

THE LIFE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

December 1

Blessed Are the Peacemakers I

Matthew 5:9

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."

The blessing of being a peacemaker is you shall be called the children of God. We are His children and we should be about making peace with people. **Romans 12:18** says, *"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."* **Romans 14:19** says, *"Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another."* It is written in **Hebrews 12:14** *"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."*

It is a blessing to see, to perceive the Lord. This blessing is to those who do this Word. Follow peace with all men, and holiness. To follow holiness simply means to be like Christ. Paul exhorted the brethren in **II Corinthians 13:11** *"Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you."* When you do this Word, the God of love and peace shall be with you.

We can see the importance of being a peacemaker. When we lose our peace, we lose our health, finances, relationships and other good things in life. Jesus dealt with the one that disrupts peace at Calvary. Satan is always trying to get people out of peace. If he can do that, he can steal your goods from you, but you do not have to let him have access to your life. It is written in **Isaiah 53:5** *"But he (Jesus) was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."* Jesus took the punishment necessary for us to have peace, be healed and keep our health.

One reason people lose their peace is because of what they have their minds on. **Isaiah 26:3** says, *"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee."* **Romans 8:6** says, *"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."* If you lose your peace what do we know? You have been thinking on wrong things. We are not

only to be peacemakers with others, we are to be peacemakers with ourselves. Don't allow yourself to think on things that get you upset. Keep bringing your thoughts back to the Word of God. In doing this you will keep your health, your finances, relationships, and everything good.

It is important that we teach our children to be peacemakers, enabling them to have the blessing in their lives. It is the parents and the body of Christ's responsibility to teach the children the importance of being a peacemaker. We are to train up our children in the way they should go so when they are old they will not depart from it (**Proverbs 22:6**). That means you are teaching them with your words and training them with your lifestyle. A peacemaker is not going to do things that will cause a brother or sister to get angry and upset. God does not do that to us and we should not do that to others. If they learn to be a peacemaker at an early age it will be of great benefit to them as they grow older. If our children are not following peace and holiness they will not be able to see or perceive the Lord.

If you are a peacemaker your children will be peacemakers. Teach them at an early age to keep their health, finances, relationships, and all the good things of life by being a peacemaker. Being a peacemaker is of utmost importance in our lives. Don't allow Satan to use you to disrupt your peace and others' peace.

Faith Confession: *I am a peacemaker. I am called a child of God and I am blessed! As much as is possible, I live peaceably with all men. I follow after the things that make for peace, and things wherewith I may edify others. I trust in the Lord, I keep my mind stayed upon Jesus, the Word, and He keeps me in perfect peace. I am spiritually minded and I enjoy life and peace. I am keeping my health, finances, relationships and all good things because I am a doer of the Word of God and follow peace. I am blessed!*

THE LIFE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

December 2

Blessed Are the Peacemakers II

Matthew 5:9

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."

The blessing of being a peacemaker is that you shall be called a child of God. A child of God loves peace. Jesus said in **John 14:27** "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." We have His peace in our heart. Peace is our nature! Just before Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you...", He said in **John 14:26** "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." What comes with comfort? Peace! The Holy Spirit is our Comforter, our peace. If we are following the Holy Spirit we will be following peace.

The Holy Spirit will always lead us into peace. We are instructed to follow after the things which make for peace (**Romans 14:19**). There are a lot of things we can follow, but not all will lead us into peace. As I was meditating on being a peacemaker the Holy Spirit showed me that there are things we can do to be a peacemaker in our own lives. If you do not have peace in your own life, how are you going to be a peacemaker in others lives?

For example, there are things we can change in our lives to bring peace. Did you know that a clean, orderly home can bring peace? It can. When things are constantly out of order in our homes it is usually because something is out of order in our heart. You can come home from work or school and start to lay something down in a place where it does not go and the Holy Spirit will prompt you to put it in the proper place. In your heart and mind you say, "Later!" Later comes and goes and you still did not do what He instructed you to do. That will lead you to putting something else off until later and then one day you look up and now you have a major clean up to do. We have all been there at one time or another in our lives. This is something the Holy Spirit is showing us so we can enjoy continual peace in our lives.

Some times we have put things off until the last minute to do them and then are trying to hurry to get it done. The Holy Spirit is not leading us to do this. That will not bring peace into your life. Part of the Holy Spirit's ministry to the believer is that He brings things to our remembrance and He shows us things to come (**John 14:26; John 16:13**). He is always endeavoring to help us be ready so we can remain in peace.

I remember a brother in Christ shared this instance in his life that a family member had been rushed to the hospital and it was said that this person was dying. He was eating breakfast when his mother told him about it. His first impulse was to jump up and run to the hospital. He stopped himself and decided the enemy was not going to cause him to get out of peace and hurry. He finished eating his breakfast. He did not eat it in a hurry. After he was done then he went to the hospital, prayed for the family member, and she lived. He followed peace. We do not have to allow the enemy to pressure us in anyway. Follow peace!

Do you remember the time when Jesus received word that Lazarus was sick? Jesus did not rush off to pray for him. He said in **John 11:4,6**, "...*This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.*" "*When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.*" Jesus was not led by the circumstances. He was led by the Holy Spirit who is the Spirit of peace! Lazarus did live!

Be a peacemaker in your own life and be blessed, for you are a child of God. Allow the Holy Spirit to show you things that can bring peace and keep peace in your personal life. Be open to change. Walk in the spirit. One of the fruit (blessings) of walking in the spirit is peace (**Galatians 5:22**)!

Faith Confession: *Jesus left me His peace. He gave me His peace. I will obey the Lord's Word. I will not let my heart be troubled. I am a peacemaker. I am blessed. I am called a child of God. I follow after the things that make for peace. I walk in the spirit and enjoy the fruit of peace! The Holy Spirit is leading me and guiding me in peace. When He speaks to me to put something in the proper place I will quickly obey and keep my peace. The Holy Spirit is bringing things to my remembrance and showing me things to come. He will have me ready!*

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December 3

Changes

Psalm 55:19

"...Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God."

We have seen in previous days the person that fears the Lord is blessed (**Psalm 112:1**). If you fear the Lord, you fear God. So we could say it this way, Blessed is the man that changes. God is not looking for us to change just on the outside. If you work on the outside only you will not have permanent changes.

It is written in **II Corinthians 4:18** *"While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."* The Lord is not saying to close our eyes to the things which are seen and pretend they are not there. He wants us to look at the Word. God is interested in eternal changes. Lasting changes. We must look at the Word of God and allow the Word to change us from the inside out. When that happens we will enjoy lasting change! This is the person that fears God and is blessed.

You might be thinking, "I want to do this, but I need to know how to do it." Great! Go with me to **Joshua 1:8**. *"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."* Don't let the word "law" hold you out of God's blessings. In **James 1:25** it says, *"But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed (doing)."* James calls the law, the perfect law (Word, scriptures) of liberty. As you look intently into the Word of God that brings liberty from your old patterns of living, and remember to do it, you shall be changed and you will be blessed. You will be the person that fears, reverences God!

The key to change is to keep speaking God's Word and meditate upon it day and night. Keep looking intently at the Word of liberty and then do it. Find the Word for what you need changed in your life. Keep it before you. Maybe that means you need to write it on

a piece of paper and carry it with you. Through out the day look at it and say it. As you do this it will bring change from the inside out.

According to **James 3:2-4** we can turn our whole body (nature) with this little member of the body, called the tongue. It is the person that hears the Word and does the Word that is blessed. **James 1:22** and **26** says, "*But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.*" "*If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.*" We have to bridle, tame our tongue. Make it speak the Word of God. **Mark 11:23** lets us know that we can have what we say. It is important to speak what you want. For example, God wants things in precise order in my life. I begin calling my life in precise order. I don't keep thinking about my life being out of order. I think and see it in order and I call it in order. As I speak that and meditate upon it, the Holy Spirit can now bring that to pass in my life.

Whatever you need changed in your life, use your words to change it. Bridle that tongue and make it say what you want. It is written in **Romans 4:17** "*(As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.*" God calls things which be not as though they were. We are to be imitators of Him and do the same thing (**Ephesians 5:1**). Call things that be not as though they were. God changed Abrams name to Abraham. Every time anyone spoke the name of Abraham they were calling him father of many nations. When Sarah called him Abraham she was calling him father of many nations. Call for what you want! You can have eternal change in your life by hearing and doing the Word of God and be blessed!

Faith Confession: *I look not at the things which are seen but at the things which are not seen. I look intently into the perfect law of liberty. I speak the Word and meditate upon it day and night and I am observing to do the Word causing me to prosper and succeed in life. I am changing, therefore I fear, reverence God and I am blessed!*

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December 4

Choose That Good Part

Luke 10:42

"But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her."

I believe we all want to choose that good part, which shall not be taken away from us. Take a moment and read the story in **Luke 10:38-42**. What was the good part that Mary chose? She was attending to God's Word, taking heed what she was hearing. She was hearing the truth by sitting at the feet of Jesus. **Jeremiah 29:10** and **Hebrews 6:5** calls the Word good! Mary chose that good part which was to sit at the feet of Jesus. The word "chosen" means to choose between many things. There are a lot of things for us to choose between each day.

You might be thinking, well yes, that is good but I have things to do. Yes, we all have things to do. But what are you spending the majority of your time giving thought and study to? Are you thinking about the cares of this life? I know Satan wants to bombard us with negative thoughts and cares, but we can still choose the good part and think on the good Word of God.

Instead of choosing to be worried and troubled in her mind about many things, Mary chose to listen to and act upon God's Word. **Isaiah 26:3** says, *"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee."* This is a choice we have to make every day, all throughout the day. No one can do this for us. You may be going through a difficult time and in your mind, you are trying to figure out why this is going on or how do I get this changed. The truth is your answer is not in your mind. When we are trying to figure things out in our minds we are not on God's channel where He can give us the help we need. God's channel is not the worried or troubled channel. It is the peace channel and as you keep your mind stayed upon Him, He is able to bring the solutions to your problems and to answer your questions.

It is written in **1 Peter 5:7** *"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."* The Greek word for "care" in this verse is also found in **Luke 21:34** where it talks about our hearts being

overcharged with "cares of this life." The Greek word means anxiety and worry, but it comes from the Greek word "merizo" that means to be divided, separated into parts, or cut into pieces. That is exactly what worry will do to us. It will cause us to be separated from God and His Word. The result of that is we are no longer walking in the light. To be separated from light is to walk in darkness. That is where the Word of God will become unfruitful in our lives and our hearts become overcharged with stress. That is where frustration, anxiety, fear, and depression which is mental and emotional disturbance can run wild. This opens the door for numerous pains and physical problems to operate in our bodies.

This may be one reason why doctors who have patients with physical problems have not been able to diagnose the cause. In some cases, they even give a wrong diagnosis. The result of that is the patient then becomes more frustrated because of the doctor's inability to identify the problem and its cause.

