CHRISTIAN PEER-SUPPORT SELF-HELP PROGRAM

THE

VICTORY

TIPS PROGRAM

Gain Victory over Anxiety and Depression

Free Daily Telephone Support

But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 15:57

The
Victory Tips
Program

NASBV Large Format

Gain Victory over Anxiety and Depression

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All Bible verses used in this version of the program

are from the New American Standard Version of the Bible.

Join our daily Zoom conference calls

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"The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love." Galatians 5:6 NIV

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Welcome to The Victory Tips Program

Since 2005, we have been helping people rise above anxiety and depression. Over the years, many of the people requesting help have been Christian. Thus, we have published this manual that helps people find wholeness using scripture. We want Christians to plainly see that God wants them well, and that He has provided guidance in the Bible on how to be well. For those who are not Christian, we suggest they find a mature Christian to walk them through this manual. We would be happy to help them find such a person in their area. Our contact information is provided below.

In 1 Peter 5:8, we learn that we have an adversary, the devil, who goes about seeking who he may devour, and many of us have suffered loss in our lives because of him. But in John 10:10, Jesus tells us that He came to give us Life, and life abundant. Many of us have found abundant life through Jesus, through the Word of God. We made a come-back in life by becoming *transformed by the renewing of our minds*, as stated in Romans 12:2.

The "Toolbox"

We think of the Bible as a toolbox. But if we don't know how to use the tools in the toolbox, the toolbox will have no value to us. Because many people do not have experience using the "toolbox" (the Bible), we have written the Victory Tips Program in simple terms so it can be easily understood, and be helpful to as many people as possible.

The Program

The Victory Tips Program has three main sections, the 29 Happiness Tips, the Happiness Basics, and the Practical Tools section. The program is written in a recovery group format. This means it can be used to lead a recovery group. People with little understanding of mental health can use this program to help those who struggle with mental health challenges.

An important benefit of the Victory Tips Program is access to daily support. Daily contact through conference calls and one-to-one support calls enables individuals to quickly learn recovery truths that will help them heal emotionally. Having contact with others who are journeying toward wellness, offers another benefit, that of, making new friends.

The Version

This particular version of the program uses Bible verses from the New American Standard Version of the Bible. For a Victory Tips Program using other Bible translations, or for a program translated into other languages, please visit our website at www.victorytipsprogram.com, or contact us: 213-426-8223 (USA) or 289-723-2420 (Canada), or email us at victorytipsprogram@gmail.com.

The Impact

To get the most out of this Bible-based program, we suggest you invite the "Author" of the Bible, Jesus Christ, into your reading time. You can do this by praying this prayer. *"Jesus, I invite you into my reading time. Please teach me how to live my life free of all anxiety and depression. Amen."*

<u>Please Note</u>

The Victory Tips Program is a peer-to-peer, personal networking and group recovery tool, and is not intended to take the place of professional counseling or medical treatment.

"But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

1 Corinthians 15:57 NASB

Testimonials

"When I first contacted Victory Tips, I was angry, sad, and inconsolable. To say I was difficult is an understatement. I felt cheated and robbed of what had been a happy life. But they more than hung in with me, offering compassion, understanding, and solutions so I could go on……. Today, I am self-employed which is something I thought I could never do. I can't thank them enough for saving my life and giving me the tools and insight to regain control of my life. They helped me realize there is life after suffering." - Beth (2007)

"My needs as a wife and mother were not being met, and I felt hurt, betrayed, neglected, and at times like I didn't matter. I began shaking and jerking on my left side due to the depression and the medications. I wanted the pain to stop..... I am now in a church that provides help and support….. For many years I felt like damaged goods. I am being restored. It is by the relationship I have with God that is allowing this to happen. Situations and circumstances are going to come up. I need to remember that I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength." - Lindsay (2006)

"I got back an email that said, "I want to talk to you." I was very hesitant, but unconsciously I must have emailed them back. Then another email came saying that God's will is that you enjoy life. It was as if God himself was speaking to me through those words……. The things that helped me so much were the Affirmations. I read them every day without fail. Sometimes I read them repeatedly. I apply the Affirmations to my everyday life….. With a whole heart, I gladly endorse the wonderful knowledge and topics that you will find in this program. I trust it will do for you what it did for me. I pray that you give them a chance to help you. Remember that you are not alone. The best is yet ahead of you! The Holy Spirit will embrace you and restore you!"- Lori (2005)

"I found Victory Tips through a telephone prayer line; they were my last hope, I had called every single prayer line listed on the Internet and prayed with thousands of them. My husband of 14 years (17 years of being together) had kicked me out and had replaced me with a girlfriend half his age. We have three children; we had a beautiful farm, everyone thought we were as in love as I thought we were, it crushed me…. This program, the group members, the Lord Christ, God JEHOVAH, saved my life and taught me how to have faith in God and rely on Him to get me through trials, there aren't enough good things I can say about this program." - Sarah (2015)

"I don't know of anything else that could have helped me through such sorrow as well as this Holy Spirit led program. Victory Tips is amazing. Because of their dedication and diligence, this program lifted me to a higher place in my Christian walk and pulled me out of the loneliness of depression. It also brought much restoration in my family and a closer relationship with Our Lord."- Catherine (2014)

"I was at an ultimate low in my life when I came to the Victory Tips Program. I had just recently tried to harm myself and was told I needed help. My daughter had found the Victory Tips program online. It was then I decided to try this program. As I began to study this course, I began drawing closer to God after being estranged from him for sooo long. I felt an indescribable PEACE set in. I highly recommend this program to anyone and everyone. This program gives you exactly what the title says, "Victory Tips" on how to cope with life and its challenges !!!! While bringing you closer to God."- Connie (2015)

"On reflection, it had been a very brief courtship, and on the day we married my husband's personality immediately appeared to change…He became extremely angry, moody, abusive and at times threatening and violent to me. I knew he had problems, but did not know the extent of them or the possible repercussions…During this desperate time, I became aware of the existence of Victory Tips

prayer ministry. We had daily discussions, which probably kept me alive and kept me praying. They linked me with other similar girls on the program with shared prayer calls; this was also supportive to me… I found the Victory tips program literally to be a lifesaver."- Deborah (2015)

"As I explored churches over a period of some 42 years, I was amazed that in the face of the Great Commission, the practical value of making disciples was nearly totally absent. Searching for something to fill that gap in my life I turned to the Victory Tips program. There I found that in the context of the lesson was how to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. The Great Commission must be completed, and discipleship is the first step. "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15)." In His love and Service." - David (2019)

"Thirteen years ago I prayed to God to send me someone I could talk to but found no one. I was desperate and did not stop crying. I asked God, "Why?..." all the time. My family thought I had left the best thing that had ever happened to me, and they did not come around. My friends had left because of the man I was with. I searched for help….I found Victory Tips. They understood and listened to me while I cried. They prayed for me, talked to me. They encouraged me to get back to church. I did not want to trust anyone in church again. I listened, and found a church. I changed my thinking…. They were active in my steps to recovery. The Victory Tips Program was the basis of finding the Love of God who heals all of the sorrows in this world. I felt like God would not ever love me as I had been such a sinner. I had to step out in faith and seek His love. Our Lord is faithful to His Word." - Hope (2017)

"Victory Tips has breathed new life into me after I spent too many years suffocating from anxiety and depression. I attended my first meeting when I was at my wit's end, having panic attacks every day and barely sleeping. Only one week into the program, I was completely free from anxiety and depression. The program has given me the courage to pursue opportunities I never would have before, such as singing a solo in my home church. The program is simple. All it requires is that you show up, listen and be open to growing in your relationship with God. My relationship with God is stronger than ever and I am grateful for the friendships I made in this program. Start the program and watch miracles happen in your life. I think you're going to be amazed." – Maddie (2020)

TIP #1

****

"Fly By the Instruments"

****

1A - Flying by the Instruments is a term used when aircraft pilots are unable to see ahead of them because of precipitation, darkness, or cloud cover. In these conditions, pilots rely on their instruments to guide them safely to their destination. We thank God for instruments in an aircraft because they can mean the difference between landing safely, and crash landing. So it is in our lives. Life can become so difficult that we can no longer "*see where we are going"*. We end up losing inner peace and happiness. At these times it is vital that we know how to "Fly by the Instruments."

Question 1: Can you remember a time when you needed help to get through a problem? If so, would you like to share with us briefly what happened?

2A - What are the "instruments" we can "fly" by? The scriptures give us principles we can hold onto when life gets tough.

"Instrument No. 1" - <u>God Loves Us.</u>

During most times in our lives, the fact that God loves us may be an unquestionable truth. Here are some scriptures about God's love for us.

a) **John 3:16** "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."

b) **Ephesians 2:4** "But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,"

c) **Titus 3:4** "But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared,"

2B - However, when we are under severe stress, the simple truth of God's love can seem foreign to us. It can tempt us to believe that God is mad at us, and is showing His dissatisfaction toward us by allowing the negative circumstances in our lives. This is a common occurrence and needs to be addressed; otherwise we lose precious time in needless stress.

2C - Some of the hard times we experience can come because of poor choices we have made. The hurtful results of these choices cannot be blamed on God. The good news is, when we are His child, we have only to confess our poor choices to Him, and repent of them, and He instantly forgives us. God's mercy is so great. Following, are some Bible verses about God's willingness to forgive us.

a) **Isaiah 1:18** "Come now, and let us reason together, Says the Lord, Though your sins are as scarlet, They will be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They will be like wool."

b) **Isaiah 55:7** "Let the wicked forsake his way And the unrighteous man his thoughts; And let him return to the Lord, And He will have compassion on him, And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon."

c) **1 John 1:9** "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

2D - <u>God's Grace</u>

Along with forgiveness, God promises to give us grace to get through the tough times. Below is a well known Bible verse about God's grace that carries us through such times. The Apostle Paul wrote about it. Paul was troubled with an affliction, and he wanted Jesus to give him relief from it. However, this was a special kind of affliction. The affliction came to him because he was given a vast amount of knowledge about Jesus Christ. Jesus felt it was necessary to keep Paul humble and allow him to somewhat suffer, so he would never lose sight of the job that was given him to do. The following verse gives us some details about this situation.

2 Corinthians 12:7 "*(Paul speaking)* Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me—to keep me from exalting myself!"

2E - Paul asked for relief from his affliction. See underlined text, below, so read how Jesus responded to his request.

2 Corinthians 12:9 "And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me."

2F - Above, Jesus told Paul, *"My grace is sufficient for you: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."* In essence, Jesus told Paul that, "No, I will not relieve you in the way you are asking. I will help you in another way." That way is called grace. Paul had to learn that there is a special place in God where His grace carries us through the difficult times of our lives. It is a place of resting and trusting in God. We find that place by meditating on God's Word.

2G - When difficult times come, for whatever reason, it's not that God wants us to feel long-lasting shame and regret. God is all about welcoming us when we do wrong. The truth is, God has a plan for us that is filled with peace and blessing. If we've failed God, or failed ourselves or failed those around us, no problem – we simply go to God in humility and faith, to receive pardon for our sins through Jesus Christ. God will forgive us, and give us a "Plan B" to follow, to get back to God's blessings. That is what makes the Christian life so amazing. We are always only one sincere prayer away from a new beginning!

For more scriptures that show us how much God loves us, read the bible verses in Core Belief #1 – God Loves Me.

"Instrument No. 1" is God Loves Us!

Question 2: Can you think of a time when God showed His love to you?

3A - **"Instrument No. 2" - People Love Us**

There are people in our lives who honestly love us, and want to help us. If our family and friends cannot help us, surely people from a nearby church will help us. The mandate of the church is to go out to the "highways and bi-ways" of life and compel people to come to Jesus Christ their Savior. Jesus wants to show them how to have their lives transformed by His love and His truth.

3B - Granted, not every church can help with financial needs, but a good church, for sure, will help with friendship and spiritual guidance.

Why would a church want to help people who are struggling? A good pastor knows the value of helping someone who is suffering. Once that person is brought to a place of faith and peace, they become the best person to reach out to others who are suffering.

Here are some scriptures about the church reaching out to help people.

a) **Matthew 25:35** "For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in:"

b) **Romans 12:13** "contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality."

c) **Galatians 6:2** "Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor;"

"Instrument No. 2" – People Love Us!

Question 3: Can you think of a time when God used people to help you?

4A - **"Instrument No. 3" – We Were Created to Win**

When we are overwhelmed with the stresses of life, it's great to know that we were created to win! It may feel like we could never win, but that isn't the way God created us to be. When we receive Jesus Christ as our personal Lord and Savior, we enter a community of people who are "overcomers" in all aspects of life.

4B - We read in Genesis 1:26 that God created Adam to have dominion over the world. See Genesis 1:26 below, and other "overcomer" scriptures.

a) **Genesis 1:26** "Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

b) **Psalm 8:4-6** "What is man that You take thought of him, And the son of man that You care for him? Yet You have made him a little lower than God, And You crown him with glory and majesty! You make him to rule over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet."

c) **Psalm 115:16** "The heavens are the heavens of the Lord, But the earth He has given to the sons of men."

4C - The New Testament also has scriptures on how man was created to win.

a) **Matthew 10:1** "Jesus summoned His twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness."

b) **Acts 1:8** "but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

c) **Romans 8:37** "But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us."

Question 4: Can you remember times in your life when you were winning? If so, can you tell us about any of them?

5A - Now that you have found out the truth, believe it!

"Instrument No.3" – We Were Created To Win!

"Instrument No. 4" – We Have a Weapon

When everything about life seems so chaotic, it is good to know that God doesn't leave us defenseless. Ephesians Chapter 6 talks about the armor of God that every Christian needs to have on, at all times. One of the pieces of armor is the Sword of the Spirit.

Ephesians 6:17 "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:"

5B - The Sword of the Spirit is the Word of God. It is what Jesus used to defend Himself when Satan tempted Him in the wilderness during a 40 day fast. At one point, the devil tempted Jesus to turn stones into bread to feed Himself. However, Jesus told him, *"It is written,'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'"* (Matthew 4:4) The devil also tempted Jesus to jump off the temple peak, by saying "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down; for it is written, 'He will command His angels concerning You'; and 'On their hands they will bear You up, So that You will not strike Your foot against a stone.'" But Jesus told him, *"It is written, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."* (Matthew 4:7) Satan kept tempting Jesus, and each time Jesus defeated the devil with the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God.

5C - We notice in the above story that Satan also knows the Word of God, and he uses it to try and deceive us. That's why we need to have a good understanding of the scriptures. So, the question for us is this: Are we going to let Satan beat us up with his lies and deceptions, or are we going to stop Satan in his tracks with the Word of God? The choice is ours.

Question 5: Do you have any experience in using weapons to protect yourself?

6A - The rest of this manual teaches us how to use God's Word to keep us in a state of peace and happiness.

"Instrument No. 4" – We Have a Weapon!

When life seems out of control, we can take back control of our lives; starting with, "Flying by the Instruments."

Contact us today to get help on your journey toward peace and happiness. Clear skies are just ahead!

213-426-8223 (USA) or 289-723-2420 (Canada)

TIP #2

****

Stop, and Be Still

****

1A - We can all agree that life can be challenging. When we get to a point where we've been trying so hard to make life work but things aren't going well, sometimes it is good to just stop.

But what does the average person do? They keep trying and trying until they exhaust themselves physically and emotionally. Life was never meant to be so difficult, but we make it so because of our ignorance.

1B - What Does "Stop" Mean?

When life gets hard, and we stop, we're not quitting, we're just pausing to assess our strategies. What does 'Stop' mean to you in your situation? It may mean to stop actions leading to a divorce or a job resignation. Maybe it means cutting back on commitments or working fewer hours. Whatever it may be, we're going to have to stop and take time to learn strategies that can help us win in life.

1C - "Stopping" in the Scriptures

One incident in the scriptures of a person feeling the need to stop was Mary, the sister of Martha. In Luke Chapter 10 we read how Jesus went to Mary and Martha's house to visit and teach them. Mary chose to stop and sit at Jesus's feet to hear Him teach. When Martha complained to Jesus that her sister wasn't helping her prepare food for His visit, Jesus told Martha, that Mary had chosen the right thing to do, to stop and hear him teach. Mary chose to "stop and be still," and it gave her favor with Jesus.

Question 1: What is your favorite place in your home where you can stop and be still each day to learn from the scriptures?

2A - Saul of Tarsus

Another time in scripture of a person feeling the need to stop was Saul of Tarsus. In Acts Chapter 8 and 9, we see that Saul was living a passionate life for God. Saul was strictly following the Jewish teachings of the day. He even imprisoned and killed people who were a threat to the Jewish ways of living, including followers of Christ. Then one day Jesus got his attention with a bright light that blinded him. He then heard an audible voice, saying, *"I am Jesus whom you are persecuting."*

That caused Saul to stop what he was doing. How did Saul "become still"? Scripture tells us that he neither ate nor drank for 3 days. He waited to receive direction for his life. Saul later became the great Apostle, Paul, who wrote most of the New Testament. Saul chose to "Stop, and Be Still," and it helped him become a renowned leader for the Church of Jesus Christ.

Question 2: Have you ever had a time in your life where God used circumstances to stop you suddenly to get your attention? Can you tell us about it?

3A - The Apostles after the Resurrection

Another occasion of people "stopping and being still" occurred after Jesus had been crucified. He arose from the dead and showed himself to His followers. He gave them these instructions, *"And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."* (**Luke 24:49**)**.** In obedience, the followers of Christ met in a large upper room and began praying. They were "stopping," and as they did, God's Holy Spirit came down from heaven and filled them all with God's power. **Acts 2:2** describes what happened; *"And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting."* From then on, the Apostle's began preaching and teaching the Word of God in great power. The 120 people in the upper room chose to "stop, and be still" and it transformed their lives!

Question 3: Have you ever attended a spiritual retreat or set aside a block of time to focus on God? Did God help you or direct you in some way?

4A - When Anxiety Comes - "Stop"

"Stop" can also be used whenever we feel anxiety coming on. When this happens, we can stop what we are doing and pray a short prayer, such as: *"Dear God, anxiety is building up in me. Please show me what is causing it so I can disarm it and go back to a place of peace and calm."*

If anxiety has become such a close companion to you that you don't even notice it when it tries to come on you, ask God to help you recognize it in its early stages, and then confront it with the above prayer.

4B - "Be Still."

It can be helpful to take time each day to "be still" from activity. The goal of taking time to be still in our actions is to learn how to be still in our thinking. Being still can also help us spiritually, for when our hearts are at rest, we are most able to sense God's guidance in our lives.

4C - Ways we can become still in our actions

Bible Reading

It can be helpful to develop a consistent time of Bible reading each day. In the Happiness Basics, we learn about the importance of knowing God's Word. This is what we use to help ourselves during difficult times.

> **2 Timothy 2:15** "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth."

4D - Prayer

We can also consider developing a consistent time of prayer each day (See Daniel 6:10 below). We can make a list of our prayer requests, and bring them to God every day. When we pray, it is good to pray with faith and thanksgiving. God wants us to believe that He is answering our requests.

Daniel 6:10 "Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime."

4E - Another good habit is to take time throughout our day to invite God into our situations.

Taking time to "be still" and pray, will help us have more peace as stated in the scripture below:

Philippians 4:6-7 "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

4F - Study

Another good habit to do is to stop and take time to study God's Word. In the Happiness Basics, we have a section that teaches us about the importance of seeking knowledge. Here are two verses that bear this out.

a) **Proverbs 4:7** "The beginning of wisdom is: Acquire wisdom; And with all your acquiring, get understanding."

b) **Proverbs 16:16** "How much better is it to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!"

4G - "Being Still" in Our Speech

An important way to become "still," is in the amount of speaking we do. Throughout the Book of Proverbs, it cautions us to be careful how we speak. Our words have creative power in our lives either for good or for bad. We go into more detail about this in Tip # 6 – Speak Right Words.

4H - Become "Still" in Our Goal-Reaching

Another way we can practice being still is in how we reach for our goals. Sometimes we get a goal in mind, but we try too hard to control events and people to achieve our goal. Doing so can take away our peace of mind. Instead, it is better to become a person who is flexible. Progress may not always happen as quickly as we want, but if we leave our setbacks in God's hands, we'll find God gets us to where we should be in due time.

Question 4: Do you know someone who can be overly goal-driven?

5A - "Being Still" in the Scriptures

In the Book of Exodus**,** in the Ten Commandments, we read a Bible command for us to "be still":

Exodus 20:8-11 "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath of the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and made it holy."

In our fast-paced lifestyle, it is easy to stay busy seven days a week. But that isn't good for us. God recommends that we take one day out of seven to "be still."

Question 5: Do you have one day each week where you do very little but rest?

6A - Verses Related To "Being Still"

a) **2 Chronicles 20:17** "You need not fight in this battle; station yourselves, stand and see the salvation of the Lord on your behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem.' Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out to face them, for the Lord is with you."

b) **Psalm 4:4** "Tremble, and do not sin; Meditate in your heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah."

c) **Psalm 46:10** "Cease striving and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."

d) **Isaiah 40:31** "Yet those who wait for the Lord Will gain new strength; They will mount up with wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired. They will walk and not become weary."

6B - Hindrances To Stopping and Being Still

There can be hindrances to stopping and being still. With this in mind, we can start being sensitive to the things that upset us, things that prevent us from being still. These are the *triggers* we can focus on in our recovery. Thankfully, we can learn how to disarm them so they no longer control us, and we find a place of peace and calm in God.

Question 6: What do you think will get in the way of you practicing Tip #2 - Stop, and Be Still? What can you do to resolve that?

TIP #3

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Admit You Have a Problem

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1A - This can be a difficult step because it requires us to admit we have a weakness in our life. However, weaknesses can be blessings in disguise. When we conquer a weakness, we increase our self-esteem and we gain the ability to help others who struggle with a similar weakness.

1B - One of the more challenging aspects of this Tip can be facing the extent of our damaged emotions. Most of us do our best to present a positive image to the people we interact with each day. But if we've only learned a few "tricks" to barely get through everyday life, it won't take many life problems to overload our capacity to manage them well. Eventually, the challenges can overpower our cobbled defenses, and we see the true extent of our damaged emotions. This is the risk we take by not dealing with our issues. Now is the time to decide what we want to do. Do we remain a "just-getting-by" person, or do we work at becoming a healed person, someone who genuinely embraces and enjoys all aspects of our life?

Question 1: Do you know people who are "just-getting-by" or "healed and at peace"?

2A - Forced To Learn

Sometimes we don't have the luxury of being able to choose which of the above groups we want to be in; life has already conquered us, and we are forced to learn new ways to win at life. Thankfully, there are benefits to being "down and out".

For one, we have no image to live up to. People have already seen us at our worst, so there's no having to try hard to hide our mental health challenge.

2B – Two, we become a tangible example of recovery to those who know us. Our friends and colleagues who know of our challenges can now watch us as we emerge from pain and loss, to love and life. These people will be like those in the crowd 2,000 years ago who were watching Jesus heal blind people, lepers, and invalids. We become proof that Jesus is alive and still healing men and women of their illnesses. Do you recall what the individuals did after Jesus healed them? They went far and wide telling the world the amazing things Jesus had done for them. That can be our experience as well!

Question 2: Do you know people who use their healing to point people to Christ?

3A - Another benefit to hitting a low point in our lives can be that we learn how to be humble. Humility can be a great stress-reliever. For more on this topic, read Tip #20 – Practice Humility.

3B - Another benefit to hitting rock-bottom is personal awareness. Most of us think we are healthier than we are. Some of us, who have had to face our emotional weaknesses, look back and see that the state of our emotional health was different than what we thought. That is painful, but valuable! It leads us to truth. Knowing and accepting the "true us", as ill as we are, better equips us to help ourselves get well.

Question 3: Have you had to see and accept how injured your "heart" is? How did it affect you?

4A - Medication

Thankfully there is medication that can offer some relief from symptoms of anxiety and depression. Some people are judgmental toward those who take medication for a mental health condition. But it is never good to judge others.

4B - For one thing, we don't know what a person is struggling with. It could be that they have suffered great personal injury, and their pain is manifesting in the way they act. We also don't know what the doctor's strategy is for treating this person. It could be that the new medication the doctor has prescribed to them has adverse side effects and is causing the person to act differently. It is best not to judge others. It is best that we be a source of positivity to them rather than a source of negativity.

Question 4: Do you know someone who passes judgment on people who take medication for anxiety or depression?

5A - Working With Our Doctor

Common uses of medication are those prescribed to help us process a sudden major life crisis. Medication can be tapered off once we have processed the crisis sufficiently. It is wise to work with our doctor when weaning off of medication.

Other mental health conditions require on-going medication treatment. These conditions are no different than taking insulin for diabetes or daily medication for a heart condition. No matter what kind of mental health challenge we have, it is best to consult our doctor for treatment options and work closely with them to help us attain optimal daily living.

5B - Stubbornness

Although most people don't pass judgment on those who struggle emotionally, they may pass judgment on a person who refuses to admit they have a problem. If there is evidence that we need treatment for a mental health condition, we should look into it. We shouldn't decline treatment. If we do, our condition escalates from being a problem with *weakness* to a problem with *stubbornness*. Being stubborn can be a character trait that works against our peace and happiness.

Question 5: Have people ever told you that you can be stubborn? Can you think of an instance when stubbornness impacted your life?

6A - "Admitting" in the Bible

King David & Bathsheba

In 2 Samuel Chapter 11 & 12, we read how King David had an affair with Bathsheba. He should have been out with his army fighting wars. Instead, from his palace, he happened to catch Bathsheba bathing one day, and he desired her and had her brought to him. Bathsheba became pregnant, and this caused a big problem for King David. He chose to cover up his sin by having Bathsheba's husband killed in battle so he could marry her.

6B - Delusion Set In

King David became deluded by his sin and he could no longer see himself as he was. God had to send David a prophet named Nathan, who, cunningly, revealed to David the terrible sin he had committed. This was a great blow to David's heart for he had walked very closely with God before this event.

6C - Honest Repentance

King David reached a point where he admitted he had done wrong. Psalm 51 is a powerful, heartfelt prayer of repentance to God to cleanse him of his sin and restore his relationship with God. God restored him.

King David chose to admit he was wrong and restoration came to his life.

Question 6: Have you ever made your life complicated by trying to cover up your mistakes?

7A - A Man Called Job (Pronounced "Jobe")

In the Book of Job, we read how a devout man of God, named Job, was tested in his faith. In a single day, Job lost his children, his servants, and his livestock! This was catastrophic for Job. He didn't know how to respond. Like most of us, he eventually began blaming God for his problems. It was at this point that God told Job in what areas he was going wrong. At once, Job repented, and thereafter, God began restoring all that Job had lost. In fact, Job received twice as much as he had before!

When Job found out that he was wrong, and he repented, his life began to improve.

Question 7: Have you ever apologized for mistakes you've made and then saw your life improve?

8A - The Prophet Jonah

Another story of repentance is in the Book of Jonah. This story illustrates God's amazing grace for his followers. In it, we read of a prophet, named Jonah, who was told by God to go to the city of Nineveh and tell them to repent of their sinful lifestyle. Jonah refused to obey God and began traveling in the opposite direction.

8B - Jonah's Disobedience Causes Problems

As Jonah was on a ship sailing away from Nineveh, a severe storm came up. The men were scared for their lives, and each man prayed to his own god to rescue them. While everyone else was terrified for their lives, Jonah was in the hull of the ship sleeping. The captain awakened him and said, "How can you sleep? Get up and pray to your God! Jonah refused. Then the crew cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. The crew asked Jonah, who are you? What have you done to cause this great storm? Jonah told them of his disobedience to God, and it scared them. Jonah told them to throw him overboard, and the storm would stop. So they threw Jonah overboard, and the storm stopped.

Question 8: Have innocent people ever suffered because of your wrong-doing?

9A - Jonah is Rescued

God had mercy on Jonah and sent a big fish to swallow him. Jonah stayed in the belly of the fish for 3 days and 3 nights. Finally, Jonah began to pray a prayer of repentance and God saved Jonah's life by causing the fish to vomit him onto dry land. After that, Jonah went to Nineveh and preached the message God wanted him to preach.

Jonah repented for disobeying God and did what he was supposed to do, and his life began to improve. Things also got better for the people in Nineveh, because everyone in the city repented and were spared from God's judgment.

9B - God Is Eager To Forgive Us

In 1 John Chapter 1, we see a well-known scripture on how eager God is to forgive us when we sin.

1 John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

When we admit we are wrong and ask for God's forgiveness, He forgives us!

9C - Honesty Is Needed

For us to become healed emotionally, we need to become honest with ourselves and admit we have a problem. As we search for help, God's healing help will follow.

Question 9: God went to great lengths to show Jonah he was wrong. Has God ever gone to great lengths to show you something? Can you tell us about it?

10A - Final Note

Is realizing and admitting we have a problem in our emotions a life sentence of unhappiness? Not at all. We can begin to take time to learn how emotional healing works and see our emotional system heal. In fact, after we are well, we will become stronger than most people. We will also become a person who is able to support others who are going through life challenges.

TIP #4

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Disarm the Same

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1A - As stated in Tip #3, emotional problems can sometimes carry a stigma. So for us to proceed smoothly in our recovery, we may need to disarm shame so it doesn't prevent us from reaching out for help.

We may be hearing a voice in our mind shouting, *"Don't tell the family secrets!"* But we shouldn't listen to that voice. That voice wants to keep us emotionally ill. Now is the time to tell what has happened to us. When we tell it to the right people, they will show us how to be set free from anxiety and depression.

Let's look at some Bible verses that show us that God wants us to live free of shame.

a) **Psalm 25:3** "Indeed, none of those who wait for You will be ashamed; Those who deal treacherously without cause will be ashamed."

b) **Psalm 31:1** "In You, O Lord, I have taken refuge; Let me never be ashamed; In Your righteousness deliver me."

c) **Psalm 34:5** "They looked to Him and were radiant, And their faces will never be ashamed."

d) **Psalm 119:80** "May my heart be blameless in Your statutes, So that I will not be ashamed."

e) **Isaiah 54:4** "Fear not, for you will not be put to shame; And do not feel humiliated, for you will not be disgraced; But you will forget the shame of your youth, And the reproach of your widowhood you will remember no more."

f) **Isaiah 61:7** "Instead of your shame you will have a double portion, And instead of humiliation they will shout for joy over their portion. Therefore they will possess a double portion in their land, Everlasting joy will be theirs."

g) **Joel 2:26** "You will have plenty to eat and be satisfied And praise the name of the Lord your God, Who has dealt wondrously with you; Then My people will never be put to shame."

h) **Romans 10:11** "For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed."

i) **1 Peter 2:6** "For this is contained in Scripture: "Behold, I lay in Zion a choice stone, a precious corner stone, And he who believes in Him will not be disappointed."

1B - One Exception for Shame

The only time shame may occur is when the Holy Spirit is revealing to us that there is a sin in our life, for which, we need to repent. Even then, the shame should only be momentary until we pray a prayer of repentance.

1C - Reaching Out For Help

The thought of asking someone for help can sometimes scare us. Either our self-esteem is so low, or our pride is so great. We become afraid of appearing weak by asking for help. This can be a roadblock in our recovery.

Question 1: In general, do you find it difficult to ask for help? If so, can you tell us why?

2A - Step Out In Faith

Fear may try to prevent us from opening up to a few helpful people, but we know what God's antidote is for fear, it is **Faith**.

Faith Example No.1 - Jacob

Jacob had received the instruction from God to go back to his homeland, but he was scared of his brother Esau. (Previously, Jacob had done a shameful thing to Esau, he stole Esau's birthright.) However, Jacob continued traveling to his homeland anyway. He knew that he had heard from God to go back, so back he went. He was afraid, but he went back by faith, each step of the way. (Living by faith can sometimes be difficult.)

Genesis 32: 6-12 "The messengers returned to Jacob, saying, "We came to your brother Esau, and furthermore he is coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him." [7] Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed; and he divided the people who were with him, and the flocks and the herds and the camels, into two companies; [8] for he said, "If Esau comes to the one company and attacks it, then the company which is left will escape."

2B - "Jacob said, "O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O LORD, who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your relatives, and I will prosper you,' [10] I am unworthy of all the lovingkindness and of all the faithfulness which You have shown to Your servant; for with my staff *only* I crossed this Jordan, and now I have become two companies. [11] Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, that he will come and attack me *and* the mothers with the children. [12] For You said, 'I will surely prosper you and make your descendants as the sand of the sea, which is too great to be numbered.'"

Thankfully, everything worked out between Jacob and Esau, since God had mellowed Esau's heart over the years.

2C - Faith Example No.2 - Moses

Forty years after Moses fled Egypt after killing a man, God told Moses to go back to Egypt and free His people from slavery. Over the years, Moses had lost all confidence in himself, to the point that he couldn't even speak well. He stuttered. (Sometimes, God waits until we are emptied of ourselves before He uses us.)

2D - Moses always knew he was born to set the Israelites free, but he tried to do it in his own strength and in his own time, and he failed. But this time he had a Word from God, "*bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt…"*

Exodus 3:9-11 *(God speaking)* "Now, behold, the cry of the sons of Israel has come to Me; furthermore, I have seen the oppression with which the Egyptians are oppressing them. [10] Therefore, come now, and I will send you to Pharaoh, so that you may bring My people, the sons of Israel, out of Egypt." [11] But Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?"

Moses was very fearful, but that didn't stop God from using him. Moses had to walk by faith. He had to trust God each step of the way back to Egypt.

Question 2: Have you ever done a shameful thing like Jacob and Moses? Do you think these things are causing fear today?

3A - Faith Example No.3 - Gideon

The Israelites had been crying out to God for help for seven years. Finally, God told Gideon to lead an attack on the Midianite army. Gideon was just an ordinary Israelite and surprised to be chosen.

Judges 6:14-15 "The Lord looked at him and said, "Go in this your strength and deliver Israel from the hand of Midian. Have I not sent you?" He said to Him, "O Lord, how shall I deliver

Israel? Behold, my family is the least in Manasseh, and I am the youngest in my father's house."

3B - Gideon was so surprised and nervous about the battle that he requested a visible sign from God to prove that He wanted him to lead a battle. Twice Gideon asked for a sign, and twice God confirmed the sign. God was gracious toward Gideon; God knows those who are nervous, and He does His best to prepare them for their task. Gideon's mission was further challenged when God asked him to reduce the number of fighting men from 30,000 to 300! However, Gideon still won the battle. Gideon was not a confident fighter, but that didn't stop God from using him. Gideon had to walk by faith and trust God each step of the way.

Question 3: Have you ever had to do a difficult task but had it turn out well, as in the case of Jacob, Moses, and Gideon? Were you scared you might fail at first?

4A - In our recovery, we may not feel that our faith is strong enough for us to tell someone about our challenge. The good news is there are ways to increase our faith. We can start by identifying the truth.

4B - **Truth 1 - We know we need help.** First off, it will help us if we truly believe we need help. We shouldn't minimize the seriousness of our condition. Here is a strategy that might help: We can ask ourselves this question: How would I view my problem if a friend approached me with the same problem? Would I suggest they go for help? If the answer is yes, then we should move forward in our plan to seek help.

4C - **Truth 2 - We know God wants us well.** Indeed, God has given us this life for us to enjoy. When we look at the life of Jesus and see all the people He healed, we believe this is true. To help convince our heart of this truth, we can read out loud the scriptures in Core Belief #6 - I Believe God Wants Me To Enjoy Good Health.

Question 4: Do you know anyone who God has healed?

5A - **Truth 3 - We know God educates people in all facets of life so they can help one another.** God has given gifts to men. He did it in the Old Testament days when he needed people to construct synagogues, palaces, and whole cities.

Exodus 35:35 "He has filled them with skill to perform every work of an engraver and of a designer and of an embroiderer, in blue and in purple and in scarlet material, and in fine linen, and of a weaver, as performers of every work and makers of designs."

5B - God also did it in the New Testament days, when he wanted His church to be educated and inspired.

1 Corinthians 12:4-10 "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons. But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit."

5C - "to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues."

Similarly, God has given knowledge to people about healing mental health problems. We need to search for such people in our community.

Question 5: Do you know anyone who has been gifted with a skill or spiritual gift?

6A - **Truth 4 - We know God wants us to live by faith.** As stated above, living by faith sometimes means we do things that we don't want to do. But there is no denying that God wants us to live by faith. In four places the Bible says, *"But the righteous man shall live by faith."* **Romans 1:17**, **Habakkuk 2:4**, **Galatians 3:11** and **Hebrews 10:38**. And in Hebrews 11:6, it says, *"Without faith it is impossible to please Him (God)."* Faith is critically important.

6B - **Truth 5 - We know God rewards those who step out in faith.** Throughout the Gospels, we read stories of how Jesus marveled at people's faith. (Faith is the currency of heaven. It is what moves the hand of God.)

6C - **Truth 6 - We know that professional people have high standards of confidentiality.** We can be confident that when we speak to a doctor, a nurse, a pastor or anyone who is a trained professional, will be held in strictest confidence. Confidentiality is also modeled by many recovery groups, including the Victory Tips Program.

6D - **Truth 7 - We know with God's help it *is* possible for us to ask for help.**

Matthew 19:26 "And looking at them Jesus said to them, "With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

We may have surprised ourselves throughout our life by doing things we thought we could never do. Asking for help can be one of them.

By reading the above truths out loud, over and over, we can reach a point where we have the confidence to ask for help.

6E - A Helpful Skill - Learn How To "Not Care."

At first glance, this skill can sound counter-productive and even opposite of basic Christian tenets, but there is merit to it. If we are concerned with how people view us, it is possible to reach a point where we no longer care what people think about us. Let's read the following Bible verse.

> **Philippians 4:6** *"*Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.*"*

The first part of the above verse, *"Be careful for nothing,"* can be reworded to say *"Don't care for anything."*

6F - Naturally, there are important things in life that we care deeply about, but for all the other aspects of life, we can reach a point where we say: *"I no longer care."* The more we say it, the more it can liberate us. When that happens, we enter a state of peace as mentioned in verse 7, below.

