life for us, and we must do the same for our friends in order to be Jesus' friend, because he commands us to love others the same way he loved us.

Gal6:2 **Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.**

..... [4]Each one should test his own actions.

We should examine our lives to see if we are helping others, actually living a life of love.

Carrying other's burdens is a way of laying down your life for others.

1Joh3:14 **We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers.**

Anyone who does not love remains in death. [15]**Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him.**

[16]**This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.** [17]**If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?**

1Tim5:8 **If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.**

'Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.' .....

'As the body without the spirit is dead,

so faith without deeds is dead.' (Jam2:17, 26)

Real faith in Christ produces real actions. If we don't have the actions, we do not really believe.

To believe in God is to believe in His way of living, serving and loving others.

2Cor8:7 ..... see that you also excel in this grace of giving. [8] ..... I want to test the sincerity of your love ..... [24] ..... show ..... the proof of your love .....

[18]**Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.** [19]**This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence** [20]**whenever our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.**

'Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test? ..... For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth.' (2Cor13:5-8)

[21]**Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God** [22]**and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him.**

[23]**And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us.**

Jam5:16 **The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.**

1Pet3:12 **"For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous**
and his ears are attentive to their prayer,
but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."
(Psa 34:12-16)

1Pet4:7 **..... be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray.**

Mat21:21 **Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, if you have faith and do not doubt, ... you can say to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and it will be done.** [22]**If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer."**

Throw that mountain of sin into the sea.

Jam1:6 **..... he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.** [7]**That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord;** [8]**he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does.**

Mar11:22 **"Have faith in God," Jesus answered.** [23]**"I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him.** [24]**Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.** [25]**And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins."**

Luk17:5 **The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!"**

[6]**He replied, "If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it will obey you."**

' "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all your seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches." ' (Mat13:31-32)

As your faith grows through applying it, the power of the Holy Spirit flows more and more through you, until people flock to be near this strength and love.

Joh15:16 **"You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last.**

Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.

'Dear friends,
if our hearts do not condemn us,
we have confidence before God

and receive from him anything we ask,

because we obey his commands and do what pleases him.

And this is his command:
to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ,
and
to love one another as he commanded us.'
(1Joh3:21-23)

If we love people
we will try to help get them saved.

[17]**This is my command: Love each other."**

Rom12:9 **Love must be sincere.**

[10]**Be devoted to one another in brotherly love.**

Honor one another above yourselves.

[24]**Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.**

1Joh4:7 Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God.

Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.

'The only thing that counts is faith
expressing itself through love.' (Gal5:6)

'Faith by itself,
if it is not accompanied by action,
is dead. .....'

'As the body without the spirit is dead,
so faith without deeds is dead.'
(Jam2:17, 26)

'Everything that does not come from faith is sin.' (Rom14:23)

The Christian obeys God's commands.

[8]**Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. .....**

[12]**No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.**

This is inexpressibly huge.

God does not do things halfway, he does them completely.

1Tim6:15 ..... God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, [16]who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.

Based on the above, the following is also

inexpressibly huge:

[13]**We know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.**

.....

[16] **..... God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.**

[17]**In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him.**

Eph5:1 **Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children** [2]**and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.**

Have to get the sin out,

stop following our selfish evil desires,

before we can do much loving.

1The3:12 **May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else .....**

[13]**May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy** in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.

Again, God cleanses us of our sin, helps us to not sin so that we can love others and actually become blameless and holy by the time we see him after our lives in this world are finished.

1The5:16 **Be joyful always;** [17]**pray continually;** [18]**give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.**

All this takes real faith to do.

.....

This takes faith:

[21] **..... Hold on to the good.** [22]**Avoid every kind of evil.**

We must fight, make every effort, to live a Christian life.

Phi4:8 **..... whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.**

It takes repenting to focus our heart and mind on what is good.

[9] **..... And the God of peace will be with you.**

As we think and focus on good things, God will help us greatly, perfect us.

When God sees you thinking, focusing your life on what is good, this is repenting, he will sanctify you through and through by His Holy Spirit.

1The5:23 **May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify[1g] you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.** [24]**The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it.**

Put your faith in Christ and He will be faithful to you

to sanctify you as only God can,

enable you to live a blameless life.