The pains and illnesses are very real which causes the patient much grief in their body, which only makes the situation worse. This in turn causes them to be pushed down further and unhappy. Without realizing it, they had allowed themselves to dwell on their problems, which opened the door to pride. Then the Lord could not lift them up out of their problems and cares because they were not humbling themselves by casting their cares upon Him.

This place of separation from the good Word of God doesn't just affect one person. Sooner or later it divides them from their spouse, children, families, friends, jobs, etc.

Be like Mary and choose the good part that cannot be taken away. Jesus gave us the answer which is, "one thing is needful." If you are willing to submit to Jesus by casting your cares upon Him and keeping your mind stayed upon Him, you will be kept in perfect peace and your life will be changed!!!!

Faith Confession: *I choose that good part, the one thing that is needful. I choose to sit at Jesus' feet. I spend time in God's Word. I keep my mind stayed upon Him and no longer experience frustrations, anxieties, fear, and depression, which results in separations and divisions. I enjoy the good life!!!*

THE LIFE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

December 5

Even as Your Soul Prospers

III John 1:2

"Beloved, I wish (pray) above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."

This is John's prayer for Gaius. John wanted this for Gaius and it is for us today! He has given us a key to prospering and being successful in every area of life. That key is to prosper in our souls. To the degree we prosper in our souls will be the degree we enjoy prosperity, success and health.

Your prosperity and health are in direct relation to your soul prosperity. If you are not prospering, enjoying success, and being in health you will need to get your soul prospering in these areas. How do you do that? Find the scriptures concerning the area you want to prosper in and begin speaking those scriptures and meditating on those scriptures.

I grew up with a lot of sickness in my life. After receiving Jesus as Lord of my life in 1973 I began reading some of Brother Kenneth E. Hagins books and learned that I could be healed and live in divine health. **III John 1:3** became an important scripture to me. I began applying it to my life by writing **I Peter 2:24** and **Isaiah 53:4-5** over and over and speaking them every time I wrote them. I was taking medication at the time because my faith was not there to receive what God had already provided for me. I had learned that God did not need to heal me because He had already healed me over some 2000 years ago. I just needed to have faith in that area so I could receive what God had already provided for me through Christ Jesus. I was not waiting on Him to heal me; He was waiting on me to receive my healing.

It is written in **Romans 10:17** "*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*" Faith comes by hearing, not having heard. It has to be a hearing, and hearing, and hearing, and hearing as much as you need to hear it until faith comes. It is the Rhema Christos, the spoken Word of the Anointed One that we need to hear again and again until faith arises.

I wrote those scriptures and spoke them out loud for many months then one day as I was reaching to get my medication I heard, "You don't need those pills anymore." I turned to see who said that to me. I knew I was the only one home that day. So, I began to reach for the pills again and once again I heard, "You don't need those pills any more." I turned again to see who said that, then I realized it was the Lord speaking to me. This time I got those pills and turned around and dumped them in the toilet. I was healed that moment and have never had a migraine headache since or any other headache thanks be to our good, good God, which always causes us to triumph in Christ (**II Corinthians 2:14**).

I recently heard the testimony of a well-known minister who shared about how she received her healing. She said that the Lord had told her to write a particular healing scripture 450 times a day. That is a lot of times and she had to deal with the thoughts of how can I do that. She had children, a husband and ministry at that time. She obeyed God and she said that one day she realized she was healed but did not know exactly when she had received it.

Glory to God, you can see as we apply the Word of God to our life, as God has instructed us to do, that we can prosper and be in health even as our soul prospers. How fast this happens is totally up to us.

You may be thinking, well God never told me to write scriptures and speak them. He never told me to do that as far as speaking to me personally but I did it and it worked. God is not a respecter of persons. He is a respecter of faith! What He did for me and this other minister, God will do for you, if you will do it. Your soul prosperity is what will cause you to prosper and be in health. How fast that happens is totally up to you.

Prayer: *Beloved, my prayer for you is that you will prosper and be in health even as your soul prospers!*

Faith confession: *I purpose to prosper in my soul so that I enjoy success and health in my life!*

THE LIFE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

December 6

Take Heed What You Hear

Mark 4:24

"And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given."

I like the way the Amplified Bible Classic Edition reads. It says, *"And He said to them, Be careful what you are hearing. The measure [of thought and study] you give [to the truth you hear] will be the measure [of virtue and knowledge] that comes back to you—and more [besides] will be given to you who hear."* Jesus is speaking in this verse and He is telling us to be careful what we are hearing. Other translations say "take heed what you are hearing." "Pay attention to what you are hearing." Is it important what we are hearing? Yes, it is! Reading on in the **24th verse** Jesus tells us what we are to hear. *"...Be careful what you are hearing. The measure [of thought and study] you give [to the **truth** you hear] ..."* We are to be hearing the truth. **John 17:17** says, *"...Thy Word is truth."* It is the truth that makes us free! Free from what? What is the opposite of the truth? A lie. The truth will make us free from lies. Hallelujah!!!

It is not enough just to hear the truth. We are to give thought and study to the truth we hear. Jesus goes on to reveal why we are to give thought and study to the truth we hear. Let's read on and see what the end result will be. *"...The measure [of thought and study] you give [to the truth you hear] will be the measure [of virtue and knowledge] that comes back to you—and more [besides] will be given to you who hear."* When we give thought and study to the truth we hear, virtue and knowledge will come back to us. How much virtue and knowledge that comes back to us is dependent on how we measure it. If we measure a cup full, we will get a cup full of virtue and knowledge back. If we measure a barrel of thought and study to the truth we hear, we will receive a barrel of virtue and knowledge back and more beside.

What is virtue? It is moral excellence. You could say moral excellence is living like Jesus lived. He lived a completely righteous life, never yielding to sin.

As I was meditating on this verse another scripture came to my mind found in **Philippians 4:8** that speaks of virtue. We are told what we are to think on. *"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."*

God's Word, which is truth, is the only thing that qualifies to give thought and study to. We see here that Paul writes by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that if there is going to be any virtue, or moral excellence, we are going to have to think on the truth of God's Word.

You can tell what a person has been thinking on by what they are talking about. It is also written in **Matthew 6:31** *"Therefore take no thought saying..."* How do you take a thought? By saying or talking about what you are thinking on. If we are thinking and studying on the Word, that is what will come out of our mouth. The Lord said in **Jeremiah 1:12** *"...for I will hasten my word to perform it."* Can you see why it is important to hear the truth, which is God's Word, and give your time to thinking on and studying His truth, which is His Word? The more time you give to it will be the more virtue and knowledge that comes back you and more besides and that is what the Lord will hasten to perform!

Faith Confession: *I purpose to hear the Truth! As I measure a lot of time to thinking on and studying the truth I hear, I am assured from God's Word that I will have the same measure of moral excellence and knowledge measured back to me and more besides will be given to me and I will be blessed and a blessing to others.*

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December 7

When You Pray

Mark 11:24

"Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."

Who is the understood subject in this verse? You! *"Therefore I (Jesus) say unto **YOU**..."* Put your name in there. *"...What things soever **YOU** desire..."* What do you desire? You pray and you ask Him for your desires. He said, *"...when **YOU** pray, believe that **YOU** receive them, and **YOU** shall have them."* Jesus is speaking to you just as much as He was speaking to His disciples. He said this to you and me!

Notice He did not say: "What things soever you desire, go and tell your pastor and his wife so they can pray for you." Is that what this verse says? No! Jesus wants you to believe that He hears your prayers and answers them. He wants you to pray and believe that you receive what you desire when you pray for them and you shall have them!!! Praise the Lord, that is good news!

He went on to say in **verse 25-26** *"And when ye stand praying forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses."* This would be something that would hold you out of receiving what you desire when you pray.

Many times, people believe they cannot forgive others. That is not true. The Father would never ask you to do something that you could not do. The power is in His Word to do His Word. Forgiveness is not a feeling; it is simply a decision from the heart to obey His Word.

When you stand praying just say, Father in Jesus' name I choose as an act of my will, in obedience to Your Word, to forgive every one of their trespasses against me. I declare them not guilty. Now Father, as I have obeyed Your Word, I believe that You forgive me

of all my trespasses. Thank You for forgiving me, in Jesus' name I pray. Amen! So be it!

Now you can ask what you desire and have confidence that you receive what you are praying for. I know I have used the word "you" many times in this devotional. I guess YOU are getting the point now! Your pastor and others do not have to do your praying for you. I am not saying you can't get others to agree with you. Just know that God hears your prayers and answers them.

When do you believe you receive what you have asked for? When you see it? When you feel it? When you have it? No, you believe you receive what you desire, when you pray. If you do that, there will be an excitement. When you know you have something you want you are excited before ever seeing it or feeling it because it belongs to you now!

Don't put a time line on your request. He did not say what things you desire, when you pray, believe you receive them in an hour or by the end of the week or in a month. No, He said believe you receive them and you shall have them. Keep believing you receive what you desire until you have it. David said in **Psalm 27:13** "*I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.*" The reason people faint or fail to receive is because they don't believe to see, but that does not have to be you. Just keep believing, keep expecting until you see!

Faith Confession: *When I stand praying, I forgive anyone I have anything against. Because of this, what things soever I desire, when I pray, I believe that I receive them, and I shall have them! I believe to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living!*

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December 8

Revealed from Faith to Faith

Romans 1:16-17

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, 'The just shall live by faith.'"

The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith. Rightness is progressive. How do we see what is right? From faith to faith. Faith without works is dead (**James 2:17**). Living faith is faith that does something. We do not get revelation or light by hearing only. We get revelation by doing.

Philippians 4:8-9 (NKJV) *"Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you."*

Notice what it says in **verse 9**. The things which you learned, plus received and heard (comprehended by hearing). You learn it then receive it and that comes through the teaching. Then you heard (comprehended it by hearing) it and saw it in me. Practice, do these things, and the God of peace will be with you. They heard and saw some things through Paul. It came through the teaching and preaching of the Word of God. So, you get a degree of light or revelation by listening and hearing the Word, but you won't get the full light by hearing only.

Let me give you a natural example that I believe will help you understand what the Lord is saying. Learning to drive a car. You can sit in a class room and be taught and read all about driving and even use a simulator, but you don't really learn until you actually get in the car and do the driving out on the road. You get more revelation in the doing. We need both the teaching and the doing.

You never really get it until you begin to do it. It is teaching and then watching how the instructor is operating and then you do it.

It is written in **II Timothy 3:5-8 (NKJV)** *"Having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith;"*

There is revelation or light that these people are never getting because they are not doing the Word they heard. It is written in **I Corinthians 8:1** *"...we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth."* In other words, knowledge alone without doing it will puff you up, but love that does will keep you from being haughty. You cannot get revelation only by hearing. You must do!!!

As soon as you do what you have learned, lights will come on. If you never do it, you will ever be learning and never be able to come to the knowledge of the truth. You do the Word according to the light that you have, and according to the faith that you have. It takes faith to step out and do. As you step out it's going to be revealed to you from faith to faith. **Hebrews 11** is full of people who heard the Word from God and then stepped out in faith.