> **Philippians 4:7** *"*And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*"*

6G - When we reach a point where we no longer care, we can access the peace of God. What kind of peace is it? Verse 7 says it is a peace that surpasses all comprehension, a peace that is indescribable! That is great news for the person who is struggling with anxiety. With this understanding, consider having the mindset that you no longer care what people think about you.

Question 6: Have you ever reached a point where you no longer cared about something? How did it feel?

7A - Practical Tips

One way to help us step out of our "comfort zone" is to start saying positive affirmations to ourselves. This program has the "I Do Not Fear" Affirmation that can help with this. You can also write your own affirmations, such as:

a) "I no longer care what people think of me."
b) "I believe God is directing my steps to the right people."
c) "God's peace envelops me as I speak to people about my challenge."

Question 7: Have you ever used positive affirmations to help you have courage? If so, how did they work for you?

8A - Earlier, we talked about Jacob, Moses and Gideon living by faith. They had to do something they didn't want to do.

True, we may not *want* to let anyone know we are struggling, but we do something anyway, by faith. We go ahead and let someone know we need help. We realize God works through people, so we prayerfully choose people who we feel have some knowledge of the problem we have, or who may know people who can help us.

When we finally ask for help, our act of faith will put the wheels of heaven in motion; God will steer us to people who can help us resolve our anxiety and depression. Disarm the shame and go!

TIP #5

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Form a Support Team

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1A - In Tip #4 we learned about our need to ask for help. In Tip #5 we will learn what to look for in people who may be able to help us. We'll also learn that it is helpful to choose more than one or two people to help us at this critical time in our lives. The following Bible verses urge us to have many advisers.

a) **Proverbs 11:14** "Where there is no guidance the people fall, But in abundance of counselors there is victory."

b) **Proverbs 15:22** "Without consultation, plans are frustrated, But with many counselors they succeed."

c) **Proverbs 24:6** "For by wise guidance you will wage war, And in abundance of counselors there is victory."

Here is a verse about having helpers in our life.

Ecclesiastes 4:12 "And if one can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him. A cord of three strands is not quickly torn apart."

Question 1: What do you think of the idea of having a network of people in our lives to help us find peace and happiness?

2A - What To Look For

Not everyone can be a support-person in our lives. That is because most people cannot relate to feelings of severe anxiety and depression. Approaching certain people with our request for help can sometimes bring uneasiness to our relationship with them. Therefore, it is best to do a little research on the people we wish to enlist for our support team. Here are a few questions to ask ourselves about a candidate:

a) Do I respect them?

b) Do they have a calm demeanor?

c) Can they be trusted to keep my information confidential?

d) Do they have time to devote to speaking with me?

e) Have they been successful at overcoming difficulties in their own life?

f) Are they knowledgeable of God's Word, and are they living by God's Word?

Question 2: After reading the above questions, does anyone come to mind who you could approach to assist you in your recovery?

3A - If we are having difficulty identifying people to help us, here are some individuals to consider:

a) A chaplain.

b) A good friend.

c) A nurse or social worker.

d) A church home-group leader.

e) A loving and understanding family member.

f) A person leading or attending a recovery group.

g) A deacon, minister, or counselor at a church. (If you are a female, then the wife of a deacon, minister or counselor would be more appropriate.)

3B - A Team and a Team Lead

Out of the people we choose for our support team, we should select one person to oversee our recovery. We can call this person our Team Lead. We can call the others, Team Members.

It would be helpful if the Team Members could report to the Team Lead any contact they've had with us, and how their time with us went. The Team Lead should have everybody's contact information in order to delegate the necessary support we will need throughout our week. Should our Team Lead be unavailable when we call them, we need to call the Team Members to see who is available to help us at that time.

3C - The Role of the Team Lead

The ideal Team Lead should be somebody who is emotionally stable and has had some experience with emotional healing. A Team Lead will be somebody we can be accountable to each day. If our Team Lead feels we are drifting toward a negative frame of mind, they should alert the Team Members that help is needed.

Question 3: Which of your Team Members would be a good Team Lead to oversee your recovery?

4A - Adjusting To Freedom

Sometimes, as we get well, and have more freedom and happiness, our desire to do things increases. That is great. But sometimes what we feel we would like to do may not be in our best interest at that time. Freedom can be harmful if it isn't monitored and critiqued properly. It is best not to trust our own judgment in the beginning stages of our recovery. Instead, to get the opinions of those on our support team before we tackle any major projects.

Question 4: Have you ever had lots of freedom, but ended up making poor choices with that freedom?

5A - An Important Benefit

Team Leads and Team Members may not always have the answers to our questions, but they *can* provide us with a vital service – that of being a good listener. Knowing somebody cares enough to listen to us can be a great benefit in our recovery.

5B - Gently Steering

Another valuable trait of a Support Team is to know when to cut short our conversations if we start getting into a mode of inferiority, self-pity or anger. Doing so is most helpful when it is spoken to us with gentleness.

Question 5: Has someone you respected ever told you your attitude and words needed an adjustment? How did you respond?

6A - Monitoring Our Diligence

Good Team Members will be able to tell us if we begin losing our diligence in getting well. They should monitor our attendance at recovery meetings, joining conference calls, watching or listening to good teachings, reading books, reading affirmations, etc. If correction is needed and is given with gentleness, it will produce good results in our lives.

Question 6: Do you tend to make excuses for lax behavior?

7A - "Team Leads" in the Bible

The greatest Team Lead in the Bible is Jesus Christ. He taught 12 disciples for three years. He also influenced many others in that period. Jesus gives us many tips on how to live a happy, fruitful life. Thus, a good habit to form is to read a chapter a day in the Gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John.

7B - The following verses suggest that Jesus would be a good Team Lead.

a) **Matthew 11:29** "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

b) **1 Peter 2:21** "For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps,"

7C - The Apostle Paul as a Team Lead

Another great Team Lead in the Bible is the Apostle Paul. He wrote most of the New Testament. His teachings went far and wide showing Christians how to live a fruitful, victorious, Christian life. Paul challenges us to follow his lead. See the scriptures below.

a) **1 Corinthians 11:1** "Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ."

b) **2 Thessalonians 3:7-9** "for this reason, brethren, in all our distress and affliction we were comforted about you through your faith; for now we really live, if you stand firm in the Lord. For what thanks can we render to God for you in return for all the joy with which we rejoice before our God on your account,"

c) **Philippians 4:9** "As for the things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you."

7D - Elijah as a Team Lead

A famous Team Lead in the Old Testament was Elijah. He had a close mentoring relationship with a man named Elisha. A record of how their relationship began is in 1 Kings 19. Below is verse 21.

1 Kings 19:21 "So he returned from following him, and took the pair of oxen and sacrificed them and boiled their flesh with the implements of the oxen, and gave it to the people and they ate. Then he arose and followed Elijah and ministered to him."

7E - When Elijah was about to leave the earth, he asked Elisha what he wanted. Elisha made a bold request of Elijah, and he got it!

2 Kings 2:9 "When they had crossed over, Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask what I shall do for you before I am taken from you." And Elisha said, "Please, let a double portion of your spirit be upon me."

And he got it!"

Question 7: Have you ever asked someone to pray for you to receive the same, or greater, anointing upon your life, as was in their life?

8A - There are many people asking God to use them to help others. Our request for help can be the answer to their prayers. It can also be the first step to an amazing new life for us. So don't be shy. Form a support team!

TIP #6

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Guard Your Thoughts

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1A - Thoughts are powerful. Those of us who have trouble with our thinking can relate to the fact that when we let our thoughts go negative, we feel negative. That is going to change. God gives us tips on how to be an overcomer in life. This includes having the ability to think right thoughts!

Below is a profound scripture about our thinking:

Proverbs 23:7 "For as he thinks within himself, so he is."

1B - This verse means our thinking reveals who we are.

Many of us think we are better than who we really are, and that hurts us. As long as we don't see the work that needs to be done in our hearts, we will never be motivated to change what we think and believe. From now on, may God help us see, clearly, who we are. And may we say from now on, *"I'm going to work with God to transform my life into the likeness of his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus will be manifested in everything I think, say, and do."*

1C - The above Bible verse, Proverbs 23:7, tells us we are what we think about. Thus, we must be careful what we <u>believe</u> about ourselves, as this will affect what we <u>think</u> about ourselves.

In the above verse, the term, "heart", refers to our thinking. So we must "Keep" (or guard) our thoughts.

Question 1: Have you ever heard the term "Guard your thoughts?" What comes to mind about this?

2A - <u>What Influences Our Thinking?</u>

Our thinking, be it positive or negative, is the result of experiences we've had in our life. Some of these experiences were caused by our own choices, but many were caused by other people.

However, it isn't just our life experiences that affect us; it is also <u>how we *responded* to those experiences</u> that influences our thinking. We learn this in Tip #12 – Don't Judge.

Question 2: Can you tell us a negative experience in your life, and the way you thought about it after it happened? Do you still think that way about this event?

3A - <u>Another Factor in Our Thinking</u>

Sometimes Satan can influence our thoughts. **John 13:2** says, "*During supper, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray Him,*" Here we see that Judas Iscariot was tempted to betray Jesus by the devil. Even though tempting thoughts come to us, we have a choice of whether we let them stay in our minds. Nobody forced Judas to betray Jesus. We know from scripture that Judas's role with the apostles was to oversee the finances, and yet he, himself, was a thief. (See John 12:6.)

3B - <u>Watch Out For Our Weaknesses</u>

In Matthew 26:15, we see that Judas had an inbred weakness for money. When he realized he could make money by handing Jesus over to the city officials, he began thinking about that. Those thoughts eventually led to an action. In his mind, he probably knew he shouldn't do it, but his natural weakness for money may have overpowered his reasoning, and caused him to turn Jesus in.

Question 3: Can you remember a time when your natural weakness for something caused you to do something that you later regretted?

4A - <u>Scripture Gives Us Clear Direction</u>

We know that our experiences in life and the way we respond to those experiences can either set us up for success in life, or for failure. If the thoughts that come to us are negative, the scriptures tell us what we should do with them. In **2 Corinthians 10:5**, it says, *"We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,"*

4B – <u>Destroy Speculations</u>

We need to judge our thoughts to see if they are positive or negative. If they are negative, we need to

cast them out of our mind. The best way to keep out the bad thoughts is to have a steady flow of good thoughts going into our minds. We suggest people start memorizing God's Word. Once scripture is memorized, we can start saying the scriptures throughout our day and thus keep our minds thinking positive thoughts. Here are verses that support this principle:

a) **Psalm 119:11** "Your word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against You."

b) **Proverbs 4:4 "**Then he taught me and said to me, "Let your heart hold fast my words; Keep my commandments and live;"

Question 4: Can you think of a time when you casted down negative thoughts? How did it go?

5A - Distractions

Another way thoughts can come to us, is when they are put there by God. God wants to speak to us all day long if we let Him. So often we let our minds wander to problems in our life, or to the desire for wealth and material things and we fail to hear thoughts from the Holy Spirit. In **Romans 8:6**, it says, *"For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace,"* When we begin to take control of our thoughts and keep them positive, they begin to reshape our beliefs, which will produce in us a mind of peace.

Question 5: What tends to distract you from thinking positive thoughts? You can say "Pass".

6A - Reprogramming

You may be saying, *"My mind is sometimes so wild, I can't control it."* That is a problem for some people. The good news is, our minds can be reprogrammed. Our mind is like a sophisticated computer. Our life's experiences, and judgments of those experiences can be "overwritten." We can enter new "data" into our mind and belief system that can prevent the negative thoughts from starting up.

6B- No matter how negative our thinking is, God gives us the ability to reprogram our thinking. Does that mean we forget the old thoughts were ever there? Not at all. Nor do we want to. The pain of our old way of thinking will one day be a great asset in our testimony of healing. Our story will captivate people and will give hope to those who are held down by anxiety and depression.

6C- The process of reprogramming can be time-consuming, but later on, when our new belief system has replaced our old belief system, we will have peace of mind. We will still have problems in our life, but the fear and inward struggle to conquer them will be gone.

6D - Below is a key Bible verse that tells us to renew our minds. It also gives the benefits for doing so, when the job is complete.

Romans 12:2 "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."

Question 6: Are you prepared to put in the time to renew your mind?

7A - God's Goal for Our Thinking

Below is another key scripture that deals with the area of our thinking. We would do well to memorize this verse and check ourselves, often, to see if we are practicing it.

Philippians 4:8 "Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things"

7B - Use the Tools

The Victory Tips Program offers 6 Affirmations and 6 Core Beliefs that are great tools to use to reprogram our beliefs. Saying the ones that pertain to us, out loud, will speed us on to our desired goal of joy and peace.

We can go one step further and begin memorizing God's Word. This program offers computer files you can use to print scriptures onto card stock, will help you memorize the scriptures.

7C - God's Word is Powerful

Hebrews 4:12 "For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart."

Using God's Word is the best way to win in the battle for peace of mind.

Question 7: Have you ever experienced relief from negative feelings by speaking God's Word?

8A - Stay Transparent

As we journey toward peace and happiness, it is helpful to pray the following prayer regularly. Doing so will keep the channel open between

ourselves and God. It will help us mature spiritually.

Psalm 139:23-24 "Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts; And see if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way."

8B - <u>You Have God's Permission Not To Worry</u>

Read the words, below, that Jesus spoke to us. He wants us to rest in Him as we journey to happiness.

Matthew 6:25 "For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?"

Let's trust Jesus to lead us every step of the way. As we take time to assess our thoughts, Jesus will show us how to turn them around, and we will give Him all of the glory.

TIP #7

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Speak Right Words

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1A - Many people do not know that there is a link between the words we speak and the events that take place in our lives. The Bible has many scriptures that teach this truth. One of the better-known scriptures is in the account of the creation of the world. In **Genesis 1:3**, we read, *"Let there be light," and there was light."* After this, God began to speak into existence, the earth, the water, the animals, and more. He did this by speaking words. We learn from this, that spoken words can have great power.

1B - <u>Jesus and Words</u>

Another well-known scripture on the power in words is **Mark 11:23**, when Jesus said: *"Truly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says is going to happen, it will be granted him."*

1C - <u>The Book of James and Words</u>

The Book of James also reveals the power of the tongue. **James 3:4-5** says, *"Look at the ships also, though they are so great and are driven by strong winds, are still directed by a very small rudder wherever the inclination of the pilot desires. So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things."*

1D - Then verse 6 paints a very dramatic picture of the power of the tongue when it is allowed to speak negative words in a person's life. **James 3:6** says, *"And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell."*

1E - <u>More Evidence on the Power of Words</u>

There is more power in words than we may think. For instance **Proverbs 18:21** says, *"Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof."* This statement teaches that we can speak life and health into our lives, or death and sickness. In **Mark 11:14**, Jesus spoke to the fig tree, and it died. He did this to illustrate to his disciples that there is power in our words. Here is the verse. *"And He said to it, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again!" And His disciples were listening."*

Question 1: Can you think back through your life and see how negative words spoken by you, or to you, have impacted your life in a negative way? Can you give us an example?

2A - <u>Out Of the Heart the Mouth Speaks</u>

From the verses below, we see that there is a connection between our thoughts and our words.

a) **Matthew 12:34** "…For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart."

b) **Matthew 12:35** "The good man brings out of his good treasure what is good; and the evil man brings out of his evil treasure what is evil."

2B - The Book of Proverbs also reveals the relation between our hearts and our words. In the verse below, we see how important it is to renew our minds, continually, to keep it thinking wise and

proper thoughts. These thoughts will cause us to speak words that bring good results in our lives, and the lives of those around us.

> **Proverbs 16:23** says, "The heart of the wise instructs his mouth And adds persuasiveness to his lips."

2C - This next verse reveals how important it is to guard our hearts, and why we should.

> **Proverbs 4:23** says, "Watch over your heart with all diligence, For from it flow the springs of life."

Our words come from our heart; thus our heart needs to be guarded and used only to think on good thoughts. For more on this, see Tip #6 – Guard Your Thoughts.

Question 2: Have you been speaking what is in your heart lately? If so, has it been positive or negative?

3A - Careless Speaking

In **Matthew 12:36** Jesus makes a startling statement. He says to us, *"Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for the tree is known by its fruit."* These words of Jesus put new importance on our words.

Our words tend to be spoken so automatically that we barely take heed how we speak to each other. God is interested in people living a happy, peaceful life, but he knows that words that are carelessly spoken can cause strife, and this grieves God. Jesus follows the above verse in **Matthew 12:37** by saying, *"For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."* Let's begin to be watchful of the words we speak.

3B - Our Words Can Defile Us

A scripture in Matthew 15 talks about what defiles us. The Jews were so careful to wash their hands before eating and to obey all the other laws, but Jesus pointed out another way that a man can break God's laws. In **Matthew 15:11**, he says, *"It is not what enters into the mouth that defiles the man, but what proceeds out of the mouth, this defiles the man.."* In essence, he said, *"Watch out what words come out of your mouth."*

3C - God Gives Us a Tip

The Book of Proverbs tells us we should keep our words correct. **Proverbs 5:1,2** reveals, *"My son, give attention to my wisdom, Incline your ear to my understanding; That you may observe discretion And your lips may reserve knowledge."* Therefore we need to read and meditate on God's truths so that our lips may speak what is right.

3D - Speak Less

Another way to control what comes out of our mouths is to speak fewer words. We talked about this in Tip #2 – Stop, and Be Still. Below are some scriptures that tell us to limit the number of words we speak.

a) **Proverbs 10:19** *"*When there are many words, transgression is unavoidable, But he who restrains his lips is wise.*"*
b) **Proverbs 17:27** "He who restrains his words has knowledge, And he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding."
c) **Proverbs 17:28** "Even a fool, when he keeps silent, is considered wise; When he closes his lips, he is considered prudent."
d) **Ecclesiastes 5:2** *"*Do not be hasty in word or impulsive in thought to bring up a matter in the presence of God. For God is in heaven and you are on the earth; therefore let your words be few."

Question 3: Do you know somebody who speaks so much that it gets them into trouble?

Question 4: Can you think of a person who is quiet, and comes across wise or self-controlled?

5A - Comparing Foolish People with Wise People

The Book of Proverbs makes a lot of comparisons between wise and foolish people. One of the trademarks of a foolish person is the content of their speech. Below are some scriptures about fools and the words they speak.

a) **Proverbs 13:20** *"*He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will suffer harm."
b) **Proverbs 18:6** "A fool's lips bring strife, And his mouth calls for blows.."
c) **Proverbs 18:7** "A fool's mouth is his ruin, And his lips are the snare of his soul.."
d) **Proverbs 18:8** "The words of a whisperer are like dainty morsels, And they go down into the innermost parts of the body."
e) **Ecclesiastes 10:12** "Words from the mouth of a wise man are gracious, while the lips of a fool consume him;"

Question 5: Do you know somebody who appears foolish and should change how they speak to others?

6A - Warning To Teachers

In the Book of James, God gives warning to people who want to be teachers of God's Word. **James 3:1** says, *"My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation."* Then in **James 3:13** it warns wise people to watch their actions. It says, *"Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation (lifestyle) his works with meekness of wisdom."*

Question 6: Can you think of a pastor or Bible teacher who should be more careful how they speak?

7A - Words and Trouble

Words can affect the amount of troubles we have in our lives. Below are descriptions of a person who speaks negatively.

a) **Psalm 101:5** "Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor, him I will destroy; No one who has a haughty look and an arrogant heart will I endure."

b) **Proverbs 10:8** "The wise of heart will receive commands, But a babbling fool will be ruined."

c) **Proverbs 11:11***"* By the blessing of the upright a city is exalted, But by the mouth of the wicked it is torn down."

d) **Proverbs 12:6** "The words of the wicked lie in wait for blood, But the mouth of the upright will deliver them."

e) **Proverbs 12:13** "An evil man is ensnared by the transgression of his lips, But the righteous will escape from trouble."

f) **Proverbs 18:6** "A fool's lips bring strife, And his mouth calls for blows.."

g) **Proverbs 18:8** "The words of a whisperer are like dainty morsels, And they go down into the innermost parts of the body."

h) **Proverbs 19:5** "A false witness will not go unpunished, And he who tells lies will not escape."

i) **Proverbs 21:23** "He who guards his mouth and his tongue, Guards his soul from troubles."

Question 7: Can you think of someone whose words may be hindering their success in life?

8A - Words and Blessings

Right words can produce good results in our lives. Below are the blessings for the person who speaks right words.

a) **Proverbs 10:21** "The lips of the righteous feed many, But fools die for lack of understanding."

b) **Proverbs 12:6** "The words of the wicked lie in wait for blood, But the mouth of the upright will deliver them."

c) **Proverbs 12:13** "An evil man is ensnared by the transgression of his lips, But the righteous will escape from trouble."

d) **Proverbs 12:25** "Anxiety in a man's heart weighs it down, But a good word makes it glad."

e) **Proverbs 13:2** "From the fruit of a man's mouth he enjoys good, But the desire of the treacherous is violence."

f) **Proverbs 13:3** "The one who guards his mouth preserves his life; The one who opens wide his lips comes to ruin."

g) **Proverbs 16:13** "Righteous lips are the delight of kings, And he who speaks right is loved."

h) **Proverbs 18:20** *"*With the fruit of a man's mouth his stomach will be satisfied; He will be satisfied with the product of his lips."

i) **Proverbs 25:15** "By forbearance a ruler may be persuaded, And a soft tongue breaks the bone."

j) **Titus 2:7** "In all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified,"

8B - Words Affect Health

Our words can affect our health. In **Proverbs 12:18,** it is written, *"There is one who speaks rashly like the thrusts of a sword, But the tongue of the wise brings healing."*

Question 8: Have your words contributed to your health, either negatively or positively?

9A - Words and Prayer

One aspect of prayer is that we ask God for what we want. Following that, we can use our words to agree with His promises to us written in His Word. For example **Romans 4:17 *says*** "… (God) *even God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist."* We can do the same.

Let's say we get a bad diagnosis from a doctor. The proper approach to this problem is to find Bible verses that reveal God's will for us to be well. Then, we pray and ask God for the healing we need, based on the verses we found.

9B - Next, we can begin to speak to the part of our body that is unwell, and we say, "*I have prayed, and I believe that God has healed my* _____.

I believe it is functioning normally. I believe it is healed in the name of Jesus, and I'm holding to my confession of healing no matter what symptoms come my way."

After that, we can begin reading all of the scriptures on healing, even memorizing them so we can say them more often. In this way, we keep our faith strong as we "*call into being, that which does not exist.*" (**Romans 4:17)**.

9C - More On How We Should Use Our Words

a) **Joshua 1:8** *"*This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success."

b) **Ephesians 4:15** *"*but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ,"

c) **Ephesians 5:19** "speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord;"

d) **Colossians 3:16** "Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God."

9D - Personalize the Word

Another way to use our words wisely is by speaking Bible-based affirmations out loud. For instance, **Romans 8:37** says, *"But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us."* We can say to ourselves out loud, *"I am more than a conqueror through Christ!"* There are many verses in the Bible we can use in this way. See below for a few others. Also, see the Affirmations section of this program for others.

a) **1 Corinthians 2:16** "...But we have the mind of Christ." We can say, *"I am intelligent, I can learn new things, I can remember things, and I can do all these things because I have the mind of Christ!"*

b) **Philippians 4:13** "I can do all things through Him which strengthens me." We can say, *"I can do all things that come my way. Indeed, I am well able!"*

c) **Philippians 4:19** "And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus*."* So we can say, *"My God meets all my needs in Christ Jesus!"*

9E - Speaking Rightly Pleases God

Proverbs 23:15-16 "My son, if your heart is wise, My own heart also will be glad; And my inmost being will rejoice When your lips speak what is right."

9F - Confession and Salvation

The following verse reveals that our spoken words are used to help us become born again, **Romans 10:9** says, *"that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."*

Jesus reveals another fact about our speech as it relates to our salvation. **Matthew 10:32-33** says, *"Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven."*

We need to develop our walk with God so finely that it becomes easy to speak to others about God and His wonderful plan of salvation.

Question 9: Have you made a decision to follow Jesus and to confess Him before others? If not, we can pause now and help you do that.

10A - Complaining

There are very destructive ways to use our words. Two of them are complaining and criticizing. Here is a scripture that cautions us to stay away from them.

Philippians 2:14 "Do all things without grumbling and disputing:"

Question 10: How would you judge your level of complaining?

11A - Below is a scripture that says our communication should only be *"good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."*

Ephesians 4:29 "Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear."

11B - Below we see that we should never grudge other people.

James 5:9 "Do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door."

Question 11: Do you ever say unkind things about people?

12A - We should never grudgingly show people hospitality.

1 Peter 4:9 "Be hospitable to one another without complaint."

Below we see that we can arouse God's anger toward us when we complain.

a) **1 Corinthians 10:10** "Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer."

b) **Exodus 16:8** "Moses said, "This will happen when the Lord gives you meat to eat in the evening, and bread to the full in the morning; for the Lord hears your grumblings which you grumble against Him. And what are we? Your grumblings are not against us but against the Lord."

c) **Numbers 11:1** "Now the people became like those who complain of adversity in the hearing of the Lord; and when the Lord heard it, His anger was kindled, and the fire of the Lord burned among them and consumed some of the outskirts of the camp."

12B - Below we see that even though Jesus knew He was going to die a horrible death, He did not complain.

a) **Isaiah 53:7** "He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His."

b) **Matthew 27:13-14** "Then Pilate said to Him, "Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?" And He did not answer him with regard to even a single charge, so the governor was quite amazed."

Let us be as noble as Jesus was in enduring the hardships of life. He is our great example.

Question 12: How often do you complain?

13A – Lying

Below we see how hurtful lying can be for us.

a) **Exodus 20:16** "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor."

b) **Psalm 101:7** "He who practices deceit shall not dwell within my house; He who speaks falsehood shall not maintain his position before me."

c) **Proverbs 6:16-19** "There are six things which the LORD hates, Yes, seven which are an abomination to Him: [17] Haughty eyes, a lying tongue, And hands that shed innocent blood, [18] A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that run rapidly to evil, [19] A false witness *who* utters lies, And one who spreads strife among brothers."

d) **Proverbs 12:19** "Truthful lips will be established forever, But a lying tongue is only for a moment."

e) **Proverbs 12:22** "Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, But those who deal faithfully are His delight."

f) **Proverbs 19:5** "A false witness will not go unpunished, And he who tells lies will not escape."

g) **Proverbs 19:9** "A false witness will not go unpunished, And he who tells lies will perish."

h) **Proverbs 24:28** "Do not be a witness against your neighbor without cause, And do not deceive with your lips."

i) **Ephesians 4:25** "Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth each one of you with his neighbor, for we are members of one another."

j) **Colossians 3:9** "Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its *evil* practices;

k) **Revelation 21:8** "But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part *will be* in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

Question 13: How often do you lie?

14A - Make A Decision

Make a decision to speak what is right and uplifting to yourself and to all those you come in contact with. To help maintain your decision, read Affirmation #4, daily, "I Only Speak Right Words."

a) **Psalm 17:3** "You have tried my heart; You have visited me by night; You have tested me and You find nothing; I have purposed that my mouth will not transgress."

b) **Proverbs 15:26** "Evil plans are an abomination to the Lord, But pleasant words are pure."

c) **Ecclesiastes 5:5** "It is better that you not vow, than vow and not pay.

d) **Ephesians 4:29** "Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear."

e) **Ephesians 5:4** "and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks."

f) **Colossians 4:6** "Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person."

g) **2 Timothy 2:16** "But avoid worldly and empty chatter, for it will lead to further ungodliness,"

Conclusion

There is good reason to examine the words we speak and to consciously make changes until our speech is pleasing to God.

TIP #8

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Make Right Choices

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1A - A railway switch is small, but is capable of sending a huge, heavy train in a completely different direction. Similarly, one small decision can send *our life* in a completely different direction; many times to heartache and loss. One way to prevent this, is found in the scripture below;

Proverbs 3:5,6 "Trust in the Lord with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight."

It seems simple; ask God to come into our situation and guide us.

Question 1: Are you in the habit of asking God to guide you in all your endeavors?

2A - Seek Assistance

Heartaches begin when life gives us a problem in which we have little knowledge of how to solve it.

Whenever we come to a situation that requires more understanding than what we have, we need to get help. God doesn't want us to "think up" a way out of a problem with just our own limited understanding. More often than not, we will get ourselves into trouble by doing so.

2B - Follow Children

For the most part, children have no worries. All they have to do is, get good grades at school, do a little work around the house, and get along with other kids. They seldom worry about the future, and they rarely get upset over the past. Their focus is more or less on the present. Thus, their stress level is usually low, and their mood is generally good.

Question 2: Have you ever wished you were as happy and carefree as children?

3A - As far as basic needs such as food and shelter, most children don't worry about these, because their parents have faithfully met these needs, day in and day out; so they've developed a trust, or "faith," in their parents when it comes to these two vital needs. And their faith gives them peace.

Question 3: Did you grow up in a family that easily met your basic needs? If not, did you worry about how those needs would get met?

Question 4: Are you thankful for the needs that your parents *did* meet?

5A - If putting trust in parents works for children, why don't adults adopt the same trusting mentality toward their heavenly Father?

5B - Children Easily "Unload."

For the most part, children seldom get overwhelmed about trying to solve a problem on their own. They simply tell their parents what the problem is, and their parents tell them what to do about it. Children give the problem over to a more experienced person, and take the advice that is given to them. What a great way to live!

5C - The reason we adults don't do this can be that, over a period of time, we have developed the habit of keeping things to ourselves for reasons such as shame, fear, pride, or perhaps the challenge of solving it on our own. Any of these factors can lead us to not seeking help, and ultimately to failure and unhappiness.

5D - It's challenging. On one hand, God has gifted us with minds so we can think, dream, and figure things out; but on the other hand, if we do get an idea that we think is good, and follow through with it, it might fail, and we suffer loss. That is why life

needs to be handled with care, and with prayer. So much can be at stake when we make poor choices. Again, let's read Proverbs 3:5,6.

Proverbs 3:5,6 "Trust in the Lord with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight."

5E - Another Scripture on Advice

Proverbs 11:14 "Where there is no guidance the people fall, But in abundance of counselors there is victory."

Question 5: Have you ever had a problem in which you sought advice from a number of people before acting on the issue? If so, how did it turn out?

6A - There is Hope

Does it mean our poor choices can be so hurtful that there is no way back to happiness and success? Thankfully, the answer is No. Consider this: The most compelling life stories are those of people who have suffered tremendous loss, but then have come back in triumph!

The very real hope of every person who has ever failed in life, is that they can rise and shine again. In so doing, they help themselves, and they become a beacon of hope to others.

Question 6: Can you think of a person whose life has been inspirational to you? If so, how low did they get, and how successful did they become later on?

7A - Watch Out For "Small Thinking."

If we have mental anguish over our poor choices, we need to understand that our losses can lead us to any number of new directions, many of which can lead us to success. God often works in mysterious ways. What we think is the end of the road, turns out to be a detour to something grand beyond our dreams. That's why we should not rely on just our own understanding, because it is so limiting.

So the question becomes: Are we bold enough to believe that God can bring good out of the bad, in our lives?

Question 7: Do you find yourself focusing on past problems, rather than finding out how they could lead you into a whole new direction?

8A - A New Way to Handle Problems

Our goal is to break free from constantly thinking about a problem, and begin to give our dilemmas to God and to others who have a greater understanding of the situation. That way we will stay at peace and will be better able to enjoy life. We shouldn't be like a person who gets an idea and immediately lunges into it on their own. When we get help with a problem, we will most likely save ourselves a lot of time, money and aggravation.

8B - Bible Tip

Reading a chapter a day from the Book of Proverbs is a good habit. There are 31 chapters in Proverbs, one chapter for each day of the month. It's packed with tips on how to live a happy, successful life.

One More Reason to Make Right Choices

One very important reason to make right choices is that our choices can often affect the lives of people around us, including our loved ones. The guilt of making a poor decision can be debilitating when we realize our decision has hurt other people; so be cautious and choose wisely.

8C - In addition, our sin can affect generations not yet born to us.

a) **Exodus 20:3-6** "You shall have no other gods before Me. [4] "You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. [5] You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, [6] but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments."

b) **Exodus 34:6-7** "Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; [7] who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave *the guilty* unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations."

c) **Jeremiah 32:18** "who shows lovingkindness to thousands, but repays the iniquity of fathers into the bosom of their children after them, O great and mighty God. The LORD of hosts is His name;"

Question 8: Can you think of people whose lives have been cursed because of their fore-fathers actions?

8C - Final Note

If we are careful to do everything we can to make right choices, and things still don't work out in our favor, we can take comfort in **Romans 8:28**, which says, *"And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."*

No matter what happens, when we put our trust in God, He can bring good out of any problem we face. Our life is in good hands when we give it to God!

Tip #9

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Develop Your Faith

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1A - At first glance faith seems like a vague, mystical concept, something that we could never truly understand or benefit from. However, the Bible says the opposite. The Bible even calls it a substance. In the 11th Chapter of the Book of Hebrews (the Faith Chapter), the Bible tells us what faith is. **Hebrews 11:1** says: *"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."* In God's realm, faith is important. In fact, faith is the *"currency of heaven."* It is vital when looking to God for His help in our lives.

1B - So, the Bible calls faith a substance. It may not be something we can touch, but it is something we can see and hear. We see it in people's actions. And we can hear it in people's words.

You Already Use Faith

A simple example of using faith can be in the use of a chair. We see that it looks strong enough to hold our weight, and by the act of sitting on the chair, we show we have faith in it.

1C - Faith is a Choice

We can have strong faith, or we can have weak faith, the choice is ours. **Romans 10:17** says *"So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ."* Faith comes by hearing God's Word. Thus, the more we saturate ourselves in the Bible, the stronger our faith becomes. Developing our faith takes time reading and speaking God's Word. But it starts with a choice, a burning desire to have strong faith.

Question 1: Have you ever met someone who had an unshakable faith in God? If so, have you ever wished you had that same kind of faith?

2A - Faith Got Jesus's Attention

Faith is a noun. But it is proven by our actions. On many occasions, Jesus told people that *"according to your faith you are healed."* What Jesus meant was, "*because you acted in a way that demonstrated your faith in me, I will respond to your action by giving you what you've asked for.*" The following are some Bible stories that illustrate this point.

2B - The Centurion Soldier

In Matthew 8:5-13, Jesus offered to heal a soldier's servant by following him to his home to pray for his servant, but then the soldier made an amazing statement. In essence, he said, "*Jesus, you don't need to come to my house and do this personally. I believe you have enough spiritual power that if you simply speak a word, right here and now, my servant will be healed.*" This comment amazed Jesus. Jesus told everyone present, "*Truly I say to you, I have not found such great faith with anyone in Israel."* (**Matthew 8:10**) Jesus said to him, *"Go; it shall be done for you as you have believed."* (**vs. 13**) And it was! That is the power of strong faith.

2C - The Woman from Canaan

In Matthew 15:21-28, a desperate non-Jewish woman approached Jesus for the healing of her daughter who had been deeply bound by demon possession. Jesus replied to her that He wasn't sent to minister to Gentiles, just the Jews. But, in essence, the woman's response was, *"Yes, I know. But as you feed the ones you were sent to feed, some of the crumbs fall to the ground, and that is all I need, just a crumb."* That surprised Jesus. Again, he publicly taught the crowd based on what this woman said. Jesus esteemed her greatly for her

faith, and spoke these words, "*O woman, your faith is great; it shall be done for you as you wish.*" (**Matthew 15:28**)

2D - The Woman with the Issue of Blood

In Mark 5:25-34 Jesus was on his way to cure a man's young daughter, when out of nowhere an older woman pushed her way through the crowd, with this in mind, *"If I can just touch Jesus's garment, I believe healing virtue will flow out of Him and into my sick body. I know he's busy so I won't bother him personally, I'll just sneak in and get what I need."* She finally did reach Jesus, and her healing happened exactly as she thought it would! A force of virtue instantly left Jesus and healed the sick woman. And it caused Jesus to ask, *"Who touched my garments?"* (**Mark 5:30**) The woman came forward, and Jesus used her situation to teach countless millions a lesson on faith. Here it is: *If you can imagine it, you can have it*. It sounds remarkable, but it is true.

2E - We Have a Say

Mark 4:24 bears this out. Jesus cautioned us by saying, "*Take care what you listen to. By your standard of measure it will be measured to you; and more will be given you besides."*

Basically, He tells us to be careful how we hear things. The way we hear them, or imagine them, will be the way they work for us.

Based on what the woman, above, had seen of Jesus healing people, she concluded in her mind that her plan of simply touching Jesus's garment would heal her, and it did. In this way, we can have a say in how things turn out. Are we bold enough to ask and believe? That is the question.

2F - How Are You Hearing It?

When we read a passage of scripture like **Philippians 4:19**, which says, *"And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.",* do we think, *"How can God give me more money? I only make $500.00 a week on my job."* or do we think, *"Anything could happen, finances can come from many directions!* We need to think "outside the box." That is the earmark of a person who walks by faith. They refuse to limit God with their "small thinking."

Question 2: Have you ever trusted God to do something that could only have been done by a miracle?

3A - What's the Alternative?

The task of developing our faith will be time-consuming, but what is the alternative? The alternative is that we stay depressed, hopeless, and unmotivated.

The Bible challenges us to develop our faith.

a) **Hebrews 3:19** "*So* we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief."

b) **James 1:6-8** *"*But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. [7] For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, [8] *being* a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways."

Having weak faith makes life hard, and it can prevent us from receiving God's best for our lives.

Question 3: Have you ever met someone who had a goal in mind, but their lack of confidence made you think they would never reach their goal?

4A - Believing For Miracles

The risk of having weak faith should make us careful when choosing a home church. If our church never talks about how God still heals people today, and we get sick, our faith might not be built up enough to believe that God will heal us.

4B - As well, if our church never talks about how God still meets financial needs, and we need increased finances, our faith might not be built up enough to believe God will give us the finances we need. Our unbelief can prevent God from pouring into our lives the blessings He wants us to have.