Mat25:31 "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. [32]**All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.** [33]He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left."

[34]"Then the King will say to those on his right, **'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.** [35]**For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in,** [36]**I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' "**

[37]"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? ..... ' "

..... [40]" .....**'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.' "**

[41]"Then he will say to those on his left, **'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.** [42]**For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink,** [43]**I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.' "**

..... [45]" ..... 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.' "

[46]**"Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."**

Faith produces action, a life of love.

'Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. .....

As the body without the spirit is dead,

so faith without deeds is dead.' (Jam2:17, 26)

The actions, deeds of loving others and getting free of sin,
(which is needed in order to be able to love others).

When preoccupied with and enslaved to satisfying our own
sinful cravings and urges
we do not have or take the time to help others.

Joh17:1 ..... Jesus ..... looked toward heaven and prayed: .....

[3]**"Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent."**

Joh10:10 **" ..... I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."**

' "The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing." ' (Joh6:63).

'On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice,

"If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." By this he meant the Spirit.' (Joh7:37-39)

' "But whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." ' (Joh4:14)

' "If you love me, you will obey what I command.

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. ..... you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. ..... Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you."

"Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me.

He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him."

.....
Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching.

My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him." '

(Joh14:15-23)

Act2:28 **" 'You have made known to me the paths of life;**
you will fill me with joy in your presence.' " (Psa 16:8-11)

- King David speaking of Jesus talking to God the Father

.....

[26]**"I have made you known to them,**

and will continue to make you known

in order that the love you have for me may be in them

and that I myself may be in them."

- Jesus praying to God the Father about believers

back to I always do what pleases Him, Joh15:9

Joh4:24 **"I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life."**

Joh8:51 **"I tell you the truth, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death."**

Heb11:5 **By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death;** he could not be found, because God had taken him away. For before he was taken, **he was commended as one who pleased God.**

[6]**And without faith it is impossible to please God,** because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that **he rewards those who earnestly seek him.**

We earnestly seek God by repenting.

Luk11:9 "So I say to you: **Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.** [10]**For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened."**

Ask for God by repenting, turning to Him, and you will find out that He exists. He will make Himself real to you, reveal Himself to you; you will encounter Him.

Seek Him out through studying His Word and you will find out the real truth of the gospel, what it is, the way it really works.

Knock on the door by living out what you read in the gospel, truly completely repenting, and He will open the door, live in you completely.

Jer29:12 "Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. [13]You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. [14]I will be found by you," declares the LORD, "and will bring you back from captivity."

..... the captivity of sin,

'Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin.

Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever.

So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." ' (Joh14:34-36)

'Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.' (1Cor2:17)

Joh11:25 Jesus said to her, **"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies;** [26]**and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"**

[27]"Yes, Lord," she told him, "I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world."

.....

[40]Then Jesus said, **"Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?"**

Joh10:15" ..... I lay down my life for the sheep. ..... [17]**The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again."**

Joh4:34 **"My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work."**

Joh17:4 **"I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do."**

- Jesus praying to the Father

- after Jesus healed a man who could not walk, who had been disabled for 38 years, on the Sabbath

Joh5:16 So, because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath, the Jews persecuted him. [17]Jesus said to them, **"My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working."**

.....

[19]Jesus gave them this answer: **"I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.**

[20]**For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does."**

Joh12:49 **"For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it.** [50]**I know that his command leads to eternal life.**

So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say."

Joh15:15 **"I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for**

"The Father loves the son and shows him all he does",

and the Son "can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does."

and, "So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say."

And:

everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you."

Therefore, how much grace is this ?? !!

1Co42:9 ..... as it is written:

"No eye has seen,
no ear has heard,
no mind has conceived
what God has prepared for those who love him" (Isa 64:4)

— [10]**but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit.**

The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. [11]For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. [12]**We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. .....**

This is overwhelming, that He goes deep into God, the Holy God, will come live in us, and go deep inside God, and on and on:

This shows the extreme power of

Christ's blood,

that it can wash us that clean.

[16]"For who has known the mind of the Lord
that he may instruct him?" (Isa 40:13)

But we have the mind of Christ.