He that does truth comes to the light. It is important that you fellowship with people that are doers of the Word. When you see people doing, then you can do. People need to do in order to develop. Walk as far as you can in the light that you have then more light will come. Put yourself in the position that you don't know what comes next. It takes faith. At the end of that faith is light and understanding. It puts stability in your spirit.

Faith confession: *The things that I learn and receive and hear and see, I do and the God of peace will be with me. I walk in the light that I have and I receive more light. I am a doer of the Word and I am blessed! I know the God of peace is with me!*

THE LIFE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

December 9

Peace is on the Path of Life

Psalm 119:165

"Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them."

There is peace on the path of life. The Hebrew word for "law" means instruction and direction as well as law. We could say it this way, "Great peace have they which love His instructions and directions: and nothing shall offend them."

When we truly love His instructions and directions, we will have great peace and nothing shall offend us! NOTHING will cause us to stumble and leave the path of life.

I am reminded of some of Jesus' disciples that did not like the instructions and directions He gave them in a church service (**John 6:59**). Let's read **John 6:53-58** *"Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever."*

We see in **verse 60** that many of His disciples heard this, and said, *"...This is an hard (difficult) saying; who can hear (understand) it?"* **Verse 61** Jesus asked them if the words He spoke offended them. He knew they were murmuring and complaining about what He had said. When you are murmuring and complaining this reveals that you are not in peace. Then we see in **verse 66** that *"From that time MANY of his disciples went back (away), and walked no more with him."* They left the path of life because they did not understand what He was saying. If they had done like the other twelve disciples, they would have understood that no one else had

the words of eternal life. They would have eventually come to understand what He meant.

We may not always understand all of the Word of God, however if we will continue to walk in the light that we have and trust God that what He said is true, we will continue to have great peace and not get offended. This will cause us to remain on the path of life.

Go back with me to **Psalm 119**. David was a man that loved the Word of God. You can see it all through this chapter. David said in **Verses 161-168** "*Princes have persecuted me without a cause: but my heart standeth in awe of thy word. I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil. I hate and abhor lying: but thy law do I love. Seven times a day do I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments. Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them. LORD, I have hoped for thy salvation, and done thy commandments. My soul hath kept thy testimonies; and I love them exceedingly. I have kept thy precepts and thy testimonies: for all my ways are before thee.*"

David could have allowed the circumstances that he was going through cause him to leave the path of life but he chose to love God's Word. He chose to keep his focus on the Word and do it enabling him to have great peace (**Isaiah 26:3-4**). Doing this kept him on the path of life!

Faith Confession: Great peace have I. I love Your law (instructions, directions, Word) and nothing shall offend me. Nothing shall cause me to leave my Lord. Nothing shall cause me to leave the path of life! I am blessed because I am a doer of the Word of God!

THE LIFE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

December 10

Lay Down Your Life

I John 3:16

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."

Notice this verse says we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. Ought means owe. We owe it to our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ to lay our lives down for them. If we read on in **I John 3:17-18** we can see how we are to do this. *"But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother (or sister) have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth."* We are to love in action, not only by saying, I love you.

When we see a brother or sister in Christ in need, we won't close our heart of compassion to them. The love of God in us will cause us to lay down our own life and meet the need of another. He is talking about meeting the need of a fellow Christian.

Jesus said in **John 15:12-13** *"This is my commandment, That ye love one another..."* Jesus was talking to His disciples. He went on to say how we are to love one another. *"... as I have loved you."* We are to love our fellow Christians the same way He loved us. We know that He laid down His life for us. He goes on to say in **verse 13**, *"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."* There is no greater love than this, to lay down your life for your brothers and sisters in Christ by meeting their need.

We want to be the person that has the ability to meet the needs of our fellow Christians and not be the one that is always having to have their needs met. The truth is if you will meet the needs of others, God will meet your needs through others. Paul said in **Philippians 4:10-19** *"But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity. Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to*

abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengthenth me. Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction. Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity (his need). Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God. But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

Paul was letting them know that just as they had taken care of his needs, God would do the same for them according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus, which is abundantly. We don't want to be led by needs. We want to be led by the Holy Spirit. There are a lot of needs around us and God is not saying that one person is to supply the needs of all those around them. Let God show you whose needs you are to supply and then obey His promptings. As you lay down your life and supply the person's need God leads you to give too, He will lead others to meet your needs.

We do not want to have the attitude of if they don't help me then I am not going to help them. That is not love! The Lord did not do that to us! Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading. Be open, willing, and ready to be a channel of love that God can flow His provision through, distributing to the necessity of the saints (**Romans 12:13**). You'll be glad you did!

Faith Confession: *Because Jesus laid down His life for me, I choose to be a doer of His Word and lay down my life for others. There is no greater love than to lay down my life for my brothers and sisters in Christ. I am open, willing, and ready to give as the Holy Spirit leads me. I don't just help those who help me, I help those as He leads me. I am thankful to be a channel that God can flow His blessings through to others. I am blessed to be a blessing.*

THE LIFE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

December 11

Love One Another I

I John 4:11

"Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another."

I am so thankful that God loved us and sent His Son to be the payment for our sins!!! Because God loved us, we owe love to one another, this is speaking of Christians loving one another.

Let's read on. In **verse 12** it is written, *"No man hath seen God at any time, if we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us."* The word "perfected" comes from the Greek word *"teleiōō"* which means to consummate, reaching the *end-stage*, i.e. working through the entire process (stages) to reach the *final* phase (*conclusion*). [This root (*tel-*) means "reaching the end (*aim*)."] It is well-illustrated with the old pirate's telescope, unfolding (extending out) one stage at a time to function at full-strength (capacity effectiveness).]

Loving one another perfects, completes this love in us. Let's read **verses 13-18**. *"Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love: but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love."*

God is love and the person that dwells in love dwells in God and God in him. We have the greater one living inside of us (**I John 4:4**). *"Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment."* What does that mean? It means that we do not have to fear punishment from God in the day of judgment. The world will fear, but we will be able to stand in His presence unashamed and without fear, because as He is so are we in this world. He is love and we are love in this world!!!

Glory to God, there is NO FEAR in LOVE! He said, the person that fears is not made perfect in love. Do you remember what we saw in **verse 12**? *"...if we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us."* His love is, not going to be when we get to heaven, but right here, right now His love is perfected in us!

What do we know if we are in fear? We should check and be sure we are loving our fellow Christians so His love is perfected in us. When this is true then we will cast this fear out. We will not tolerate it in our lives. You may feel the effects of fear on the outside. Your knees might be knocking together and your hair standing up on the back of your neck, but you do not have to let it in your heart. When you feel the effects of it, just stand up and say, No, not here. I cast this fear out! It is written in **II Timothy 1:7**, *"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear (timidity, shyness, cowardness); but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."* It is also written in **Psalms 34:4** *"I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears."* If He delivered me from ALL my fears, then how many fears do I (you) have? Thanks be to our good God, none!!!

Let's look at one other verse in **I John 2:5**. *"But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him."* The word "keep" means to keep, treasure, value, and remember to do His Word. As we do His Word, we can be sure that God's love is perfected in us. When fear tries to come, we can cast it out. According to **II Timothy 1:7** fear is a spirit and it is from Satan. Don't allow Satan to steal your peace through fear. It is written in **James 4:7-8** *"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil (the spirit of fear), and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you..."*

Let's be sure we are keeping His Word and loving our fellow Christians and when fear comes, we can cast it out!

Faith Confession: *I love my brothers and sisters in Christ. God dwells in me, and His love is perfected in me. I believe the love that God has to me. God is love; I dwell in love, I dwell in God, and God dwells in me. God is love and as He is so am I in this world. I am love in this world. I am made perfect in love and I cast out fear. I have boldness in the day of judgment!*

THE LIFE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

December 12

Love One Another II

I John 4:11

"Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another"

We have seen that we owe love to our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. In **I John 5:1-3** we can see some important truths about loving one another and how we can know we are loving one another. Let's read those verses. *"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God..."* Are you a whosoever? Sure! Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ (the Anointed One, the Messiah)? I trust you do, and if so, glory to God, you are born of God! If not then you can be that person right now. Believing is a choice. You choose what you believe. You can choose right now to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Anointed One and be born of God. You can become a new creation in Christ Jesus and receive God's nature which is love (**II Corinthians 5:17**).

Hallelujah, we are born of God! That means that God is our Father and righteousness is our mother. We have God's DNA! We have the God-kind of life in us! That which makes God, God, was imparted to our spirit. We are the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus which means we have the ability to do like God does.

Let's read on. *"...and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him."* If we love God, then we will love those who are born of God, which is every Christian. You might not love everything a fellow believer does, but you should love them.

Verse 2-3, *"By this we know that we love the children of God..."* How do we know if we are loving our fellow believers? *"...when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."* When we love God and keep His commandments, we are loving our fellow brother's and sister's in Christ. Jesus said in **John 14:21 & 23**, *"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."* *"...If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with*

him." Now let's read **John 15:10,12**. "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you." The degree that we practice His Word is the degree that we abide in His love.

He said that we are to love one another as, in the same way He loved us. How did He love us? By loving the Father and keeping His commandments. Jesus did it so we can do it. He loved God and us by keeping the Father's commandments. Now we are to love one another by keeping His commandments. When we keep His commandments, we are loving God, Jesus, and one another.

Now let's go back to **I John 5:4-5** "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" We are world overcomers because we believe that Jesus is the Son of God! What does that mean? One thing it means is that we have what it takes to keep His commandments. The world will not be able to draw us away from doing that which pleases the Father. It takes faith to keep His commandments and do the Word of God. Our faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God (**Romans 10:17**), and faith pleases the Father (**Hebrews 11:6**).

I am so thankful that God has shown us how to love one another. Let's be keepers, people that treasure, value and remember to do His commandments. As we do this, we will keep ourselves in the love of God, and the wicked one will not be able to touch us (**I John 5:18**)!!!

Faith Confession: *I believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Anointed One, the Messiah, and I am born of God. I love Him that begat and I love those that are begotten of Him. When I love God, and keep His commandments, His Word, I know that I love the children of God. This is love, that I keep His commandments and His commandments are not grievous to me. I am born of God and I believe that Jesus is the Son of God, therefore, I overcome the world. This is the victory that overcomes the world even our faith!!*

THE LIFE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

December 13

This Is Love

II John 1:6

"And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it."

This is love that we walk after His commandments, which we saw in a previous devotion in **I John 5:2-3**: *"By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous."* Now we also see that we are to walk in truth which is a commandment. The word for "walk" means to conduct or regulate our lives accordingly. In **II John 1:4-5** it is written, *"I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father. And now I beseech thee lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another."* John explained that this is love: that we conduct or regulate our lives after His commandments.