There is nothing wrong with attending a church that doesn't teach the principles of faith; we just need to get Bible teaching from other sources, so our faith can keep growing.

Question 4: Has your lack of faith ever prevented you from going to God in confidence that He would help you?

5A - A Blank Check

God gave us His Word so we could saturate ourselves in it. By doing so, we can begin trusting Him for big things in our lives. If we don't need a miracle, we can believe God for miracles for other people.

In a sense, God has issued us a "blank check." We fill in "the amount" (what we are believing God for), and Jesus's death on the cross is what covers "the cost."

5B - Even if we don't receive everything we ask for, we are better off to ask big and receive *something,* than to have weak faith and receive nothing at all.

All of this takes faith, and developing mature faith takes time. It takes time in the reading and speaking of God's Word. There is no shortcut to developing strong faith.

5C - Actions Prove Faith

a) **Matthew 9:2** *"*And they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralytic, "Take courage, son; your sins are forgiven."

b) **Mark 2:5** *"*And Jesus seeing their faith said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

c) **Luke 5:20** "Seeing their faith, He said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven you."

5D - What Kind Of Signals Are You Sending?

Actions and words prove our faith. Thus, all through our day, we can be sending "faith signals" to heaven by our actions and words that show God we are trusting Him to act in our life.

Remember that people's *lack of faith* also got Jesus's attention, but, we don't want that. We want Him to stand continually amazed by our faith-affirming words and actions.

Question 5: Have you ever responded to a problem in a way that God would say was an act of faith?

6A - Forgiveness is Available

Does living the faith life mean we aren't going to make mistakes? Not at all. Everyone who begins the journey toward strong faith will make mistakes. When we make a mistake, we simply repent of it, receive our forgiveness by faith, and we move on.

6B - Repenting of sin means, we confess it to God, and make a decision not to do it again. If it is a habitual sin, we will need God's help, and likely the help of others to break the habit.

To get a greater understanding of God's willingness and grace to forgive our sins, read Core Belief #2 – "I Believe Christ's Crucifixion on the Cross Has Paid the Penalty For My Sin."

Question 6: Are you in the habit of confessing and repenting of your sins to God?

7A - We May Not Feel It

We may not always *feel* that God wants to help us, but we override those feelings by doing our actions by faith. That proves to God that we are doing our best to trust Him to help us. Some people complain to God that life isn't fair, but that doesn't win God's favor. He has stated in His Word that, *"The just shall live by faith.",* and that is what we will do. We will keep doing actions and speaking words that prove our faith. Faith is a lifestyle we can learn!

TIP #10

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Respond Rather Than React

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1A - If we were to describe the journey to emotional healing in a single sentence, it would be this: It is the process of learning how to *respond* to life's challenges, rather than *react* to them. We need to learn how to slow down our decision-making process when we get caught off guard. This Tip will help us do that.

1B - Natural reactions are great if they are coming from a healthy foundation, but if they are coming from a weak foundation, they can be crippling. If we give somebody struggling with anxiety and depression another situation to juggle in their lives, their natural reaction may be less than helpful. On the other hand, let's compare such a situation to an athlete who trains 4-6 hours daily so they can be their best on game day. Their natural reactions during the game will be practically perfect, and will help them achieve success in their sport.

1C - Start Training!

Just like an athlete who trains each day to improve their athletic abilities, we can also train in the area of our thinking to achieve a greater measure of personal well-being. This kind of training sharpens our ability to respond effectively

to stressful situations, and will help us to stay peaceful so we can enjoy every aspect of our day.

Question 1: Do you know someone who trains diligently for any reason?

2A - Who's Causing the Problem?

Have you ever felt totally drained at the end of work days for days on end? Life can be hard. And it can tempt us to believe that it is *our situation* or *person* in our life which is causing our unrest. However, the root problem is usually our improper response to the challenges in our lives. That is great news because this means that it doesn't matter what the problem is in our lives, there are ways to respond to the problem that can take away the anxiety related to it. One of the programs slogans is: "There is a stress-cancelling response to every problem."

Question 2: Have you ever blamed other people or situations for your emotional unrest? Would you like to give us an example?

3A - Improper Responses – Bible Examples

King David and Bathsheba

In Tip #3, we looked at how King David sinned with Bathsheba, and how it led him astray in his life. David leaned on his own understanding, and it cost him the life of a very good soldier, Bathsheba's husband, Uriah. It also cost him the life of the child that was born to him and Bathsheba. It likely, also, caused David and Bathsheba sadness whenever they remembered their sin and the outcome of it. King David's natural reactions caused much grief and hardship.

3B - Jonah and the People of Nineveh

We also looked at the story of Jonah, how he did not like the people of Nineveh, and that he thought he could get away from doing his job. Jonah's incorrect reaction to his situation caused great loss of contents from the ship he was on, and it could have caused a great loss of life. His rebellion toward God, and his judgmentalism toward the Ninevites also cost him his peace and happiness. See below.

3C - **Jonah 3:10-4:3** "When God saw their deeds, that they turned from their wicked way, then God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them. And He did not do *it*. (Chapter 4) But it greatly displeased Jonah and he became angry. [2] He prayed to the LORD and said, "Please LORD, was not this what I said while I was still in my *own* country? Therefore in order to forestall this I fled to Tarshish, for I knew that You are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, and one who relents concerning calamity. [3] Therefore now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for death is better to me than life."

3D - Do The Job

Based on this story, it would have been easier for Jonah not to care who God sent him to, and simply do his job. Jonah had his own opinion of what he should do, and his natural reaction to not do his job got him into serious trouble.

Question 3: Can you think of a time at your job where your supervisor asked you to do a certain task, but you thought you knew better and did something else? If so, how did it turn out?

4A - Getting Too Entangled

Many times we fail to recognize the true origin of our problems. In some cases, we allow ourselves to get caught up in a battle that we could have avoided. The Bible cautions us on getting too wrapped up in the things of this life. The apostle Paul says it this way:

2 Timothy 2:4 "No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier."

4B - The True Origin of Problems

If the Christian life is a war, who are we fighting against? There is one main enemy to humanity, and that is Satan. The Bible says he tried to misuse his authority as the head angel to dethrone God in heaven (Isaiah 14). Because of this act of treason, God banished him from heaven to the earth, along with one-third of the angels.

For more information on the reality of Satan, read Core Belief #4 – I believe I have an Enemy, Satan.

4C - How Does Satan Operate?

Satan and demons (fallen angels) try to steer people away from God and the blessings He has for them through lies and misleading questions. If Satan can convince us that God doesn't love us, or if he can cause us to question that God is even in our life, then he can steal our peace of mind.

Question 4: Can you think of a time in your life when you felt that God didn't love you?

5A - Verses on Satan Using Lies

a) **John 8:44** *(Jesus speaking)* "You are of *your* father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*, for he is a liar and the father of lies."

b) **2 Corinthians 11:3** "But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity *of devotion* to Christ."

Below, is a verse showing how Satan uses questions;

Genesis 3:1 "Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?"

Question 5: Knowing that Satan uses lies to upset our lives, what lies do you think he may be using to upset your peace of mind currently?

6A - Below are some common lies:

1) God doesn't love me.
2) I could never get married.
3) I could never forgive that person.
4) I could never be healed physically.
5) I could never be happy with my spouse.
6) Nobody would want to be my friend.
7) I need to have a spouse to be happy.
8) I could never be happy in my job.
9) I need money or things to be happy.
10) I'll never progress past this level of success.
11) I need to be loved and accepted to be happy.
12) I could never break free from my addiction.
13) I'll never have what it takes to be gainfully employed.
14) My worrying about problems shows that I am responsible.
15) My past is so bad; I'll never recover from my emotional wounds.
16) I could never be happy without this person. (e.g., A loved one who passes away)
17) I need to change my physical features to be happy and accepted. *(e.g., weight changes or cosmetic surgery.)*
18) I need to act a certain way to be happy and accepted. *(e.g., "I need to be the life of the party.)*

6B - The Thief

Satan is a liar, but he is also referred to as a thief, as described in the well-known scripture below.

John 10:10 *(Jesus speaking)* "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."

6C - Satan's Ultimate Goal

Satan will steal whatever he can; our health, our wealth, our possessions, but most of all, he wants to take our peace of mind. That's because our mind is the gateway to our life. He knows if he can steal our peace of mind, then he has a chance at stealing our life - through self-destruction. That is the ultimate "win" for Satan. He knows that nothing grieves the heart of God more than to have the person He gives the gift of life to, to throw it back in His face. Thankfully, we can stop Satan from stealing that from us, the way Jesus stopped him.

Question 6: Can you think of anything Satan has stolen from you?

7A - How Did Jesus Stop the Devil?

In this portion of scripture, we will watch Jesus in action as He uses a weapon that the Bible calls, the "Sword of the Spirit."

Matthew 4:1-11 "Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. 3 And the tempter came and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." 4 But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'"

7B - 5 Then the devil took Him into the holy city and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, 6 and *said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down; for it is written, 'He will command His angels concerning You'; and 'On their hands they will bear You up, So that You will not strike Your foot against a stone.'" 7 Jesus said to him, "On the other hand, it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'" 8 Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and *showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; 9 and he said to Him, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me." 10 Then Jesus *said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.'" 11 Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him.

7C - Jesus knew God's Word, and He used it like a sharp sword to disarm the lies of Satan. The devil wanted to shorten the fast that Jesus was on, but Jesus said, *"It is written, man shall not live on bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God."*

Then, it appears the devil tried to make Jesus commit suicide by throwing himself off the temple, but Jesus said, *"It is written again, You shall not put the Lord your God to the test."*

7D - Following that, the devil tried to get Jesus to worship him instead of the Father, but Jesus said, *"Go, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.'"*

7E - The great news is that we can do the same thing Jesus did. Jesus knew God's Word very well. If we apply ourselves, we, too, can learn God's Word.

Then, for example, if we get thoughts in our mind that our health is getting worse, or that God hasn't forgiven us, we can say, "No sir, Devil, it is written in **Psalm 103:3**,*"Who pardons all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases;"*

7F - Or, if we get thoughts that God doesn't love us, we can say, "No sir, Devil, for it is written in **1 John 4:16** *"We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him."*

7G - Or, if we get thoughts that God won't help us with our financial needs, we say, "No sir! For it is written in **Philippians 4:19**, *"And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus."*

7H - Use God's Weapons

By holding tightly to our core beliefs of who God says He is - our loving creator, we can keep ourselves at peace by trusting Him to keep His promises to us.

Just as Jesus used God's Word to defend Himself, God urges us to know and use His Word to defend ourselves.

As stated above, God has given His Word a specific name - the "Sword of the Spirit".

> **Ephesians 6:17** "And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

7J - The Sword of the Spirit is one of a number of items that God gives us, with which to fight our spiritual battles. Ephesians Chapter 6 lists them: the Belt of Truth, Breast Plate of Righteousness, Shoes of the Gospel of Peace, Shield of Faith, Helmet of Salvation, and the Sword of the Spirit. Become familiar with this gear and learn to use them every day as needed.

Question 7: Have you ever used God's Word to defend yourself from Satan's mental attacks?

8A - Not only is Satan called a liar and a thief; he is also referred to as a lion.

> **1 Peter 5:8** "Be of sober *spirit*, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour."

The devil is looking for an opening in our lives, that we give him, to gain entry into our affairs. When we walk closely with Jesus, He will show us ways to prevent Satan from upsetting situations in our lives.

Question 8: Is there an aspect of your life, presently, in which you feel Satan is causing you trouble?

9A - Cheerful In Problems

One of the unique and refreshing aspects of Christianity is the positive attitude we can have when facing challenges in our life. The following verses tell us that we can have good cheer in the midst of difficulties.

a) **John 16:33** "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."

b) **Romans 5:3,4** "And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; [4] and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope;"

c) **Colossians 1:11** "strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously,"

d) **James 1:2** "Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,"

For more information on being cheerful in trials, read Tip #18 – Become an Optimist.

9B - Our Problems Don't Even Compare

Here we see that our present sufferings are not worth comparing to the glory that is waiting for us.

> **Romans 8:18** "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us."

9C - View Problems Differently

To the Christian, problems can also be referred to as "blessings in disguise." That's because God has ways of taking problems and making them work out for our benefit.

Indeed, challenges don't have to get us anxious or depressed. However, this can only happen when we keep our spiritual focus on God and His Word. We don't want to be like Peter, in Matthew 14:23-32, when he was walking on the water with Jesus, he began to take his eyes off of Jesus and started looking at the wind and the waves, and he began to sink. Instead, we want to learn to keep our thoughts on God's Word, and on the promises He has for us.

9D - What's Our Job?

Our job as Christians is to believe. It is God's job to answer our prayers. The only way to truly believe, is to be hopeful, trusting and optimistic. Thankfully, we can learn how not to be disturbed by the challenges in our lives. We can learn to stay in control of our responses to our problems instead of reacting to them. We can learn to keep our peace of mind no matter what obstacles come our way!

Question 9: Can you tell us of a recent problem in your life and how you responded to it?

10A - Natural Reactions to Pain

A woman experienced prolonged labor while giving birth to her first child. Five hours, 10 hours, 15 hours; after 20 hours she began thinking of reasons why God was giving her such a difficult delivery. Her mind took her back through her life, and she started to remember all the times she hurt people, even in a small way. She became convinced that the reason she was in this difficult situation was because of the mistakes she had made. Others tried to tell her differently, but she couldn't see it. Fortunately, God helped her get through the delivery.

10B - Pain Can Be a Good Thing

A natural reaction to pain can be self-inspection. When pain makes us think about our past experiences, we can assess the circumstances to determine if we were guilty or not. If so, we can repent of it, and move on with our lives.

Pain, with its natural reaction of self-assessment, isn't a bad thing. It can cause us to do a thorough "house-cleaning" of our heart. After it is complete, we are ready to aim for new successes in our life!

Question 10: Has your pain ever caused you to do self-inspection?

11A - King David Arrives Home in Ziklag

In 1 Samuel 30, we read of the time when King David and his army came home to Ziklag, only to find that their city was burning, and their wives and children carried off by the Amalekite army. David and his men were overcome with terrible grief. They wept until they had no more strength to weep. The men even considered stoning David. David was greatly distressed. Then he asked God for advice. God's answer was: "Pursue and overtake." So they did, and they got their families back!

Question 11: After coming home from battle, and seeing their burnt and vacant city, could David have inquired of God before his distress set in, and thereby have avoided the emotional pain?

12A - Natural Reactions When Somebody Hurts Us

When somebody hurts us, the natural reaction is to want to hurt them back. But we should be careful when dealing with vengeance. Some people who have fought back have been injured, and even killed. Sometimes, the best thing to do is just forgive the person who hurt us and go on.

12B - When we refuse to forgive, we imprison ourselves. Thus, the act of forgiveness is more for the person who got hurt, rather than the person who injured us. It may *feel* like we cannot forgive the person, however, like love, forgiveness is an act of the will. *We can choose to forgive the person.* By doing so, we let God handle the person who hurt us in His way and in His time. That is faith. We will know we truly have forgiven the person when we no longer obsess about the incident. If we are having difficulty forgiving someone, sometimes it is helpful to begin praying for the person, asking God to bless their life in every way.

> **Matthew 5:44** "But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,"

Question 12: Is there someone in your life with whom you have vengeful thoughts? If so, what do you think about making a quality decision to forgive them?

13A - Natural Reaction When You Feel Depressed

Sometimes when we feel down, we make the mistake of trying hard not to look depressed. This can cause more anxiety because we are trying to be somebody we are not. Like the person who breaks their leg, a doctor will tell them not to put too much weight on it for a few weeks. The same goes for someone who is troubled emotionally. We shouldn't try too hard to look happy. Instead, we should become more of a spectator of life for a while until

we heal up emotionally. In due time, our healing will come, and we will rejoice genuinely!

Question 13: Have you ever tried too hard to hide your emotional pain?

14A - Avoid Isolation

Another natural reaction when experiencing emotional pain can be to isolate ourselves from others. By keeping our problem a secret, we can rob ourselves of good people who can help us resolve our issue. It is best to go against our natural reaction and tell our doctor and loved ones how we are feeling. Then together, search for the help that is needed. For more on this, see Tip #5 – Form a Support Team.

Question 14: Have you ever withheld information from people who you knew could help solve your problem?

15A - Natural Reaction When Life Gets Hard

When life gets difficult, the natural reaction is to flee from a situation. We can get caught up in the mindset, *"The grass is greener on the other side."* If we feel compelled to move on, it is sometimes best to stay in a situation until we achieve victory in it. Then move on to something else. What we don't want, is to *"jump out of the frying pan and into the fire."* This will further complicate our problem.

Question 15: Have you ever tried to get out of a difficult situation by moving to something else, only to end up in worse circumstances?

16A - Seeing Ourselves in Others

Sometimes, when we begin seeing areas in our lives improve; we tend to see them in other people's lives as well. The temptation can be to tell others what their areas of weakness are. This can possibly hurt them, and can hurt us as well. It is best to be careful when sharing information related to someone else's recovery. Doing so with gentleness and humility will give us greater success in passing on the valuable truths we have learned.

The following verses give us tips on how to reach out to others.

a) **Matthew 7:5** "You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye."

b) **1 Corinthians 14:3** "But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation."

c) **Galatians 6:1** "Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; *each one* looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted."

Question 16: Have you ever tried to help a person see a certain truth, but hurt yourself, and them, by doing so?

17A - Natural Reaction When Healed from Fear

Sometimes, when we get free from fear, we can become overly confident. Our new-found confidence can cause us to boldly do things that *may seem right to us*, but can lead us to more pain. We need to use our new found freedom wisely. Boldness should be tempered with wisdom. When recovering from fear, it is best to get feedback from others before making important decisions in our life.

Question 17: Have you ever been overly confident and tried to do something that eventually caused you pain?

18A - Busyness

Sometimes, when we become anxious, a natural reaction can be that we become overly busy. Our busyness can act as a distraction, preventing us from pursuing our healing, and thus prolonging our illness.

Question 18: Have you ever avoided facing problems in your life by getting overly busy?

19A - Hurt by People at Church

Because people make mistakes, the day may come when someone at our church hurts us. Our judgment toward someone at church can grow by causing us to pass judgment toward the church, and even God Himself. We shouldn't let the natural reaction to this hurt cause us to lose our church friendships, or our walk with God. It is best to resolve the hurt as soon as possible. We should be gracious and forgive. We should forgive people as if we ourselves made the mistake and would need forgiveness. For more on this, see Tip #21 – Collect "Grace Doors."

Question 19: Have you ever found yourself being judgmental toward a person, a church, a denomination, or even God Himself?

20A - With God's help we can learn how to respond, rather than react to the challenges of life.

TIP #11

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Know Yourself

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1A - Life has a way of leading us away from God's best for our lives. The problem is that change in our heart can happen so slowly that we aren't aware we are drifting away from God. What complicates this problem further is that we have inherent weaknesses that we may not be aware of, or not paying attention to. Not being aware of our weaknesses can be a serious problem. Our enemy, the devil, knows us better than we know ourselves, and he can use this knowledge against us. Let's take some time to identify our strengths and weaknesses, so we'll be ready for any challenge that comes our way.

1B - People in the Bible had weaknesses. God has given us their stories so we can learn from them.

Eve was too naïve when she was speaking with the serpent (Satan).

Genesis 3:1-6 "Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?" 2 The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; 3 but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.'" 4 The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die! 5 For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." 6 When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make *one* wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate."

1C - Adam's weakness was his impulsiveness to take the fruit from Eve.

Question 1: Does anyone come to mind that is naïve like Eve, or impulsive like Adam?

2A - King Saul became jealous of young David.

1 Samuel 18:7-9 "The women sang as they played, and said, "Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands." 8 Then Saul became very angry, for this saying displeased him; and he said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, but to me they have ascribed thousands. Now what more can he have but the kingdom?" 9 Saul looked at David with suspicion from that day on."

Question 2: Can you think of anyone who gets jealous easily?

3A - King Solomon became addicted to women, and began marrying non-Jewish (Gentile) women.

When we start spending too much time with worldly people, it can reduce our love for God, and our service for Him. Solomon's story is very sad when you consider how he began his reign as king, with great humility and uprightness of heart toward God.

1 Kings 11:1-4 "Now King Solomon loved many foreign women along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women, 2 from the nations concerning which the LORD had said to the sons of Israel, "You shall not associate with them, nor shall they associate with you, *for* they will surely turn your heart away after their gods." Solomon held fast to these in love. 3 He had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines, and his wives turned his heart away. 4 For when Solomon was old, his wives turned his heart away after other gods; and his heart was not wholly devoted to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father *had been*."

Question 3: Do any Christians come to mind that spend too much time with non-Christian people?

4A - In Joshua Chapter 7, we read how the Israelite army suffered a devastating defeat. This caused Joshua to fall on his face before God to find out why they lost the battle. God said that there was sin in the camp. The camp was searched, and Achan confessed to stealing some of the booty from a previous battle. He suffered a terrible loss for doing so.

Joshua 7:24,25 "Then Joshua and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, the silver, the mantle, the bar of gold, his sons, his daughters, his oxen, his donkeys, his sheep, his tent and all that belonged to him; and they brought them up to the valley of Achor. [25] Joshua said, "Why have you troubled us? The LORD will trouble you this day." And all Israel stoned them with stones; and they burned them with fire after they had stoned them with stones."

Question 4: Does anyone come to mind who likes nice things a little too much?

5A - One day King Nebuchadnezzar was in the middle of a prideful speech of how he built such a grand kingdom by his own might. Suddenly, God humbled him in a very dramatic way. For seven long years, King Nebechadnezzar lived like an ox in the field, grazing on grass.

Daniel 4:30-33 "The king reflected and said, 'Is this not Babylon the great, which I myself have built as a royal residence by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty?' [31] While the word *was* in the king's mouth, a voice came from heaven, *saying*, 'King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is declared: sovereignty has been removed from you, [32] and you will be driven away from mankind, and your dwelling place *will be* with the beasts of the field. You will be given grass to eat like cattle, and seven periods of time will pass over you until you recognize that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes.' [33] Immediately the word concerning Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled; and he was driven away from mankind and began eating grass like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair had grown like eagles' *feathers* and his nails like birds' *claws*."

Question 5: Do you know anyone who is prideful? Did their pride cause them a downfall?

6A - Samson was one of the judges of Israel, and especially gifted by God to help liberate Israel from a forty year reign of the Philistines.

Judges 13:1-5 "Now the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD, so that the LORD gave them into the hands of the Philistines forty years. [2] There was a certain man of Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah; and his wife was barren and had borne no *children*. [3] Then the angel of the LORD appeared to the woman and said to her, "Behold now, you are barren and have borne no *children*, but you shall conceive and give birth to a son. [4] Now therefore, be careful not to drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing. [5] For behold, you shall conceive and give birth to a son, and no razor shall come upon his head, for the boy shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb; and he shall begin to deliver Israel from the hands of the Philistines."

6B - Samson was born with the gift of strength. His strength was due to his long hair which had never been cut. But Samson had a weakness. He was careless about the secret of his power. After years of causing havoc for the Philistines, the Philistines convinced Samson's girlfriend, Delilah, to inquire of Samson the source of his great strength. Samson toyed with her for a while, giving her false sources. However, after Delilah's ongoing and tearful inquiries, Samson did the unthinkable; he told her the real source of his strength - his long hair. While sleeping that night, his hair was cut off, and when he awoke, he was powerless to defend himself, and he became a slave of the Philistines.

Judges 16:17 "So he told her all *that was* in his heart and said to her, "A razor has never come on my head, for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother's womb. If I am shaved, then my strength will leave me and I will become weak and be like any *other* man."

Question 6: Does anyone come to mind that treats their natural gift with casual disinterest, to a point where they allow Satan to play havoc in their lives?

7A - Now that we see how flawed Bible characters can be, it may be easier for us to confess our own areas of weakness.

Question 7: Do you know of any weaknesses in your life? Would you like to share any with the group?

8A - God sometimes uses other people to tell us what our weaknesses are. We would do well to take note of what people are telling us to see if there is any truth to what they are saying. We could also ask people who know us if they see any weaknesses in our lives.

Question 8: Has anyone ever talked to you about areas of weakness in your life, either in a serious, joking, or mean way? What was your reaction? What did you learn about yourself?

9A - Once we know our weaknesses, we can begin to work on improving those areas, so they become

less of a handicap in our lives. A good strategy is to have accountability people in our lives, people we can confess our shortcomings to, and who can inspire us to be our best.

Question 9: Have you ever had an accountability person or group in your life? How did it help you?

10A - Know Your Strengths

God has given us strengths. He challenges us to find out our gifts.

Proverbs 25:2 "It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, But the glory of kings is to search out a matter."

Question 10: Has anyone ever told you, you were gifted in some way? How did you respond to it?

11A - Our gifts can bring us a measure of joy when we operate in them.

Question 11: In what ways have you been energized by your talents?

12A - Sometimes when we discover what our strengths are, we can become prideful. We can even use our gift for unjust gain. For instance, a salesperson that has a warm, caring personality can begin selling products that will benefit them more than the customer.

Question 12: Have you ever got a little prideful or careless after finding out what your gifts were? If so, can you tell us about it?

13A - Often, God uses our natural talents in the church.

Question 13: In what ways could you make use of your gifts in the church?

14A - Having an accurate understanding of our strengths and weaknesses can give us an edge in life. Becoming a life-long student of ourselves will help us to make right choices in our life, and will help us produce fruitful service for God, as well as happiness and peace for ourselves.

TIP #12

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Don't Judge

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1A - One major cause of anxiety and depression is the act of passing judgment on others. You might ask, *"Do I just turn a blind eye to anyone that does wrong to me?"* That depends on the situation. Every circumstance is different, and every person we come in contact with is different, thus requiring a particular response. Having a pastor or a support team in our life will give us people we can speak with, who can give us suggestions on how to best respond to a given situation.

1B - If it is an abusive situation we should first try to remove ourselves from the abuse. By doing so, we can better assess the hurtful action. We will then be better able to respond properly to it if it happens again. (To recognize abuse more readily, see the *"Types of Abuse"* section at the end of the book.)

1C - When someone abuses us it is natural to pass judgment on them. However, Jesus tells us not to judge others. Here are two such verses.

a) **Matthew 7:1,2** (Jesus is speaking) "Do not judge so that you will not be judged. [2] For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you."

b) **Luke 6:37** "Do not judge, and you will not be judged; and do not condemn, and you will not be condemned; pardon, and you will be pardoned."

1D - When Jesus tells us not to judge, does that mean we can't judge the action? We know that judicial judges judge actions all the time. We also know that Jesus gives permission to judge people's actions when He says, *"Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine,"* (Matthew 7:6) and *"Beware of false prophets"* (Matthew 7:15-16). How do we determine who the dogs and pigs are, and the false prophets are if we are not allowed to judge?

1E - When we share with people how sin is so damaging, how can we warn people who may be engaged in sinful actions such as *immorality, impurity, sensuality, [20] idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions (heresies), [21] envying,*

drunkenness, carousing, (Galatians 5:19-21)? Won't listing these sins sound like we are passing judgment? It's a delicate issue.

1F - In **John 7:24**, Jesus tells us *"Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment."* Examining the above references would make it appear it is permissible to judge a person's actions.

1G - For sure, we should not judge the person. We ought not to judge them because we all have blind spots. Plus, it is only by God's grace that we aren't as mixed up as the person who wronged us.

Forms of Judging

Judgment Toward People

Often we get into the habit of passing judgment on others because we ourselves were judged in the past. Let's take some time to see in what ways others have judged us.

Question 1: Looking back at your youth, can you remember being judged by your parents? If yes, can you tell us why, and are they still passing judgment on you today?

Question 2: Did your parents pass judgment on others? If yes, can you tell us on whom?

Question 3: Can you remember being judged by kids at school? Did you judge other kids?

Question 4: Can you remember being judged by teachers or other adult leaders? If yes, can you tell us why?

5A - Judgment toward Institutions

Sometimes we face problems at school that cause us to pass judgment on schools.

Question 5: Looking back over your school years, can you remember passing judgment on your schools for any reason? If yes, can you tell us why?

6A - Sometimes we face problems on the job that cause us to pass judgment on companies that employ us.

Question 6: Can you remember passing judgment on companies or workers for any reason? If yes, can you tell us why?

7A - Judgment Toward Ideologies

Sometimes we are influenced by people who are prejudiced for one reason or another.

Question 7: Can you remember judging people who were different than you (race, ethnicity, religion, political persuasion, ideologies, etc.)? If yes, can you tell us why?

8A - Avoid this Kind of Judgment

One of the most damaging acts of judgment to our emotional health is that of judging ourselves. These kinds of judgments are characterized by critical, condemning, self-shaming, and other demeaning thoughts and feelings.

Question 8: Can you remember ever passing judgment on yourself? If yes, can you tell us why, and do you still pass judgment on yourself today?

10A - Judgment Scriptures

The scriptures are very clear on not passing judgment on other people. See the scriptures below.

a) **Luke 6:37** "Do not judge, and you will not be judged; and do not condemn, and you will not be condemned; pardon, and you will be pardoned."

b) **James 2:3,4** "and you pay special attention to the one who is wearing the fine clothes, and say, "You sit here in a good place," and you say to the poor man, "You stand over there, or sit down by my footstool," [4] have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil motives?"

c) **James 4:11,12** "Do not speak against one another, brethren. He who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks against the law and judges the law; but if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge *of it*. [12] There is *only* one Lawgiver and Judge, the One who is able to save and to destroy; but who are you who judge your neighbor?"

d) **1 Peter 2:23** "and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting *Himself* to Him who judges righteously;"

10B - The Cure for Being Hurt When Being Judged

The way out of the pain of having been judged by others is through the act of forgiveness. Our natural reaction to those who have hurt us is to hurt them back, but that will only keep us in emotional distress. We must go against our natural reaction and consciously forgive the person who has hurt us. We do not have to *feel* like forgiving them. We forgive them not by our emotions, instead, as an act of our will, knowing it is the right thing to do. For more on this, see Tip #10 – Respond Rather Than React.

10C - <u>One Important Reason to Forgive</u>

After we have forgiven someone their hurtful action toward us, and the pain of it has gone, we will then have a story to share with others of how God has helped us through the act of forgiveness. That's why one of the slogans of the program is: *Don't focus on what you lost, focus on what you gained*. When we forgive someone who has hurt us, we gain a "platform" with which we can use to tell our story and inspire others to forgive, especially if what they are struggling with is a similar offense. Others will be helped by realizing they aren't the only ones who have suffered hurt, and they will be challenged to forgive their trespassers too.

Question 10: Do you have a trauma that God could use to help others with? Would you like to share that with us?

11A - <u>A Helpful Skill to Learn</u>

After recovering from the hurtful words spoken to us, we can ask God to help us to no longer care what people think of us. Faith in God will give us greater confidence. We will be better able to shrug off unkind words spoken to us or about us. We can be like Jesus when He spoke these words from the cross, *"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."* (Luke 23:34)

Question 11: Is there an area of your life in which you would like God to help you be more carefree?

12A - Learning to be non-judgmental will help us keep our peace of mind, and will help our personalities become more attractive, thus giving us greater happiness with those around us.

TIP #13

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Be "Good Ground"

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1A **-** Jesus tells us that the parable of the sower is a "stand-alone" parable. He asks, how will you know any parable if you don't know this one? Thus, it is good for us to read it, and glean everything we can from it. The title of this Tip comes from the soil types described in the parable. May God teach us something valuable as we read it.

1B **- Mark 4:3-20**

"Listen *to this*! Behold, the sower went out to sow;
[4] as he was sowing, some *seed* fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate it up. [5] Other *seed* fell on the rocky *ground* where it did not have much soil; and immediately it sprang up because it had no depth of soil. [6] And after the sun had risen, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away. [7] Other *seed* fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked it, and it yielded no crop. [8] Other *seeds* fell into the good soil, and as they grew up and increased, they yielded a crop and produced thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold." [9] And He was saying, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." [10] As soon as He was alone, His followers, alone with the twelve, *began* asking Him *about* the parables."

1C - "[11] And He was saying to them, "To you has been given the mystery of the kingdom of God, but those who are outside get everything in parables, [12] so that WHILE SEEING, THEY MAY SEE AND NOT PERCEIVE, AND WHILE HEARING, THEY MAY HEAR AND NOT UNDERSTAND, OTHERWISE THEY MIGHT RETURN AND BE FORGIVEN." [13] And He *said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? How will you understand all the parables? [14] The sower sows the word. [15] These are the ones who are beside the road where the word is sown; and when they hear, immediately Satan comes and takes away the word which has been sown in them."

1D - "[16] In a similar way these are the ones on whom seed was sown on the rocky *places*, who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy; [17] and they have no *firm* root in themselves, but are *only* temporary; then, when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately they fall away. [18] And others are the ones on whom seed was sown among the thorns; these are the ones who have heard the word, [19] but the worries of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other

things enter in and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. [20] And those are the ones on whom seed was sown on the good soil; and they hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold."

Question 1: What kind of ground are you when you hear God's Word taught?

a) **Hard Ground - Do you dismiss it quickly?**

b) **Stony Ground – Are you interested in God's Word initially, but then let it slip away soon after?**

c) **Thorny Ground – Are you enthusiastic about God's Word, but easily allow the cares of life to limit you from getting closer to God and doing His work?**

d) **Good Ground – Are you really interested in God's Word and looking for every opportunity to read it and tell people the message of eternal life through Jesus?**

TIP #14

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Develop a Conqueror Mentality

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1A - God wants each of us to be strong and able to handle any problem that comes our way. A good example of this is the young man David, who found out about a giant named, Goliath, who was making fun of the Israelite army. When the time came, David marched up in great boldness and he defeated the giant!

1B - Here is the account:

1 Samuel 17:20 – 51 "So David arose early in the morning and left the flock with a keeper and took *the supplies* and went as Jesse had commanded him. And he came to the circle of the camp while the army was going out in battle array shouting the war cry. [21] Israel and the Philistines drew up in battle array, army against army. [22] Then David left his baggage in the care of the baggage keeper, and ran to the battle line and entered in order to greet his brothers. [23] As he was talking with them, behold, the champion, the Philistine from Gath named Goliath, was coming up from the army of the Philistines, and he spoke these same words; and David heard *them*."

1C - "**24** When all the men of Israel saw the man, they fled from him and were greatly afraid. [25] The men of Israel said, "Have you seen this man who is coming up? Surely he is coming up to defy Israel. And it will be that the king will enrich the man who kills him with great riches and will give him his daughter and make his father's house free in Israel." [26] Then David spoke to the men who were standing by him, saying, "What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should taunt the armies of the living God?" [27] The people answered him in accord with this word, saying, "Thus it will be done for the man who kills him."

1D - "Now Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men; and Eliab's anger burned against David and he said, "Why have you come down? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your insolence and the wickedness of your heart; for you have come down in order to see the battle." [29] But David said, "What have I done now? Was it not just a question?" [30] Then he turned away from him to another and said the same thing; and the people answered the same thing as before."

1E - "**31** When the words which David spoke were heard, they told *them* to Saul, and he sent for him. [32] David said to Saul, "Let no man's heart fail on account of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine." [33] Then Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are *but* a youth while he has been a warrior from his youth."

1F - "**34** But David said to Saul, "Your servant was tending his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and took a lamb from the flock, [35] I went out after him and attacked him, and rescued *it* from his mouth; and when he rose up against me, I seized *him* by his beard and struck him and killed him. [36] Your servant has killed both the lion and

the bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, since he has taunted the armies of the living God." [37] And David said, "The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." And Saul said to David, "Go, and may the LORD be with you."

1G - "[38] Then Saul clothed David with his garments and put a bronze helmet on his head, and he clothed him with armor. [39] David girded his sword over his armor and tried to walk, for he had not tested *them*. So David said to Saul, "I cannot go with these, for I have not tested *them*." And David took them off. [40] He took his stick in his hand and chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook, and put them in the shepherd's bag which he had, even in *his* pouch, and his sling was in his hand; and he approached the Philistine."

1H - "[41] Then the Philistine came on and approached David, with the shield-bearer in front of him. [42] When the Philistine looked and saw David, he disdained him; for he was *but* a youth, and ruddy, with a handsome appearance. [43] The Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. [44] The Philistine also said to David, "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the sky and the beasts of the field."

1J - "[45] Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword, a spear, and a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have taunted. [46] This day the LORD will deliver you up into my hands, and I will strike you down and remove your head from you. And I will give the dead bodies of the army of the Philistines this day to the birds of the sky and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, [47] and that all this assembly may know that the LORD does not deliver by sword or by spear; for the battle is the LORD'S and He will give you into our hands."

1K - "[48] Then it happened when the Philistine rose and came and drew near to meet David, that David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine. [49] And David put his hand into his bag and took from it a stone and slung *it*, and struck the Philistine on his forehead. And the stone sank into his forehead, so that he fell on his face to the ground. [50] Thus David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, and he struck the Philistine and killed him; but there was no sword in David's hand."

1L - "[51] Then David ran and stood over the Philistine and took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him, and cut off his head with it. When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled."

Question 1: What thoughts come to your mind after reading the story of David and Goliath?

Question 2: In what area of your life do you need to develop a conqueror mentality?

3A - We, too, can have boldness like young David had. One way is by reading the following scriptures out loud over and over. By making it a priority in our lives to speak God's Word, we'll develop a connection with God that nothing else can. We can go one step further by memorizing the verses.

1) **Joshua 1:5** *(God speaking)* "No man will *be able to* stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you."

2) **2 Samuel 22:29-31** "For You are my lamp, O LORD; And the LORD illumines my darkness. [30] "For by You I can run upon a troop; By my God I can leap over a wall. [31] "As for God, His way is blameless; The word of the LORD is tested; He is a shield to all who take refuge in Him."

3) **2 Chronicles 16:9** "For the eyes of the LORD move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His. You have acted foolishly in this. Indeed, from now on you will surely have wars."