Joh3:8 **"The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."**

People cannot see the path you are on, but they can sense that you are on it, on a path going somewhere much different than theirs and the rest of the world's, on a path they do not know.

We have our eyes, our hopes, set on

something they can not see,

but they can sense it.

- a man born blind who Jesus healed, speaking about Jesus to the Jewish religious leaders who were questioning him

Joh9:31"We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly man who does his will."

- Peter, speaking to the crowd after healing a man lame from birth

Act3:16"By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. **It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has given this complete healing to him,** as you can all see."

Rom4:18Against all hope, Abraham **in hope believed** and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, "So shall your offspring be." (Gen 15:5) **[19]Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead**—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah's womb was also dead. **[20]Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, [21]being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.** [22]This is why "it was credited to him as righteousness." [23]The words "it was credited to him" were written not for him alone, [24]but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. [25]He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.

Rom12:12Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

Heb11:1Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. [2]This is what the ancients were commended for.

[3]By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.

Eph4:10He* who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.

* Christ

Col1:15He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. [16]For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. [17]He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. [18]And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. [19]For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, [20]and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Heb1:1In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, **[2]but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. [3]The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.** After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

.....

[8]But about the Son he* says,

"Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever,
and righteousness will be the scepter of your kingdom.
[9]You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;
therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions
by anointing you with the oil of joy." (Psa 45:6,7)

* God

Being in the Father's presence is joy:

' " 'You have made known to me the paths of life;

you will fill me with joy in your presence.' " '

(Psa 16:8-11 OT) (Act2:28)

- King David speaking of Jesus
talking to God the Father

Holiness, pureness of heart causes us to see and get close to God, where we find joy:

' "Blessed are the pure in heart,

for they will see God." '

(Mat5:8)

'Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy;

without holiness no one will see the Lord.'

(Heb12:14)

'God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. .....

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

(1Joh1:5,7)

The ultimate is to love God always in all ways, love our neighbor, and 'hate what is evil; cling to what is good.' (Rom12:9) Jesus did this to perfection.

God is with the one who always does His will:

' "I love the Father and ..... I do exactly what my Father has commanded me." ' (Joh16:31)

'And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." ' (Mar1:11)

' "The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him." (Joh8:29)

' "I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.

Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.

You are my friends if you do what I command." ' (Joh15:11-14)

[10]He* also says,

"In the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth,
and the heavens are the work of your hands.
[11]They will perish, but you remain;
they will all wear out like a garment.
[12]You will roll them up like a robe;
like a garment they will be changed.
But you remain the same,
and your years will never end." (Psa 102:25-27)

* God

Heb13:8Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

1 - sanctify: to free from sin, purify, and set apart for a sacred purpose. 1a: ^ 1b: ^ 1c: ^ 1d: ^ 1e: ^ 1f: ^ 1g: ^

2 - debauchery: indulgence in pleasure that lacks moral restraint, extreme indulgence in sensual pleasure. 2a: ^ 2b: ^

3 - atonement: to restore to friendship or harmony, settle, resolve --- to repair, the act of making amends or giving satisfaction for a wrong or injury, something done or given as amends or satisfaction, the payment of damages for an offense or injury --- the reconciliation of God and humankind through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. 3a: ^ 3b: ^

4 - repent: to turn from sin/harmdoing and dedicate oneself to the correction of one's life to God's principles: to feel regret and sorrow, to change one's mind. 4a: ^ 4b: ^ 4c: ^ 4d: ^ 4e: ^ 4f : ^ 4g: ^ 4h: ^ 4i: ^

5 - deprave: to make bad, to corrupt morally, degrade with unsound principles or moral values. 5a: ^ 5b: ^ 5c: ^

6 - redeem: to buy back, free from what distresses or harms, free from captivity by payment of ransom, to extricate from or help to overcome something detrimental, release from blame or debt, to free from the consequences of sin, to remove the obligation of a charge for the satisfaction of some debt by someone else making a payment of an amount which secures its removal, to offset the bad effect of, to make worthwhile. 6a: ^ 6b: ^ 6c: ^

Faith and **Love**

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