We have been given the commandment to love one another and to walk in the truth. How do we walk in the truth? According to **John 17:17**, His Word is truth. It would be accurate to state **II John 1:4** in the following way, "I rejoiced greatly that I found of your children walking in the Word, conducting their lives according to the Word." His Word is truth, and as we do His Word, we are walking in His commandments of love and truth. This is love! Every time I apply God's Word to my life, I am walking, conducting, regulating my life in truth, and loving God and my fellow Christians.

Paul writes in **Ephesians 4:15-16**, *"But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ. From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."* This is part of walking in the truth. The more of the Word of God we know, the more of the truth we will walk in.

When we see something in God's Word, it is important that we receive the love of that truth so we do not perish (**II Thessalonians 2:10-12**). We saw in a previous devotion that all but twelve of Jesus' disciples left Him in a single day. The reason: they did not receive the love of that truth, and the end result of that choice was they would perish. There will be things we may not understand in God's Word, but choose to receive the love of it, and in time you will understand it. We want to love all of God's Word, He and His Word are one. To not love His Word is to not love Him. Receive the love of the truth and obey it.

Paul prayed this in **I Thessalonians 3:12-13** *"And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints."* He spoke again in chapter **4:9-10** *"But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another. And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macaedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more."*

Our love is never to decrease, but to increase towards each other. Paul wrote in **II Thessalonians 1:3** *"We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity (love) of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth."*

This love we are to walk in is to increase. How is this going to happen? We will have to speak over ourselves that our faith is growing exceedingly and that our love is abounding towards one another. We also need to meditate upon these Scriptures in order to obey them. As we do this, we will truly be walking and conducting our lives in love and truth. As we do this, the world will know that we are His disciples, because we have love one toward another (**John 13:35**).

Faith Confession: *I know that I love the children of God, when I love God and follow His commandments. I walk in truth and I walk in love. My faith is growing exceedingly and my love is abounding towards others! My love is increasing more and more!*

THE LIFE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

December 14

We Owe One Another Love

Romans 13:8

"Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law."

As a Christian, there is one debt that we will always owe, and that is the debt of love. We will always owe each other love. We are not supposed to owe any person anything but to love one another. We saw in a previous devotion that when we love one another, God dwells in us, and His love is perfected in us (***I John 4:12***). This enables us to cast out fear. When we love one another, we are fulfilling the law.

It is written in ***Romans 13:9-10***, *"For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet: and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."*

If I love you, I won't steal your spouse from you. In fact, I will not steal anything from you. I will not lie about you. I will not covet what belongs to you, etc. This love that God has shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit will not do those things (***Romans 5:5***). If we trust in God, we will never make provision for the flesh by yielding to those things. When we trust in God, then we can believe that God will give us our own spouse. We will not have to steal from God, or others because God will supply all our needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus (***Philippians 4:19***). He will give us seed to sow and bread to eat (***II Corinthians 9:10***). We will not have to lie if we trust God, because He is able to protect us. We will not have to covet what belongs to others, because God is able to provide for us!!!

We are to walk in love with one another in the same way Christ loved us (***Ephesians 5:2***). We can see how God is with us in ***I Corinthians 13:4-8 (AMPC)***. God, who is love, loves us in this way. Since God is love I can replace the word "love" and "it" with "God" and "He". *"God endures long and is patient and kind; God*

never is envious nor boils over with jealousy, is not boastful or vainglorious, does not display Himself haughtily. God is not conceited (arrogant and inflated with pride); God is not rude (unmannerly) and does not act unbecomingly. God does not insist on His own rights or His own way, for God is not self-seeking; God is not touchy or fretful or resentful; God takes no account of the evil done to Him [He pays no attention to a suffered wrong]. God does not rejoice at injustice and unrighteousness, but rejoices when right and truth prevail. God bears up under anything and everything that comes, is ever ready to believe the best of every person, His hopes are fadeless under all circumstances, and He endures everything [without weakening]. God's love never fails [never fades out or becomes obsolete or comes to an end]."

This is how God is with us and this is how you and I as His children are to treat each other. I encourage you to put "I" everywhere I put "God" and confess this about yourself. Remember, in **1 John 4:17** it says, "...as he is, so are we in this world." We are love in this world so let us be doers of this Word and be blessed and a blessing to others. We are going to have to take time to meditate upon these verses so we can observe to do them (**Joshua 1:8**).

Faith Confession: *I owe no man anything but to love them. As God is, so am I in this world. He is love; therefore, I am love. I love my neighbor as myself. I do not mistreat my neighbor: therefore, I am fulfilling the law. Love is the fulfilling of the law!*

THE LIFE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

December 15

Love and Forgiveness

Ephesians 4:32

"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you."

For the sake of the anointing, forgive in the same way God forgave you. We are to forgive all the time! This is what love will do. We have seen in the Word how Jesus forgave those who beat Him, spit on Him, mocked Him, and did all kinds of evil against Him. Hanging on that tree, Jesus looked down upon the people and said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do... **Luke 23:34.**"

Jesus knew that flesh and blood were not His enemies and we too must remember that flesh and blood are not our enemies (**Ephesians 6:12**). He knew that Satan had influenced those people. Satan would have liked it if Jesus would have said, "Father, punish them for this evil they have done to me." If Jesus had yielded to unforgiveness, Satan would have defeated Jesus, and we would have never been able to be saved and restored back into fellowship with the Father. Oh, but thanks be to God! Jesus overcame and yielded to love!

Love and forgiveness are forces or power. The same power that loves and forgives is the same power which heals and makes us new creations in Christ Jesus (**II Corinthians 5:12-20**). We are ambassadors for Christ. We have been given the ministry of reconciliation. What does that mean? It means that we are to let people know that God is not holding their sins against them. He has forgiven them, and thus we are to forgive people of their sins.

When we wake up in the morning, before we meet anybody, we should begin our day by saying, "Father, I know You love everybody I will come in contact with today. As Your ambassador, in the name of Jesus, I release the force of forgiveness and I forgive everyone whom I will meet today. Lord of the harvest, I ask You to send laborers into people's paths today with the Word. Send someone they can receive from. Lord, I am Your ambassador, and if You can use me, I am available to do Your will."

This is walking in forgiveness. Because I have put this force of forgiveness to work before meeting people, then if someone does something to me, I have that forgiveness already in place and the devil is defeated. Do not wait until someone does something to you and then try to work on forgiving. You can simply remind yourself, "I already forgave that person this morning." This is the way Jesus lived.

Let us look at ***I Corinthians 13:4-8*** in the ***Amplified Bible Classic Edition*** and view it in regards to forgiveness. Because love forgives, "*Love endures long and is patient and kind....*" Patience is a fruit of our recreated spirit; it is our nature. The word for "patience" here means to hold off on punishment. So, this patience is dependent on forgiveness. "*Love never is envious nor boils over with jealousy...*" You cannot be a doer of that Word without forgiveness! Forgiveness activates this.

Because love forgives, it "*...is not boastful or vainglorious, does not display itself haughtily.*" Why? Because love forgives and remembers no wrong or sin against anybody. "*... it is not conceited-arrogant and inflated with pride; it is not rude (unmannerly), and does not act unbecomingly. Love [God's love in us] does not insist on its own rights or its own way for it is not self-seeking; it is not touchy or fretful or resentful; it takes no account of the evil done to it [it pays no attention to a suffered wrong].*" Because love forgives! Love "*...does not rejoice at injustice and unrighteousness, but rejoices when right and truth prevail. Love bears up under anything and everything that comes...*" Because love forgives. And because love forgives..." it "*...is ever ready to believe the best of every person...*" Because love forgives, "*...its hopes are fadeless under all circumstances and it endures everything [without weakening].* Because love forgives, "*Love never fails-never fades out or becomes obsolete or comes to an end...*"

This love of God that has been shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Spirit loves and forgives! That is why Jesus died on the cross so we could be forgiven, and now we can forgive others!

Faith Confession: Write your own confession of faith based on these Scriptures.

THE LIFE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

December 16

Keep Yourself in the Love of God

Jude 1:20-21

"But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

By the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Jude wrote in **verse 3** that we as believers *"...should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."* It is so important that everything we believe is consistent with the Word of God. In **Romans 10:17**, Paul states, *"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"* (Rhema Kristos, the anointed spoken Word of Christ)."

There are many false teachings today, and we can believe things we have grown up hearing if we do not take the time to line them up with the Word of God (**Acts 17:11**). One thing I have heard for many years and once believed myself, is that if I get sick, I must be doing the will of God. When looking into God's Word, I am unable to find any Scripture which establishes that statement as truth. On the contrary, I can find Scriptures that if I live a godly life, I will suffer persecution. However, persecution is not sickness (**II Timothy 3:12**)!

We know from Scripture that Paul suffered persecution. He was beaten, had stripes on his back, and was wounded due to being stoned (**Acts 14:19-20; Galatians 4:13-15; II Corinthians 11:25**). Some people believe that Paul was sick all of his life, because they believe that the thorn in the flesh was a sickness. Nowhere in the Bible do you read that the thorn was a sickness. We need to rightly examine the Word and interpret it with other Scriptures, such as **Numbers 33:55, Joshua 23:13**, and **Judges 2:3**. God was telling them that if they did not kill the Canaanites when they would go to possess the land, then the Canaanites would be thorns in their sides, tormenting them. Have you ever had a thorn in your finger and could not remove it? The thorn torments you every time you touch it. Paul explains exactly what the thorn was: *"... the messenger of Satan, to buffet me..."* (**II Corinthians 12:7**). Everywhere Paul went to preach, this evil spirit followed and provoked him.

God loves us, and He is not the author of sickness and disease. God will never allow Satan to put sickness on His children when they are obeying Him. Similarly, you would not allow Satan to put sickness on your children when they are obedient. God has given us authority, which He expects us to exert over Satan, sickness, and disease.

We are commanded to remain in God's love, by praying in the Holy Spirit. It is written in **1 John 5:18**, "*We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.*" We have seen from other verses in this fifth chapter of John that we are loving God and His children when we follow His commandments. When we do this, we will not sin. Also, by obeying His commandments we protect ourselves, and the wicked one will not touch us.

The Holy Spirit reminds me of another Scripture found in **Psalms 105:14-15**, "*He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, he reproveth kings for their sakes; Saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.*" We are His anointed, because Jesus is anointed, and we are His body. If the head is anointed, so is the body!!! Praise the Lord! Let us keep ourselves in the love of God, so the wicked one cannot touch us.

Faith Confession: *I build myself up in my most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit. I keep myself in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. I am a doer of **Acts 17:11**. I search the Scriptures daily being sure that what I believe is in line with the Word of God. I am born of God, and I do not sin. I protect myself and the wicked one does not touch me. I am blessed!*

THE LIFE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

December 17

It Shall Be Health

Proverbs 3:8

"It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones."