4) **Psalm 18:32-40** "The God who girds me with strength And makes my way blameless? [33] He makes my feet like hinds' *feet*, And sets me upon my high places. [34] He trains my hands for battle, So that my arms can bend a bow of bronze. [35] You have also given me the shield of Your salvation, And Your right hand upholds me; And Your gentleness makes me great. [36] You enlarge my steps under me, And my feet have not slipped. [37] I pursued my enemies and overtook them, And I did not turn back until they were consumed. [38] I shattered them, so that they were not able to rise; They fell under my feet. [39] For

You have girded me with strength for battle; You have subdued under me those who rose up against me. [40] You have also made my enemies turn their backs to me, And I destroyed those who hated me."

5) **Psalm 28:7** "The Lord is my strength and my shield; My heart trusts in Him, and I am helped; Therefore my heart exults, And with my song I shall thank Him."

6) **Psalm 44:5-7** "Through You we will push back our adversaries; Through Your name we will trample down those who rise up against us. [6] For I will not trust in my bow, Nor will my sword save me. [7] But You have saved us from our adversaries, And You have put to shame those who hate us."

7) **Psalm 68:35** "O God, You are awesome from Your sanctuary. The God of Israel Himself gives strength and power to the people. Blessed be God!"

8) **Psalm 138:3** "On the day I called, You answered me; You made me bold with strength in my soul."

9) **Psalm 144:1,2** "Blessed be the LORD, my rock, Who trains my hands for war, *And* my fingers for battle; [2] My lovingkindness and my fortress, My stronghold and my deliverer, My shield and He in whom I take refuge, Who subdues my people under me."

10) **Proverbs 3:26** "For the Lord will be your confidence And will keep your foot from being caught."

11) **Job 17:9** "Nevertheless the righteous will hold to his way, And he who has clean hands will grow stronger and stronger."

12) **Isaiah 40:29** "He gives strength to the weary, And to *him who* lacks might He increases power."

13) **Isaiah 54:17** "No weapon that is formed against you will prosper; And every tongue that accuses you in judgment you will condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, And their vindication is from Me," declares the LORD."

14) **Daniel 11:32** "By smooth *words* he will turn to godlessness those who act wickedly toward the covenant, but the people who know their God will display strength and take action."

15) **Hosea 11:10** "They will walk after the LORD, He will roar like a lion; Indeed He will roar And *His* sons will come trembling from the west."

16) **Zechariah 4:6** "Then he said to me, "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel saying, 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD of hosts."

17) **Matthew 10:1** "Jesus summoned His twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness."

18) **Matthew 10:6-8** "but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. [7] And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' [8] Heal *the* sick, raise *the* dead, cleanse *the* lepers, cast out demons. Freely you received, freely give."

19) **Mark 6:7,13** "And He summoned the twelve and began to send them out in pairs, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits;… And they were casting out many demons and were anointing with oil many sick people and healing them."

20) **Mark 16:20** "And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them, and confirmed the word by the signs that followed."

21) **Luke 9:1** "And He called the twelve together, and gave them power and authority over all the demons and to heal diseases."

22) **Luke 10:19** "Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will injure you."

23) **Acts 1:8** "but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

24) **Acts 2:43** "Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles."

25) **Acts 4:33** "And with great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all."

26) **Romans 15:19** "in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit; so that from

Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ."

27) **1 Corinthians 4:20** "For the kingdom of God does not consist in words but in power."

28) **2 Corinthians 12:12** "The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with all perseverance, by signs and wonders and miracles."

29) **Philippians 4:13** "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me."

30) **1 Thessalonians 1:5** "for our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake."

31) **Hebrews 2:4** "God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will."

32) **1 John 2:20** "But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know."

33) **1 John 2:27** "As for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him."

Question 3: How do you feel after reading these verses out loud?

TIP #15

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Eliminate Wasted Thinking

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1A - As we journey toward peace and happiness, we'll need to look at all the ways wasted thinking takes up room in our daily thoughts. In this Tip, we'll explore the various negative ways our mind can think. Then we'll look at ways to disarm these negative thought patterns when they come up.

1B - Types of Wasted Thinking

The following webpage describes 15 ways in which our thinking can be hindered. Please refer to psychcentral.com/lib/15-common-cognitive-distortions and read the introduction.

1C - Filtering

Please read the "Filtering" description at psychcentral.com/lib/15-common-cognitive-distortions.

1D - "Filtering" in the Bible

In 1Samuel 18, we see that even though the shepherd boy, David, killed a giant enemy of Israel, King Saul became angry because the boy became more famous than he.

1 Samuel 18:6-11 "It happened as they were coming, when David returned from killing the Philistine, that the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with joy and with musical instruments. 7 The women sang as they played, and said, "Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands." 8 Then Saul became very angry, for this saying displeased him; and he said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, but to me they have ascribed thousands. Now what more can he have but the kingdom?"

1E - "9 Saul looked at David with suspicion from that day on. 10 Now it came about on the next day that an evil spirit from God came mightily upon Saul, and he raved in the midst of the house, while David was playing *the harp* with his hand, as usual; and a spear *was* in Saul's hand. 11 Saul hurled the spear for he thought, "I will pin David to the wall." But David escaped from his presence twice."

1F - Saul Filtered Out the Positives

David did become more famous than King Saul; however, David was not a threat to Saul's Kingdom. David was a young boy who fully loved God and the King. Saul had become David's father-in-law, so David was not a threat to King Saul; but Saul "filtered out" the positives. Saul's filtering caused him great stress in his mind, so much so that he needed David to play music to calm him down. It was a horrible existence for Saul; on one hand, he

needed David to play for him, while on the other hand, he was furious with David's abilities and his fame.

1G - Acknowledge Other People's Gifts

Saul needed to accept David for who he was. David had developed a close relationship with God through the songs he was writing and singing while watching the sheep. He was likely meditating on what his Rabbi preached every Sabbath. He heard how Godly men should pray, praise and work, and he believed what he heard and practiced it. All of this helped transform David, a boy, into a "Giant" of a man, on the inside.

1H - Saul Was Fear-Driven

Saul needed to trust God that He would protect him. Instead, he let his fear of David stealing his throne, ruin his life. This burdened Saul with a lot of wasted thinking and emotional pain.

1J - Conquering Filtering

If we struggle with Filtering, it may be helpful to first see if fear is a root cause. If yes, then we would benefit from admitting we have a problem with fear. At this point, it would be helpful to find a couple of people we could contact when the fear begins causing us unrest. The next time our emotions are bothered, we could contact one of these people for support. See Tip #5 - Form A Support Team, for more on this. Meanwhile we could also read out loud, multiple times daily, the Affirmation #1 – I do Not Fear, as well as Core Belief #3 – I Believe God Wants Me to Live in Perfect Peace at All Times.

Noticing fear in our life, and responding to it effectively, will help us conquer Filtering.

Question 1: Can you think of an example of Filtered Thinking, or someone who has Filtered Thinking?

2A - Polarized Thinking

Please read the "Polarized Thinking" description at psychcentral.com/lib/15-common-cognitive-distortions.

2B - "Polarized Thinking" In the Bible

The Apostles

Here is a story of the disciples getting prideful with power.

> **Luke 9:51-55** "When the days were approaching for His ascension, He (Jesus) was determined to go to Jerusalem; [52] and He sent messengers on ahead of Him, and they went and entered a village of the Samaritans to make arrangements for Him. [53] But they did not receive Him, because He was traveling toward Jerusalem. [54] When His disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, "Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?" [55] But He turned and rebuked them, and said, "You do not know what kind of spirit you are of,"

2C - At this point, the disciples had become accustomed to being empowered by Jesus to heal people of diseases and the ability to cast out evil spirits. It would appear they got carried away with that power and felt it was OK to kill these people because they were not welcoming Jesus and His disciples.

Question 2: Can you tell us a time when you got carried away with power?

3A - Elijah and the Prophets of Baal

Another example in the Bible of someone struggling with the effects of Polarized Thinking is the story of Elijah after he defeated the prophets of Baal.

> **1 Kings 19:13-14,18** "When Elijah heard *it*, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entrance of the cave. And behold, a voice *came* to him and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" [14] Then he said, "I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the sons of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars and killed Your prophets with the sword. And I alone am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. [18] *(God speaking)* Yet I will leave 7,000 in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal and every mouth that has not kissed him."

3B - Elijah's Amazing Feat

Elijah, indeed, had been busy for God, proving that the prophets of Baal (Satan) were no match for the living God. In one of the most dramatic events of a man of God, Elijah, single-handedly, humiliates and kills 450 false prophets.

3C - Elijah's Depression

Then remarkably, Elijah loses all faith in himself and in God, when he learned of Jezebel's anger toward him for killing all of her prophets. This unusual reaction from a mighty man of God could've occurred because he was physically exhausted after the events of the previous days. After Jezebel's threat to kill Elijah, Elijah ran for his life until he finally stopped twenty-four hours

later. He then begged God to kill him.

3D - Elijah's Pride

After resting a couple of days, Elijah went on a 40-day journey in the wilderness. Then God spoke to him. And we find out that Elijah was full of pride as he described to God all he had been doing the previous days for God. He also thought he was the only one left who served God. God had to let him know He still had 7,000 priests who hadn't bowed the knee to Baal.

3E - Tip for God's Workers

All of our godly activity is good, but when it begins to make us think we are better than the next person, we need to step back and renew our humility, and remember that we are nothing without God's help in our lives.

3F - Conquering Polarized Thinking

If we struggle with Polarized Thinking, we could benefit from stepping back and praying about situations before reacting to them. We could benefit from reading Tip #12 – Don't Judge, Tip #25 – Collect Grace Doors, and Tip #20 – Practice Humility, as well as reading, multiple times daily, Affirmation #3 – I Flow in Harmony and Love.

Question 3: Can you tell us a time where you were experiencing some major victories in your life and how those victories drained you physically, or distorted your thinking?

Question 4: Can you think of someone who struggles with Polarized Thinking (black or white thinking)?

5A - Over-Generalization

Please read the "Over-Generalization" description at psychcentral.com/lib/15-common-cognitive-distortions.

5B - Conquering Over-Generalization

Here is an example of Over-Generalization and some possible tips to conquer it:

Let's imagine someone is preparing to learn how to drive a car, and they watch a show on television about a new driver who gets into an accident during their first time behind the wheel. The viewer might now be fearful of learning how to drive a car. To conquer that fear, they might want to check the statistics of how many people get into car accidents during their first time driving. The odds are very low. They could also begin to meditate on the truth that God wants His people to live by faith, and not by fear. They could help themselves by reading out loud, multiple times daily, Affirmation #1 – I Do Not Fear. Finally, they could get into the car, in a safe area, and boldly start learning how to drive a car. It might be difficult, but it can be done.

Question 5: Can you think of someone who struggles with Over-Generalization?

6A - Jumping to Conclusions

Please read the Jumping to Conclusions description at psychcentral.com/lib/15-common-cognitive-distortions.

6B- An example of someone who struggles with Jumping to Conclusions could be if we started a new friendship, and that person suddenly stops texting us and refuses to answer our calls. We could negatively assume that we have offended the other person. Later, we find out that the person had lost their cell phone, which prevented them from texting us or calling us back. Meanwhile, we would have wasted time feeling badly, and needlessly trying to figure out how we offended this person.

6C - Jumping To Conclusions in the Bible

In Joshua Chapter 22, the Israelites were ready to go to war with the Tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh, because they wrongly assumed that the altar they built was a sign that they were rebelling against God. Here is God's advice:

> **Proverbs 25:8** "Do not go out hastily to argue *your case*; Otherwise, what will you do in the end, When your neighbor humiliates you?"

Good advice.

6D - Conquering Jumping To Conclusions

If we struggle with Jumping To Conclusions, we could first consider Slogan #28 - Sleep On It. Sometimes, time has a way of resolving problems.

We could also take time to reflect on the idea that we don't have to care what people think about us. If people leave our circle of friendship, there could be a good reason for it, and we don't need to know the reason; we can leave that in God's hands. We could benefit from saying, multiple times daily, Affirmation #3 – I Flow in Harmony and Love.

Question 6: Can you think of someone who wastes time jumping to conclusions?

7A - Catastrophizing

Please read the Catastrophizing description at psychcentral.com/lib/15-common-cognitive-distortions.

7B - Catastrophizing in the Bible

In Numbers Chapter 13, God told Moses to send twelve leaders of Israel, to spy out the land that God wanted the Children of Israel to own and to live in. Ten of the twelve men came back fearful, and gave bad reports.

> **Numbers 13:30-33** "Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses and said, "We should by all means go up and take possession of it, for we will surely overcome it." [31] But the men who had gone up with him said, "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are too strong for us." [32] So they gave out to the sons of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, "The land through which we have gone, in spying it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants; and all the people whom we saw in it are men of *great* size. [33] There also we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak are part of the Nephilim); and we became like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight."

7C - The result of having so many fearful leaders was that Israel had to wander in the wilderness 40 years! God wanted all the fearful and disobedient people to die off before helping them move into their new homeland.

There can be dire consequences to being fearful!

7D - Conquering Catastrophizing

If we struggle with the habit of thinking that catastrophes are always coming our way, we need God's help to calm down. We need to realize that God is well able to prevent bad things from happening, and if He doesn't, we need to have faith that He can bring good out of any negative situation (See Romans 8:28 below). A good place to start in conquering Catastrophizing is by reading out loud, multiple times daily, Affirmation #1 – I Do Not Fear, and Tip #9 – Develop Your Faith.

> **Romans 8:28** "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose."

Question 7: Can you think of someone who wastes time thinking that disasters are coming their way?

8A - Personalization

Please read the Personalization description at psychcentral.com/lib/15-common-cognitive-distortions.

8B - Conquering Personalization

If we struggle with Personalization, it is helpful to realize that life does not revolve around us. We can learn to step back from a situation and not get emotionally involved in everything that goes on around us. We could also learn that it's OK to be more of an observer of life, and not feel guilty for doing so. In addition, we could realize that whatever happens to us or others around us is completely fixable by God. We can learn to give everything to God and let Him direct the events of people's lives as He sees fit, and we can learn to be OK with that. We could benefit from reading all six Affirmations multiple times daily.

Question 8: Can you think of someone who wastes time thinking and talking about a mysterious link between their lives and other people's lives (Personalization)?

9A - Control Fallacies

Please read the Control Fallacies description at psychcentral.com/lib/15-common-cognitive-distortions.

9B - Conquering Control Fallacies

If we struggle with Control Fallacies, we could realize we don't have to be controlled by other people. In the example used on the webpage, the person could have slowed down and done a better job instead of rushing through it. We could also realize that other people's happiness is not our responsibility. Reading the Affirmations, multiple times daily, would be helpful in conquering this condition, as well.

Question 9: Can you think of someone who wastes time thinking they don't measure up, or that other people's happiness is dependent on them?

10A - Types of Wasted Thinking – Fallacy of Fairness

Please read the Fallacy of Fairness description at psychcentral.com/lib/15-common-cognitive-distortions.

10B - Conquering Fallacy of Fairness

If we struggle with Fallacy of Fairness we could realize that life simply isn't fair, and that it is helpful to accept what is handed to us, and make the best of it. We could also consider that we don't need everyone around us to agree with our point of view. It can also be helpful to realize that we only have a limited understanding; and that there are many things we can learn from others. If we struggle with this, we can help ourselves by

considering that we sometimes win people to our way of thinking, and sometimes we don't, and to be OK with that. We could benefit from saying, multiple times daily, Affirmation #3 – I Flow in Harmony and Love.

Question 10: Can you think of someone who wastes time thinking and talking about how unfair life is?

11A - Blaming

Please read the Blaming description at psychcentral.com/lib/15-common-cognitive-distortions.

11B - Blaming in the Bible

Below we see how Adam blamed Eve, and Eve blamed the serpent for deceiving her. Blaming got in the way of them taking responsibility for their actions.

a) **Genesis 3:11,12** "And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" [12] The man said, "The woman whom You gave *to be* with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate."

b) **Genesis 3:13** "Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" And the woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

11C - Conquering Blaming

If we struggle with blaming, we could benefit by realizing that it is normal to make mistakes. We are fallible creatures. That's why we need God to help us live our lives. We could also realize that when we do make mistakes, it is good to quickly admit where we went wrong. Doing so, can give us greater respect from others when they see we are willing to accept responsibility for our mistakes. We can learn to embrace our humanity, and the grace that we need when we make mistakes. To conquer Blaming, it can be helpful to read out loud, multiple times daily, Affirmation #1 - I Do Not Fear, and Affirmation #3 - I Flow in Harmony and Love.

11D - Here are some scriptures on being quick to admit guilt.

a) **Leviticus 5:5** "So it shall be when he becomes guilty in one of these, that he shall confess that in which he has sinned."

b) **2 Samuel 24:10** "Now David's heart troubled him after he had numbered the people. So David said to the LORD, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done. But now, O LORD, please take away the iniquity of Your servant, for I have acted very foolishly."

Question 11: Can you think of someone who wastes time blaming others for their mistakes and their unhappiness?

12A - Shoulds

Please read the Shoulds description at psychcentral.com/lib/15-common-cognitive-distortions.

12B - Conquering Shoulds

If we struggle with Shoulds, we could benefit from realizing that God wants us to relax. God does have guidelines for us, but one of His main directives is for us not to fret. This includes, not worrying, or judging people who do not keep our list of rules. It's great that we have high expectations for ourselves and others, but we should first model such standards in our own lives. Our actions can speak *for* us. If we feel compelled to share our expectations with others, we could do it in love, gentleness, and humility. This will give us better results. We would benefit from saying, multiple times daily, Affirmation #3 – I Flow in Harmony and Love.

Question 12: Can you think of someone who wastes time being prideful about what they do, or judgmental about what other people do?

13A - Emotional Reasoning

Please read the Emotional Reasoning description at psychcentral.com/lib/15-common-cognitive-distortions.

13B - Conquering Emotional Reasoning

If we struggle with Emotional Reasoning, we could realize that feelings a fickle. They are subject to change depending on various factors, usually by our fears! Therefore we could first benefit from reading Tip #9 – Develop Your Faith, and reading, multiple times daily, Affirmation #1 – I Do Not Fear. We would also benefit from meditating on **2 Corinthians 5:7** *"for we walk by faith, not by sight."* A person who walks by faith doesn't pay too much attention to how things look or how they feel, they base what they want, upon God's willingness to answer prayer, and they hold on, in patience, until they receive what they've asked for. If we don't like how things feel, we change our situation, or ourselves, using our faith.

Question 13: Can you think of someone who wastes time being misdirected by feelings?

14A - Fallacy of Change

Please read the Fallacy of Change description at psychcentral.com/lib/15-common-cognitive-distortions.

14B - Conquering Fallacy of Change

If we struggle with Fallacy of Change, we could benefit from realizing that we can be perfectly happy even if circumstances or people around us don't change for the better. We could give people around us, grace to learn in their own time, and in their own way. We could also benefit from saying, multiple times daily, Affirmation #3 - I Flow in Harmony and Love, as well as saying Core Belief #3 – I Believe God Wants Me to Live in Perfect Peace.

Question 14: Can you think of someone who wastes time thinking of ways to make people change?

15A - Global Labeling

Please read the Global Labeling description at psychcentral.com/lib/15-common-cognitive-distortions.

15B - Conquering Global Labeling

If we struggle with Global Labeling, we could benefit from realizing we don't have to try so hard to sound impressive or make a point. We can relax and not judge. That way we can enjoy our lives, and make it enjoyable for others. We could also benefit by saying, multiple times daily, Affirmation #3 - I Flow in Harmony and Love.

Question 15: Can you think of someone who wastes time coming up with damaging comparisons and judgments – Global Labeling?

16A - Always Being Right

Please read the Always Being Right description at psychcentral.com/lib/15-common-cognitive-distortions.

16B - Conquering Always Being Right

If we struggle with always having to be right, we would benefit from realizing that as humans we all make mistakes occasionally, and thus it isn't worth getting upset over. We just have to keep trying to do our best without getting stressed out about it. We could also benefit from saying, multiple times daily, Affirmation #3 - I Flow in Harmony and Love, as well as Affirmation #1 - I Do Not Fear.

Question 16: Can you think of someone who wastes time trying to always be right?

17A - Heaven's Reward Fallacy

Please read the Heaven's Reward Fallacy description at psychcentral.com/lib/15-common-cognitive-distortions.

17B - Conquering Heaven's Reward Fallacy

If we struggle with Heaven's Reward Fallacy, we can benefit from remembering that the greatest person we could make sacrifices for is God, and that we can't "out-give" God. Eventually, He will reward us. We can ask God to help us keep our eyes on Him, and do all things for God, rather than having our eyes on others and doing things for them.

Question 17: Can you think of someone who wastes time expecting approval from people and working overly hard to get it?

18A - Other Kinds of Wasted Thinking

Appearance

A lot of advertising is focused around people's looks. It is natural to want to present ourselves in the best way possible; and it can also be enjoyable. The problem comes in when we obsess about our looks. Any thinking that goes beyond basic, everyday grooming could be wasted thinking. Questions we can ask ourselves can include: Do I dislike anything about my looks? Do I spend time thinking about how to change the features of my looks? Is my value as a person dependent on my looks? Am I focused on these features because I feel people will like me more if I change them? If we answer yes to any of these questions, we might want to work on resolving this issue in our lives.

18B - The Unimportance of Appearance in the Bible

The following are Bible verses that teach that, in God's eyes, a person's looks is unimportant. Notice what attribute *is* important, is having a loving heart.

a) **1 Samuel 16:7** "But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God *sees* not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

b) **Proverbs 31:30** "Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, *But* a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised."

c) **1 Peter 3:3,4** "Your adornment must not be *merely* external—braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; [4] but *let it be* the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God."

18C – Below, are scriptures about our immense value, just the way we are.

a) **Psalm 139:13,14** "For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother's womb. [14] I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Your works, And my soul knows it very well."

b) **Isaiah 43:4** "Since you are precious in My sight, *Since* you are honored and I love you, I will give *other* men in your place and *other* peoples in exchange for your life."

c) **Luke 12:7** "Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows."

Question 18: Can you think of someone who wastes time thinking about how to improve their looks?

19A - Income Ability

Sometimes we dislike ourselves because we feel we don't earn enough money. It's natural to want to earn enough money to meet all of our financial needs. The problem comes in when we obsess about how to make more and more money. Some questions to ask ourselves might be: Is my value as a person dependent on my income? Do I dislike myself because I cannot earn enough money? Would the extra money I earn be spent on things I don't need? If we answered yes to any of these questions, we might want to work on resolving this issue in our lives. Here are some Bible verses to consider.

a) **Luke 3:14** "*Some* soldiers were questioning him, saying, "And *what about* us, what shall we do?" And he said to them, "Do not take money from anyone by force, or accuse *anyone* falsely, and be content with your wages."

b) **1 Timothy 6:6** "But godliness *actually* is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment."

c) **2 Timothy 2:4** "No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier."

Question 19: Can you think of someone who wastes time thinking of ways to earn more money?

20A - Our Spouse

Sometimes we waste time being upset at our spouse. We don't realize we have the ability to help our spouse become a great person. We also may not realize we have the power to love our spouse in spite of past conflicts we've had with them, as well as, in spite of existing weaknesses they might have. Some questions to ask ourselves might be: Do I spend time being angry with my spouse? Do I spend time looking at other people and wish they were my spouse? Do I think I am too good for my spouse? If we answered yes to any of these questions, we might want to work on resolving this issue in our lives.

Question 20: Can you think of someone who wastes time being judgmental toward their spouse?

21A - Addiction

Sometimes we develop addictions that cause us to waste time thinking about how to get our next fix. Addictions can be conquered. The Victory Tips Program can help in conquering an addiction. We have a short Tip on conquering an addiction, #23. Our daily telephone support calls can also help in conquering an addiction.

Question 21: Can you think of someone who wastes time thinking about how and when to get their next fix?

22A - The bottom line is that God wants us to live with peace of mind. We should never settle for a mind that is tossed to and fro with the cares of life. We can learn how to tame our mind and live in peace.

TIP #16

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Develop a Disciplined Lifestyle

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1A - The essence of discipline is denying ourselves things of low value to gain something of greater value. Few great things in life are accomplished without discipline. Every athlete will tell you it took discipline of diet, exercise and practice to become good at what they do. Every successful business person will tell you it took long hours and hard work to get to where they got in the business world. Discipline is a key ingredient to living a successful life.

Question 1: Can you think of a person who is successful and disciplined? If so, can you tell us in what way they are disciplined?

2A - Bible Verses on Being Disciplined and Self-Controlled

a) **Galatians 5:22-23** "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law."

b) **1 Thessalonians 5:6** "so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober."

c) **Titus 1:8** "but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled,"

d) **1 Peter 1:13** "Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober *in spirit*, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

e) **1 Peter 5:8** "Be of sober *spirit*, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour:"

Question 2: Can you recall anyone in your life who taught you to be disciplined? If so, what did they say to you?

3A - Following, are instructions Paul gave to Titus on how Christians should live. Much of it relates to being disciplined.

Discipline Tips for Older Men

Titus 2:2 "Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance."

3B - Discipline Tips for Older and Younger Women

Titus 2:3-5 "Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, *to be* sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored."

3C - Discipline Tips for Young Men

Titus 2:6-8 "Likewise urge the young men to be sensible; in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, sound in speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us."

3D - Discipline Tips for Employees

a) **Titus 2:9** "*Urge* bondslaves to be subject to their own masters in everything, to be well-pleasing, not argumentative."

b) **Ephesians 6:5-8** "Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; [6] not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. [7] With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, [8] knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free."

3E - Discipline and Children

Another aspect of life requiring discipline is in the area of raising children. The following verses talk about the need to "punish" (discipline) our children when they do wrong, demonstrating that true love must sometimes be tough.

a) **Proverbs 13:24** "He who withholds his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines

him diligently."

b) **Proverbs 19:18** "Discipline your son while there is hope, and do not desire his death."

c) **Proverbs 23:13** "Do not hold back discipline from the child, Although you strike him with the rod, he will not die."

d) **Proverbs 29:17** "Correct your son, and he will give you comfort; He will also delight your soul."

Question 3: Can you think of anyone's children who would benefit from better discipline? If so, how are they trying to discipline their children presently?

4A - Discipline and Diet

a) **Proverbs 23:21** "For the heavy drinker and the glutton will come to poverty, And drowsiness will clothe *one* with rags."

b) **Philippians 3:19** "whose end is destruction, whose god is *their* appetite, and *whose* glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things."

Question 4: Can you think of someone who would benefit from being disciplined in the area of diet?

5A - Discipline and Exercise

With factories becoming more automated and people spending more time online, the general population is reducing the amount of physical activity they do. Yet, the human body was made to do manual labor, to be physically fit. Physical work and exercise, develops muscles, accelerates the heart, and clears the mind. Not prioritizing physical activity can place a person at risk of premature death, due to high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, and other silent killers. It also puts a person at risk of injury, due to occasional over-exertion.

Below, are some scriptures about maintaining our physical bodies.

a) **Proverbs 24:5** "A wise man is strong, And a man of knowledge increases power."

b) **Proverbs 31:17** "She girds herself with strength, And makes her arms strong."

c) **Isaiah 40:31** "Yet those who wait for the Lord Will gain new strength; They will mount up *with* wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary."

d) **Romans 12:1** "Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship."

e) **1 Corinthians 6:19-20** "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body."

f) **1 Corinthians 9:27** "but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified."

g) **1 Corinthians 10:31** "Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."

Question 5: Can you think of someone who would benefit from an exercise program?

6A - Jesus Chose Disciples

When Jesus walked the earth, He chose for Himself, twelve disciples. The word "disciple" is the root word, for the word "discipline."

6B - An Analogy of Discipline in Nature

A nicely landscaped yard got that way because someone took the time to get rid of weeds, trim the bushes, plant beautiful flowers, and so on. All of this took time and hard work, but in the end it makes for a beautiful yard. So too with mental well-being; it can take effort to identify and uproot wrong beliefs and replace them with proper, life-giving beliefs. But in due time, a happy, peaceful life will emerge and be a joy for the person, and for those around them.

Question 6: In what way can you see yourself improving your self-discipline?

TIP #17

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Develop a Lifestyle of Holiness

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Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love. Ephesians 1:4

1A - The central theme of the Bible is to show us how to have a relationship with God and the forgiveness we need through our Lord Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament, we read about God's high standards for daily living. They were so high that no one was able to achieve it. People sinned. The only thing that could pay the penalty for sin was blood. Thus, in the Old Testament God instructed His people to sacrifice animals once a year to pay for the sins of the people.

1B - Then a better sacrifice came, the Lord Jesus Christ. Two thousand years ago, the blood of a sinless man, Jesus Christ, was spilled, to pay the penalty for the sin of all of humanity. It was a horrendous day - but a monumental day, the day Jesus allowed Himself to be nailed to a cross. Because of Jesus, we can trade our sin nature for a new nature. Thank God for Jesus!

1C - Why did Jesus have to die? Why did animals have to die? Because of sin.

If sin is so terrible that it cost the lives of numerous animals, and the life of a perfect human being - Jesus Christ, shouldn't we be living holy lives? Absolutely.

The problem is that living holy lives rarely comes up in people's minds. Most people end up living half-hearted, semi-holy lives. This kind of lifestyle can become a hindrance to our happiness.

1D - We should understand, however, that our motive for living a holy life is not so that we can *buy* ourselves a place in heaven after we die. The Bible says that our best works are like filthy rags in God's sight (See Isaiah 64:6 below). Our good works could never be good enough to save our souls. We need the sacrifice of Jesus to cleanse our souls of sin.

> **Isaiah 64:6** "For all of us have become like one who is unclean, And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; And all of us wither like a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, take us away."

1E - Our holy living is a bi-product of living a life connected with God.

God is very gracious. He has an end goal for us to achieve, as far as holy living is concerned; however, He also extends grace to those who are just starting their Christian walk, and have difficulties in their behavior. God understands the challenges that people have to work through before they develop a life of holiness. Thus, for most people change happens gradually.

1F - Our reason for living a holy life is to honor God for saving our souls, and to be an example to others.

Also, a holy life helps us to share the good news of Jesus's sacrifice more effectively.

Do you care what God cares about? God cares about people, people who need to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Thus, He needs faithful people willing to let Him live His life through them. It is an amazing experience. Are you one of these people? Then, consider developing a lifestyle of holiness.

Question 1: Have you ever considered the importance of living a holy life?

2A - At this point, it is important to outline what a Christian should do if they sin. Eventually, we will all miss the mark in trying to live a God-honoring life. When this happens, we need to come to God in humility, and confess our sin, and ask Him to forgive us, based on the sacrifice Jesus made, for us, on the cross. See the verse below.

> **1 John 1:9** "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

By faith, we receive our forgiveness, and we go on. We should also take steps, to prevent us from falling into that same sin again. Otherwise, it

becomes a habit or an addiction. With the right support and direction, we can learn to overcome our negative behaviors. (See Tip #23 – Conquer The Addiction, for more on this.)

Question 2: Have you developed the habit of going straight to God for His forgiveness, and for His help in the weak areas of your life?

3A - Below are some verses about God's ultimate goal for us related to holy living.

a) **2 Timothy 1:9** "who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity,"

b) **2 Timothy 2:19** "Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Everyone who names the name of the Lord is to abstain from wickedness."

c) **Titus 1:7-8** "For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled,"

d) **Titus 2:12** "instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age,"

e) **James 1:19-20** "This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God."

f) **James 1:21** "Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls."

g) **1 Peter 2:11** "Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul."

h) **2 Peter 3:11** "Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,"

Question 3: Is God asking for too much of His people, to live upright lives?

4A - Verses Relating to Purity

a) **1 Timothy 5:1-2** "Do not sharply rebuke an older man, but rather appeal to him as a father, to the younger men as brothers, the older women as mothers, and the younger women as sisters, in all purity."

b) **1 Timothy 5:20, 22** "Those who continue in sin, rebuke in the presence of all, so that the rest also will be fearful of sinning…Do not lay hands upon anyone too hastily and thereby share responsibility for the sins of others; keep yourself free from sin."

c) **1 Peter 1:22** "Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart:"

Question 4: Do you think you might like the challenge of trying to live a pure life?

5A - Knowledge Can Help Us Stay Pure

Proverbs 2:11 "Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee:"

The Bible Talks About Our "Old Self" and Our "New Self"

a) **Galatians 5:24** "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."

b) **Colossians 3:9-10** "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; [10] And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him."

c) **1 Peter 1:14-16** "As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

d) **2 Timothy 2:21** "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work."

5B - Verses on the Lusts of the Flesh

a) **Romans 13:14** "But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts."

b) **Galatians 5:16** "But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh."

5C - Verses on Sexual Purity

a) **Proverbs 5:20** "For why should you, my son, be exhilarated with an adulteress And embrace the bosom of a foreigner?"

b) **Ephesians 5:3** "But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as

is proper among saints;"

c) **Ephesians 5:5,6** "For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience."

d) **1 Thessalonians 4:3-7** "For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; and that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter because the Lord is the avenger in all these things, just as we also told you before and solemnly warned you. For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification."

Question 5: Do you know someone who has a problem with sexual purity?

6A - Shame is Associated with Sin

Ephesians 5:12 "For it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret."

Question 6: Have you experienced shame with some of the things you've done?

7A - Holy Living Includes Holy Speaking (For more on this, see Tip #7 – Speak Right Words)

a) **Ephesians 5:4** "and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks."

b) **James 1:26** "If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is worthless."

c) **1 Peter 3:10-11** 'For, "The one who desires life, to love and see good days, Must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit. "He must turn away from evil and do good; He must seek peace and pursue it."

Question 7: Do you know anyone whose speech needs to be improved?

8A - Reckless Living Can Prevent Us From Getting To Heaven

a) **Ephesians 5:5-7** "For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. [6] Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. [7] Therefore do not be partakers with them;"

b) **Hebrews 12:14** "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:"

Question 8: Is spending eternity with God in heaven something you want, and worth living holy for?

9A - We are a Light With Holy Lives

Ephesians 5:8-10 "for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light [9] (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), [10] trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord."

9B - We should keep our minds on good things.

Colossians 3: 1-3 "Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. [2] Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. [3] For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God."

Question 9: What are good ways to help keep our minds on good things?

10A - Develop these Traits

a) **Colossians 3:12** "But women will be preserved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint."

b) **2 Timothy 2:22** "Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart."

c) **Titus 2:2** "Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance."

d) **Titus 2:3-5** "Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonoured."

e) **Titus 2:6-8** "Likewise urge the young men to be sensible; [7] in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, *with* purity in doctrine, dignified, [8] sound *in* speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us."

f) **2 Peter 1:5-9** "Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in *your* moral excellence, knowledge, [6] and in *your* knowledge, self-control, and in *your* self-control, perseverance, and in *your* perseverance, godliness, [7] and in *your* godliness, brotherly kindness, and in *your* brotherly kindness, love. [8] For if these *qualities* are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. [9] For he who lacks these *qualities* is blind *or* short-sighted, having forgotten *his* purification from his former sins."

Question 10: Which of these traits seem appealing to you? How would you develop them?

11A - Live a Life Worthy of God

a) **Colossians 1:10** "so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God."

b) **1 Thessalonians 2:11,12** "just as you know how we were exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father would his own children, so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory."

c) **2 Thessalonians 1:5** "This is a plain indication of God's righteous judgment so that you will be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which indeed you are suffering."

d) **2 Thessalonians 1:11** "To this end also we pray for you always, that our God will count you worthy of your calling, and fulfill every desire for goodness and the work of faith with power:"

11B - Live Blameless Lives

a) **Proverbs 20:7** "A righteous man who walks in his integrity—How blessed are his sons after him."

b) **1 Thessalonians 3:13** "so that He may establish your hearts without blame in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints."

c) **1 Thessalonians 5:21-23** "But examine everything *carefully*; hold fast to that which is good; [22] abstain from every form of evil. [23] Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

d) **2 Peter 3:14** "Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless."

Question 11: Striving for a blameless life can seem like a daunting task. How do you feel about this?

12A - Our Good Life is a Testimony to Others

a) **2 Corinthians 9:13** "Because of the proof given by this ministry, they will glorify God for your obedience to your confession of the gospel of Christ and for the liberality of

your contribution to them and to all,"

b) **1 Peter 2:12** "Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe *them*, glorify God in the day of visitation."

12B - An effective way to attain and maintain holy living is by memorizing scripture, then speaking it to ourselves throughout our day. Contact us for computer files that can be used to print Bible verse cards to help with this.

TIP #18

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Become an Optimist

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1A - Can you think of someone who is always optimistic? Is that a good way to be? In this Tip, we will learn how optimism relates to the Christian life. The definition of **optimism** in the Merriam-Webster dictionary is: *"The tendency to be hopeful and to emphasize or think of the good part in a situation rather than the bad part, or the feeling that in the future good things are more likely to happen than bad things:"*

Question 1: In general, what is your level of optimism?

2A - Below, are some quotes on optimism.

a) "Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence." – Helen Keller

b) "One of the things I learned the hard way was that it doesn't pay to get discouraged. Keeping busy and making optimism a way of life can restore your faith in yourself." – Lucille Ball

c) "Be fanatically positive and militantly optimistic. If something is not to your liking, change your liking." – Rick Steves

d) "A healthy attitude is contagious but don't wait to catch it from others. Be a carrier." – Author Unknown

Question 2: What thoughts come to your mind after reading the above quotes on optimism?

3A - The Book of Galatians gives an overview of the character traits of people who follow Christ. Some burst with optimism, others not so readily at first glance. Let's see how they relate.

> **Galatians 5:22,23** "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law."

3B - **Love** – An optimistic person loves people. No matter what the person has done, they still love them. They believe that person will improve when they are treated with love, so they step out in faith to love them. They may not *trust* them immediately, but they show good faith by associating with them and offering them unconditional love.

3C - **Joy** – An optimistic person has joy. They believe the best is yet to come. They have confidence in God's blessings upon their life, and they have confidence in themselves that they can do all things through Christ. They have seen how circumstances and people have turned around because of their joy, so they continually operate in joy. Circumstances may challenge their joy but they swerve around them and keep right on going.