Let us read a couple of other translations of this verse. The **Complete Jewish Bible** states, *"This will bring health to your body and give strength to your bones."* The **Revised Standard Version** reads, *"It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones."* What is it that will be healing to our flesh and refreshment and strength to our bones? Let us go back and read the previous verses. **Proverbs 3:5-7**, *"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil."*

Firstly, we are to *"Trust in the Lord with all of our heart..."*! Not with our mind, but with our heart. You can trust God with all of your heart. God created you, and He knows the plans He has for you. He knows exactly what He created you to be and do in life. Put your trust in Him! He can be trusted!

Secondly, we are not to lean on our own understanding. God may tell you to do something, but in your mind, it may seem like the wrong thing to do. That is the reason why He does not want us to depend on our own understanding. In the past, the Lord has spoken to me to do a certain thing or not to do a certain thing and in my mind, I thought, "Do what???" In those times, I had to trust and obey Him. Each time I did, it worked out.

Just recently I was getting ready to go to a certain place, and the Lord said to me, "Stay here today." I have heard the Lord say that to me before, and I recognized His voice, but this time I chose to trust my own understanding because I believed I had an appointment scheduled that day. Guess what? I later found that I should **not** have depended on my own understanding. When I arrived at the place where I thought I had an appointment, I found that I had entered the wrong date in my calendar. Follow your heart, trust Him, and do not trust your own understanding! I had

to repent and ask the Lord to forgive me. Thank God, He did and the day turned out well.

Thirdly, *"In all your ways acknowledge Him..."* In **all your ways**. How many is all? ALL! Not just in the major details of life, but also in the minor details of your life, acknowledge Him. Know what He wants and do that. Always check in your heart. When we acknowledge Him in all our ways, He has promised to *"...direct our paths."* A willing heart gives a hearing ear. If we do not have a willing heart, then our ear will not hear, and He will not be able to direct our paths. I am speaking from my own experience!! The truth is, everyone but Jesus has been there at one time or another. The good news is we can choose to have a willing heart so that we have a hearing ear. Praise the Lord, I have chosen to have a willing heart, so I will always keep a hearing ear, enabling God to direct my paths!

Fourthly, He said, *"Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil."* When we fear God, reverence what He is saying, we will not be wise in our own eyes, resulting in departing from evil and enjoying health for our flesh with strength and refreshment for our bones.

Today, if you are not enjoying health in your flesh with strength and refreshment in your bones, examine and see if you are being a doer of **Proverbs 3:5-8**. You can enjoy health this very day by simply repenting, which means to turn from what you were doing and begin obeying His Word. Then ask God to forgive you for not trusting in Him. As soon as you do that, then tell the devil to take his sickness and pain and go in Jesus Name. You are being a doer of **James 4:7-8** *"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you..."* He has promised to give more grace to the humble. Healing is a grace of God!

Faith Confession: *I submit myself to God. I trust in the LORD with all my heart; and do not depend on my own understanding. In all my ways I acknowledge Him, and he will direct my paths. I will not be wise in my own eyes. I fear the LORD, and depart from evil. Because I obey God's Word, I will experience divine health!!! Glory be to God!*

THE LIFE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

December 18

Examine Yourself

II Corinthians 13:5

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"

The **Amplified Bible Classic Editions** of **II Corinthians 13:5** says, *"Examine and test and evaluate your own selves to see whether you are holding to your faith and showing the proper fruits of it. Test and prove yourselves [not Christ]. Do you not yourselves realize and know [thoroughly by an ever-increasing experience] that Jesus Christ is in you—unless you are [counterfeits] disapproved on trial and rejected?"*

We are to examine, test, and evaluate ourselves to determine whether we are adhering to our faith and showing the proper fruits of it. Faith has corresponding actions. **James 2:17, 26** explain, *"Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."*

The number one corresponding action of faith is your confession. Faith has a confession! Let us look at some Scriptures that speak of our profession or confession of faith. **Romans 10:9-10** *"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."* In this verse, the Greek word for "salvation" is "sótéria" which includes welfare, prosperity, deliverance, preservation, salvation, safety, and healing.

The way you were saved is the same way you are going to receive your healing, deliverance, or any of the provisions God has made available to the believer. We believe in our hearts and confess with our words regarding welfare, prosperity, deliverance, preservation, salvation, safety, healing, etc.!!!

"Examine and test and evaluate your own selves to see whether you are holding to your faith and showing the proper fruits of it." Are you holding onto your confession of faith? This is very important in the face of tests and trials. What you say during those times will either give you victory or defeat.

It is written in **Hebrews 10:21-23** *"And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession (confession) of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)."* We are to have a confession of faith! When you are going through tests and trials, hold fast to the confession of faith. If your trial pertains to lack, your confession of faith should be the following: **Psalm 23:1** *"The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want (lack)."* **Psalm 34:10** *"The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD (That's me!) shall not want (lack) any good thing."* **Philippians 4:19** *"But my God shall supply all your (my) need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."* God can do this for me because I am taking care of the needs of His ministers. There are many Scriptures concerning God meeting our needs. Search the Scriptures and find the ones that resonate with you.

Healing and finances are the two main areas which Satan attacks the Christian. When you are going through tests and trials in your health, hold fast to your confession of faith, which must be based on the Word of God. Search for healing Scriptures such as **Isaiah 53:4-5**; **I Peter 2:24**; **Matthew 8:17**; **Psalm 103:1-5**; and **Psalm 107:20**. These are just a few Scriptures. There are many more available to us.

Another Scripture I want to consider is found in **I Thessalonians 3:10**, *"Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?"* We need to be around ministers who operate in the gifts of the Spirit. When they see your face God can reveal to them what is lacking in your faith and give you exactly what you need. If you will obey Him, He will always have you in the right place at the right time to give you what you need.

Faith Confession: *Write your own confession of faith.*

THE LIFE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

December 19

Lack of Knowledge

Hosea 4:6

"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge..."

There are three main reasons why people become sick and remain sick. I am not saying these are the only reasons, but these are the main ones. If we are aware of them, then we can do what is necessary to keep our healing. The truth will make us free! Our desire is to be free from sickness and disease! That is the will of God for every believer!

Today let us look at the first reason why Christians become ill and remain ill which can be found in **Hosea 4:6**. *"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children."* There are millions of Christians today who do not know it is God's will for them to be healed. People debate whether it is the will of God to heal every person. They do not know that at Calvary, Jesus not only paid for every person's salvation, but at the same time He also paid for every person's healing. Healing belongs to every person just like forgiveness of sin belongs to every person who will receive. However, if you do not know that truth, you will never experience it. If you question His will concerning healing, then you cannot have faith, and faith is what receives all that Jesus bought and paid for at Calvary.

Notice **Hosea 4:6** states, *"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because..."* Because of what? He did not say it was because there was no knowledge, but rather because people have rejected it. God has given us a book full of the words of knowledge. We certainly cannot say that God has not made known His will to us.

Paul writes in **Romans 12:1-2** *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and*

acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” We must renew our minds with God’s Word in order to prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God. What Paul is explaining is that you must put the fleshly desires aside so you can have time to search His Word and renew your mind. He wants us to know what His will is in every situation. He has made His will known to us in this book called the Bible. So, we are really without excuse. We cannot stand before God and say, “I had no way of knowing.”

Jesus said in **John 14:9** “...Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?” If you want to know what the will of God is, look at Jesus. He always did the Father’s will. It is written in **Acts 10:38** “How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and **healing all** that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.” There was never a time that someone came to Jesus and asked to be healed and He said, “Sorry, not today, or sorry, it’s not for you.” No, He healed everyone that came to Him in faith. Jesus is not a respecter of persons, but He is a respecter of faith, and faith begins where the will of God is known.

Do not reject the knowledge that God has made available to you. Read the Bible. Obey **Romans 12:1-2** and **Acts 17:11**, “These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.” Search the Scriptures and know for yourself the will of God for every area of your life. Do not just take someone’s word for it. You do not even have to take my word for it. Study God’s Word, and find what He said about everything you believe. You will be glad you did, because you will know the truth which will free you from sickness, disease, and from all the lies of the enemy (**John 8:31-32**)!

Faith Confession: *I will not be destroyed for lack of knowledge. I present my body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is my reasonable service. I am not conformed to this world: but I am transformed by the renewing of my mind, that I may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”*

THE LIFE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

December 20

Provided by Grace, Received through Faith

Ephesians 2:8

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:"

We began looking at three main reasons why people become ill, and remain ill. The first reason we examined: people perish for a lack of knowledge (**Hosea 4:6**). This lack of knowledge on the believer's part is evident in two ways: failure to even read the Scriptures and/or failure to believe them. The good news is, you can change today by faithfully reading your Bible every day, loving the truth, and applying the Word to your life.

The second main reason people get sick and stay sick is that what has been provided by grace must be received through faith. Grace is God's part. For by grace, you are saved! The word "save" has several meanings: safe, to save, deliver or protect, heal, preserve, save, do well, be (made) whole. This is the gift God has given us. What must you do with this gift? You have to receive it. As an example, you must actively receive your healing with your faith, just as you received your salvation by faith. F. F. Bosworth, the author of the book "Christ the Healer" wrote, "Faith begins where the will of God is known." How do I find the will of God? In **Romans 12:1-2** the answer is revealed: believe in your heart and say with your mouth that Jesus is Lord.

Let us assume that I go to the market and purchase a bag of food for you. I leave it at the store, and then tell you, "I bought a bag of food for you. All you have to do is go and pick it up from Krogers." Would you enjoy that food I bought for you just because you know it is there? No, you have to actively receive it by going and picking it up. What is your faith based on? My words. If you know that I tell the truth, then you can go and pick up that bag of food, take it home, and enjoy it.

The good news is that Jesus bought and paid for our healing at the same time He bought and paid for our salvation. However, even though we may know He provided healing for us, we still must

actively receive it by faith. We know that God cannot lie. He proclaimed in **Isaiah 53:4-5**: *"Surely he hath borne our griefs (Hebrew - sickness, disease), and carried our sorrows (Hebrew - pain): yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."* God cannot lie and He emphasized, *"...with His stripes WE ARE, not going to be, but WE ARE HEALED."*

When sickness, disease and pain try to attack us, does that mean we are not healed? Did God lie to us? No, He did not. The truth is, we are still healed. Satan is simply trying to get us to let go of our healing and receive sickness and pain. What must we do at that time? Resist it! Tell the devil, "In the name of Jesus, take your hands off my healing!" Do not be affected by the symptoms. If you do this, the symptoms will leave. Hold to the truth that by His stripes YOU ARE healed. Believe it in your heart, and say it with your mouth.

We live in a time where we can obtain healing teachings and healing Scriptures online and on CD's. Healing classes are also available in various churches. It is essential to feed your faith with such teachings. It is also important to attend a church where the pastor is teaching on healing in order to have faith to receive. As you do this, you will keep your healing. If you are dealing with sickness and pain, keep feeding your faith by listening to teachings on healing and by continually quoting the truth, God's Word: "By Jesus' stripes I am healed!" Be assured, your healing will manifest itself!

Faith Confession: *Just as my salvation has been provided by grace and I received it through faith, my healing has also been provided by grace and I receive it through faith. Faith to receive my healing comes by hearing and hearing by the anointed spoken Word of Christ. My confession is, "By Jesus' stripes I am healed." I will keep saying this when I am walking in health, during symptoms of sickness, and after the symptoms leave! "We having the same spirit of faith according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak." (II Corinthians 4:13).*

THE LIFE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

December 21

Obey God and Follow His Perfect Plan

Romans 12:2

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

We are looking at three main reasons why Christians are ill and remain ill. The first reason we examined was due to a lack of knowledge. Yesterday we looked at the second reason. What has been provided by grace must be actively received by faith. The third reason that Christians are sick and remain sick is many Christians do not obey God and follow His perfect plan for their life.

Obedying God's Word put us on the path of life. If we do something other than the Word of God, we will go off the path of life. If we do not obey God, we are going to end up going down paths God never intended for us. When we get off onto the wrong path, we will end up going to places we should never have gone to. People are going through a lot of bad things and are trying to say it is God's will. The truth is that they are simply on the wrong path. You can get off the path of life by stepping out of love. When we get off the path of life, we will end up experiencing sickness and disease, marital problems, financial problems, as well as other possible problems.

When you are dealing with a chronic sickness, it is usually because you have stepped out of love. Examples: by not obeying God's instructions such as not forgiving someone and not walking in love with them, or by not doing what God led you to do or not do.

I can share my own testimony of being off the path of life. I had pain in my left knee for four years. I would seek the Lord about it. I had been prayed for. I stood on healing Scriptures and took authority over Satan, but still no results. One day I was impressed to make some adjustments in my ministry concerning dismissing a person who was helping me. This individual wanted to do things their own way and not the way God had instructed me to do it. The very day my new assistant started helping me, the pain left my knee! Glory to God! I had been out of God's will by allowing someone to direct my ministry how they wanted instead of how

God had instructed me to do. The good news is, we can get back on the path of life and receive our healing.

There was also a time when I had shoulder pain. I could not even lift my arm above my waist without severe pain. I was seeking the Lord about some things in my ministry, and the Lord instructed me to move from Kuressaare back to Lihula. I did not do that immediately, and other bad things started happening to me. I asked the Lord about it and He let me know that I was in disobedience because I had not done what He had instructed me to do. As soon as I repented and began making steps toward the move, things immediately began to improve. My shoulder was healed the day I went to clean my new apartment. Praise the Lord! It pays to obey!

God's Word is His perfect will. As we read the Word of God and obey it, then when we need direction from God that is not found in the Bible, such as who to marry, or what job to take, etc., then God can instruct you in those areas. It is written in **Proverbs 12:28** *"In the way of righteousness is life; and in the pathway thereof there is no death."* There is no death in the path of righteousness and light. Poverty, sickness, and mental oppression are all manifestations of spiritual death. Stay on the path of life by following God and obeying His plan for your life. You will be glad you did!

Faith Confession: *I daily renew my mind with the Word of God. I will not be conformed to this world. As I renew my mind with the Word, I will be able to prove what is that good, acceptable and perfect will of God. As I follow God and His perfect will for my life, things will get brighter, clearer, and better (**Proverbs 4:18**). I trust in the Lord with all my heart, and do not depend on my own understanding. As I trust Him, I will experience divine health. (**Proverbs 3:5-8**).*

THE LIFE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

December 22

Walking in the Spirit

Galatians 5:16

"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh."

The Lord is calling us to walk in the spirit and to allow Him to manifest Himself by His Spirit to this world. Since the day of Pentecost, we have had the potential to walk in the power and authority that Jesus walked in. We are God's children, His ambassadors, and we have been sent to do the same works that Jesus did and greater works (**Romans 8:16; II Corinthians 5:20; John 14:12**). This will happen as we walk in the spirit.

The question is, how do we get to this place of walking in the spirit? We want to please God, to serve Him with our whole heart, but we have to overcome the weakness of the flesh. It is written in **Galatians 5:16-17**, *"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."* Our heart is to do the right thing, but because of the weakness of the flesh (which is Satan's only weapon against us), often we do not do those things we know to do and even desire to do. I am thankful that God has given us a way to overcome the weakness of the flesh by walking in the spirit.

For example, Peter thought he would never deny the Lord but because of the weakness of the flesh he failed. In **Matthew 26:40-41** Jesus spoke something to Peter that would help him walk in the spirit. *"And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."* Jesus was tempted in every way just like we are, but He knew the importance of prayer. Because Jesus prayed, He did not yield to the weakness of the flesh. Whatever you focus on, that is what your flesh will be trained to do. The more you pay attention to the things of God, the more you will behave and walk after the Spirit of God.

Romans 12:1-2 states, "... present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind..." Paul explains in **Romans 8:5-6**, "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."

The entire world around us is pushing the things of the flesh. The devil pulls at your flesh to get you to go the direction of the world because he is interested in you being ruled by your body. The world puts the body and mind before the spirit. The world is geared to pamper the body. Paul said in **I Corinthians 9:27 (Complete Jewish Bible)** "I (speaking of the man on the inside) *treat my body hard and make it my slave so that, after proclaiming the Good News to others, I myself will not be disqualified.*" God is interested in us dominating our body through our recreated spirit. This occurs as we give attention to the things of God and practice godliness. (being like God). God's order for man is spirit, soul, and body (**I Thessalonians 5:23**).

As we expose our flesh to the Word of God and prayer, we will find ourselves walking in the spirit, which means you are thinking on spiritual things. We will not fulfil the lusts (strong desires) of the flesh mentioned in **Galatians 5:19-21**. We will find ourselves walking in the fruit of the spirit, which is "...love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." (**Galatians 5:22-25**).

Prayer and time in the Word of God are the keys to not yielding to the desires of the flesh. Two other simple keys to walking in the spirit include the following: what you are thinking of and what you allow to direct you. Be led by the Spirit and not by your five physical senses.

Faith Confession: *The Lord is calling me to walk in the spirit and to allow Him to manifest Himself by His Spirit to this world. Walking in the spirit means I have spiritual things on my mind, which result in enjoying life and peace. I spend time in the Word of God and prayer every day! I am blessed to be a blessing!*

THE LIFE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

December 23

This Is My Beloved Son: Hear Him

Mark 9:7

"And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him."

Is it important who we listen to? Absolutely! **Proverbs 4:20-22** reads, *"My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings. Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart. For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh."* When He said *"My son, attend to my words..."*, these verses explain that God's Words are first in importance. His Words are first and final authority over every other person's words. He said, *"...incline thine ear to my sayings..."*, which means you must go to the Word, which is God's will. There are a lot of sayings in the world, but He has told us to listen to what He says. What He says trumps all other words!

Our Father said to "hear Jesus." By the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we must line up everything we believe with the Word of God. This morning when I woke up, the Lord spoke to me about writing this devotion today. He said, "Tell them the truth." According to **John 17:17**, God's Word is truth. If you want the truth, you must go to the Word. The truth will set you free from all the lies of the enemy (**John 8:31-32**). According to **John 7:17**, *"If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."*

During my ministry, people have come to me and said, "I can't do this Word, because a minister shared his testimony about how he did the Word and something bad happened to him. I do not want bad things to happen to me." Let me ask this, "Did the minister give Scriptures for what he believed?" We are told in **II Corinthians 13:1** *"...In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established."* (See **Matthew 18:16; Deuteronomy 19:15**)

Let us go to the Word and find the truth about what we believe. So many committed Christians have lost loved ones, and their children are not serving God today. They believe it is because they were in

church too much. One reason their children are not serving God today is because of fear. I know ministers who have feared losing their children to the world because they had to spend so much time in the ministry. It actually happened! Job lost his children among other things and he acknowledged why. **Job 3:25** *"For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me."* There are numerous Scriptures which tell us, "Fear not, be not afraid." Jesus said it to His disciples and to people who came to Him for healing. There are pastors who will not share the Word concerning tithing and giving of offerings because they fear losing people in their churches. Or they fear their people will stop giving. Be cautious! Listen to what Jesus is saying and not to what man or the devil is telling us!

We see in the book of Acts that Christians spent a lot of time in church. Thus, they and their families were blessed. Let us read **Acts 2:44-47**: *"And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, **continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house**, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."*

Jesus explained in **Mark 10:29-30** *"And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."* (See **Luke 18:29-30**) These are the words of Jesus! Do not let the fear of losing your children keep you from being in church and serving God. Fear is like a magnet and will draw your fear to you. If you do not agree with me, then search the Scriptures and find at least two verses which say you will lose your children if you go to church too much and serve God (**II Corinthians 13:1**).

Faith Confession: *I listen to the sayings of Jesus. I line up everything I hear with the Word of God. I determine to do His will, therefore I will know whether something someone says is of God or it is their own words. I do not fear losing my children! I resist fear. I cast it out because I am made perfect in love. As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord!*

THE LIFE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

December 24

The Faithful God

Deuteronomy 7:9

"Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keeps his commandments to a thousand generations."

"...the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy..." Who does He keep covenant and mercy with? Everybody? No, He emphasized *"...with them that love him and keep his commandments..."* I am reminded of **Galatians 6:7**, which states, *"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."* When you love Him and keep His commandments, then you can know that He will keep covenant and mercy with you. That is good news!

Someone might say, "That is Old Covenant. We are not under the law; we are under grace." It is true that you are not under the law if you are led by the Spirit. Paul explains in **Galatians 5:18**, *"But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law."* The key to not being under the law is to be led by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will never lead you to break any of the commandments nor lead you to walk out of love. Praise the Lord!

Our God is faithful. He is faithful to keep covenant and mercy. It is written in **Psalms 119:86** (Literal Hebrew) *"His faithfulness is shewn in His commands,"* which means you can trust in His commandments. When you obey His commandments, He is faithful to keep you from evil (**II Thessalonians 3:3**). Also, in **Psalms 119:138**, *"Thy testimonies that thou hast commanded are righteous and very faithful."* We rejoice that God's mercies are new every morning: great is His faithfulness (**Lamentations 3:23**). Hallelujah! Now we can sing of the mercies of the Lord and make known His faithfulness to all generations (**Psalms 89:1**). Why? Because we love Him and do what He commands us to do in His spoken or written Word.

Let us look at some other Scriptures that speak of His mercy and faithfulness. It is written in **Psalms 36:5**, *"Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens, and thy (Literal Hebrew) faithfulness reacheth unto*

the clouds." **Isaiah 25:1**, "O Lord, thou art my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things; thy counsels of old are (Literal Hebrew) steadfastness and faithfulness." **I Thessalonians 5:24** "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." **II Thessalonians 3:3** "But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil."