Question 3: How do you demonstrate love and joy?

4A - **Peace** – An optimistic person has peace. They believe God has everything in control. They know God blesses those who live righteous lives, and they have peace knowing that there is no sin blocking them from God's flow of blessings. If they do sin, they know they can quickly repent of it, and, once again, live in a state of peace and favor in God's kingdom. Their optimism gives them peace!

4B - **Longsuffering** (Patience) – An optimistic person is patient. They believe in God's ability to help them do everything at the right time. They are busy, but at the same time they are at rest on the inside, trusting God. If things slow them down, they don't get flustered, they look at it as an opportunity to learn from the hindrance, or to help someone in need at that moment. Their optimism gives them peace as they wait.

4C - **Gentleness** – An optimistic person is gentle. They know the valuable truth Jesus taught, *"Treat others the same way you want them to treat you."* (**Luke 6:31**) They know that people respond better to gentleness than to aggression, so they model gentleness. Gentleness is a hallmark of maturity, and it keeps the social atmosphere happier.

Question 4: How do you demonstrate peace, patience, and gentleness?

5A - **Goodness** – Two definitions of good or goodness is 'honorable' and 'favorable.' Optimism can feed both of these attributes for the optimistic person. Optimism attracts honor and favor. Optimists "raise the bar" of what is possible and causes people to see challenges in a different light, giving the optimist increased honor and favor. This helps spur growth and advancement. Optimists feed their spirit with God's Word, which saturates them with goodness. This sets them apart from others.

5B - **Faith** – An optimistic person naturally operates in an atmosphere of faith. Their positive disposition draws blessings toward them. Now, give a natural optimist teaching on biblical faith, and you have a person who is unstoppable. They know that big problems are no match for them and God, and they boldly embrace challenges until their desired goal is achieved. The optimist, with faith, stands in a league of their own.

Question 5: How do you demonstrate goodness and faith?

6A - **Meekness** – The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines meekness as: *"enduring injury with patience and without resentment."* An optimistic person knows there is value in suffering and does not shy away from it. They know that some of humanities greatest feats have come from great suffering. To the optimist, not a second of God's grace is lost in the midst of life's challenges. They endure with patience for as long as it takes, and always without resentment.

6B - **Temperance** (Self-control) – An optimistic person has good self-control. They know it is wise to forego a small pleasure now to reap a great blessing in the future. They know how easy it is for someone to *react* to a problem and further complicate their problems. An optimist's self-control protects them. They respond rather than react. Self-control is their best investment for a bright future, and they guard it well.

Question 6: How do you demonstrate meekness and temperance?

7A - Optimism in the Bible

Taking the Promised Land

In Tip #15 – Eliminate Wasted Thinking, we saw how ten of the twelve Israelite leaders said they could not beat the giants in a war to take the Promised Land that God had given them (Numbers Chapter 13). The other two, Joshua and Caleb, said, they were well able to beat the giants. Below, is Caleb's appeal to go in and take the land.

> **Numbers 13:30** "Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses and said, "We should by all means go up and take possession of it, for we will certainly prevail over it."

7B - Joshua and Caleb were optimistic, the others were pessimistic. Because the pessimistic people persuaded the others to hold back, all of Israel had to wander in the wilderness for 40 years until the pessimistic people all died. Associating with well-meaning, pessimistic people can bring problems in our lives.

Question 7: Can you think of pessimistic people in your life who are negatively affecting you? What do you think of reducing your contact with them?

8A - The Optimism of David

In Tip #14 – Develop a Conqueror Mentality, we talked about the shepherd boy, David, finding out about the giant, Goliath, how he was taunting the Israelite army. David became bold and spoke the following words.

> **1 Samuel 17:43-47** "The Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. 44 The Philistine also said to David, "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the sky and the beasts of the field."
>
> 8B - "45 Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword, a spear, and a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have taunted. 46 This day the LORD will deliver you up into my hands, and I will strike you down and remove your head from you. And I will give the dead bodies of the army of the Philistines this day to the birds of the sky and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, 47 and that all this assembly may know that the LORD does not deliver by sword or by spear; for the battle is the LORD'S and He will give you into our hands."

8C - Sure enough, David killed Goliath, and everyone was amazed at his feat of power, as well as his faith in God. David was optimistic; everyone else was pessimistic. David's optimism attracted God's power in his life and helped him defeat Goliath.

Question 8: Can you think of a "giant" in your

life that God is waiting to help you conquer?

9A - Healing the Lame Man

In Acts Chapter 3, scripture records the story of the apostle Peter healing the lame man at the temple.

Acts 3:1-9 "Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the ninth *hour*, the hour of prayer. [2] And a man who had been lame from his mother's womb was being carried along, whom they used to set down every day at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, in order to beg alms of those who were entering the temple. [3] When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he *began* asking to receive alms."

9B - [4] But Peter, along with John, fixed his gaze on him and said, "Look at us!" [5] And he *began* to give them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. [6] But Peter said, "I do not possess silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene—walk!" [7] And seizing him by the right hand, he raised him up; and immediately his feet and his ankles were strengthened. [8] With a leap he stood upright and *began* to walk; and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. [9] And all the people saw him walking and praising God;"

9C - Peter was boldly optimistic that God would heal the paralytic man.

Peter and John had received extraordinary power from God to start the Christian church. The miracles were evidence that God was with the apostle's, to prove that their message about Jesus Christ was true.

Question 9: Is there a ministry that God wants you to start, for which you need His help?

10A - In Acts Chapter 16, we see how praising God caused Paul and Silas to be freed from prison.

Acts 16:18-26 "She continued doing this for many days. But Paul was greatly annoyed, and turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!" And it came out at that very moment. [19] But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the market place before the authorities, [20] and when they had brought them to the chief magistrates, they said, "These men are throwing our city into confusion, being Jews, [21] and are proclaiming customs which it is not lawful for us to accept or to observe, being Romans."

10B - "[22] The crowd rose up together against them, and the chief magistrates tore their robes off them and proceeded to order *them* to be beaten with rods. [23] When they had struck them with many blows, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to guard them securely; [24] and he, having received such a command, threw them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. [25] But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the prisoners were listening to them; [26] and suddenly there came a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison house were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened."

10C - Paul and Silas chose to be optimistic and praised God while they suffered for His name, and God miraculously freed them from prison.

Question 10: Is there a problem in your life in which God wants you to be optimistic and praise Him in?

11A - Ways to Become an Optimist

Speak Your Way to Optimism

The Bible says in **Romans 4:17** *"(As it is written, "A father of many nations have I made you") in the presence of Him whom he believed, even God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist."*

11B - This principle of speaking things into existence, shows us that when we pray for something, we can help it along by speaking faith-affirming words that depict the item we want, has already come into existence. That's what God does – He speaks things into existence. So, we can start saying:

a) My life is great.
b) My job is great.
c) My spouse is great.
d) My church is great.
e) My pastor is great.
f) My apt is great.
g) My school is great.
h) My teachers are great
i) My parents are great.
j) My siblings are great.
k) My neighbors are great.
l) My vehicle is great.
m) My job search is great.
n) My city has great employers .
o) My public transportation is great.

11C - All of these statements can be true when we compare them with other people's experience.

Our words can have a significant influence on our beliefs. Our beliefs are important because they influence our automatic thinking. With positive beliefs, our minds automatically think positive. For more on this principle, read Tip #7 - Speak Right Words.

Question 11: Do you speak positive words to improve optimism in your life?

12A - Be Thankful

Another way to maintain optimism is by being thankful.

For example, when we consider everything we do with the help of modern appliances, we can be thankful for each appliance. Below are a few verses on being thankful. For more information on gratitude, read Tip #25 – Be Thankful.

a) **Psalm 107:1** "Oh give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, For His lovingkindness is everlasting."

b) **Ephesians 5:20** "always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;"

c) **Colossians 3:15** "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful.

d) **1 Thessalonians 5:18** "in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

Question 12: What are you in the habit of being thankful for?

13A - Make Friends with Optimists

The Bible has a lot to say about the people we associate with. Below are some verses about relationships.

a) **Proverbs 1:10** "My son, if sinners entice you, Do not consent."

b) **Proverbs 13:20** "He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will suffer harm."

c) **Proverbs 14:7** "Leave the presence of a fool, Or you will not discern words of knowledge."

d) **Proverbs 22:24-25** "Do not associate with a man given to anger; Or go with a hot-tempered man, Or you will learn his ways, And find a snare for yourself."

e) **1 Corinthians 15:33** "Do not be deceived: "Bad company corrupts good morals."

Question 13: Can you think of any optimistic people you could get to know more?

Question 14: What do you think of making optimism something to strive for in your life?

TIP #19

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Eliminate Anger

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1A - Anger is a definite hindrance to happiness. Many of us have triggers that bring on our anger. It is helpful to take time to assess the root causes of our anger and learn how to disarm it.

In a June 29, 2017 article in Time Magazine entitled, "The Rage Flu - Why All This Anger is Contagious and Making Us Sick, Dr. Gary Slutkin, founder of Cure Violence, and a faculty member of the University of Illinois at Chicago is quoted as saying *"Violence and violent speech meet the criteria of disease… Like a virus, violence makes more of itself. Rage begets more rage. And it spreads because we humans are wired to follow our peers."*

1B - The author of the magazine article, Susanna Schrobsdorff, adds that *"…if extreme speech becomes acceptable in one realm, it's likely to spread to overlapping realms – from the dinner table, to social feeds, to a political demonstration. …And for the more vulnerable, those who are mentally unstable or disenfranchised, this sickness can lead to actual violence directed at the person or institution that symbolizes their disappointment."* Ms. Schrobsdorff also quotes Dr. Slutkin as saying *"Undesirable social norms are becoming more prevalent."*

1C - Anger and Anxiety

Something to note is that there can be a link between anxiety and anger. If we've never learned how to calm ourselves down, and problems come up, they can trigger an anger response in us. When we see that our anger can "freeze" those around us, we can use it to influence others to do what we want, whenever we want. However, our anger can stop us from developing emotionally.

Question 1: What tends to trigger your anger?

2A - Jesus was very much against anger.

Matthew 5:22 "But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty *enough to go* into the fiery hell."

2B - Anger is so destructive that the Bible advises us to get rid of it before bedtime.

Ephesians 4:26 "Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger,"

Question 2: Do you make it a habit to forgive everyone before sunset?

3A - The Bible implies that there is a link between anger and the devil. Right after the above verse, it says:

"and do not give the devil an opportunity." (**Ephesians 4:27**)

3B - The following verses link anger to evil.

a) **Psalm 37:8** "Cease from anger and forsake wrath; Do not fret; it leads only to evildoing."

b) **Ephesians 4:31** "Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice:"

3C - The following scripture shows how anger in King Saul's life brought about torment from an evil spirit.

1 Samuel 18:9-11 "Now it came about on the next day that an evil spirit from God came mightily upon Saul, and he raved in the midst of the house, while David was playing *the harp* with his hand, as usual; and a spear *was* in Saul's hand. [11] Saul hurled the spear for he thought, "I will pin David to the wall." But David escaped from his presence twice."

Question 3: Have you ever witnessed anger that made you see a connection between anger and the devil?

4A - Four Synonyms

Ephesians 4:31 "Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice."

The above verse gives us four synonyms for the word anger: bitterness, wrath, clamor, and malice.

Question 4: Is there anything in your life that you are bitter about?

5A - The Bible verse below gives us a unique verb for what to do with anger.

Psalm 37:8 "Cease from anger and forsake wrath; Do not fret; it leads only to evildoing."

The meanings of the word "forsake" are 1) to quit or leave entirely; abandon; desert; and, 2) to give up or renounce (a habit, way of life, etc.).

Question 5: Can you see yourself forsaking (abandoning) anger? Can you see yourself renouncing anger, and committing to living a whole new life, free of anger?

6A - The same verse links anger with fretting and worrying.

Psalm 37:8 "Cease from anger and forsake wrath; Do not fret; it leads only to evildoing."

Question 6: Do you have any worries that contribute to you getting angry?

7A - Ephesians 4:31 *(above),* gives us another adjective for the word anger: Malice. It is defined as the desire to inflict injury, harm, or suffering on another, either because of a hostile impulse or deep-seated meanness.

Question 7: Have you ever wanted to inflict pain on someone?

8A - Here is another scripture on synonyms for anger and to not be associated with it.

Colossians 3:8 "But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth."

8B - The Bible tells us that anger is something that fools have a problem with.

Ecclesiastes 7:9 "Do not be eager in your heart to be angry, For anger resides in the bosom of fools."

Question 8: Has anyone told you that you were foolish? If so, was it in connection with anger?

9A - On the contrary, people who are slow to wrath are looked upon as wise, with great understanding.

Proverbs 14:29 "He who is slow to anger has great understanding, But he who is quick-tempered exalts folly."

Question 9: Do people tell you that you are wise?

10A - The following verse gives two tips on how to avoid anger.

James 1:19-20 "This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God."

Question 10: When conflict arises, do you give people adequate time to state their case?

11A - A hot-tempered person attracts conflict.

Proverbs 15:18 "A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, But the slow to anger calms a dispute."

Soft speech can remove anger in a situation.

Proverbs 15:1 "A gentle answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger."

Question 11: Do you make it a point to soften your speech when anger is building up in you or in those around you?

12A - A Wise Man Watches How He Responds

There is a saying that says, "Choose your battles wisely." In the following scripture, we see the benefits of backing off from tense situations.

Proverbs 19:11 "A man's discretion makes him slow to anger, And it is his glory to overlook a transgression."

Here we see that a wise man can defer his anger. That means wise people can tell when it isn't a good time to discuss a problem with someone, so they put it off for a while. A wise person will sometimes even pass over someone's mistake, giving the other person grace.

Question 12: Can you see yourself not reacting to a problem, and even letting a matter go?

13A - The following verse states that anger is not from God.

James 1:20 "for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God."

13B - This Can Cause Anger

Many times anger occurs because we are passing judgment on people. The Bible has much to say about not passing judgment on people. The way we judge others will be the way God judges us.

a) **Matthew 7:1,2** (Jesus is speaking) "Do not judge so that you will not be judged. For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you."

b) **Luke 6:37** "Do not judge, and you will not be judged; and do not condemn, and you will not be condemned; pardon, and you will be pardoned."

Refer to Tip #12 – Don't Judge, for more information on not passing judgment.

Question 13: Would you like God to judge you the way you judge others?

14A - Knowing how to prevent anger has great value.

Proverbs 16:32 "He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, And he who rules his spirit, than he who captures a city.. "

Question 14: Are you happy with the way you disarm anger in your life?

15A - Anger can hinder us from making friends with emotionally healthy people.

Proverbs 22:24-25 "Do not associate with a man given to anger; Or go with a hot-tempered man, Or you will learn his ways And find a snare for yourself."

Question 15: Do you know of angry people who could benefit from making friends with healthier individuals?

Are you up for the challenge of learning how to disarm anger in your life? To help you do this, consider giving people a dollar for every time they see you angry. It will be a good investment in your life!

TIP #20

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Practice Humility

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1A - Learning to be humble is one of the most attractive attributes we can develop. The word "humble" is defined as having, or showing, a modest or low estimate of one's importance.

We don't have to *be* lower in importance; rather we give others the privilege of being higher than us.

Jesus taught the paradox, to become great, one must become humble.

a) **Matthew 18:4** "Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

b) **Matthew 23:12** "Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted."

1B - Jesus taught us humility by displaying it in a number of ways.

First, He was born in a humble place, a barn.

Luke 2:16 "So they came in a hurry and found their way to Mary and Joseph, and the baby as He lay in the manger."

1C - Second, He was humble toward His parents.

Luke 2:51 "And He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and He continued in subjection to them; and His mother treasured all these things in her heart."

1D - Third, Jesus never had a house.

Luke 9:58 "And Jesus said to him, "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."

1E - Fourth, Jesus spent His teaching days as a servant.

a) **Matthew 20:28** "just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

b) **Luke 22:27** "For who is greater, the one who reclines at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at the table? But I am among you as the one who serves."

c) **Philippians 2:7** "but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men"

d) **Philippians 2:8** "Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."

1F - Jesus was not self-willed.

John 6:38 "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me."

1G - The apostle Paul told us to be humble.

Colossians 3:12 "So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience;"

1H - The writer of Proverbs spoke highly of humility.

a) **Proverbs 15:33** "The fear of the Lord is the instruction for wisdom, And before honor comes humility."

b) **Proverbs 18:12** "Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, But humility goes before honor."

Question 1: Can you think of someone who portrays humility?

Question 2: How would you rate your level of humility?

3A - We can see a greater importance of humility when we understand how negative the opposite is - pride.

a) **Proverbs 8:13** "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way; And the perverted mouth, I hate."

b) **Proverbs 16:5** "Everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord; Assuredly, he will not be unpunished."

c) **Proverbs 16:18** "Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before stumbling"

3B - Humility is a very attractive character trait, and can be displayed with very little effort. Notice the easy-going sense we feel in the following quote from Jesus.

Matthew 11:29, 30 "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

Question 3: Can you think of anyone who is humble, and would you agree that their demeanor feels effortless?

4A - When we don't humble ourselves, sometimes God will humble us, through life events.

Deuteronomy 8:2 "You shall remember all the way which the Lord your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not."

4B - Our humility can cause God to lift us out of evil.

a) **1 Kings 21:29** "Do you see how Ahab has humbled himself before Me? Because he has humbled himself before Me, I will not bring the evil in his days, but I will bring the evil upon his house in his son's days."

b) **2 Chronicles 7:14** "and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

c) **2 Chronicles 12:7** "When the Lord saw that they humbled themselves, the word of the Lord came to Shemaiah, saying, "They have humbled themselves so I will not destroy them, but I will grant them some measure of deliverance, and My wrath shall not be poured out on Jerusalem by means of Shishak."

d) **2 Chronicles 12:12** "And when he humbled himself, the anger of the Lord turned away from him, so as not to destroy him completely; and also conditions were good in Judah."

e) **2 Chronicles 32:26** "However, Hezekiah humbled the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the Lord did not come on them in the days of Hezekiah."

Question 4: Can you think of a time when God was humbling you?

5A - Sometimes we need to show humility.

a) **2 Kings 22:19** "because your heart was tender and you humbled yourself before the Lord when you heard what I spoke against this place and against its inhabitants that they should become a desolation and a curse, and you have torn your clothes and wept before Me, I truly have heard you," declares the Lord."

b) **Psalms 35:13** "But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth; I humbled my soul with fasting, And my prayer kept returning to my bosom."

Question 5: Have you ever done something to show your humility toward God?

6A - God will hear the prayers of the humble.

a) **2 Kings 22:19** "because your heart was tender and you humbled yourself before the Lord when you heard what I spoke against this place and against its inhabitants that they should become a desolation and a curse, and you have torn your clothes and wept before Me, I truly have heard you," declares the Lord."

b) **2 Chronicles 34:27** "Because your heart was tender and you humbled yourself before God when you heard His words against this place and against its inhabitants, and because you humbled yourself before Me, tore your clothes and wept before Me, I truly have heard you," declares the Lord."

6B - God's rescuing power can come to the humble person.

Job 22:29 "When you are cast down, you will speak with confidence, And the humble person He will save."

6C - Do this when you are in trouble with people.

Proverbs 6:3 "Do this then, my son, and deliver yourself; Since you have come into the hand of your neighbor, Go, humble yourself, and importune your neighbor."

6D - God will dwell with you when you are humble.

Isaiah 57:15 "For thus says the high and exalted One Who lives forever, whose name is Holy, "I dwell on a high and holy place, And also with the contrite and lowly of spirit In order to revive the

spirit of the lowly And to revive the heart of the contrite."

6E - The humble person can become the greatest person.

a) **Proverbs 29:23** "A man's pride will bring him low, But a humble spirit will obtain honor."

b) **Luke 14:11** "For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

c) **Luke 18:14** "I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted."

d) **James 4:10** "Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you."

e) **1 Peter 5:6** "Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time,"

Question 6: What are some ways you can be humble?

TIP #21

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Collect "Grace Doors"

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1A - It was Thanksgiving weekend, and a gentleman was waiting his turn to drive out of a grocery store parking lot. To his left, he saw an older woman backing out of her parking spot heading straight for his driver's door. It looked like she wasn't going to stop, so the man honked his horn, but her car kept going and hit his door. The two drivers got out of their vehicles to assess the damage, and to exchange driver's licenses and insurance information. The gentleman could smell alcohol on the breath of the other driver.

1B - About an hour later, the gentleman called the woman driver and told her, "I've decided not to pursue the insurance claim on the dented door. I am a handy person, so repairing the door is not a big deal for me. Plus, I know one day I'm going to make a mistake and will need grace, so I am "paying it forward" by giving you grace for the dented door. I hope you have a nice Thanksgiving weekend."

1C - The woman was speechless. Her husband had to come on the phone to finish the call. The gentleman explained to the husband what he had just told his wife. The husband said his wife was speechless and thanked the man very much for the call.

1D - This example shows what we mean by the term "Grace Door," a situation in which we give someone grace for a mistake they have made.

Question 1: Have you ever given someone grace like this? If so, can you tell us about it?

2A - The truth is, we all make mistakes, and it's only a matter of time before we make our next mistake. Thus, it's good to be prepared for them. One way to be prepared is to have "Grace Doors" in our "account." That means having a number of past instances where we have given grace to people for the mistakes they've made that affected us.

2B - The Bible says that we reap what we sow. If we have given grace to others, we *ourselves* can expect to receive grace when *we* make a mistake. See the following scriptures about us reaping what we sow.

a) **2 Corinthians 9:6** "Now this I say, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully."

b) **Galatians 6:7** "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap."

Question 2: Can you think of a time when you reaped what you sowed? Are you in a situation now in which you could give grace to someone?

3A - <u>Grace Was God's Idea</u>

Below are stories of grace in the Bible.

Noah was a righteous man living in a world of sinners. At the time, God wanted to destroy the human race and start again. Noah was the only

righteous man living. Noah's history of right living caused him to find grace with God.

Genesis 6:8,9 "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. **9** These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God."

3B - Lot

Another example of God giving grace to someone is the story of Lot and his family. They lived in the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. These cities had become so filled with sin that many people were suffering because of it. God decided He had no choice but to destroy the cities.

In contrast, God gave grace to Lot and his family who lived there, by allowing them to escape before His fierce anger wiped out the cities.

Genesis 19:19 "Now behold, your servant has found favor in your sight, and you have magnified your lovingkindness"

3C - Jacob

God gave Jacob twelve sons. His eleventh son was named Joseph; Joseph became Jacob's favorite son. Thus, the other brothers didn't like Joseph. One day they sold him to slave traders and then told Jacob a lion killed Joseph. Jacob was heart-broken. Joseph went through some ups and downs in a foreign country, but in the end he became a top leader in Egypt. When a famine gripped the area, Jacob and his family traveled to the one area with food – Egypt. There Jacob was reacquainted with his lost son Joseph – such grace from God! God also gave grace to Jacob by keeping him and his family alive during a famine.

Genesis 46:30 "And Israel said unto Joseph, Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive."

3D - God's Grace Towards Us

The most notable example of grace is when God, our Father, sent His only begotten son, Jesus, to pay the penalty for our sin, by dying on a cross. We deserved death because of our sin, but Jesus willingly died in our place. That is profound grace.

Romans 5:8 says, "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Only a sinless man could pay the penalty of our sin, and that was Jesus.

3E - Our Grace toward Others

Just as God gave us grace through Jesus, God expects us to give grace to others.

a) **Matthew 6:12** "And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors."

b) **Ephesians 4:32** "Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you."

c) **Colossians 3:13** "bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you."

If it is within our power to forgive someone, we should forgive them.

3F - However, it is good to keep in mind that we sometimes hurt people by letting them *off the hook* too easily. They could start feeling entitled to our forgiveness, thus abuse our good nature. Each case is different; so we need to pray for wisdom that God will help us know when to use "tough love," and when to freely forgive. For the most part, live a lifestyle of grace, and you will be given grace yourself.

TIP #22

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Volunteer

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1A - When our day-to-day life becomes a constant struggle, it can be tempting to just stay home and do nothing. However, great blessings await us if we will move out of our comfort zone and help make a difference in other people's lives. A great way to do this is through volunteering. Real benefits can be had, even if we only volunteer for an hour a week.

1B - It can be surprising how God uses our volunteering to direct us to new people who can enrich our lives. He can also use our past

experiences to help us to do a good job in a volunteer position. Volunteering has a way of expanding our vision to new ideas we could never have come up with otherwise. Here's how volunteering can help us.

a) Volunteering can help take our mind off whatever is bothering us.
b) Volunteering helps us network with others.
c) Volunteering can lead to promotions.
d) Volunteering can advance our career.
e) Volunteering can help us live a more active lifestyle.
f) Volunteering can add a sense of fun and excitement to our lives.

Question 1: Can you tell us in what ways you've volunteered in the past? If so, how did it help you?

2A - A Good Distraction

Volunteering can help distract us from thinking negatively. This is a huge benefit for people who struggle with anxiety or depression. Choosing a volunteer position that entails meeting new people and learning new skills helps this further.

Question 2: Can you tell us about the people you've met and things you've learned while volunteering?

3A - Networking for Employment

Volunteering can help us network with others. People who watch us volunteer may know an employer who is looking to hire for a paid position.

3B - Promotion

Doing a good job as a volunteer prepares us for greater responsibility in the future. The Bible says, if we are faithful in little, God can entrust us with greater.

a) **Matthew 25:23** "His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master."
b) **Luke 16:10** "He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much."

So get ready for promotion!

3C - Above the Rest

More than ever, employers are looking to give back to their communities. Thus, some of them look for people who like to volunteer. If our resume shows volunteer work, it can put us ahead of other candidates who haven't volunteered.

Question 3: Has volunteering helped you meet key people or led to a promotion in your career?

4A - More Active

For someone who struggles with depression, a volunteer position that requires physical activity can help them feel more productive, improve their physical health, and improve their sleep.

Question 4: Have you ever had a physically active volunteer position? If so, how did it help you?

5A - Fun

Some volunteer positions require us to do activities with people. Some of these activities can lead to some great fun, making the exercise beneficial for both the volunteer and the people being helped.

Question 5: Have you ever experienced enjoyable times volunteering?

6A - Volunteering (Serving) in the Bible

There are a lot of Bible verses on being of service to others.

a) **Proverbs 11:25** "The generous man will be prosperous, And he who waters will himself be watered."
b) **Matthew 20:26** "It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant,"
c) **Mark 9:35** "Sitting down, He called the twelve and *said to them, "If anyone wants to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all."
d) **Mark 10:42-44** "Calling them to Himself, Jesus *said to them, "You know that those who are recognized as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great men exercise authority over them. [43] But it is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant; [44] and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all."
e) **Mark 10:45** "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

f) **John 12:26** "If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him."

g) **Galatians 5:13** "For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another."

h) **1 Corinthians 4:1-2** "Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy."

i) **Ephesians 2:10** "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them."

j) **Philippians 2:5-7** "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, [6] who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, [7] but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men:"

6B - A Key Place to Volunteer

A great place to volunteer is at church. Here are some reasons why.

a) We get to know some of the nicest people around.

b) We work together to achieve a common goal.

c) We get a sense of purpose.

d) We can be used of God to inspire someone who may be struggling.

e) We position ourselves to meet God in a very special way – serving in His house.

f) We encourage our pastor and the leadership team by volunteering.

g) We become good role models to those around us.

6C - The Nicest People

Many older people have been church members for a long time and have developed into strong, cheerful Christians. Their love for God, for their church, and for the community is attractive. Serving at church puts us into direct contact with these amazing people, and it positions us to be blessed by their Christ-filled lives. This blessing is especially helpful when we are recovering from an emotional wound.

Also, these fine Christian people become great candidates for the role of support team members in our life. See more on this in Tip #5 – Form a Support Team.

Question 6: Have you made some quality friendships at a local church? If so, can you tell us about them?

7A - Achieving a Common Goal

A popular saying is, "Teamwork makes the dream work." This can apply to church life. Every church member has unique, God-given strengths, and when church members are operating in their gifts together, the results can be remarkable.

7B - Teamwork in the Bible

Below is a profound story that perfectly demonstrates the power of unity.

Genesis 11:1-8 "Now the whole earth used the same language and the same words. [2] It came about as they journeyed east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. [3] They said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks and burn *them* thoroughly." And they used brick for stone, and they used tar for mortar. [4] They said, "Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top *will reach* into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name, otherwise we will be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth." [5] The LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built."

7C - "[6] The LORD said, "Behold, they are one people, and they all have the same language. And this is what they began to do, and now nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them. [7] Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, so that they will not understand one another's speech." [8] So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of the whole earth; and they stopped building the city."

7D - These people had discovered the power of unity. But because the goal was something that displeased God, God decided to confuse their languages and scatter them all over the earth. Indeed, there is great power in teamwork.

Question 7: Have you ever helped out on a big project at church? If so, how did it feel?

8A - Sense of Purpose

One of the easiest ways to breathe new life into a depressed person is by helping them choose an

inspirational goal. This also applies to churches. A good church leader can help a church maintain vibrancy by choosing great goals for the church to reach for.

8B - Volunteering at Church

A church should take time to help members see the importance of the various jobs that need to be done for the church, and they should gladly take time to explain thoroughly the tasks at hand. As well, the leaders should take time to see that the job was done properly, and if needed, lovingly offer helpful tips on how to improve the job next time. They should also express appreciation for all that has been done. All of this validates the church members and gives them a sense of importance for their contribution to the church.

Question 8: Have you ever felt a sense of purpose for the tasks you have taken on at your church?

Question 9: Have you ever been sincerely thanked for your contribution at your church? How did it feel?

10A - Inspire Someone

When we take time to help at church, we can meet new people. Some of these people may be struggling. Even people who look as if everything is going well could be good at hiding their pain. God has a way of letting us know who these hurting people are, so we can befriend them and inspire them.

Question 10: Has God ever helped you meet people at church who needed a friend?

11A - Meeting God in a Very Special Way

In essence, the body of believers is God's home. His holiness and love should be evident in a local church. When it is, this draws God's presence. Whenever we walk into a church, or volunteer at a church, we should have a sense of optimism that in some way we will meet with God and receive an impartation of His power and grace in our life. When you go to church, be expectant! That is faith!

Here is a Bible story of a miracle that happened at a local church.

11B - **Acts 3:1-8** "Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the ninth *hour*, the hour of prayer. [2] And a man who had been lame from his mother's womb was being carried along, whom they used to set down every day at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, in order to beg alms of those who were entering the temple. [3] When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he *began* asking to receive alms. [4] But Peter, along with John, fixed his gaze on him and said, "Look at us!"

11C - And he *began* to give them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. [6] But Peter said, "I do not possess silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene—walk!" [7] And seizing him by the right hand, he raised him up; and immediately his feet and his ankles were strengthened. [8] With a leap he stood upright and *began* to walk; and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God."

Question 11: Do you go to church with a sense of optimism that God is going to reveal Himself to you?

12A - Encourage Your Pastor

Being a pastor or an elder in a local church can be a difficult job. Volunteering our time to help the church can mean so much to a pastor and others in leadership. It can help energize them to be all that God needs them to be, at that church.

Question 12: Have you ever taken time to show appreciation to your pastor and the church staff?

13A - Beware of Complaining at Church

It is important when we serve at our church that we do not fall into the habit of complaining about the church or its members. Gossip in a church can be extremely harmful. We should be ready to take someone aside to explain this truth to them if we see they are bothered by a church-related problem. We should even consider helping the person resolve the issue at hand. For more on this, go to Tip #7 – Speak Right Words, and Tip #12 – Don't Judge. Below are some scriptures that caution us to avoid complaining.

a) **Ephesians 4:29** "Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear."

b) **Philippians 2:14** "Do all things without grumbling or disputing;"

c) **James 5:9** "Do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door."

Question 13: Have you ever helped a person resolve an issue they had about the church?

14A - Become a Role Model

Churches, in general, and growing churches especially, need good role models for people it be inspired by, and to follow. Here are two scriptures on being a good example.

a) **Matthew 5:16** "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

b) **1 Timothy 4:12** "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."

Question 14: Have you ever been inspired by someone at your church? What was it about them that caught your attention?

15A - In the verse below, Jesus tells us that the harvest is plenteous but the laborers are few. Therefore, churches often need more volunteers.

Matthew 9:37-38 "Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest."

New people will be attracted to the church when they see members doing their best to share the gospel message, either one-to-one, or by volunteering in larger evangelistic projects.

15B - Jesus gave us the Great Commission, to go out and make disciples of all men and women, teaching them all that Jesus taught us. Some churches are taking this very seriously, and are developing movie-producing skills in order to create impressive, full-length movies. These movies present the gospel in ways that everyday people can relate to. Whatever methods our church uses to promote the gospel, it will require people to be committed to the tasks, people willing to be good role models where they are.

Question 15: Has your church talked about big ways in which to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ?

16A - Volunteering is definitely a helpful strategy to improve your mood and aim your life in the direction of success.

TIP #23

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Conquer the Addiction

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1A - Addictions are fast becoming a major problem in our communities, with some areas reaching crisis levels. Therefore the church should be ready to meet the needs of people caught in a cycle of defeat due to addictions.

1B - Any activity we feel compelled to do regularly, to feel better, could be an addiction. We shouldn't be fooled by the low statistics of a behavior. If we need something to dull emotional pain, we should assess the root cause of this urge to see if it is an addiction. Some of the more common addictions are over-eating, alcohol, drugs, pornography, sex, shopping, gambling, video gaming, television, and work. Sadly, addictions are even prevalent in the church. We need God to help us in this regard.

Below are some scriptures related to addiction.

a) **Deuteronomy 21:20** "They shall say to the elders of his city, 'This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey us, he is a glutton and a drunkard."

b) **Proverbs 23:21** "For the heavy drinker and the glutton will come to poverty, And drowsiness will clothe one with rags."

c) **Matthew 11:19** "The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds."

d) **Luke 7:34** "The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!"

Question 1: What addictions do people you know struggle with today?

2A - Reasons to Break an Addiction

Financial Loss

One significant loss that can come from addictions is financial. Life *without* an addiction can be difficult enough when it comes to managing our money; add an addiction and our financial stability is further weakened.

The Bible advises us to stay clear of debt.

a) **Deuteronomy 15:6** "For the Lord your God will bless you as He has promised you, and you will lend to many nations, but you will not borrow; and you will rule over many nations, but they will not rule over you."

b) **Proverbs 22:7** "The rich rules over the poor, And the borrower becomes the lender's slave."

c) **Lu ke 14:28** "For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it?"

d) **Romans 13:8** "Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law."

Question 2: Can you think of anyone who is in debt because of an addiction?

3A - Loss of Relationships

Many families have been torn apart because of a loved one who is entrenched in an addiction. Although there are many support groups in almost every community, there are still people who are not getting the help they need to break free of their addiction.

Question 3: Can you think of anyone who is going through great stress because of a loved one caught in an addiction?

4A - Loss of Time

Another loss is the loss of time that we spend engrossed in our addiction. The family of a famous lead singer of a 1970's music group reported that the singers dying words were, "So much wasted time..." Wasted time can be something we *all* could assess in our lives, more so, for those with addiction.

4B - Below we see the Bible cautions us to beware of wasting time.

a) **Psalm 90:12** "So teach us to number our days, That we may present to You a heart of wisdom."

b) **Ephesians 5:16** "making the most of your time, because the days are evil."

c) **Colossians 4:5** "Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity."

Question 4: Can you think of anyone who wastes time because of an addiction?

5A - Loss of Public Services

Another consequence of addictions is the toll it takes on police services, first responders, and hospital staff. It isn't just the cost of their time; it is also the emotional toll it takes on these public service providers while doing their jobs. They see people at their worst, and it can cause them to develop PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder), a debilitating mental illness that can lead to suicide.

Question 5: Can you think of anyone who is in public service and has to provide care for those with addictions? How does their job affect them?

6A - Toll on Children

Nobody wants to see children get hurt, but this can happen because of addictions. Children don't know how to mentally process something like an angry parent or sibling who is fighting an addiction. The frightening experiences children are exposed to can have a profound, negative effect on them for the rest of their lives. Further, an addiction can be inherited by the child, and thus become a generational problem within families.

Question 6: Can you think of any children who have been traumatized because of addiction?

7A - Toll on Industry

A notable council on drug addiction states that drug abuse alone costs employers $80 billion a year. High employee turnover rates, lower quality of work, workplace theft, absenteeism, accidents, and sick time, all play a part in reducing profitability for corporations. Losses corporately can mean less finances going to community endeavors.

Question 7: Can you think of anyone who works in human resources, or owns a company, and deals with employees who have addictions? What do they say about helping employees with addictions?

8A - Breaking the Addiction

Addictions can be challenging to break. There needs to be a sincere desire to quit the addiction. From a Christian standpoint, we could see the addiction as sin. We must reach a point where we are so turned off by our *sin,* that we want to do something about it.

8B - Jesus said, if you want to follow Him, you have to deny yourself. People with addictions find it difficult to deny themselves. See scriptures below.

a) **Mark 8:34** "And He summoned the crowd with His disciples, and said to them, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me."

b) **Luke 9:23 & Matthew 16:24** "And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me."

Question 8: In what way do you deny yourself?

9A - The Bible says that one of the fruits of the Spirit is self-control.

Galatians 5:22-23 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law."

Most addicts will admit nonetheless that they have very little self-control.

Question 9: How would you rate your level of self-control?

10A - Below are some steps we can take that can help us break an addiction.

Step 1 - Ask Ourselves "Why Do We Do It?"

Often there is a mental health condition causing us to have an addiction. Many people need relief from symptoms of guilt, anxiety, or depression. Once we resolve the mental health issue, our addiction will be easier to beat.

Question 10: Do you know anyone who has pinpointed the root cause of their addiction?

11A - Step 2 - Think Rationally About the Addiction

Many people don't think rationally about their addiction. They tell themselves it isn't as bad as it is. They minimize the significance of the addiction and its effect on their life.