Our God is faithful, and we have His nature. Therefore we are faithful (**Galatians 5:22**). We are to deal faithfully with finances. We can see from Scriptures that God used His faithful people that could be trusted with the offerings of the Lord. (**II Kings 12:15; 22:7; II Chronicles 31:12; Nehemiah 13:13**). We are to do our work faithfully (**II Chronicles 34:12**). We are to be faithful witnesses (**Isaiah 8:2**). We who have His Word are to speak it faithfully (**Jeremiah 23:28**). God uses faithful and wise servants to rule over His household (**Matthew 24:45; Luke 12:42**). God entrusts a few things to the good and faithful servant and as this person is faithful with a few, He makes them ruler over much and over cities (**Matthew 25:21; Luke 16:10; Luke 19:17**). Those who are faithful in that which is another man's, God will give them their own (**Luke 16:12**).

Faithfulness is required in stewards (managers of another individual's business which includes pastors and ministers of God's business). (**I Corinthians 4:2; I Timothy 1:12; II Timothy 2:2**). These are the kind of people God uses, and these are the kind of people we are to use. We are to be faithful until death, and He will give us the crown of life (**Revelation 2:10**). There are many more Scriptures on faithfulness, so I encourage you to do a study on faithfulness. You will be glad you did!

Faith Confession: *The Lord my God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps covenant and mercy with me because I love Him and obey His commandments. I am led by the Spirit of God, and I am not under the law. The Lord my God is faithful, He stablishes me and keeps me from evil. Faithful is He who called me who will do it. I imitate my Father. I have His nature, and therefore I am faithful. I am a faithful servant. I am faithful with my finances. I am a faithful worker. I am a faithful witness. I have His Word and I speak it faithfully. I am one who is peaceable and faithful in the body of Christ. I abound in blessings, because I am faithful!*

THE LIFE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

December 25

The Greatest Gift

II Corinthians 9:15 (AMPC)

"Now thanks be to God for His Gift, [precious] beyond telling [His indescribable, inexpressible, free Gift]!"

Thanks be to God for His gift to all of mankind. Paul explained in **Ephesians 2:8-9**, *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the **gift** of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast."* This free gift has been given, but not everyone will receive this free gift. Oh, but thanks be to God, we have received God's "...[precious] beyond telling [His indescribable, inexpressible, free Gift]!" God gave us eternal life which started on the day we accepted Jesus as Lord. It is life like God has. It is the abundant life (**John 10:10**).

There is so much more to eternal life than we first realized. It is written in **I Corinthians 2:11-12** *"For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God."* God gave us His Spirit so we can know the things that He freely gave us. Hallelujah! He gave us the Holy Spirit and His gifts (**Acts 2:38; I Corinthians 12:1-11**). Even though He has given us many gifts, there are people that will not receive everything He has freely given. What He has given by grace must be received through faith. Let us look at some of the things He has given us.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, Jesus the Word (**John 3:16; John 1:1**). He sent His Word, healed us, and delivered us from destruction. (**Psalms 107:20**). Healing is a gift from God! He redeemed us from the curse of the law to Abraham's blessings (**Galatians 3:13-14; Deuteronomy 28**). **Ephesians 4:7-8** reads, *"But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men."* He Himself gave us ministry gifts, *"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists;*

and some, pastors and teachers..." (**Ephesians 4:11**). Our pastors long to impart some spiritual gift to us in order for us to be established (**Romans 1:11**).

Jesus emphasized in **Matthew 7:11**, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, **how much more** shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" It is written in **James 1:17**, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." If something is bad, we know it did not come from God. Have you ever heard anybody say, "Oh, I feel so good, I have this headache, and a terrible cough, I feel so good." Of course not! Sickness is bad, and it is not from God!

Romans 8:32 reads, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" It is written in **II Peter 1:3-4** "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue. Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these (great and precious promises) ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

Finally, Jesus commanded in **Matthew 10:7-8** "And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: **freely ye have received, freely give.**" Today we would say, the kingdom of God has come. As we have freely received, we are to freely give!!! Give the most precious gift, Christ Jesus, the Word!

Faith Confession: *I give thanks to God for His precious gift. I give thanks for the Holy Spirit and His gifts. I give thanks that He sent His Word and healed me and delivered me from destruction. I give thanks for His ministry gifts, my pastor and all the other ministry gifts that bring the Word of God to me and impart spiritual gifts to me. I am so blessed! Blessed to be a blessing. Freely I have received, and freely I will give! Happy Birthday, Jesus!*

THE LIFE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

December 26

The Presence of the Lord

Psalm 16:11

"Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy: at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

How could you tell if you were in the presence of the Lord? According to **Psalm 16:11**, we see that in His presence is fulness of joy. God is omnipresent, meaning that He is present everywhere. However, He is not manifesting Himself to the same degree in every place. It is written in **1 Samuel 2:30**: *"Wherefore the LORD God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the LORD saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed."* The number one way God honors those who honor Him is with His presence. The more we honor Him, the more joy we will experience.

The more we honor God and His Word, the more He is able to manifest Himself to us. The word, "despise," in Bible terms simply means to fail to acknowledge. To fail to acknowledge God and His Word is despising. Why? Because you are treating something as trivial, insignificant, and unimportant. This was happening in the offerings of the Lord in **1 Samuel 2**. The ministers were not treating God's Word as important concerning His offerings. They did not receive the offerings according to His Word; therefore, God could not manifest Himself in their presence and the end result was death. Because Eli did not correct his sons concerning the way they were handling the offerings of the Lord, both he and his sons died. The offerings of the Lord are very important to Him. He wants us to acknowledge His Word in our times of offerings and in all that we do.

He said, *"...them that honour me I will honour..."* Can we honor God more in our homes, in our businesses, and in our church services? Yes, we can! The more we honor Him, the more He is able to honor us with His presence, resulting in experiencing more joy. The following are some results which we can expect as we honor the Lord.

Firstly, in the presence of the Lord, there is comfort. The Holy Spirit is the Comforter (**John 14:16**). The more we honor the Holy Spirit, the more He is able to manifest Himself in our presence. You should feel comfortable in the presence of God and His Spirit, which means you should feel comfortable in His services and with His people. In some churches, ministers have stopped honoring the Holy Spirit because they do not want to offend the unbelievers. I would rather offend an unbeliever than offend God by not yielding to His Spirit. The way pastors have stopped honoring the Holy Spirit is by deciding when the Holy Spirit can manifest Himself. The gifts manifest as He wills, not as man wills (**I Corinthians 12:11**). The more we yield to the Holy Spirit and respond to what He wants to do, the more He will honor us with His manifested presence.

Secondly, as seen in **Acts 3:19**, refreshing comes from the presence of the Lord. *"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."* We can have His manifested presence of refreshing every day, as we honor Him and acknowledge Him and His Word. **Isaiah 28:11-12** state, *"For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear."* You can be refreshed as you pray in the Spirit.

Lastly, in the presence of the Lord, there is joy, comfort, refreshing, peace, love, and healing. Everything you need is in the presence of the Lord. We can have more of His manifested presence this very day by honoring Him, His Word, His Spirit, and His people more. The degree we honor Him is the degree He will honor us with His presence.

Faith Confession: *I honor God more and more and as I do this, He has said in His Word that He will honor me. He will honor me with His manifested presence. In His presence is fulness of joy, comfort, refreshing, and everything that I will ever need. I love the Lord my God with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength.*

THE LIFE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

December 27

Honored

Proverbs 27:18

"Whoso keepeth the fig tree shall eat the fruit thereof: so he that waiteth on his master shall be honoured."

Honor is important to God. According to **1 Samuel 2:30**, "...for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed." God has promised to honor those who honor Him. We see here in **Proverbs 27:18**, "...he that waiteth on his master shall be honoured." We observe an example of this in **Acts 13:2**: "As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted..." What were these ministers doing? They were honoring God by ministering to Him. The next thing we see is God honoring them. "...the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them."

Notice that they were waiting upon the Lord. They were not being ministered to, but they were ministering to Him. How do you minister to the Lord? One way you can do this is by praising and worshipping Him. It is not about you coming to Him to get Him to meet your needs or to get something from Him. You are simply coming to Him and letting Him know you love Him and thanking Him for all He has done for you. It is you coming to Him, praising and worshipping Him for His goodness and mercy, and for all the wonderful things He has done and is doing. This is ministering to the Lord. I believe we need to do more of this.

I was ministering to the Lord in song recently, and the Holy Spirit gave me some direction for the New Year. I was honoring God, and He in turn honored me. He did what He said in His Word. Let us examine some other Scriptures about waiting upon the Lord and observe how God honors people.

Psalms 27:14, "Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD." As we honor the Lord by waiting on Him and being of good courage, He will honor us by strengthening our heart. Praise the Lord! So, if you need strengthening in your heart, wait on Him, minister to Him in praise and worship.

Proverbs 20:22 reads, *"Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the LORD, and he shall save thee."* When someone does something wrong to us, we do not have to get even with them. Just wait upon the Lord, minister to Him in praise, worship the Lord, and He will save, He will deliver you. David is a good example of this. King Saul was seeking to kill David; however, David was a man who ministered to the Lord in song and God did save him. God protected David from his enemies.

David prophesied about Jesus in **Psalms 40:1**: *"I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry."* As we honor God by patiently waiting for Him, He honors us by hearing our cry. We know that Jesus did wait patiently for the Lord and God did bring Him out of the horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set His feet upon a rock, and established His goings (**Psalms 40:2**).

Isaiah 40:31 promises, *"But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."* God honors us by renewing our strength; and causing us to mount up with wings as eagles. He honors us by causing us to run and not be weary; to walk and not faint. All that is ours as we honor Him by waiting on Him.

As we are approaching the New Year, take time to honour our Lord by waiting upon Him. Do not ask for anything, but simply focus on Him, giving thanks for all He has done for you in this past year. Praise and worship Him for His greatness. As we honor the Lord, we can count on Him to honor us. As we minister to the Lord, the Holy Spirit can speak things to us concerning the New Year.

Faith Confession: *As I wait on my Master, I shall be honored. He will honor me by renewing my strength. He will strengthen my heart enabling me to mount up with wings as eagles; I shall run, and not be weary; and I shall walk, and not faint. As I honor the Lord by ministering to Him, He will hear my cry and protect me from my enemies. He will strengthen my heart!*

THE LIFE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

December 28

Honor to Whom Honor

Romans 13:7

"Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour."

According to the Word of God, there are people to whom we owe honor. The Bible reveals those whom we are to honor. We do not have to honor everything a person does, because some actions people do are not honorable. However, we can honor the office, the place, that God has given them. Some people say, "I honor God, but so and so I will not honor." The truth is that you do not honor God any more than you honor people. We have a command, not just a suggestion, to *"Render therefore to all their dues...honour to whom honour."*

Paul wrote in **Romans 13:1**, *"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers (authorities). For there is no power (authority) but of God: the powers (authorities) that be are ordained of God."* The highest authority is God, His Word, and His Spirit (**John 5:23**). Therefore, every soul should be subject, (which also means to be submitted) to God's order or to place themselves under those God has placed over them. We certainly owe honor to God. All authority is ordained of God. **Romans 13:6** reads, *"For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing."* Those in positions of authority are God's ministers, and we are to pay tribute or render to all their dues.

People would not think of letting their bills pile up and neglecting to pay them. If you did, the electric company, water company, and other businesses would be notifying you. If you continued not to pay your bills, they would turn your electric and water off or take you to jail. Most people pay their bills. I wonder how many have piles of unpaid honor and respect? God has promised in **I Samuel 2:30**, *"...for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed."* We are looking at some ways that we can honor God more, enabling Him to honor us more with His manifested presence. This is one way, by honoring those He has told us to honor. Again, you might not be able to honor all

that a person in authority does, but you can honor the place God has given them in your life. First, we notice in the New Testament that we are to honor our father and mother (**Matthew 15:4-8; 19:19; Mark 10:19; Ephesians 6:2**). In **Matthew** Jesus is talking about honoring our parents financially. Maybe you cannot give them money, but you can buy them food, or other things they need, or pay a bill for them. Children are to honor their parents by obeying them. One way we honor our Heavenly Father is by obeying Him.

In **Romans 12:10**, we are admonished to "*Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another.*" According to **I Timothy 5:3** we are to "*Honour widows that are widows indeed.*" Read on in **I Timothy 5** to see which widows we are to honor. In **I Timothy 5:17** it is written, "*Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.*" **I Timothy 6:1** "*Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed.*" The author states in **I Peter 2:17**, "*Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king* (those in authority)."

Peter continues to write in **I Peter 3:7**, "*Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.*" In **Ephesians 5:21-6:1**, we see whom we are to be subject to, or we can also say, who we are to honor by submitting to them. The wife is to submit to the husband. As the wife submits, she is honoring God, and God will in turn honor her for obeying His Word. This is God's order. God has ordained that the husband be the love head under the Love head of the Church, Christ. Wives, let me tell you a secret. If you do not submit to your husband, you take away his ability to honor you. The same is true concerning the church and Christ. If we do not submit to our Lord and His Word, we remove His ability to honor us. As we honor God and His Word, He will honor us.

Faith Confession: *Write your own confession based on the Scriptures.*

THE LIFE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

December 29

The Humble Will Be Honored

Proverbs 29:23 (CJB)

"The proud will be humbled, but the humble will be honored."

We have seen that God honors those who honor Him (**I Samuel 2:30**). We are looking at ways which we can honor God more and thus enable Him to honor us. The degree that we submit to God is the degree God is able to honor us. **Proverbs 29:23** states that the humble will be honored. Jesus is our example. It is written in **Philippians 2:5-8**, *"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."*

We are to allow this mindset be in us, which was also in Christ Jesus. He made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Himself the form of a servant. He became like us. Even though He is the Son of God, He walked on the earth as a man, led by the Holy Spirit. He became a servant, serving God and others. He was not self-serving. Jesus humbled Himself and became obedient to the Father's will. It was the Father's will that Jesus die and pay the price for all mankind's sins. Jesus knew that meant He would be eventually separated from the Father, which He had never experienced. Jesus had a will of His own. We can see this in **Matthew 26:39** *"...O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me..."* That was Jesus' will. Notice He did not stop with those words, He went on to say, *"...nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt."* He became obedient to the Father's will even to death.

The opposite of humility is pride. According to **Proverbs 29:23**, the proud will be brought low or humbled. We also observe in **James 4:6**, *"But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble."* When we see something in God's Word and choose not to do it, we are being prideful which God resists. It is written in **Psalms 138:6**, *"Though the LORD be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly:"*

but the proud he knoweth afar off." God honors us with more grace as we humble ourselves. That is exactly what God did for Jesus as He humbled Himself and became obedient to death. Jesus had the grace to do the will of God. We are so thankful that Jesus did that for us! Therefore, we now have access to the Father and will never experience the wrath of God. Jesus took the punishment for us! Hallelujah!

In **Philippians 2:9-11** we notice how God honored Jesus, because He humbled Himself and became obedient. *"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."* Praise the Lord! It pays to obey God!

As we submit ourselves to the will of God (which is His Word, both written and that which He would speak to our hearts), we are honoring the Lord. As we honor Him, He is able to honor us. He will honor us with more grace, which is His ability. He will also honor us with healing, provision, peace, joy, comfort, strength, revelation, restoration, and the list goes on. Everything we see God doing through Jesus is God honoring Jesus. God will honor us the same way as we humbly submit to the will of God as Jesus did.

Maybe there are some areas in your life that you have not wanted to obey God. Maybe you have not wanted to willingly submit to those individuals God has placed over you. Husband, maybe you have not wanted to be the love head of your home by submitting to God and doing His will. Or wife, maybe you have not wanted to submit to your husband, or employee to the employer, or children to your parents. There is good news. You can become willing! If you are serious about being willing, then pray the following prayer that is found in **Hebrews 13:21**: *Father, make me perfect in every good work to do Your will, working in me that which is wellpleasing in Your sight, through Jesus Christ; to Whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.* Because you know that God heard your prayer, let the following faith confession be yours from now on.

Faith Confession: Philippians 2:13 *"God is working in me both to will and to do of His good pleasure."*

THE LIFE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

December 30

You Crown the Year with Your Goodness I

Psalm 65:11
(NKJV)

"You crown the year with Your goodness, And Your paths drip with abundance."

God crowns or encircles the year with His goodness, the year of His bounty, harvest bestowed by God. His paths drip with abundance. The King James Version says, "...*Thy paths drop fatness.*" The word "fatness" means "extra, increase, abundance, luxuriance". Praise God! Taking the right path is important if you want to enjoy fatness, abundance, extra increase, luxuriance! If you are willing and obedient, you will get on the right path.

What is the right path? **Proverbs 4:18** explains, "*But the path of the just (the believer) is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*" The right path is the path of the just. The moment you made Jesus Christ the Lord of your life, you became the just and you stepped on the right path which is the path of light and life. As you continue to walk in the light that you have, and continue to trust and obey His Word, your path will become brighter and brighter. Things will improve in every area of your life.

Jesus said in **John 10:10**, "*The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly,*" which is referring to the path of light, the path of the just. When people leave the path of light, one of the first things they stop doing is tithing and giving. If you are experiencing your money being stolen from you through sickness and disease, and constantly things breaking down, you might want to check that you have not left the path of light and life. If you are a tither and a giver, know that the devourer is rebuked for your sake. He cannot steal from you (**Malachi 3:7-12**). Examine your love walk. Check and see if there was a Word of the Lord which you disliked and disobeyed. It is easy to get back on the path of the just, the path of light, by simply confessing your sins. He will forgive your sins and cleanse you from all unrighteousness (**I John 1:9**). Just say, "Lord, I have sinned; I

have failed You. Forgive me, Lord, in Jesus' Name." He will do two things: He will forgive you, and He will cleanse you of all unrighteousness. Now you are back on the path. Continue obeying God's Word.

Decide to be willing and obedient at all times. Always obey the Word of God which is how you stay on the path of light. It pays very well! The Holy Spirit leads you on the path of light, the path of obedience, not the path of darkness. **Colossians 1:13** states, "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness (of sin and disobedience) and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life (**John 14:6**). He is the light!

He crowns, encircles your year with His goodness. His paths drip with abundance, luxuriance, and extra increase! Be blessed!

Faith Confession: *I am a doer of the Word of God. I walk in the light as He is in the light, and I have fellowship with Him and other believers. I am willing and obedient; therefore, I get on the right path and stay on the path of light. I stay on the path that drips with abundance, extra increase, and luxuriance. As I stay on the path of the just, I can know that my path will get brighter and brighter. Things will get better and better. The just shall live by faith. My faith comes by hearing the Word of God. I am the just, and I live by believing and applying God's Word. This year is crowned with goodness. I am on His path that drips with abundance, extra increase, bounty, and luxuriance! I am blessed to be a blessing.*

THE LIFE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

December 31

You Crown the Year with Your Goodness II

Psalm 65:11

(NKJV)

"You crown the year with Your goodness, And Your paths drip with abundance."

Psalm 65:9-13 (NKJV) reads, "You visit the earth and water it, You greatly enrich it; The river of God is full of water; You provide their grain, For so You have prepared it. You water its ridges abundantly, You settle its furrows; You make it soft with showers, You bless its growth. You crown the year with Your goodness, and Your paths drip with abundance. They drop on the pastures of the wilderness, And the little hills rejoice on every side. The pastures are clothed with flocks; The valleys also are covered with grain; They shout for joy, they also sing."

This is a picture of the lives of the believer, both spiritually and physically. When you follow the path of light, you can expect these rewards in every area of your life. **Psalm 67:5 (NKJV)** is a key to the earth yielding her increase. "Let the people praise You, O God; Let all the peoples praise You." What is the result of praising God? **Psalm 67:6-7** "Then (when you praise God) shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us. God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him." Here you can see the connection between praise and increase.

We saw yesterday that God's "...paths drop fatness..." and that the word "fatness" literally means "extra increase." According to **Psalm 67:5**, if you are on God's path of light, you will be praising Him and the result of that will be the earth yielding her increase. Do you believe it would be worth praising Him more? It is important to be thankful for all He has given you. Praise and thankfulness open the door for God to bless you with more. I believe the prophet Habakkuk understood this principle when he said in **Habakkuk 3:17-18 (NKJV)** "Though the fig tree may not blossom, Nor fruit be on the vines; Though the labor of the olive may fail, And the fields yield no food; Though the flock may be cut off from the fold, And there be no herd in the stalls-Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." This is just the opposite of the picture seen in **Psalm 65:9-13**. Maybe things were not as good as

they could have been this year. However, as you continue to praise and give thanks to God and keep your eyes upon the God of your salvation and make the adjustments needed, by the end of next year you can experience extra increase!

Expect God to crown your year with goodness! Begin making this your confession now. Many people pray and ask God to bless their plans and purposes. Do not pray this, because He is not obligated to answer that prayer. You can pray the following: "God, show me Your plans and purposes, Your path for my life that You have already placed your blessing on." As you ask Him to do this and believe, He will show you the path of life, His blessed plans and purposes for your life.

Be thankful for every good thing God has blessed you with over the past year. Begin to sing praises to God. Praising God simply means to brag on God. Brag on His goodness, His faithfulness which is how Israel defeated its enemy. They sent the singers before them to praise the beauty of His holiness. They sang, "Praise the Lord for His mercy endures forever" (**II Chronicles 20:21-22**). God is good, and He only does good!

Faith Confession: *I am a doer of the Word of God, and I am blessed. I thank You, God, that You crown my year with goodness. I am on Your path, the path of light, and I am blessed with extra increase. Thank You for blessing me so I can be a blessing to Your kingdom and to others as you lead me. I am blessed with the blessing of the Lord! I praise You for all You have done for me and in me. God, You are good and Your mercies endure forever! Amen!*