Question 11: Do you know anyone who minimizes the effects of their addiction?

12A - Step 3 - Pray

It is helpful to ask God for His assistance in breaking our addiction. Some people testify that God miraculously healed them of their addiction instantaneously. Since this is possible, we, too, can aim our faith toward God to give us a complete and instant healing from our addiction. It may seem too large a task to ask, but we remind ourselves that God takes great pleasure in people who are bold enough to ask Him for big things. (For more on this read Tip #9 – Develop Your Faith.)

12B - When we pray a prayer of this nature, it is helpful to couple our prayer with action. We might want to write out our prayer and the date we prayed it, as a memorial to ourselves and to God that we have invited Him into this great need we have, and that we are expecting Him to give us this healing.

12C - We could also ask the elders of our church to anoint us with oil and pray a prayer of healing. The Bible instructs us to do this for those who need healing in their physical bodies, but it can also be used for breaking an addiction.

James 5:14 "Is anyone among you sick? Then he must call for the elders of the church and they are to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:"

12D - Another way to couple our prayer with action is by disposing of any of the addictive substance we may still have in our possession.

Another way to couple our prayer with action is by giving a donation. We aren't *buying* our healing; giving a donation is just another way to show God we are serious about our request and that we are willing to sacrifice for it. If our finances are low, we can volunteer our time to help someone.

12E - Our Prayer

The actual prayer that we pray doesn't have to be long or perfect. It can be as simple as, *"God, I believe Jesus died for my sins, and for the healing of my body. My body (or mind) needs to be set free from this addiction. Please heal me, so I am no longer controlled by this substance (or action). I ask this in Jesus's name."*

12F - We could then call someone from our church and tell them what we have just prayed and done, and ask them to help us keep our commitment to God, to never go back to the addiction.

Whether our healing is instant or gradual, below are some practical steps we can take to help ourselves stay free of our addiction.

Question 12: Do you know anyone who God has set free from addiction?

13A - Step 3 - Replace Bad Habits with Good Habits

The Victory Tips Program suggests that we take up memorizing Bible verses. We can become so busy learning new verses that we distract ourselves from the thoughts of the addiction. This also is a great way to get closer to God.

Question 13: Do you know anyone who has successfully replaced bad habits with good habits?

14A - Step 4 - Identify Trigger Times

There can be times during our day when we are more prone to give in to our addiction, such as break times, meal times, evenings, pay-days, holidays, etc. We can prepare for these times by having other activities to do in place of the negative habit; perhaps something healthy like focused breathing, an exercise routine, a relaxation routine, prayer or Bible study.

Question 14: Can you suggest activities to do in place of addictive behaviors?

15A - Step 5 - Limit Access to the Substance

One way to cut off access to our substance is by not carrying cash or a credit card. Not having money can prevent us from purchasing our drug of choice. If we have an online addiction, we could consider removing the computer from our home.

We could also avoid going near places we used to go to for our "fix."

As well, we could also break off friendships with those who have addictions, and make friends with people who don't have addictions. A church can be a great place to meet people without addictions.

Question 15: Can you think of other ways a person might cut off access to their drug of choice?

16A - Step 6 - Be Accountable to People

It can be helpful to find people we can call every day, to let them know how we're doing. If we have the person's permission, we don't have to feel bad if we need to contact them multiple times a day. It can be helpful to find several people in our lives to call, in case one isn't available when we need to speak with them. Surrounding ourselves with people who care about us, and who never feel we have contacted them too much, is very helpful. We shouldn't let shame prevent us from getting the help we need. We may need a lot of support at present, but we should realize that someday we can be the support person for someone else in need. For more on this topic see Tip #5 – Form a Support Team.

Question 16: If you have an addiction, can you think of people who may be helpful in providing accountability for you? How could you find others?

17A - Step 7 – Learn About the Addiction

Knowledge is power. We can do research online, or we can get books, CDs, or DVDs, at the library.

We could also find good recovery groups and start attending meetings regularly. We can also learn much by speaking with people who have conquered a similar addiction.

Question 17: Do you know of good resources to help people with addictions?

18A - Step 8 – Reward Yourself

We can be our own best friend by rewarding ourselves when we make even the slightest progress in our attempts to conquer our addiction.

Question 18: What are good ways you reward yourself?

19A - With God's help we can become overcomers in every area of or lives, including conquering addictions. We can begin to see ourselves as a conqueror. For more on this concept see Tip #14 – Develop a Conqueror Mentality. For more practical help in breaking an addiction, contact us.

TIP #24

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Have a Vision for Your Life

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1A - God has created us for a purpose. The Bible says He laid out the purpose for our lives before we were even born. **Ephesians 2:10** says, *"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them."*

Our life's purpose will eventually begin manifesting at some point in our life. We call this birthing stage of a mission, a vision. It is a captivating, irresistible sense of something we must do. It can come suddenly, or it can happen slowly, over days, weeks, and months. The following scripture gives us a sense of the importance of a vision.

> **Proverbs 29:18** "Where there is no vision, the people are unrestrained, But happy is he who keeps the law."

Question 1: Have you ever had a vision or a sense of what you were supposed to do?

2A - Begin with a Prayer

Life can have a way of *"knocking the wind out of us."* The challenges of life can sometimes seem impossible to conquer, and we are tempted to adopt a defeatist attitude. But just because one door of opportunity closes on us, doesn't mean new doors can't open. If a dream we've been holding on to falls apart, we can ask God for a new purpose for our life, and He will give it to us. Here is a well known Bible verse on getting guidance. We can use it to help steer us to our next vision, or goal, in life.

> **Proverbs 3:5-6** "Trust in the Lord with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight."

Question 2: Have you ever felt like you couldn't go any further? If so, would you like to share with us what happened?

3A - Become Unstoppable!

It may surprise us what new directions God has for us. When they come, they will infuse us with a new zest for life. The following are some people in the Bible who had a vision for their life, and it caused them to become unstoppable.

a) Noah had a vision of building a large boat for God. Doing so took him a very long time (120 years), but he didn't give up. It gave him purpose, and it saved him and his family! (Genesis 6 & 7)

b) Moses had a vision of setting the Israelites free from the Egyptians. After God met him at a burning bush, He sent Moses to complete the mission. Doing so was stressful, but he kept at it until the Israelites were free. (Exodus 3)

c) Joseph had a vision of his family bowing down to him. Life became very difficult for him but he kept living for God, and God eventually made him Prime Minister of Egypt! Amazingly, his family did bow down before him! (Genesis 37)

d) Paul had a vision of preaching the gospel for Jesus all over the world. No matter how hard it was, he kept at it, and eventually, God used his preaching and his letters to reach millions of people for Christ. His letters make up most of the New Testament!

Question 3: Have you ever received new direction for your life? If so, how did it make you feel?

4A - Beware of Some Visions

The peculiar thing about a vision is that it can either be a positive, life-giving goal, or it can be a negative, hurtful purpose. An example of a negative vision is in the life of Haman, a vizier under King Ahasuerus of Persia, who lived around 465 B.C. Haman took offense to Mordecai, a Jew, for not bowing down to him when he went by.

> **Esther 3:6** "But he disdained to lay hands on Mordecai alone, for they had told him who the people of Mordecai were; therefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews, the people of Mordecai, who were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus."

4B - Haman built a set of gallows 50 feet high, and a 75 foot high sharpened, impaling pole, with which to impale Mordecai. These were eventually used to impale Haman, himself. Haman's vision cost him his life.

Question 4: Have you ever had an irresistible sense of what you wanted to do, but then it hurt you?

5A - Check Your Vision

So we've prayed for direction. We've gotten an answer. It feels good. What do we do next? We can check our vision by asking ourselves the following questions. Answers to these questions can help determine the value of the new goal we have in mind.

a) What does God's Word say about this new vision?

b) What do my church friends say about this new direction?

c) What do respected church leaders think of the idea?

5B - Heavenly Value

In evaluating a vision, something to consider is the spiritual value of the work we would like to do. The following verses tell us our works will one day, "be burned," to see if there is any spiritual value in them.

> **1 Corinthians 3:13-15** "each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is *to be* revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. [14] If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. [15] If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire."

Question 5: Have you ever told others about a vision? If so, how did they respond?

6A - Once the concept of the vision is affirmed, take time to write it out in more detail. The following verse tells us to write out our vision.

> **Habakkuk 2:2-3** "Then the LORD answered me and said, "Record the vision And inscribe *it* on tablets, That the one who reads it may run. [3] "For the vision is yet for the appointed time; It hastens toward the goal and it will not fail. Though it tarries, wait for it; For it will certainly come, it will not delay."

Most visions can only be accomplished with help from others. Writing out the vision gives new people a way of understanding what the vision is and how to help bring it into reality.

Question 6: Have you ever had a yearning desire to do something in which you took time to write it out?

7A - Getting Help

Next, we'll want to create a plan of how to bring this vision to reality. It is a good idea to contact people who have some skill in the kind of work that the vision requires. The Bible says a lot about getting good counsel.

a) **Proverbs 12:15** "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, But a wise man is he who listens to counsel."

b) **Proverbs 15:22** "Without consultation, plans are frustrated, But with many counselors they succeed."

c) **Proverbs 24:6** "For by wise guidance you will wage war, And in abundance of counselors there is victory."

7B - At this point, it's important to be careful who we share our vision with. Some "would-be" helpers might only see reasons why our vision could never come to pass. This can cause doubt in our mind and discourage us from going any further with the goal.

Question 7: Have you ever contacted someone for advice about a vision you had? How did they respond?

8A - Set Goals

It's important to start setting goals so we can track our progress. This will also help us accomplish tasks in a shorter time frame. Our counselors can help us with this. The following scriptures challenge us to work hard at completing our God-given tasks.

a) **2 Chronicles 15:7** "But you, be strong and do not lose courage, for there is reward for your work."

b) **Proverbs 21:5** "The plans of the diligent lead surely to advantage, But everyone who is hasty comes surely to poverty."

c) **Philippians 3:14** "I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

8B - Stay in Prayer

It is helpful to stay close to God in prayer throughout our work so we can detect any adjustments we may need to make along the way.

As an example, after Jesus was born, Joseph received a change of course from an angel in a dream.

Matthew 2:13 "Now when they had gone, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up! Take the Child and His mother and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is going to search for the Child to destroy Him."

8C - We should stay in prayer, so we don't waste time doing something we weren't supposed to do.

Psalm 127:1 "Unless the Lord builds the house, They labor in vain who build it; Unless the Lord guards the city, The watchman keeps awake in vain."

Enjoy the excitement of creating something new! God is the "Great Creator," so we'll be in good company when we include God in our project!

TIP #25

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Be Thankful

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1A - Another helpful attribute to develop in our lives is that of being thankful. Scientific research shows that thankfulness boosts the immune system and increases blood supply, both of which contribute to improved physical and emotional health. Research also shows that it enhances alertness, enthusiasm, energy, and sleep improvements. All of these benefits contribute to less stress, anxiety, and depression.

The Bible refers to thanksgiving many times. Below are some of the key verses for gratitude.

Question 1: How would you rate your level of thankfulness?

2A - Below is a verse that tells us to be thankful for all things. Does the Apostle Paul mean for us to be thankful for bad things that happen to us, as well? Good question.

Ephesians 5:20 "always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;"

Below is a verse that tells us to be thankful "in" all things. This is something we can definitely do, if not the above.

1 Thessalonians 5:18 "in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

Question 2: Can you think of a time when you were thankful "for" or "in" a negative event in your life?

3A - <u>A Good Reason To Be Thankful – God's Mercy</u>

The Bible doesn't just say "give thanks," sometimes it says "O give thanks."

a) **Psalms 106:1** "Praise the Lord! Oh give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; For His lovingkindness is everlasting."

b) **Psalms 118:1** "Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; For His lovingkindness is everlasting."

That means His mercy is so good; it implies, "Look! See how great it is!"

Question 3: How highly do you value God's mercy in your life? Can you tell us a time He showed great mercy to you?

4A - <u>Thankful In Times of Loss</u>

Life can also include times of loss. And while these losses can try to derail our lives, we can help offset the loss by remembering, and, being thankful for the times *before* the loss. Such as a loved one passing away or becoming ill. We can remember the good times before the loss of our loved one.

Or in the case of an automobile becoming too expensive to repair, we can throw a party for the years of service that we *did* get out of it.

Question 4: Has your life ever been derailed by a loss, but you found something to be thankful for in spite of it?

5A - A loss can be a difficult time in our lives. It is the perfect time to prove Christ's words that He spoke to the Apostle Paul, in **2 Corinthians 12:9**, *"...My grace is sufficient for you, for power is*

perfected in weakness…" We can find hidden strength in Christ.

Question 5: Have you ever found unexpected grace to get through a hard time in your life?

6A - The verse below talks about the things we do and say, how we should do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, and with thanksgiving to God.

Colossians 3:17 "Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father."

6B - The scripture below tells us to present our requests to God with thanksgiving.

Philippians 4:6 "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."

Here are other verses on thanksgiving.

a) **Colossians 2:6,7** "Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude."

b) **Colossians 3:15** "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful."

c) **Colossians 4:2** "Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving."

Question 6: Are you in the habit of including thanksgiving in your prayers?

7A - The following scripture tells us to enter His presence with thanksgiving.

Psalms 100:4 "Enter His gates with thanksgiving And His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him, bless His name."

7B - The following are other scriptures on being thankful.

a) **1 Chronicles 16:34** "O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; For His lovingkindness is everlasting."

b) **Nehemiah 12:46** "For in the days of David and Asaph, in ancient times, there were leaders of the singers, songs of praise and hymns of thanksgiving to God."

c) **Psalm 26:7** "That I may proclaim with the voice of thanksgiving And declare all Your wonders."

d) **Psalm 50:14** "Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving And pay your vows to the Most High."

e) **Psalm 69:30** "I will praise the name of God with song And magnify Him with thanksgiving."

f) **Psalm 95:2** "Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, Let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms."

g) **Psalm 107:22** "Let them also offer sacrifices of thanksgiving, And tell of His works with joyful singing."

h) **Psalm 116:17** "To You I shall offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving, And call upon the name of the Lord."

i) **Psalm 147:7** "Sing to the Lord with thanksgiving; Sing praises to our God on the lyre,"

j) **Amos 4:5** "Offer a thank offering also from that which is leavened, And proclaim freewill offerings, make them known. For so you love to do, you sons of Israel," Declares the Lord God."

k) **Jonah 2:9** "But I will sacrifice to You With the voice of thanksgiving. That which I have vowed I will pay. Salvation is from the Lord."

l) **Colossians 3:15** "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful."

m) **Colossians 3:17** "Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father."

n) **1 Timothy 4:4** "For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with gratitude;"

o) **Hebrews 12:28** "Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe:"

TIP #26

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Welcome MLC's

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1A - Life can be filled with challenges. Thus, it is good to be prepared when these challenges come around. One way to be prepared is to be able to welcome MLC's. "MLC" stands for Major Life Challenge. They are the more difficult times in our lives such as the death of a loved one, spouse wanting a divorce, negative diagnosis, job loss, serious injury, relocation, lawsuit, and financial loss. Each of these requires an adjustment in our thinking so we keep our peace of mind.

Question 1: Can you think of a time in your life when you were faced with an MLC? If so, how well did you handle it?

2A - Why "Welcome" MLC's?

At first glance, we might wonder why we would want to welcome one of these events in our lives. We will examine the reasons below.

First, as Christians, God requires us to live by faith. That means that we trust God in every aspect of our lives; this includes the difficult times. Our faith tells us that God can heal a negative situation, or bring good out of it.

a) **Romans 1:17** "But the righteous man shall live by faith." (Also found in Habakkuk 2:4, Galatians 3:11 and Hebrews 10:38.)

b) **2 Corinthians 12:9** "And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me."

c) **Ephesians 3:20** "Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us,"

Question 2: Can you think of a time when your faith helped carry you through a major life challenge?

3A - God Can Replace

Another reason to have faith is that God can *replace* what has been lost, as in the case of Job. We talked briefly about Job in Tip #3 – Admit You Have a Problem.

Job was a very reverent follower of God. Satan told God that surely Job would curse Him if his life were negatively affected. God didn't think so, and He let Satan trouble Job's life to prove His point to Satan.

3B - The first trial was with the loss of farm animals.

Job 1:12-19 "Then the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power, only do not put forth your hand on him." So Satan departed from the presence of the LORD.[13] Now on the day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, [14] a messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, [15] and the Sabeans attacked and took them. They also slew the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you."

3C - "[16] While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them, and I alone have escaped to tell you." [17] While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The Chaldeans formed three bands and made a raid on the camels and took them and slew the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you."

3D - Job's second loss was the death of all his children.

"[18] While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, [19] and behold, a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people and they died, and I alone have escaped to tell you."

These were terrible losses for Job.

Question 3: Have you ever lost something valuable to you? If so, how did you respond?

4A - Job's Health

Job was then afflicted with boils all over his body.

Job 2:6-8 "So the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your power, only spare his life."[7] Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. [8] And he took a potsherd to scrape himself while he was sitting among the ashes."

Question 4: Have you ever had a major health problem? If so, how did you handle it?

5A - Job's Relationships

Even Job's wife was no help to him. She told Job to "curse God and die."

Job never cursed God, but he did do something that he shouldn't have – he complained. In fact, the whole of Chapter 3 is a complaint about his misfortune. Following, are four of the verses of Chapter 3 that bear this out.

Job 3:3-6 "Let the day perish on which I was to be born, And the night *which* said, 'A boy is conceived.' [4] "May that day be darkness; Let not God above care for it, Nor light shine on it.[5] "Let darkness and black gloom claim it; Let a cloud settle on it; Let the blackness of the day terrify it. [6] "*As for* that night, let darkness seize it; Let it not rejoice among the days of the year; Let it not come into the number of the months."

Question 5: Have you ever complained about a problem in your life? If so, would you like to share with us what happened?

6A - God Shows Up

Thirty-six chapters later, after much philosophical talk from Job and his well-meaning friends, God corrected everyone's misunderstandings of why things happened as they did. Job repented, and then God began to bless Job. Job ended up getting twice as much back of what he lost.

Job 42:19 "The Lord restored the fortunes of Job when he prayed for his friends, and the Lord increased all that Job had twofold."

The story of Job gives us hope that God can make up for the losses that occur in our lives too.

Question 6: Have you ever experienced a great loss, but then received back more than you lost?

7A - Looking at Job's story, notice who was responsible for Job's loss. Job thought it was God, but it was actually Satan.

Job 1:12 "Then the Lord said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power, only do not put forth your hand on him." So Satan departed from the presence of the Lord."

Question 7: Have you ever had a loss in your life and blamed God for it?

8A - When Jesus was on earth, He attributed most of the people's problems to the work of Satan.

a) **Matthew 8:16** "When evening came, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed; and He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were ill."

b) **Matthew 9:33** "After the demon was cast out, the mute man spoke; and the crowds were amazed, and were saying, "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel."

c) **Matthew 12:22** "Then a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute was brought to Jesus, and He healed him, so that the mute man spoke and saw."

d) **Matthew 17:18** "And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon came out of him, and the boy was cured at once."

e) **Luke 13:11,16** "And there was a woman who for eighteen years had had a sickness caused by a spirit; and she was bent double, and could not straighten up at all. [16] And this woman, a daughter of Abraham as she is, whom Satan has bound for eighteen long years, should she not have been released from this bond on the Sabbath day?"

Question 8: Do you think your problems have come because of Satan?

9A - What if it's My Fault?

Sometimes our losses in life are brought about by our own poor choices. However, just because we sometimes make poor choices doesn't mean God won't help us. He responds to our faith, not because we always do everything right. Thus, we don't have to be discouraged with our mistakes; we can show God that we are trusting Him, and we become candidates for His help, even if we caused the problem.

Mark 11:24 "Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they will be granted you."

Question 9: What can you do to show God that you are trusting Him to solve your present problem?

10A - Other Reasons to Welcome MLC's

As mentioned above, the first reason is to see the challenge as a way to stretch our faith. We sometimes need difficulties to help us grow spiritually.

Secondly, our correct responses to our challenges can bring pleasure to God as He sees us trust him every step of the way. We believe that no problem is too big for us when we have Jesus by our side, guiding us, and even praying for us. See below.

Romans 8:34 "who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us."

10B - Thirdly, we welcome MLC's because they teach us how to be victorious even though we have problems. Circumstances don't have to dictate how we feel. They force us to learn how to cast all our cares onto God. See the verses below.

a) **Psalm 55:22** "Cast your burden upon the Lord and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken."

b) **Philippians 4:6** "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanks-giving let your requests be made known to God."

c) **1 Peter 5:7** "casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you."

10C - Fourthly, we welcome MLC's because after God delivers us, we'll have a powerful testimony to share with others who may be going through a similar challenge. In fact, our MLC can be the 'launch pad' for a far-reaching ministry. Millions of people can be helped because of the victory we have found while going through a serious challenge.

10D - Fifthly, we welcome MLC's because we're simply curious about how God is going to deliver us. We picture ourselves as a bystander, someone on the outside looking in, observing how God is going to "fix" this situation at hand. This mindset helps us not to get overly engrossed in our problems.

10E - For any life challenge, it is good not to get overly stressed about it, but rather to trust God to solve it; even more so when it is a Major Life Challenge. True, there may be things we have to do to help solve our problem, but our primary focus is on God to solve it. This makes us candidates for His supernatural help.

10F - Remember that our peace is a reflection of our faith. When we have peace about a situation, we know our faith is intact. The following scriptures give us a sense of peace when we truly believe Jesus is in the middle of our life challenge.

10G - **John 14:1-12** "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. [2] In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. [3] If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, *there* you may be also. [4] And you know the way where I am going." [5] Thomas *said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?" [6] Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me. [7] If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him."

10H - "[8] Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." [9] Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and *yet* you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how *can* you say, 'Show us the Father'? [10] Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works."

10J - "[11] Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves. [12] Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater *works* than these he will do; because I go to the Father. [13] Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. [14] If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do *it*."

Question 10: Can you recall a stressful situation in which you had complete peace that God was right beside you, helping you get through the ordeal?

11A - Final Reason

The final reason we want to welcome major life challenges is that the way we go through them becomes a testimony of the reality of Jesus and His help. People will take notice when they see us go through a challenge peacefully, knowing that they, themselves, would have difficulty going through it. That helps prove the reality of Jesus Christ, and it

may be enough for some people to consider making Jesus the Lord of their lives. Don't be afraid of MLC's, instead, welcome them. Squeeze out every bit of good that is in them.

Question 11: Can you think of a time when you went through a difficult situation with grace and peace? Did someone comment on how well you went through it?

12A – MLCs can be difficult to go through, but they can also lead us to some amazing spiritual growth.

TIP #27

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Resolve Delayed Maturity

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When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things. 1 Corinthians 13:11

1A - It is important for us to attain maturity in all aspects of our life. This is because we influence those around us. If people see us engage in certain behaviors, they will consider doing them as well. Thus it is essential for us to model maturity - emotionally, intellectually, behaviorally and spiritually. A healthy, thriving society depends on it.

1B - Who is This Tip For?

This Tip is primarily written for young people. Knowing vital information when we are young means we won't have to struggle through some pitfalls that catch young people off guard in today's society. This tip will also alert us to weaknesses we may not know we have. Knowing our weaknesses, early in life, means we can guard them and work on them before they develop into unmanageable problems later in life.

Finally, knowing what a well-adjusted life looks like, early on, will better prepare us to raise our children successfully when that time comes.

Question 1: Can you think of any young people who are presently struggling in life?

2A - Delayed Maturity

Sometimes unhappiness is linked to areas of our lives that are not fully matured. Delayed maturity can come from early childhood trauma. It can also come from an unhealthy home environment growing up. Thirdly, it can come from people we associate with during our adolescent and adult years. Whatever the cause, delayed maturity can hinder us from developing inner peace, and from building friendships with emotionally healthy peers.

2B - Delayed Maturity is Common

Since it is difficult for anyone to go through childhood and adolescence without some form of negative influence, at home, at school, or within the community, most everyone has delayed maturity to some extent.

Question 2: Can you think of someone who has delayed maturity?

3A - Making a Commitment

The apostle Paul was confronted with this challenge at some point in his life. In our theme verse, it appears he made a conscientious decision to live in maturity. Here it is again.

> **1 Corinthians 13:11** "When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things."

For our good and the good of those around us, we too can make a conscientious decision that we will live in maturity in every area of our life. God gives us the power of choice. We can choose to make life decisions that lead us to success in all areas of our lives. This is one of them.

3B - Childhood Trauma

One of the causes of delayed maturity is childhood trauma. Some examples of childhood trauma are assault, molestation, severe teasing, neglect, and other forms of mental, physical, and emotional abuse. Depending on a child's ability to process trauma, the result can be overwhelming fear that prevents the child from returning to a natural state of calm in their minds. Such ongoing stress

can prevent normal emotional growth, thus, delaying their maturity.

Question 3: Can you think of someone who experienced childhood trauma? If so, are there any lingering effects from their past trauma in their life today?

4A - Observations

Occasionally, people will comment on our behavior peculiarities. Sometimes, we mistakenly embrace these peculiarities with a sense of pride, and carry on the behavior. For those of us unsure of our identities, these peculiarities can fill our need for individuality, but in an unhealthy way. We don't realize that the trait that people are noticing in us can hold us back from fully maturing. It is wise to take note of what others are saying about us. Their unwelcome observations may sting, but they can illuminate our blind spots and alert us to some self-development needed in our lives.

4B - Compare

One way for us to detect if delayed maturity has affected our life can be by comparing our lives with other people's lives in our age group. To do so, we could compare aspects such as the level of inner peace, social skills, educational achievements, and career success.

This method can be deceiving, however, in that, if the people we are comparing ourselves to, are also lacking in maturity, then the determinations we make about ourselves will not be accurate.

Question 4: Based on successful people in your age range, how do you compare with them as far as level of inner peace, social skills, educational achievements, and career success?

5A - One way to detect delayed maturity in us can be if we tend to be gullible; easily lead away from truth.

Question 5: Can you think of anyone who is easily lead away from truth?

6A - Disrespect

Another way to detect delayed maturity in us can be by examining the comments people make toward us. If we have delayed maturity, we may sometimes be teased or disrespected. It might be difficult for us to see the disrespect since it may have been happening to us our whole life. We may need to ask a trusted person to help us see if there is any disrespect in what others are saying to us. If any exists, we may need to adopt new ways of acting and responding to those who disrespect us.

At this point, we may also want to determine if we are disrespecting ourselves. If so, we'll want to make changes to how we view ourselves, as well.

Question 6: Can you think of any adults who are frequently teased or disrespected? Do you feel they might have delayed maturity?

7A - Respect and Christianity

As Christians, we need to aim for maximum respect. People may not agree with our faith stance, but they should respect us for our commitment to living a godly life. Below are some related verses.

a) **1 Corinthians 4:1** "Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God."

b) **1 Timothy 4:12** "Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe."

c) **Titus 2:15** "These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you."

7B - Enabling

Sometimes we enable people to carry on in their delayed maturity. For reasons of respect or sympathy, we may detect where people are emotionally, and we lower ourselves to their level of maturity. Doing this permits them to carry on acting the way they do.

7C - Enabling people in this way is particularly hurtful in the church of Jesus Christ. When we communicate the gospel message, it ought to come from a position of maturity. Otherwise, people may not respect the message we give.

Question 7: Can you think of anyone with delayed maturity with whom you lowered yourself to their level of maturity? Can you tell us about it?

8A - Communication

Another way to detect our delayed maturity can be in the content of our communication. In our desire to relate well with others, we can sometimes share too much information about our personal lives.

For example, in a job setting, it is best to present a professional persona that rarely goes into detail about our personal affairs.

Below are some Bible verses about talking too much.

a) **Proverbs 10:19** "When there are many words, transgression is unavoidable, But he who restrains his lips is wise."

b) **Proverbs 17:28** "Even a fool, when he keeps silent, is considered wise; When he closes his lips, he is considered prudent."

c) **Proverbs 21:23** "He who guards his mouth and his tongue, Guards his soul from troubles."

d) **Proverbs 29:20** "Do you see a man who is hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him."

e) **James 1:19** "This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger;"

For more on this subject see Tip #7 – Speak Right Words.

Question 8: Can you think of any adults who share too much personal information? Do you feel they may have delayed maturity?

9A - Speaking Skills

Another way to detect our delayed maturity can be if we have difficulty speaking to people, or have trouble talking to groups of people. Fear can prevent us from developing into calm, pleasant, enjoyable communicators.

Below are Bible verses about not fearing man.

a) **Deuteronomy 1:17** "You shall not show partiality in judgment; you shall hear the small and the great alike. You shall not fear man, for the judgment is God's. The case that is too hard for you, you shall bring to me, and I will hear it."

b) **1 Samuel 15:24** "Then Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned; I have indeed transgressed the command of the Lord and your words, because I feared the people and listened to their voice."

c) **Proverbs 29:25** "The fear of man brings a snare, But he who trusts in the Lord will be exalted."

d) **Isaiah 51:12** "I, even I, am He who comforts you. Who are you that you are afraid of man who dies And of the son of man who is made like grass,"

9B - Help with Speaking

A great organization that helps people become better communicators is Toastmasters. There are likely Toastmasters clubs near where you live. To find out where, go to www.toastmasters.org.

Question 9: Can you think of someone who has a speech impediment, or has trouble speaking to groups of people?

10A - Anger

Another way to detect delayed maturity in us can be if our personality is dominated by anger. As adults, we want to communicate in a respectful, mature way, without anger.

Here are two Bible verses telling us to avoid getting angry.

a) **Psalms 37:8** "Cease from anger and forsake wrath; Do not fret; it leads only to evildoing."

b) **Ephesians 4:31** "Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice:"

For more information on anger, see Tip #19 - Eliminate Anger.

Question 10: Can you think of anyone who struggles with excessive anger? Do you feel they may have delayed maturity?

11A - Complaining and Being Critical

Another way to detect delayed maturity in us can be if we criticize and complain. As an adult, we want to avoid being critical and complaining. Criticizing and complaining is a quick way to lose good people as friends, and can hinder us from making new friends. An excellent book on this subject is: *How to Win Friends and Influence People by Dale Carnegie*.

For more on eliminating complaining, see Tip #7 – Speak Right Words, and Affirmation #4 – I Only Speak Right Words.

Below are some scriptures about not complaining.

a) **Numbers 11:1-4** "Now the people became like those who complain of adversity in the hearing of the Lord; and when the Lord heard it, His anger was kindled, and the fire of the Lord burned among them and consumed some of the outskirts of the camp."

b) **1 Corinthians 10:10** "Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer."

c) **Philippians 2:14** "Do all things without grumblings or disputing:"

Question 11: Can you think of any adults who have a problem with being critical or complaining? Do you feel they may have delayed maturity?

12A - Confidentiality

Another way to detect delayed maturity in us can be if we break confidentiality. This is a serious breach of trust. A mature person considers confidentiality before talking about other people.

The Bible talks about this problem in the following verses.

a) **Psalms 101:5** "Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor, him I will destroy; No one who has a haughty look and an arrogant heart will I endure."

b) **Proverbs 11:13** "He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets, But he who is trustworthy conceals a matter."

c) **Proverbs 17:9** "He who conceals a transgression seeks love, But he who repeats a matter separates intimate friends."

d) **Proverbs 20:19** "He who goes about as a slanderer reveals secrets, Therefore do not associate with a gossip."

e) **1 Timothy 5:13** "At the same time they also learn to be idle, as they go around from house to house; and not merely idle, but also gossips and busybodies, talking about things not proper to mention."

Question 12: Can you think of any adults who easily break confidentiality? Do you feel they might have delayed maturity?

13A - Lying

Another way to detect delayed maturity in us can be if we lie. In Tip #7 – Speak Right Words, we list 11 verses that caution us against lying.

Question 13: Can you think of anyone who frequently lies? Do you feel they have delayed maturity?

14A - Entitlement Syndrome

Another way to detect delayed maturity in us may be if we think we are entitled to things. We're not happy until we get what's coming to us. Children will have temper tantrums when they don't get what they want. Adults can sometimes think, act and speak out when they don't get what they want. It can even happen in a Christian context, "I'm God's child, so I deserve thus and thus." When things don't go the way we would like, we should be gracious about it, and trust God to bring things our way in His time.

Question 14: Can you think of anyone who feels the world owes them this or that? Do you feel they have delayed maturity?

15A - Poor Work Attitude

Another way to detect delayed maturity in us can be if we are not giving 100% at our jobs. One of the reasons we show poor performance on our jobs is that our attitude is negative. A successful worker is one who offers top notch service while on the job. A way to brighten our attitude is to think of our job as a "close personal friend", and that we get to visit that "friend" every day.

Question 15: Can you think of anyone who doesn't want to work or has a negative attitude at work? If so, do you think their poor attitude is rooted in past trauma?

16A - Dress and Hygiene

Another way to detect delayed maturity in us can be how we dress, and how well we maintain our hygiene. We should seek to present ourselves well in public, remembering that we influence those around us. We should take care of our looks and hygiene without getting obsessed about our looks or how people view us.

Question 16: Can you think of any adults who frequently dress shabbily, or do not maintain their hygiene? Do you feel they might have delayed maturity?

17A - Family Needs

Another way to determine delayed maturity in us can be if we are not meeting all the needs of our family. We may have the time and ability to meet these needs, but we prefer to focus on other interests in our life. The Bible has strong words against this behavior.

a) **Ephesians 5:25** "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,"

b) **Ephesians 5:33** "Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband."

c) **1 Timothy 5:8** "But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his

household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."

d) **1 Peter 3:7** "You husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered."

Question 17: Can you think of any adults who aren't meeting the needs of their family members adequately? Do you feel they might have delayed maturity?

18A - Financial Responsibility

Another way to detect delayed maturity in us can be with the spending of our finances. As a responsible adult, we want to live within our means, financially. Preferably, we want to live debt free. Living under a load of debt can impact our happiness. Thus we need to have wisdom in budgeting and using our finances.

The Bible cautions us to stay clear of debt as stated below.

a) **Deuteronomy 15:6** "For the Lord your God will bless you as He has promised you, and you will lend to many nations, but you will not borrow; and you will rule over many nations, but they will not rule over you."

b) **Proverbs 22:7** "The rich rules over the poor, And the borrower becomes the lender's slave."

c) **Luke 14:28** "For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it?"

d) **Romans 13:8** "Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law."

18B - Retirement planning is also important for our financial health. As a responsible adult, we need to plan for our retirement. Thus we need to budget and invest so that when the time comes when we can no longer work, finances will be there to carry us through for the rest of our lives.

a) **Proverbs 13:22** "A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children, And the wealth of the sinner is stored up for the righteous."

b) **1 Timothy 5:8** "But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."

Question 18: Can you think of anyone who misspends their finances or neglects to plan for retirement? Do you feel they might have delayed maturity?

19A - Another way to detect delayed maturity in us can be if we have multiple adult partners. It is best to make a commitment to one individual, to be faithful to that person, for life. We do this for our mutual good, the good of our family, and the good of society.

A helpful question to ask ourselves can be: "What would the world be like if everybody lived the way I live?"

Here are some Bible verses on being faithful to one spouse.

a) **Ephesians 5:25** "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,"

b) **Ephesians 5:33** "Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband."

c) **1 Peter 3:7** "You husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered."

Question 19: Can you think of any adults who are not committed to one spouse? Do you feel they might have delayed maturity?

20A - Final Notes

If you see someone who is delayed in their maturity, make it a consideration to befriend that individual and keep in touch with them. When the time comes for them to make important decisions in their life, you can be there to offer insight that may not be evident to them, thus helping them make right decisions and possibly prevent a crisis in their life.

Romans 15:1 "Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves."

20B - Wikipedia has a good definition of psychological maturity:

"Psychological maturity is the ability to respond to the environment in an appropriate manner. This response is generally learned rather than instinctive."

With God's help, we can learn how to develop into mature individuals who become excellent examples for others to follow.

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TIP #28

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Sing

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1A - According to a number of sources*, singing can help us overcome anxiety and depression. One such write-up is the August 16, 2013, *Time Magazine* article entitled, "Singing Changes Your Brain." See quotes below.

> *"When you sing, musical vibrations move through you, altering your physical and emotional landscape. Group singing, for those who have done it, is the most exhilarating and transformative of all. It takes something incredibly intimate, a sound that begins inside you, shares it with a roomful of people and it comes back as something even more thrilling: harmony."*

1B - The article goes on to say, *"The elation may come from endorphins, a hormone released by singing, which is associated with feelings of pleasure. Or it might be from oxytocin, another hormone released during singing, which has been found to alleviate anxiety and stress. Oxytocin also enhances feelings of trust and bonding, which may explain why still more studies have found that singing lessens feelings of depression and loneliness."*

1C - A recent study even attempts to make the case that *"music evolved as a tool of social living,"* and that the pleasure that comes from singing together is our evolutionary reward for coming together cooperatively, instead of hiding alone.

Question 1: Have you experienced an improvement in your mood as a result of singing? What is your favorite style of music?

2A - Singing "Plus God."

Singing is a powerful force for good. Now, couple it to God's truths, and we have the potential for huge improvement in our mood. Here are two Bible examples of the power of singing:

In the Book of 2 Chronicles, we see how singing caused the Israelites to win a war.

> **2 Chronicles 20:21,22** "When he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who sang to the LORD and those who praised *Him* in holy attire, as they went out before the army and said, "Give thanks to the LORD, for His lovingkindness is everlasting." [22] When they began singing and praising, the LORD set ambushes against the sons of Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; so they were routed."

2B - In Acts 16, we see how singing praises to God opened prison doors where Paul and Silas were imprisoned for preaching the gospel.

> **Acts 16:22-26** "The crowd rose up together against them, and the chief magistrates tore their robes off them and proceeded to order *them* to be beaten with rods. [23] When they had struck them with many blows, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to guard them securely; [24] and he, having received such a command, threw them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.[25] But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the prisoners were listening to them; [26] and suddenly there came a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison house were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened."

Question 2: Do you have any stories of how

singing has helped you?

3A - There are many references in the Bible about singing. The following are scripture references highlighting the importance of singing.

Old Testament References

a) **Psalm 13:6** "I will sing to the Lord, Because He has dealt bountifully with me."

b) **Psalm 59:16** "But as for me, I shall sing of Your strength; Yes, I shall joyfully sing of Your lovingkindness in the morning, For You have been my stronghold And a refuge in the day of my distress."

c) **Psalm 95:1,2** "It is good to give thanks to the Lord And to sing praises to Your name, O Most High; To declare Your lovingkindness in the morning And Your faithfulness by night,"

d) **Psalm 100:1,2** "Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth. Serve the Lord with gladness; Come before Him with joyful singing."

e) **Psalm 104:33** "I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have my being."

f) **Psalm 147:1** "Praise the Lord! For it is good to sing praises to our God; For it is pleasant and praise is becoming."

New Testament References

g) **1 Corinthians 14:15** "What is the outcome then? I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the mind also; I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the mind also."

h) **Ephesians 5:19** "speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord;"

i) **Colossians 3:16** "Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God."

j) **James 5:13** "Is anyone among you suffering? Then he must pray. Is anyone cheerful? He is to sing praises."

3B - Martin Luther Highly Endorsed Singing

It may be interesting to know that the great reformer of the church, Martin Luther (1483-1546), highly endorsed singing praises to God. He wrote these words:

"When man's natural ability is whetted and polished to the extent that it becomes an art, then do we note with great surprise the great and perfect wisdom of God in music, which is, after all, His product and His gift; we marvel when we hear music in which one voice sings a simple melody, while three, four, or five other voices play and trip lustily around the voice that sings its simple melody and adorn this simple melody wonderfully with artistic musical effects, thus reminding us of a heavenly dance where all meet in a spirit of friendliness, caress, and embrace. . . ."

3C - "*A person who gives this some thought and yet does not regard it [music] as a marvelous creation of God, must be a clodhopper indeed and does not deserve to be called a human being; he should be permitted to hear nothing but the braying of asses and the grunting of hogs." (Luther, "Preface to Georg Rhau's Symphoniae iucundae," LW 53, cited by Buszin in "Luther on Music," The Musical Quarterly 32, no. 1 [1946]: 85)*

3D - God Sings Over You

It may surprise us to know that God sings over us.

Zephaniah 3:17 "The Lord your God is in your midst, A victorious warrior. He will exult over you with joy, He will be quiet in His love, He will rejoice over you with shouts of joy."

Question 3: Do you sing to the Lord in your daily walk with Him?

4A - An Act of Faith

Singing can be an act of faith. If we are feeling so low that all we want to do is go to bed and pull the covers over us, we can begin to sing God's praises. That is an act of faith, and it gets God's attention.

Here are verses about using our will to sing praises to God.

a) **Numbers 21:17** "Then Israel sang this song: "Spring up, O well! Sing to it!"

b) **Judges 5:3** ""Hear, O kings; give ear, O rulers! I—to the Lord, I will sing, I will sing praise to the Lord, the God of Israel."

c) **2 Samuel 22:50** "Therefore I will give thanks to You, O Lord, among the nations, And I will sing praises to Your name."

d) **Psalm 7:17** "I will give thanks to the Lord according to His righteousness And will sing praise to the name of the Lord Most High."

e) **Psalm 9:2** "I will be glad and exult in You; I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High."

f) **Psalm 18:49** "Therefore I will give thanks to You among the nations, O Lord, And I will sing praises to Your name."

g) **Psalm 27:6** "And now my head will be lifted up above my enemies around me, And I will offer in His tent sacrifices with shouts of joy; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the Lord."

h) **Psalm 30:12** "That my soul may sing praise to You and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks to You forever."

i) **Psalm 57:7** "My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises!"

j) **Psalm 57:9** "I will give thanks to You, O Lord, among the peoples; I will sing praises to You among the nations."

k) **Psalm 59:16** "But as for me, I shall sing of Your strength; Yes, I shall joyfully sing of Your lovingkindness in the morning, For You have been my stronghold And a refuge in the day of my distress."

l) **Psalm 59:17** "My strength, I will sing praises to You; For God is my refuge, the God who shows me favor.."

m) **Psalm 61:8** "So I will sing praise to Your name forever, That I may pay my vows day by day."

n) **Psalm 71:22** "I will also praise You with a harp, Even Your truth, O my God; To You I will sing praises with the lyre, O Holy One of Israel."

o) **Psalm 75:9** "But as for me, I will declare it forever; I will sing praises to the God of Jacob."

p) **Psalm 89:1** "I will sing of the lovingkindness of the Lord forever; To all generations I will make known Your faithfulness with my mouth."

q) **Psalm 101:1** "I will sing of lovingkindness and justice, To You, O Lord, I will sing praises."

r) **Psalm 108:1** "My heart is steadfast, O God; I will sing, I will sing praises, even with my soul"

s) **Psalm 108:3** "I will give thanks to You, O Lord, among the peoples, And I will sing praises to You among the nations."

t) **Psalm 146:2** "I will praise the Lord while I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being."

Question 4: Have you ever forced yourself to sing when you didn't feel like singing?

5A - Sing With Might!

a) **1 Chronicles 13:8** "David and all Israel were celebrating before God with all their might, even with songs and with lyres, harps, tambourines, cymbals and with trumpets."

b) **2 Chronicles 30:21** "The sons of Israel present in Jerusalem celebrated the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days with great joy, and the Levites and the priests praised the Lord day after day with loud instruments to the Lord."

c) **Nehemiah 12:42** "and Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malchijah, Elam and Ezer. And the singers sang, with Jezrahiah their leader."

d) **Psalm 51:14** "Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation; Then my tongue will joyfully sing of Your righteousness."

e) **Psalm 71:23** "My lips will shout for joy when I sing praises to You; And my soul, which You have redeemed."

f) **Psalm 138:1** "I will give You thanks with all my heart;I will sing praises to You before the gods."

Question 5: Have you ever sung praise to God with all your might?

6A - Sing About God's Past Works

a) **Exodus 15:1** "Then Moses and the sons of Israel sang this song to the Lord, and said, "I will sing to the Lord, for He is highly exalted; The horse and its rider He has hurled into the sea."

b) **1 Chronicles 16:9** "Sing to Him, sing praises to Him; Speak of all His wonders."

c) **Psalm 13:6** "I will sing to the Lord, Because He has dealt bountifully with me."

d) **Psalm 21:13** "Be exalted, O Lord, in Your strength; We will sing and praise Your power."

Question 6: Have you ever sung praise to God for the things He has done in the past?

7A - Sing Until Something Happens

2 Chronicles 5:13 "in unison when the trumpeters and the singers were to make themselves heard with one voice to praise and to glorify the Lord, and when they lifted up their voice accompanied by trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and when they praised the Lord saying, "He indeed is good for His lovingkindness is

everlasting," then the house, the house of the Lord, was filled with a cloud,"

7B - Tell People to Sing

a) **Numbers 21:17** "Then Israel sang this song: "Spring up, O well! Sing to it!"

b) **1 Chronicles 16:23** "Sing to the Lord, all the earth; Proclaim good tidings of His salvation from day to day."

c) **Psalm 9:11** "Sing praises to the Lord, who dwells in Zion; Declare among the peoples His deeds."

d) **Psalm 30:4** "Sing praise to the Lord, you His godly ones, And give thanks to His holy name."

e) **Psalm 33:3** "Sing to Him a new song; Play skillfully with a shout of joy"

f) **Psalm 47:6** "Sing praises to God, sing praises; Sing praises to our King, sing praises."

g) **Psalm 47:7** "For God is the King of all the earth: **si**ng ye praises with understanding."

h) **Psalm 66:2** "Sing praises to God, sing praises; Sing praises sing to our King, sing praises."

i) **Psalm 68:4** "Sing to God, sing praises to His name; Lift up a song for Him who rides through the deserts, Whose name is the Lord, and exult before Him."

j) **Psalm 68:32** "Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth, Sing praises to the Lord, Selah."

k) **Psalm 92:1** "Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth, Sing praises to the Lord, Selah."

l) **Psalm 96:2** "Sing to the Lord, bless His name; Proclaim good tidings of His salvation from day to day."

m) **Psalm 98:5** "Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre, With the lyre and the sound of melody."

n) **Psalm 105:2** "Sing to Him, sing praises to Him; Speak of all His wonders."

o) **Psalm 135:3** "Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good; Sing praises to His name, for it is lovely."

p) **Psalm 147:1** "Praise the Lord! For it is good to sing praises to our God; For it is pleasant and praise is becoming."

q) **Psalm 147:7** "Sing to the Lord with thanksgiving; Sing praises to our God on the lyre,"

r) **Isaiah 12:5** "Praise the Lord in song, for He has done excellent things; Let this be known throughout the earth."

s) **Isaiah 44:23** "Shout for joy, O heavens, for the Lord has done it! Shout joyfully, you lower parts of the earth; Break forth into a shout of joy, you mountains, O forest, and every tree in it; For the Lord has redeemed Jacob And in Israel He shows forth His glory."

t) **Isaiah 54:1** "Shout for joy, O barren one, you who have borne no child; Break forth into joyful shouting and cry aloud, you who have not travailed; For the sons of the desolate one will be more numerous Than the sons of the married woman," says the Lord."

u) **Jeremiah 20:13** "Sing to the Lord, praise the Lord! For He has delivered the soul of the needy one From the hand of evildoers."

v) **Zechariah 2:10** "Sing for joy and be glad, O daughter of Zion; for behold I am coming and I will dwell in your midst," declares the Lord."

w) **Psalm 95:1** "O come, let us sing for joy to the LORD, Let us shout joyfully to the rock of our salvation."

Question 7: Have you ever suggested to people that they sing to God?

8A - Sing with Instruments

a) **Psalm 33:2** "Give thanks to the Lord with the lyre; Sing praises to Him with a harp of ten strings."

b) **Psalm 33:3** "Sing to Him a new song; Play skillfully with a shout of joy."

c) **Psalm 87:7** "Then those who sing as well as those who play the flutes shall say, "All my springs of joy are in you."

d) **Psalm 149:3** "Let them praise His name with dancing; Let them sing praises to Him with timbrel and lyre."

Question 8: Do you play a musical instrument to God? If yes, what do you play?

9A - Sing a New Song

a) **Psalm 33:3** "Sing to Him a new song; Play skillfully with a shout of joy."

b) **Psalm 96:1** "Sing to the Lord a new song; Sing to the Lord, all the earth."

c) **Psalm 98:1** "O sing to the Lord a new song, For He has done wonderful things, His right hand and His holy arm have gained the victory for Him."

d) **Psalm 144:9** "I will sing a new song to You, O God; Upon a harp of ten strings I will sing praises to You,"

e) **Psalm 149:1** "Praise the Lord! Sing to the Lord a new song, And His praise in the congregation of the godly ones."

f) **Isaiah 42:10** "Sing to the Lord a new song, Sing His praise from the end of the earth! You who go down to the sea, and all that is in it. You islands, and those who dwell on them."

9B - Singing and Joy

a) **Psalm 67:4** "Let the nations be glad and sing for joy; For You will judge the peoples with uprightness And guide the nations on the earth. Selah."

b) **Psalm 100:2** "Serve the Lord with gladness; Come before Him with joyful singing."

c) **Psalm 126:2** "Then our mouth was filled with laughter And our tongue with joyful shouting; Then they said among the nations, "The Lord has done great things for them."

d) **Isaiah 49:13** "Shout for joy, O heavens! And rejoice, O earth! Break forth into joyful shouting, O mountains! For the Lord has comforted His people And will have compassion on His afflicted."

e) **Isaiah 51:11** "So the ransomed of the Lord will return And come with joyful shouting to Zion, And everlasting joy will be on their heads. They will obtain gladness and joy, And sorrow and sighing will flee away."

f) **Isaiah 52:9** "Break forth, shout joyfully together, You waste places of Jerusalem; For the Lord has comforted His people, He has redeemed Jerusalem."

g) **Isaiah 55:12** ""For you will go out with joy And be led forth with peace; The mountains and the hills will break forth into shouts of joy before you, And all the trees of the field will clap their hands."

h) **Zephaniah 3:14** "Shout for joy, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem!"

Question 9: Have you ever sung to God with great joy?

*Articles on Singing:

https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/12/171221101402.htm

https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/the-athletes-way/201811/feeling-lonely-singing-could-be-joyful-remedy

https://www.rhinegold.co.uk/music_teacher/31600/

TIP #29

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Join a Church

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1A - In this Tip, we are going to see that the Christian church is the center of the community. We will also look at the purpose of the church, part of which, is to show us how to live above anxiety and depression.

Not every congregation meets in a public building, but wherever a church meets, that is the focus of all of heaven. See below.

Hebrews 12:1 "Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,"

Thus, heaven has the greatest "reality show" in the universe. They are watching us GO!

1B - How the Church Got Started

After God, the Father, resurrected Jesus from the dead, Jesus commissioned His disciples to go and preach the Gospel of forgiveness through Christ Jesus throughout the whole world.

Mark 16:15, "And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation."

1C - Before the disciples were to evangelize the world Jesus had them wait for the Holy Spirit to empower them.

Acts 2:1-4 "When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. [2] And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. [3] And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. [4] And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance."

Since then the church has grown in number, and in knowledge of the scriptures.

1D - Esteem Mature Christians

In a local church, we can meet some amazing people, individuals who are eager to help us mature in our walk with God. Remember to value these people. We may not see their real value at the time, but years later we will see how instrumental they were in helping us grow spiritually.

a) **Proverbs 27:17** "Iron sharpens iron, So one man sharpens another."

b) **1 Timothy 5:17** "The elders who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching."

Question 1: Have you ever been inspired by someone in your church? If so, how did they help you?

2A - Churches and Unbelievers

As the church mobilizes its members, unbelievers will begin attending church services. Wise churches will always present the simple story of salvation through Christ at the end of the service to give unbelievers the opportunity to receive Jesus as their personal Savior. Once they accept Jesus, they can begin enjoying the benefits of connection to a local church.

2B - New Believers

Something to note about churches is, although they have some great people as members, churches that are growing will also have people who are just at the beginning of their spiritual growth. This means that there may be people who have come into the church with various negative habits, behaviors, and mindsets. As we get to know these new members, we might be negatively affected and hurt by them. This is normal. When this happens, it is best for us to forgive the person who has hurt us. We need to remember that we, ourselves, were once new believers, with problems needing help from our Savior and His church. We will want to quickly forgive these people so we can continue our growth in Christ.

Question 2: Have you ever been hurt by someone in your church? If so, how did it affect you, and what did you learn from it?

3A - Some people say they don't need to be part of a local church, but the Bible tells us not to neglect meeting together.

Hebrews 10:25 "not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near."

Question 3: Do you know any Christians who do not attend a local church?

4A - In the scripture below we see that Jesus intends to build a community of believers, and called it His church. His intention is for the church to be strong and victorious.

Matthew 16:18 "also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it."

Question 4: Do you know of a church which is vibrant and victorious?

5A - The Bible tells us to be watchful of people who try to bring discord into the church.

Romans 16:17 "Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them."

Question 5: Can you think of anyone who tends to bring division to a church?

6A - The Bible refers to the church as the body of Christ.

a) **Romans 12:5** "So we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another."

b) **1 Corinthians 12:27** "Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it."

c) **Ephesians 4:12** "For the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;"

d) **Ephesians 4:16** "from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love."

6B - Since the church is the Body of Christ, the church should know what is important to Jesus. Preaching and teaching the gospel of salvation is what is important to Jesus. See below.

a) **Matthew 10:32** "Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven."

b) **Matthew 28:19** "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,"

c) **Mark 16:15** "And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation."

d) **Luke 14:23** "And the master said to the slave, 'Go out into the highways and along the hedges, and compel them to come in, so that my house may be filled."

e) **John 3:3** "Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

f) **John 3:5** "Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

g) **John 15:16** "You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you."

Question 6: Can you tell us of a church where preaching the gospel is a priority?

7A - <u>A Unique Term</u>

Jesus used a unique term when talking about how people make it to heaven after they die. He said that a person needs to be "born again."

John 3:3 "Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is <u>born again</u> he cannot see the kingdom of God."

7B - Heaven is a place without sin, and only sinless people can get to heaven. A marvelous attribute with man is that we have freedom of choice – we can choose to do right, but we can also choose to do wrong. All of us, at some point in our lives, have chosen wrongly – we have sinned. The Bible tells us that only blood can take away sin.

a) **Leviticus 17:11** "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement."

b) **Hebrews 9:22** "And according to the Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness."

7C - We become born again when we admit we have sinned, and we acknowledge what Jesus did on the cross for us personally – Jesus took the punishment for our sin by allowing Himself to be nailed on the cross.

It's at the cross that a great exchange took place. The Apostle Paul tells us what God did when Christ died.

2 Corinthians 5:21 "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

7D - Jesus became sin for us so that we might become righteous (sinless) in God's sight. Our sin killed Jesus. But then God miraculously resurrected Jesus on the third day, and now we can all be forgiven of sin. We can also learn how to live free of sin, and be ready for heaven. Our old life of sin dies, and our new life in Christ begins – hence the term, "born again."

Question 7: Can you tell us of a church that uses the term "born again" when speaking to unbelievers about becoming a Christian?

8A - <u>Church Outreach</u>

The most important part of human life is making it to heaven, thus a church should try to be open as many hours a week as possible so unbelievers can come and find Jesus as Savior. Also, that people can be taught how to live free of all hindrances to happiness. In this way, a church is like a hospital; they help "broken" people.

Indeed, people should be able to come in anytime they feel the need, and be able to speak with someone, or learn how to overcome obstacles in their life.

Question 8: Can you tell us of a church that is open many hours a week, teaching people principles that help them know God, and to

learn how to overcome obstacles in their life?

9A - In addition to making the church available throughout the week, a church should have community events that give people in the community an opportunity to hear the Gospel message. Most churches offer a week-long Vacation Bible School during the summer. Some churches will rent a band-shell in a park and provide a "Church-in-the-Park" experience. Some churches have live theater presentations during Christmas or Easter.

9B - An effective way for a church to present the gospel is when churches work together on a community outreach event. Jesus prayed that such meetings would be held so that the world would believe that God sent Jesus.

> **John 17:21** "that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me."

Question 9: What methods of sharing the gospel have you seen churches use?

10A - In addition to sharing the good news of the gospel, the church should be able to help the community in practical ways. See below.

a) **Matthew 5:42** "Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you."

b) **Matthew 25:35** "For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in;"

c) **Matthew 25:44-45** "Then they themselves also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?' Then He will answer them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.'"

d) **Ephesians 4:28** "He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have something to share with one who has need."

e) **Hebrews 13:16** "And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased."

Question 10: In what ways have you seen churches help people in the community?

11A - <u>Church "In-Reach"</u>

In addition to reaching out to help unbelievers, a church should be helping people who are already members of the church. Here are some verses on the church helping its members.

a) **Acts 20:35** "In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

b) **Romans 15:1** "Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves."

c) **Galatians 6:2** "Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ."

d) **Galatians 6:10** "So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith."

e) **Philippians 2:4** "do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others."

f) **Hebrews 13:16** "And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased."

g) **James 2:15-17** "If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled," and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself."

h) **1 John 3:17** "But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?"

11B - As members of the Body of Christ, we are one body, and are to share the joys and the pains of our brothers and sisters in Christ. Social media makes it easy for us to stay connected with our church family and lets us know when help is needed.

Question 11: In what ways have you seen churches help its members?

12A - An effective way to meet the many needs of church members is to organize them into groups that meet outside of church meetings. There are various names given to these groups, for example, Home Groups, Home Fellowships, Life Groups,

Connect Groups. These groups offer a relaxed atmosphere to get to know one another and to learn about Christ. They also provide immediate, close-to-home care when someone is struggling.

a) **1 Corinthians 12:26** "And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it."

b) **Hebrews 13:5** "Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you."

Question 12: Do you know of any churches that have weekly home groups? Have you ever been helped by a home group?

13A - Supporting the Church Financially

Donating money can be a delicate issue. A wise church will be thrifty and transparent with their finances so that if a financial matter arises, it can be quickly resolved, so the church can get back to the job of spreading the Gospel.

Question 13: Can you think of a church that publishes an annual report on how donations were allocated?

14A - The Love of Giving

There is something about Jesus that makes people want to give. Zacchaeus, the despised tax collector, felt it. One day he climbed a tree to watch Jesus walk by. Jesus spotted him and said, *"Zaccheus, hurry and come down, for today I must stay at your house."* **(Luke 19:5)** That brief time with Jesus prompted Zacchaeus to give away a large sum of money.

Luke 19:8 "Zaccheus stopped and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, half of my possessions I will give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will give back four times as much."

14B - Other people gave more than Zacchaeus. The Apostles gave up everything to follow Him.

Matthew 19:27 "Then Peter said to Him, "Behold, we have left everything and followed You; what then will there be for us?"

Indeed, one way to spot a child of God is by their generosity.

Question 14: Have you ever felt the desire to give to God, or give to help others?

15A - God has instituted a method of meeting the needs of a local church called tithing. The tithing principle is one in which a person gives to God 10% of any profit they earn. This principle started with Abraham. The Bible says that after a war Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek.

Genesis 14:19-20 "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; [20] And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." He gave him a tenth of all."

15B - Many people believe Melchisedek was a type of Jesus because he had no beginning and no end. See verses below.

Hebrews 7:1-6 "For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham as he was returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, [2] to whom also Abraham apportioned a tenth part of all *the spoils*, was first of all, by the translation *of his name*, king of righteousness, and then also king of Salem, which is king of peace. [3] Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, he remains a priest perpetually."

15C - "[4] Now observe how great this man was to whom Abraham, the patriarch, gave a tenth of the choicest spoils. [5] And those indeed of the sons of Levi who receive the priest's office have commandment in the Law to collect a tenth from the people, that is, from their brethren, although these are descended from Abraham. [6] But the one whose genealogy is not traced from them collected a tenth from Abraham and blessed the one who had the promises."

15D - 430 years later, God gave the Levitical Law to Israel, which was a list of rules for God's people to live by. This included tithing.

a) **Leviticus 27:30** "Thus all the tithe of the land, of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's; it is holy to the Lord."

b) **Leviticus 27:32** "For every tenth part of herd or flock, whatever passes under the rod, the tenth one shall be holy to the Lord."

15E - 1500 years after that, we see that Jesus endorsed tithing.

a) **Matthew 23:23** "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and

faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others."

b) **Luke 11:42** ""But woe to you Pharisees! For you pay tithe of mint and rue and every kind of garden herb, and yet disregard justice and the love of God; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others."

Question 15: Can you tell us of a church that teaches the principle of tithing?

16A - <u>The Promise of Blessing</u>

In the following verse we see that God issues us a challenge.

Malachi 3:10 "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this," says the Lord of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows."

16B - Verse 10 says *"...test Me now in this," says the Lord of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows."* God wants us to tithe so we can help others. Helping others is a good enough reward to do so, but God doesn't stop there. He says He will bless us if we tithe. Many people testify that their lives have been blessed financially, and in other ways, because of tithing. That is wonderful, but this isn't why we tithe. We tithe because God tells us to tithe.

16C - Here are other scriptures on blessings that come from giving.

a) **Proverbs 11:24** "There is one who scatters, and yet increases all the more, And there is one who withholds what is justly due, and yet it results only in want."

b) **Luke 6:38** "Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure—pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return."

c) **2 Corinthians 9:6** "Now this I say, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully."

d) **2 Corinthians 9:7,8** "Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed:"

Question 16: Do you know people who have been blessed by tithing?

17A - <u>New Testament Giving</u>

Nothing is said about tithing after Jesus was resurrected, but people in the 1st century church gave much more than the tithe.

Acts 4:36-37 "Now Joseph, a Levite of Cyprian birth, who was also called Barnabas by the apostles (which translated means Son of Encouragement), and who owned a tract of land, sold it and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet."

17B - <u>Communal Living</u>

The New Testament church was a beautiful picture of peace and love amongst its members, with everyone sharing what they had with those in need.

a) **Acts 2:44-45** "And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need."

b) **Acts 4:32** "And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul; and not one of them claimed that anything belonging to him was his own, but all things were common property to them."

c) **Acts 4:34-35** "For there was not a needy person among them, for all who were owners of land or houses would sell them and bring the proceeds of the sales [35] and lay them at the apostles' feet, and they would be distributed to each as any had need."

d) **2 Corinthians 8:13-15** "For *this* is not for the ease of others *and* for your affliction, but by way of equality— [14] at this present time your abundance *being a supply* for their need, so that their abundance also may become *a supply* for your need, that there may be equality; [15] as it is written, "He who gathered much did not have too much, and he who gathered little had no lack."

Question 17: Can you tell us of a church that has a communal feel when it comes to sharing?

18A - <u>A Store House</u>

The Bible says that if church members are tithing, their church needs to have a "storehouse" –

a place where people can come when they are in need. The following scriptures show the importance of tithing and of having a storehouse.

Malachi 3:8-10 "Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing Me! But you say, 'How have we robbed You?' In tithes and offerings. [9] You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing Me, the whole nation *of you*! [10] Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this," says the LORD of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows.."

Question 18: Can you think of a church that has a "storehouse" from which to give to those in need?

19A - First Century Church Needs

The 1st-century church had great needs. They were feeding the poor and sending groups of people all over the world to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul had to do everything in his power to meet the many needs. Here is a strategy he used: He offered his preaching for free**.** He didn't want people to think he was preaching the gospel to make money. The following scriptures reveal this mindset.

a) **1 Corinthians 9:18** "What then is my reward? That, when I preach the gospel, I may offer the gospel without charge, so as not to make full use of my right in the gospel."

b) **1 Thessalonians 2:9** "For you recall, brethren, our labor and hardship, how working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God."

c) **2 Thessalonians 3:8** "nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with labor and hardship we kept working night and day so that we would not be a burden to any of you:"

Question 19: Do you know of a church that is sensitive to people's tendency to think *"churches only want your money"*?

20A - Paul could preach the Gospel for free because he was a tent-maker by trade.

Acts 18:3 "and because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and they were working, for by trade they were tent-makers."

Question 20: Do you know of anyone who funds their own Christian ministry?

21A - Financial Gain and Godliness

In Paul's day, some people taught that having great wealth was a sign of Godliness. Paul refuted that belief extensively.

1 Timothy 6:5-11 "and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. [6] But godliness *actually* is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment. [7] For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. [8] If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content. [9] But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. [10] For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. [11] But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance *and* gentleness."

21B - Two Opponents

Is it wrong to be a wealthy Christian? No, but Jesus told us that wealth can be a god in our lives. He said that we cannot serve, both, God and money.

Matthew 6:24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth."

21C - Money is not our friend. It seeks to displace God in our lives. We must be careful. We can be at a time in our lives when we are enthralled with God, and busy doing things to further His kingdom, and all of a sudden we get a desire to buy something, or we get a better job offer, or we get a business idea. These are not bad things, but they *can* affect our commitment for God. A person's zeal for God is their most valuable possession. And the devil will go after it, and steal it in any way he can. Here are verses related to losing our focus for God.

a) **Revelation 2:4-5** "But I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love. [5] Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place—unless you repent."

b) **Revelation 3:16** "So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth."

21D - Jesus addresses the issue of money on a number of occasions. Let's look at the following

verses to get a sense of what money is from Jesus's perspective.

Below, we read how Jesus advised people not to hoard their wealth, but instead to use their money to help others.

a) **Matthew 6:19-21** "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. [20] But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal;"

b) **Luke 12:20,21** "But God said to him, 'You fool! This *very* night your soul is required of you; and *now* who will own what you have prepared?' [21] So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God**.**"

c) **Luke 12:33** "Sell your possessions and give to charity; make yourselves money belts that do not wear out, an inexhaustible treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near nor does a moth destroy."

21E - Below, we read how hard it is for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 19:23,24 "And Jesus said to His disciples, "Truly I say to you, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. [24] Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

21F - Following, we read how Jesus warns people who are rich.

Luke 6:24,25 "But woe to you who are rich, for you are receiving your comfort in full. [25] Woe to you who are well-fed now, for you will be hungry. Woe to you who laugh now, for you will mourn and weep."

21G - Below, we read how Jesus advised people to be content with their wages.

Luke 3:14 "*Some* soldiers were questioning him, saying, "And *what about* us, what shall we do?" And he said to them, "Do not take money from anyone by force, or accuse *anyone* falsely, and be content with your wages."

21H - In Matthew 21:12, Mark 11:15 and John 2:15, we see how Jesus flipped over the tables of the money-changers in the temple.

Matthew 21:12,13 "And Jesus entered the temple and drove out all those who were buying and selling in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who were selling doves. [13] And He *said to them, "It is written, 'MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER'; but you are making it a ROBBERS' DEN."

21J - Jesus did not think to highly of money, in fact He despised it. Does that mean we aren't supposed to have a savings account or a retirement plan? It can be wise to have these, so it is a delicate question, and can only be answered by each person individually. As we take time to pray and grow close to God, we will learn how to hear His voice. This will help us see where we should allocate our financial resources.

21K - In the final scene of the movie *Schindler's List*, in which Schindler is surrounded by the 1,100 people he saved from Nazi concentration camps, he says slowly and painfully, *"I could have got more out. I could have sold that car and got ten more people out." "And this pin, it is gold. I could have sold it and got two more people out…"* It is a solemn scene, and it illustrates the love and commitment he had developed to help the Jewish people in need.

21L - What is written on *our* 'Schindler's list'? What are *our* priorities? What do we aspire to do with our lives? May our 'Schindler's list' be filled with noble goals and achievements, so that when we come face to face with God, we will stand unashamed, hoping only to hear the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Matthew 25:21 "His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master."

21M - May each of us be "God-conscious" and "others-conscious" so that God can use us to help those in need. And may those responsible for distributing funds for operating church ministries do it wisely. May those who receive these funds, do their jobs well so that many will be helped, and many will hear the Good News of what Jesus did for them, and be challenged to give their lives to Christ, and be saved.

Question 22: Do you know of a church that is watchful of how they spend their money? Do they have a deep desire to share the Gospel message with unsaved people?

22A - Joining a great church can have a wonderful effect on our lives, ushering us toward happiness and fruitfulness in every area of our lives.

The Happiness Basics

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Meeting Start

The numbered paragraphs below will direct the content of the conversation during the meeting. The Chairperson will read their own parts marked in ***bold italics*** *font,* and the meeting participants will read their parts marked in **Bold Arial** font.

1 - ***Chairperson: Welcome everyone to the Victory Tips Recovery Group! My name is*** ____(Chairperson name)____***, and I will be the Chairperson for our meeting. Before we start, please turn off the ringer on your cell phone. Also, please try to limit background noise during the call. Use the Mute feature if need be.***

2 - ***Chairperson: Do we have any visitors?*** *[If so, kindly acknowledge and thank them for joining in, and ask who wants to participate or just listen in.]* ***Our meetings have two main sections: The Happiness Basics, and the Happiness Tips. As we go through the program, I will read from the bold italics text marked 'Chairperson', and I will call on others who wish to have Speaker Roles by reading from the*** **Bold Arial** ***font text. Please keep your comments to about thirty seconds so everyone has a chance to speak. The last fifteen minutes are reserved for Prayer Requests and members praying for each other. We should finish in 90 min.***

3 - ***Chairperson: So, let's get started!***
[Chairperson or attendee reads the Recovery Prayer below].

Recovery Prayer

"Dear God, thank you for giving us your Word to heal us. We joyfully dedicate this time to renew our minds to the truths in your Word. With your help we will use your Word to bring down strongholds of fear and deception. We agree that your Word is a light to our path and it leads us to a place of peace, confidence and happiness. We thank you in advance for everything you have done for us, and will do in our lives. You have made our future bright, and we praise you for this. In Jesus's name. Amen."

4 - ***Chairperson: This program promotes confidentiality. We teach its importance so those unfamiliar with it can learn about it and begin abiding by it. Whatever is said in the group stays in the group. Here to read our Confidentiality Commitment is*** **_____(Speaker name)_____**.

5 - Confidentiality Speaker: Thank you, ____(Chairperson name)_____.

"We value your confidentiality. Whatever we hear you say at a group or in private conversation we promise not to repeat to anyone. This includes your contact information. We will never share any information about you without your permission."

Back to you ____(Chairperson)_____.

6 - ***Chairperson: Thank you,*** _____(Speaker name)_____***. We will now ask participants for any praise reports.*** *[Chairperson now asks each person who wants to participate if they have any Praise Reports.]*

7 - ***Chairperson*****:** ***We will now give a quick overview of how to achieve happiness by using the Happiness Basics. We will be using*** *(The Regular Version of the Happiness Basics or the Quick Version of the Happiness Basics using the numbered paragraphs marked with an "a").* ***God wants us to be Happy. To talk more about this, is our Happiness Speaker,*** **___(Speaker)___.**

8 – Happiness Speaker: Thank you, ___(Chairperson)___. Indeed, God wants us to enjoy our journey in life, as seen in the following verses. I will pick one randomly to read, and speak briefly on how it applies to God wanting us to be happy. The verse I choose is _____.

(8a – Happiness Speaker: Thank you, ___(Chairperson)___. Indeed, God wants us happy. The "List 1" verses below show us that God wants us to be happy. The "List 2" verses show us how we can be happy even when we have problems in our lives. I will choose verse _____ from List _____, and speak briefly on how it applies to God wanting us to be happy.)

(8b - List 1 Verses - God Wants Us To Be Happy)

1) **Psalm 19:8** "The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes."

2) **Psalm 28:7** "The Lord is my strength and my shield; My heart trusts in Him, and I am helped; Therefore my heart exults, And with my song I shall thank Him."

3) **Psalm 30:11,12** "You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; You have loosed my sackcloth and girded me with gladness, That my soul may sing praise to You and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks to You forever."

4) **Psalm 32:11** "Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, you righteous ones; And shout for joy, all you who are upright in heart."

5) **Psalm 64:10** "The righteous man will be glad in the Lord and will take refuge in Him; And all the upright in heart will glory."

6) **Psalm 89:16** "In Your name they rejoice all the day, And by Your righteousness they are exalted."

7) **Psalm 97:11** "Light is sown like seed for the righteous And gladness for the upright in heart."

8) **Ecclesiastes 2:26** "For to a person who is good in His sight He has given wisdom and knowledge and joy,"

9) **Ecclesiastes. 5:19** "Furthermore, as for every man to whom God has given riches and wealth, He has also empowered him to eat from them and to receive his reward and rejoice in his labor; this is the gift of God."

10) **Ecclesiastes. 11:8** "Indeed, if a man should live many years, let him rejoice in them all…"

11) **Luke 10:20** *(Jesus speaking*) *"*Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven."

12) **John 10:10** "*(Jesus speaking)* "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."

13) **John 15:11** "*(Jesus speaking)* "These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full."

14) **Acts 2:25, 26** "For David says of Him, 'I saw the Lord always in my presence; For He is at my right hand, so that I will not be shaken. 'Therefore my heart was glad and my tongue exulted; Moreover my flesh also will live in hope;"

15) **Romans 15:13** "Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

16) **1 Corinthians 15:57** "but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

17) **2 Corinthians 2:14** "But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ…"

18) **Galatians 5:22** "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness",

19) **Philippians 1:25** "Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy in the faith,"

20) **Philippians 4:4** "Rejoice in the Lord always: again I will say, Rejoice."

21) **1 Thessalonians 5:16** "Rejoice always;"

22) **1 John 1:4** "These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete."

23) **2 John 1:12** "Though I have many things to write to you, I do not want to do so with paper and ink; but I hope to come to you and speak face to face, so that your joy may be made full."

9 - Happiness Speaker: So, God wants us to be happy. We can even be happy when we have problems in our lives. From the verses below, I will pick one randomly to read, and speak briefly on how it applies to us being happy even when we have problems in our lives. The verse I choose is _____.

(9a - List 2 Verses - God Wants Us Happy Even With Problems)

1) **Psalm 27:6** "And now my head will be lifted up above my enemies around me, And I will offer in His tent sacrifices with shouts of joy; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the Lord."

2) **Psalm 119:143** "Trouble and anguish have come upon me, Yet Your commandments are my delight."

3) **Luke 6:22,23** "Blessed are you when men hate you, and ostracize you, and insult you, and scorn your name as evil, for the sake of the Son of Man. [23] Be glad in that day and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven. For in the same way their fathers used to treat the prophets."

4) **John 16:33** *(Jesus speaking)* "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."

5) **Romans 5:3-5a** "And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; and hope does not disappoint,"

6) **Romans 8:18** "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us."

7) **Romans 8:28** "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."

8) **2 Corinthians 4:17** "For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison,"

9) **2 Corinthians 7:4** "Great is my confidence in you; great is my boasting on your behalf. I am filled with comfort; I am overflowing with joy in all our affliction."

10) **2 Corinthians 12:9,10** *(In this passage, Paul was troubled by a 'thorn in his flesh.')* "And He (Jesus) has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." [10] Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong."

11) **Colossians 1:11** "strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously."

12) **James 1:2** "Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,"

13) **1 Peter 1:6** "In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials,"

14) **1 Peter 3:14** "But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;"

15) **1 Peter 4:12,13** "Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you;. [13] but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation."

16) **1 Peter 4:14** "If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you."

10 - Happiness Speaker: So even in troubles, we can be happy! Back to you, _ (Chairperson) _.

(10a - Happiness Speaker: So, we can be happy! Back to you, _(Chairperson)_.)

11 - ***Chairperson: Thank you,*** ____(Speaker name)____***. So, it is God's will that we be happy, but it goes deeper than that. God wants us to be strong in our spirit. Here to tell us more on that is our Strong Speaker,*** ____(Speaker)____.

12 - Strong Speaker: Thank you, ___(Chairperson)_____. Indeed, God wants people to be strong in spirit, and from the verses below, I will pick one randomly to read, and speak briefly on how it applies to us being strong in our spirit. The verse I choose is _____.

(12a - Strong Speaker: Thank you, ___(Chairperson)_____. Indeed, God wants us strong in spirit. The "List 1" verses below show us that God wants people to be strong in spirit. The "List 2" verses show us that God also wants us to stand firm and steadfast, and be bold, established, and confident. I will choose verse _____ from List _____, and speak briefly on how it applies to God wanting us to be strong (or stand firm and steadfast, or be bold, established and confident)**.)**

1) **Joshua 1:6** "Be strong and courageous, for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them."

2) **Joshua 1:7** "Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go."

3) **Joshua 1:9** "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

4) **2 Samuel 22:33** "God is my strong fortress; And He sets the blameless in His way."

5) **2 Samuel 22:40** "For You have girded me with strength for battle; You have subdued under me those who rose up against me."

6) **Psalm 31:24** "Be strong and let your heart take courage, All you who hope in the Lord."

7) **Proverbs 24:5** "A wise man is strong, And a man of knowledge increases power."

8) **Romans 8:37** "But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us."

9) **1 Corinthians 16:13** "Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong."

10) **Ephesians 1:19** "and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might"

11) **Ephesians 3:16** "that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man,"

12) **Ephesians 3:20** "Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us,"

13) **Ephesians 6:10-11** "Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. [11] Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil."

14) **Philippians 4:13** "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me."

15) **Colossians 1:10-**11 "so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously…"

16) **2 Timothy 1:7** "For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline."

17) **2 Timothy 2:1** "You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus."

18) **1 Peter 5:10** "After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you."

13 - Strong Speaker: So, God wants us to be strong emotionally, but it goes deeper than that. God wants us to stand firm and steadfast, and be bold, established, and confident! From the verses below, I will pick one randomly to read, then share briefly on how it ties in to God wanting us to be steadfast, bold, established or confident. The verse I choose is _____.

(13a - List 2 Verses - God Wants Us to Stand Firm and Steadfast, and be Bold, Established, and Confident!)

1) **Psalm 20:8** "They have bowed down and fallen, But we have risen and stood upright."

2) **Psalm 138:3** "On the day I called, You answered me; You made me bold with strength in my soul."

3) **Proverbs 10:25** "When the whirlwind passes, the wicked is no more, But the righteous has an everlasting foundation."

4) **1 Corinthians 15:58** "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord."

5) **1 Corinthians 16:13** "Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong."

6) **2 Corinthians 5:6,8** "Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. [8] we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord."

7) **2 Corinthians 7:4** "Great is my confidence in you; great is my boasting on your behalf. I am filled with comfort; I am overflowing with joy in all our affliction."

8) **Ephesians 3:12** "In whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him."

9) **Ephesians 3:13** "Therefore I ask you not to lose heart at my tribulations on your behalf, for they are your glory."

10) **Ephesians 3:16** "that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man,"

11) **Ephesians 6:13** "Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm."

12) **Ephesians. 6:19** "and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of

my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel,"

13) **Philippians 1:6** "For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus."

14) **Philippians 1:20** "according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I will not be put to shame in anything, but that with all boldness, Christ will even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death."

15) **Philippians 1:27** "Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;"

16) **Philippians 4:1** "Therefore, my beloved brethren whom I long to see, my joy and crown, in this way stand firm in the Lord, my beloved."

17) **Colossians 1:23** "if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister."

18) **Colossians 2:7** "having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude."

19) **1 Thessalonians 3:8** "or now we really live, if you stand firm in the Lord."

20) **1 Thessalonians. 3:13** " so that He may establish your hearts without blame in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints."

21) **2 Thessalonians 2:15** "So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by letter from us."

22) **2 Thessalonians 2:16,17** "Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has loved us and given us eternal comfort and good hope by grace, comfort and strengthen your hearts in every good work and word."

23) **2 Peter 1:12** "Therefore, I will always be ready to remind you of these things, even though you already know them, and have been established in the truth which is present with you."

24) **James 5:8** "You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near."

14 - Strong Speaker: So, God wants us to stand firm and steadfast, and be bold, established and confident. Back to you, ____(Chairperson)____.

(14a - Strong Speaker: So, God wants us strong. Back to you, ____(Chairperson)____.)

15 - *Chairperson: Thank you, ____(Speaker)____. If God's will is for us to be happy and strong, what do you think gets in the way of us experiencing these attributes in our lives? Hosea 4:6 gives us a clue: It says, "My people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge." Knowledge is powerful. Here to help us understand the importance of gathering knowledge is our Knowledge Speaker, __(Speaker)___.*

16 (16A) - Knowledge Speaker: Thank you, ___(Chairperson)___. God urges us to gain knowledge, and from the verses below, I will pick one randomly to read, and then speak briefly on how it applies to the importance of gathering knowledge. The verse I choose is _____.

1) King Solomon prayed to God for wisdom and knowledge when he was crowned king.

2 Chronicles 1:9-12 "Now, O Lord God, Your promise to my father David is fulfilled, for You have made me king over a people as numerous as the dust of the earth. [10] Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people, for who can rule this great people of Yours?" [11] God said to Solomon, "Because you had this in mind, and did not ask for riches, wealth or honor, or the life of those who hate you, nor have you even asked for long life, but you have asked for yourself wisdom and knowledge that you may rule My people over whom I have made you king, [12] wisdom and knowledge have been granted to you. And I will give you riches and wealth and honor, such as none of the kings who were before you has possessed nor those who will come after you."

2) **Proverbs 2:3-5** "For if you cry for discernment, Lift your voice for understanding; If you seek her as silver And search for her as for hidden treasures; Then you will discern the fear of the Lord And discover the knowledge of God."

3) **Proverbs 3:13,14** "How blessed is the man who finds wisdom And the man who gains

understanding. For her profit is better than the profit of silver And her gain better than fine gold."

4) **Proverbs 3:20-22** "By His knowledge the deeps were broken up And the skies drip with dew. My son, let them not vanish from your sight; Keep sound wisdom and discretion, So they will be life to your soul And adornment to your neck."

5) **Proverbs 4:1**"Hear, O sons, the instruction of a father, And give attention that you may gain understanding,"

6) **Proverbs 4:5-7** "Acquire wisdom! Acquire understanding! Do not forget nor turn away from the words of my mouth. "Do not forsake her, and she will guard you; Love her, and she will watch over you. "The beginning of wisdom is: Acquire wisdom; And with all your acquiring, get understanding."

7) **Proverbs 4:13** "Take hold of instruction; do not let go. Guard her, for she is your life."

8) **Proverbs 8:5** "O naive ones, understand prudence; And, O fools, understand wisdom."

9) **Proverbs 8:10** "Take my instruction and not silver, And knowledge rather than choicest gold."

10) **Proverbs 16:16** "How much better it is to get wisdom than gold! And to get understanding is to be chosen above silver."

11) **Proverbs 18:15** "The mind of the prudent acquires knowledge, And the ear of the wise seeks knowledge"

12) **Proverbs 23:23** "Buy truth, and do not sell it, Get wisdom and instruction and understanding."

13) **Proverbs 24:3-5** "By wisdom a house is built, And by understanding it is established; [4] And by knowledge the rooms are filled With all precious and pleasant riches. [5] A wise man is strong, And a man of knowledge increases power."

14) **Proverbs 24:14** "Know that wisdom is thus for your soul; If you find it, then there will be a future, And your hope will not be cut off."

17 - Knowledge Speaker: So knowledge is valuable and vital for healing from anxiety and depression. Back to you, ___(Chairperson)___.

18 - *Chairperson: Thank you, ____(Speaker)____. This program places a great emphasis on God's Word as our way toward peace and happiness. Here to help us understand the importance of God's Word is our Word Speaker, ____(Speaker)____.*

19 - Word Speaker: Thank you, ____(Chairperson)____. God's Word is very important, and from the verses below, I will pick one randomly to read, and speak briefly on how it applies to the importance of God's Word. The verse I choose is _____.

(19a - Word Speaker: Thank you, ____(Chairperson)____. Indeed. The "List 1" verses below show us that God's Word is very important. The "List 2" verses show us the importance of building God's Word into our hearts. The "List 3" verses show us that God's Word helps us stay away from sin, which causes heart-ache. I will choose verse _____ from List _____, and speak briefly on how it applies to the importance of God's Word.)

1) **Psalm 107:20** "He sent His word and healed them, And delivered them from their destructions."

2) The longest psalm in the Bible is Psalm 119. It has 176 verses! It is 2 ½ times longer than the next longest Psalm. The whole psalm talks about God's Word, how the writer loves God's Word. Do you think God is trying to teach us something about the importance of His Word?

3) **Psalm 138:2** "I will bow down toward Your holy temple And give thanks to Your name for Your lovingkindness and Your truth; For You have magnified Your word according to all Your name."

4) **Proverbs 4:4** "Then he taught me and said to me, "Let your heart hold fast my words; Keep my commandments and live;"

5) **Isaiah 55:11** "So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.'"

6) **Luke 6:47-48** "(Jesus speaking) Everyone who comes to Me and hears My words and acts on them, I will show you whom he is like: he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid a foundation on the rock; and when a flood occurred, the torrent burst against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built."

7) **John 1:1** "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

8) **John 8:37** Jesus told us how important God's Word is in John 8:37, saying, "I know that you are Abraham's descendants; yet you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you."

9) **John 15:7** Jesus told us how important God's Word is in John 15:7, saying, "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you."

10) **John 17:17** "Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth." *(God's Word is truth. And we know that the truth sets us free!)*

11) **Ephesians 6:17** "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." *(You have to know the Word before you can use it!)*

20 - Word Speaker: God's Word is important. But, building God's Word into our hearts, is equally important. From the verses below, I will pick one randomly to read, and speak briefly on how it applies to the importance of building God's Word into our hearts. I choose verse ____.

(20a - List 2 Verses - Building God's Word into Our Hearts)

1) **Exodus 13:9** "And it shall serve as a sign to you on your hand, and as a reminder on your forehead, that the law of the Lord may be in your mouth; for with a powerful hand the Lord brought you out of Egypt."

2) **Deuteronomy 6:6-9** "These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. 8 You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. 9 You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."

3) **Joshua 1:8** "This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success."

4) **Psalm 1:2-3** "But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night. He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, Which yields its fruit in its season And its leaf does not wither; And in whatever he does, he prospers."

5) **Psalm 119:11** "Your word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against You." *(Memorizing scriptur can help us live "sin-free".)*

6) **Proverbs 2:1** "My son, if you will receive my words And treasure my commandments within you, Make your ear attentive to wisdom, Incline your heart to understanding; For if you cry for discernment, Lift your voice for understanding; If you seek her as silver And search for her as for hidden treasures; Then you will discern the fear of the Lord And discover the knowledge of God."

7) **Proverbs 4:4** "Then he taught me and said to me, "Let your heart hold fast my words Keep my commandments and live;" *(Memorize scripture "and live.")*

8) **Proverbs 4:20,21** "My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your sight; Keep them in the midst of your heart."

9) **Jeremiah 20:9** "But if I say, "I will not remember Him Or speak anymore in His name," Then in my heart it becomes like a burning fire Shut up in my bones; And I am weary of holding it in, And I cannot endure it."

10) **Luke 4:1-4** *Jesus used God's Word to defend himself when he was tempted by the devil:* Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led around by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And He ate nothing during those days, and when they had ended, He became hungry. And the devil said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread." And Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone.'"

11) **Luke 4:5-8** "And he led Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said to Him, "I will give You all this domain and its glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore if You worship before me, it shall all be Yours." Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God and serve Him only.'"

12) **Luke 4:9-13** "And he led Him to Jerusalem and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple,

and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here; for it is written, 'He will command His angels concerning You to guard You,' and, 'On their hands they will bear You up, So that You will not strike Your foot against a stone.'" And Jesus answered and said to him, "It is said, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'" When the devil had finished every temptation, he left Him until an opportune time."

13) **Luke 6:43-45** "or there is no good tree which produces bad fruit, nor, on the other hand, a bad tree which produces good fruit. For each tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they pick grapes from a briar bush. The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good; and the evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth what is evil; for his mouth speaks from that which fills his heart."

14) **Luke 6:49** "But the one who has heard and has not acted accordingly, is like a man who built a house on the ground without any foundation; and the torrent burst against it and immediately it collapsed, and the ruin of that house was great."

15) **John 1:14** "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth."

16) **John 8:31,32** "So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

17) **Romans 10:8** "But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart"—that is, the word of faith which we are preaching,"

18) **Colossians 3:16** "Let the word Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God."

19) **James 1:21** "Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls."

21 - Word Speaker: One cause of emotional pain can be sin. God's Word has an answer for that. From the verses below, I will pick one randomly to read, and speak briefly on how it applies to God having an answer for sin. The verse I choose is number _____.

(21a - List 3 Verses - God's Word Prevents Emotional Pain From Sin)

1) **Psalm 119:2,3** "How blessed are those who observe His testimonies, Who seek Him with all their heart. They also do no unrighteousness They walk in His ways."

2) **Psalm 119:9** "How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Your word."

3) **Psalm 119:11** "Your word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against You. *(When we memorize God's Word, we are able to recite God's Word throughout our day. By doing so, we are less apt to fall into temptation to sin.)*

4) **Psalm 119:127,128** "Therefore I love Your commandments Above gold, yes, above fine gold. Therefore I esteem right all Your precepts concerning everything, I hate every false way."

22 (22a) - *Word Speaker:* Since God's Word is so important, we should ask ourselves: 1) How much time do I spend each day reading and meditating on God's Word? 2) Could it be that my struggles are tied to: a) a lack of interest in God's Word, or b) a lack of understanding of what it teaches about victorious living. Consider praying this prayer: "God, please give me a hunger for your Word." Back to you, ____(Chairperson)_____.

23 (23a) - *Chairperson: Thank you, ____(Speaker)____. Three personal attributes we recommend you develop in your life are: Faith, Truth, and Love. Here to help us understand the importance of Faith, is our Faith Speaker, ____(Speaker)____.*

24 (24a) - Faith Speaker: Thank you, ____(Chairperson)____. The attribute of Faith is an amazing tool. It enables us to roll our problems over to God, thus freeing us up to enjoy life while we wait for God to move on our behalf. The following are Biblical principles that can help us live in Faith, and keep us in a state of constant peace. From the principles below, I will pick one randomly to read, and speak, briefly, on

how it helps us live by Faith. I choose Principle ____.

The Principles Of Faith

1) Based on Hebrews Chapter 11, we see that God places a strong emphasis on a person's faith. **Hebrews 11:6** *says, "And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him."*

2) Based on Galatians 5:6, faith works along side of love. **Galatians 5:6** *says, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love."*

3) Based on James 2:26, faith must be demonstrated. (Belief + Action = Faith) **James 2:26** says, *"For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."* **James 2:22** says, *"You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected."*

4) Based on Hebrews 10:35,36, faith must be patient. ***Hebrews 10:35,36*** *says, "Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised."* ***Hebrews 6:12*** *says, "so that you will not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises."*

5) Based on 2 Corinthians 5:7, we do not judge a problem's solvability by how impossible *it looks* or how bad *we feel*. **2 Corinthians 5:7** *says, "For we walk by faith, not by sight:"*

6) Based on Mark 11:24, we believe we have received the thing we have asked for, even before we actually have it. Jesus says in **Mark 11:24**, *"Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they will be granted you."* In **Mark 11:22** He says, *"And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive."*

7) Based on James 5:15, we see that faith can heal a sick body. **James 5:15** says, *"and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him."*

8) Based on 1 Timothy 6:12 & Ephesians Chapter 6, we understand that the life of faith is a *fight*. But based on Romans 8:37, we believe we are more than able to win this fight. **1 Timothy 6:12** says, *"Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses."* **Romans 8:37** says, *"But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us."*

9) Based on James 1:6-8, we see that people who waiver in their faith shouldn't expect to receive anything from God. **James 1:6-8** *says, "But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways."*

10) Based on Romans 10:17, faith must be developed. It does not come naturally. It comes from reading and speaking God's Word. **Romans 10:17** *says, "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ."*

25 (25a) - Faith Speaker: This principle helps us with _____. Back to you, ___(Chairperson)___.

26 - *Chairperson: Thank you, ____(Chairperson)____. Here to help us understand the importance of Truth, is our Truth Speaker,* ____(Speaker)____.

27 (27a) - Truth Speaker: Thank you, ___(Chairperson)____. The key verses for the Truth Speaker are John 8:31-32, in which Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in Him: *"If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."* Indeed, the Truth *can* set us free! Circumstances take place in our lives that cause us to believe lies. These lies tell us that problems will never change, habits cannot be broken, loved ones will never change, and so on. The antidote to these lies is Truth. For every problem in our lives there is a Truth that can set us free emotionally from the problem. The problem may still be there, but the anxiety related to it is gone. Below are some common lies we sometimes believe. From the lies below, I will pick one randomly to read, and speak, briefly, on how it hinders our happiness, and how the truth can set us free. I will choose lie number ____.

1) God doesn't love me.
2) I could never get married.
3) I could never forgive that person.
4) I could never be healed physically.
5) I could never be happy with my spouse.
6) Nobody would want to be my friend.
7) I need to have a spouse to be happy.
8) I could never be happy in my job.
9) I need money or things to be happy.
10) I'll never progress past this level of success.
11) I need to be loved and accepted to be happy.
12) I could never break free from my addiction.
13) I'll never have what it takes to be gainfully employed.
14) My worrying about problems shows that I am responsible.
15) My past is so bad, I'll never recover from my emotional wounds.
16) I could never be happy without this person. (e.g. A loved one who passes away)
17) I need to change my bodily features to be happy and accepted. *(e.g. weight changes or cosmetic surgery.)*
18) I need to act a certain way to be happy and accepted. *(e.g. "I need to be the life of the party.")*

28 (28a) - Truth Speaker: By seeing these lies for what they are, and using the Truth of God's Word to renew our minds, we can be set free from these lies! Back to you, ___(Chairperson)___.

29 - *Chairperson: Thank you,* ____(Speaker)____. *Here to help us understand the importance of Love, is our Love Speaker,* ____(Speaker)____.

30 (30a) - Love Speaker: Thank you, ___(Chairperson)___. Love helps us respond properly to life's challenges. We may know *what* we should do, but it is Love that allows us to do it willfully and cheerfully. Love is not based on feelings, but on our commitments. Love is a decision we make each day and is proven by our actions. From the verses below, I will pick one randomly to read, and speak, briefly, on how it applies to the importance of Love. I will choose verse ____.

1) **Romans 13:8** "Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law."
2) **Matthew 5:43-45** "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' [44]But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, [45] so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous."
3) **1 Corinthians 13:3** "And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing."
4) **1 Corinthians 13:4** "Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant,"
5) **1 Corinthians 13:5** "(Love) does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered,"
6) **1 Corinthians 13:6** "Love does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth;"
7) **1 Corinthians 13:7** "Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."
8) **1 Corinthians 13:8** "Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away."
9) **1 Corinthians 13:13** "But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love."
10) **Galatians 5:13** "For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another."
11) **Galatians 5:14** "For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."
12) **Galatians 5:22,23** "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law."
13) **Ephesians 4:2** "with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love,"
14) **1 Peter 1:22** "Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of

the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart:"

15) **1 Peter 4:8** "Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins."

16) **1 John 4:7** "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God."

17) **1 John 4:18** "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love."

31 (31a) - Love Speaker: So Love is vital to living a happy fruitful life! Back to you, ___(Chairperson)___.

32 - *Chairperson: Thank you,* ____(Speaker)____. *Affirmations are designed to be spoken out loud, enabling us to use our own self-help resource, our tongue. Here to help us understand the importance of affirmations is our Affirmations Speaker,* ____(Speaker)____.

33 (33a) - Affirmations Speaker: Thank you, ____(Chairperson)____. As we hear truth spoken by our own mouth, our belief system begins to change. Positive beliefs spawn positive thoughts, and positive thoughts create and maintain happiness. This program offers both generic and Bible-based affirmations. We can even create our own affirmations, customized for situations we come up against. I will pick a Generic Affirmation to read, and share, briefly, how it helps us. The affirmation I choose is ____.

Generic Affirmations

1) "I can start again."
2) "I play to win."
3) "I don't enable."
4) "My job is easy."
5) "I love a challenge."
6) "My job is to believe."
7) "I am bigger than fear."
8) "I bounce back easily."
9) "I live my life effortlessly."
10) "I handle change easily."
11) "Knowledge empowers."
12) "Every days a good day."
13) "Say it till you believe it."
14) "I respond rather than react."
15) "I always see a silver lining."
16) "God is bigger than the facts."
17) "I live by faith, not by sight."
18) "When I'm in a battle, I fight."
19) "Self-discipline is my strong point."
20) "Faith is a lifestyle I can learn."
21) "My best defense is a strong offence."
22) "Am I angry? I may be judging."
23) "I stop running and start confronting."
24) "I see myself as a peaceful, loving person."
25) "You can't upset me. (I won't let you.)"
26) "I see myself as a winner before I see my victory."
27) "It's not my problem, it's God's problem."
28) "I don't make their problem, my problem."
29) "My positive believing produces positive thinking."
30) "God can bring good out of any of my mistakes."
31) "God responds to faith, not always to need."
32) "My problems are opportunities to see God move."
33) "There's a stress-cancelling response to my problem."
34) "Problems are inevitable, stress is optional."
35) "I forgive everybody immediately after they hurt me."
36) "I don't focus on what I've lost, I focus on what I've gained."
37) "I see my prayers getting answered before I see the actual answer to my prayers."
38) "I see myself as healed in my body before I see and feel the changes I desire.

34 (34a) - Affirmations Speaker: I will now choose one of the Bible-based Affirmations below, in which we will all read 3 statements from. The Affirmation I choose is number ____.

Bible-Based Affirmations

1) "I Do Not Fear" Affirmation (Pg 110)
2) "I Am Strong" Affirmation (Pg 112)
3) "I Flow in Harmony and Love" Affirmation (Pg 114)

4) "I Only Speak Right Words" Affirmation (Pg 115)
5) "I Only Think Right Thoughts" Affirmation (Pg 116)
6) "I Am Happy Because…" Affirmation (Pg 117)

35 (35a) - Affirmation Speaker: Positive affirmations spoken boldly, define what we believe is true. Doing so positions us to receive more from God and from life! So speak boldly! Back to you, ____(Chairperson)____.

36 - *Chairperson: Thank you,* ____(Speaker)____. *There's an easy way to keep our thinking in check. Here to tell us more on that is our Beliefs Speaker,* ____(Speaker)____.

37 (37a) - Beliefs Speaker: Thank you, ____(Chairperson)____. Our thinking is influenced by our beliefs. Positive beliefs help us keep our responses to life's problems positive. We recommend adopting the following six Core Beliefs. The idea is to make these Core Beliefs the final word in our lives. No matter what our feelings say or what the circumstances try to tell us, these foundational beliefs are what we will use when thinking about ourselves, and when making decisions in our lives. For any belief that feels untrue, we simply say the scriptures associated with that belief over and over until the belief feels true. I will choose a Core Belief to read 3 verses from. The core belief I pick is number ____.

Core Beliefs

1) "I Believe God loves me, and that I am valuable." (Pg 124)
2) "I Believe Christ's crucifixion paid for my sin." (Pg 126)
3) "I Believe God wants me to live in perfect peace." (Pg 130)
4) "I Believe I have an enemy – Satan." (Pg 132)
5) "I Believe I have another enemy – my fleshly appetites." (Pg 138)
6) "I Believe God wants me to enjoy good physical health." (Pg 139)

38 (38a) - Beliefs Speaker: So, adopting and developing this Core Belief will help us with _____. Back to you, ____(Chairperson)____.

39 - *Chairperson: Thank you,* ____(Speaker)____. *Our unhappiness can sometimes be easily diagnosed by pinpointing what the hindrance is. Here to talk to us about hindrances to happiness is our Hindrance Speaker,* ____(Speaker)____.

40 (40a) - Hindrance Speaker: Thank you, ____(Chairperson)____. There are many hindrances to happiness. From the hindrances below, I will pick one randomly to read, and speak, briefly, on how it affects our happiness. The Hindrance I choose is number ____.

Hindrances

1) Self-pity "If only…"
2) Being unthankful
3) Ostracized by community
4) Double-mindedness
5) Lack of purpose
6) Believing lies
7) Guilt (real or imagined)
8) Entitlement mentality
9) Sin, or sinful thinking
10) Unforgiveness
11) Debt
12) Shame
13) Anger
14) Isolation.
15) Perfectionism
16) Lack of patience
17) Physical tiredness
18) Doubt and Unbelief
19) A rebellious heart
20) Mourning a loss
21) Pouting
22) Being unthankful
23) Trying to figure it out
24) Being judgmental
25) Enabling abusive behavior

41 (41a) - Hindrance Speaker: Let's live free of hindrances so we can brightly shine God's love in everything we do! Back to you, ____(Chairperson)____.

42 - *Chairperson: Thank you,* ____(Speaker)____. *We'll now work with one of the Happiness Tips. The place we left off last time was Page #____. *[Or the Chairperson may choose any Tip.]*

(After working a Tip, the Chairperson proceeds below.)

43 (43a) - Gospel Speaker: We believe it is important to have a relationship with God, and that this relationship can help us find healing in our emotions. Let's take turns reading the following statements in the order we've been using. *[Chairperson prompts speakers as before.]*

1) The main purpose of the Bible is to show mankind their need of Jesus Christ.

2) God wants to fellowship with mankind, but He can't until the issue of their sin has been dealt with.

3) Throughout the Bible there are prophecies about Jesus, and there are stories about Jesus.

4) All of these are there to show us the importance of Jesus.

5) Because of our tendency to sin, we need someone who would pay the penalty of our sin. And that was Jesus.

6) **John 3:16** says, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."

7) **Romans 1:16** says, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."

8) **Romans 6:23** says, "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

9) **Romans 5:8** says, "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

10) Jesus, God's Son, came to earth to show us how to live, and to pay the penalty for our sin by dying on the cross.

11) Once we personally receive forgiveness for our sin, and ask Jesus to guide our lives, we find New Life! And we become part of God's family.

12) **John 3:3** Jesus says, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

13) So, we must be born again. Is there anyone here who would like to become born again? And find New Life! And find forgiveness for their sins and become a part of God's family?

44 - ***Chairperson: Please read along as I say the invitational prayer.***

> **"Dear God, I see the sins that I have committed. I believe Jesus paid the penalty for my sin by His crucifixion. I receive your forgiveness for my sin. And I ask you to come into my life, and help me to live the rest of my life in a way that pleases you. Amen."**

45 - ***Congratulations! If you've prayed this prayer sincerely, you are now born again! You are now a part of God's family! And we, as a group, will help you learn how to live a happy, fruitful life in Christ. Welcome to God's family!***

46 - Chairperson: ***For those of us who are already born again, God asks us to tell the world that they can be born again. Here are some verses that bear this out. Let's take turns reading these verses out loud.***

14) **Mark 16:15** (Jesus tells us) "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation."

15) **2 Corinthians 5:20**, "Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God."

16) **2 Corinthians 5:18**, "Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation,"

17) **2 Corinthians 5:14**, "For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died;"

18) **2 Corinthians 3:6**, "who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life."

47 - ***So let's challenge ourselves to tell the Good News of Jesus wherever we go this week. May God help us!***

48 - ***We would like to take time now to pray for each other's needs.*** *[Chairperson asks each person individually if they have any prayer requests, writing each one down, then asks who would like to pray for each person. Then the Chairperson goes back through the list asking each person who offered to pray to do so.]*

49 - ***Does anyone have any final words before we conclude our meeting?***

50 - ***I will now offer a closing prayer...***

51 - ***Our meetings are held*** *[tell days/times].*

<u>Meeting Options</u>

Occasionally, Chairpersons may elect to have someone give their testimony of how God help them recover from a mental health condition. Another option is to add a segment in the meeting devoted to sharing The Lord's Supper with everyone.

Affirmation #1

"I Do Not Fear"

****

Throughout your day, try to recite out loud, the "I Do Not Fear" Affirmation.

Prayer of Dedication: "Father, I dedicate myself to live a life free of all fear. I now speak these Bible-based statements out loud to build in me a rock solid faith that keeps me at peace all day long."

****

1) It is the Lord who goes before me, He is with me, He will not leave me, nor fail me. I do not fear, nor am I dismayed. Based on Deuteronomy 31:8.
2) No one is able to stand before me, all the days of my life. As God was with Moses, He is with me; He will never fail me, nor forsake me. Based on Joshua 1:5.
3) I am strong and courageous, I am careful to obey all the laws of God, I do not turn from it, to the right or to the left, and I succeed wherever I go. Based on Joshua 1:7.
4) I am strong and courageous. I do not tremble, nor am I dismayed, for the Lord my God is with me wherever I go. Based on Joshua 1:9.
5) I listen to God and I live securely, I am at ease from the dread of evil. Based on Proverbs 1:33.
6) I walk in my way securely, my foot does not stumble. Based on Proverbs 3:23.
7) When I lie down, I will not be afraid, when I lie down, my sleep is sweet. Based on Proverbs 3:24.
8) I am not afraid of sudden fear, nor the onslaught of the wicked when they come. The Lord is my confidence, He keeps my foot from being caught. Based on Proverbs 3:25-26.
9) The fear of man brings a snare, but because I trust in the Lord, I am exalted. Based on Proverbs 29:25.
10) The Lord is a shield for me, He lifts up my head. Based on Psalm 3:3.
11) I lie down and sleep. I wake again, because the Lord sustains me. Based on Psalm 3:5.
12) I am not afraid of tens of thousands of people who have set themselves against me, all around. Based on Psalm 3:6.
13) When evil doers come up against me, they stumble and fall. Based on Psalm 27:2.
14) The LORD is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the defense of my life, of whom shall I dread? Based on Psalm 27:1.
15) Though a host encamps against me, my heart will not fear; though war rises against me, I am confident. Based on Psalm 27:3.
16) For in my time of trouble, He conceals me in His tabernacle; In the secret place of His tent, He hides me. He lifts me up on a rock**.** Based on Psalm 27:5.
17) My head is lifted up above the enemies all around me; In His tent I offer shouts of joy; I sing praises to the LORD. Based on Psalm 27:6.
18) Though my father and mother forsake me, the LORD will take me up. Based on Psalm 27:10.
19) I wait for the LORD; I am strong and my heart takes courage, I wait for the LORD. Based on Psalm 27:14.
20) I sought the Lord and He answered me, and delivered me from all my fears. Based on Psalm 34:4.
21) I stop myself from being angry, I forsake my wrath, I do not fret for any reason. Based on Psalm 37:8.
22) There is no reason for my soul to be in despair. My hope is in God, And I praise Him, He is the help of my countenance. Based on Psalm 42:11.
23) I dwell in the shelter of the Most High and I abide in the shadow of the Almighty. Based on Psalm 91:1.
24) I say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in him I trust." Based on Psalm 91:2.
25) Surely God delivers me from the trappers snare and from the deadly pestilence. Based on Psalm 91:3.
26) God covers me with His pinions (feathers), under His wings I seek refuge, His faithfulness is my shield and bulwark. Based on Psalm 91:4. **(**Bulwark is a defensive wall.)
27) I do not fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in

the darkness, nor the destruction that destroys at noon. Based on Psalm 91:5-6. (Pestilence means deadly disease.)

28) A thousand fall at my side, ten thousand at my right hand, it does not approach me. Based on Psalm 91:7.

29) With my eyes I see the recompense of the wicked, because I make the Lord, who is my refuge, my dwelling place. Based on Psalm 91:8,9. (Recompense means reward or payment)

30) No evil befalls me, neither any plague comes near my home. Based on Psalm 91:10.

31) God commands His angels charge over me, to guard me, in all my ways. They bear me up in their hands, so I do not dash my foot against a stone. Based on Psalm 91:11-12.

32) I tread upon the lion and the cobra. The young lion and the serpent I trample under my feet. Based on Psalm 91:13.

33) Because God loves me, He delivers me, God sets me securely on high, because I know His name. Based on Psalm 91:14.

34) I call upon God and He answers me. He is with me in trouble, and He rescues me, and honors me. Based on Psalm 91:15.

35) God is my salvation; I trust and I am not afraid. The Lord God is my strength and my song. He is my salvation. Based on Isaiah 12:2.

36) I encourage myself when I'm exhausted, and I strengthen my knees, I say to my heart, "Take courage! Do not fear! My God will come through with vengeance. He comes! and saves me!" Based on Isaiah 35:3-4.

37) I do not fear, for God is with me. I do not anxiously look about me, for God is my God, He strengthens me, He helps me, He upholds me, with His righteous right hand. Based on Isaiah 41:10.

38) I do not fear, for the Lord my God holds my right hand. It is He who says, "Do not fear, I will help you." Based on Isaiah 41:13.

39) I do not fear, for He says, "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine." Based on Isaiah 43:1.

40) I do not fear, for He says, "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you; when you walk through the fire, you shall not be scorched, neither shall the flame burn you." Based on Isaiah 43:2.

41) God has given me power to trample on serpents and scorpions, over all the power of the enemy. (Nothing injures me!) Based on Luke 10:19.

42) I am not afraid, for it is God my father's good pleasure to give me the kingdom. Based on Luke 12:32.

43) I have not received the spirit of slavery that leads to fear, but the spirit of adoption, as sons, so I cry "Abba Father!" Based on Romans 8:15.

44) Because God is for me, I do not fear those against me. Based on Romans 8:31.

45) I stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel, without being alarmed by my opponents. Based on Philippians 1:27-28.

46) I do not overly care about anything, but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, I make my requests to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, guards my heart and my mind in Christ Jesus. Based on Philippians 4:6-7. (Supplication means petition)

47) God has not given me a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love, and of discipline. Based on 2 Timothy 1:7.

48) God has said to me, "I will never desert you, nor forsake you." Based on Hebrews 13:5.

49) I confidently say, "The Lord is my helper, I am not afraid what man can do to me? Based on Hebrews 13:6.

50) I do not fear, for there is no fear in love. Perfect love casts out all fear. God has made me perfect in love. Based on 1 John 4:18.

51) I cast all my anxieties onto God, because He cares <u>for</u> me. Based on 1 Peter 5:7.

Let's go back to the Affirmation Speaker role.

AFFIRMATION #2
"I AM STRONG"

****

Throughout your day, try to recite out loud, the "I Am Strong" Affirmation.

Prayer of Dedication: "Father, I dedicate myself to live this day with a 'strength-conscious' mindset. I now speak these Bible-based statements out loud to build in me a strong spirit that carries me victoriously through each challenge in my day!"

****

1) No man is able to stand before me all the days of my life, as God was with Moses, He is with me, my God will not leave me, nor forsake me, I am strong, I have good courage. Based on Joshua 1:5.
2) For by God, I can run upon a troop and leap over a wall. Based on 2 Samuel 22:30.
3) God's Word is proven, He is a shield to me, because I trust Him. Based on 2 Samuel 22:31.
4) God is my rock and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I take refuge; He is my shield, the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. Based on Psalm 18:2.
5) God arms me with strength, He makes my way blameless, He makes my feet like hinds' feet, He sets me on high places, God trains my hands for battle, so that my arms can bend a bow of bronze. Based on Psalm 18:32-34.
6) I pursue my enemies, I've overtaken them, I do not turn back until they are consumed, I shatter them, so they cannot rise, they fall under my feet. Based on Psalm 18:37,38.
7) God has armed me with strength for battle, God subdues those under me and those who rise up against me. Based on Psalm 18:39.
8) I wait on the Lord; I am strong, and my heart takes courage, I wait on the Lord. Based on Psalm 27:14.
9) The Lord is my strength and my shield, My heart trusts in Him. Based on Psalm 28:7.
10) Because of Your favor upon my life, You have made my mountain to stand strong. Based on Psalm 30:7.
11) I am strong and my heart takes courage, I strengthen my heart as I hope in the Lord. Based on Psalm 31:24.
12) There is no reason for me to despair or be disturbed. My hope is in God. And I praise Him, He helps my countenance shine, He is my God. Based on Psalm 42:11.
13) Through God, I push back my adversaries, Through God's name, I trample those who rise up against me. Based on Psalm 44:5.
14) God is in the midst of me, I will not be moved: God helps me when the morning dawns. Based on Psalm 46:5.
15) God is my salvation, and my glory, the rock of my strength, My refuge is in God. Based on Psalm 62:7.
16) I proclaim good news; Kings of armies flee. I remain, and I divide the spoil! Based on Psalms 68:11,12.
17) God is the strength of my heart forever. Based on Psalm 73:26.
18) I dwell in the shelter of the Most High, and I abide in the shadow of the Almighty. Based on Psalm 91:1.
19) I flourish like a palm tree, I grow like a cedar in Lebanon, I am planted in the house of the Lord, and I flourish in the courts of my God. Based on Psalm 92:12 & 13.
20) God satisfies my mouth with good things; so that my youth is renewed like the eagles. Based on Psalm 103:5.
21) God causes me to be fruitful, and has made me stronger than my enemies. Based on Psalm 105:24.
22) God rescues my soul from death, my eyes from tears, and my feet from stumbling. Based on Psalm 116:8.
23) God strengthens me according to His Word. Based on Psalm 119:28.
24) Because I trust in the Lord, I am like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, I abide forever. Based on Psalm 125:1.

25) In the day that I cry out to God, He answers me, and emboldens me, with strength in my soul. Based on Psalm 138:3.

26) God is the Lord of my rock. He trains my hands for war, and my fingers for battle. Based on Psalm 144:1.

27) The Lord is my confidence, and He keeps my feet from being caught. Based on Proverbs 3:26.

28) Because I fear the Lord, I have strong confidence, and my children have a place of refuge. Based on Proverbs 14:26.

29) I gird myself with strength, I make my arms strong. Based on Proverbs 31:17.

30) Strength and dignity are my clothing, I smile at the future. Based on Proverbs 31:25.

31) I am righteous through Christ, I hold to my way, I have clean hands, I grow stronger and stronger. Based on Job 17:9.

32) God gives me strength when I'm weary. When I lack might, He increases my power. (My strength is increasing!) Based on Isaiah 40:29.

33) As I wait for the Lord, I gain new strength. I mount up with wings like eagles; I run, and do not get tired, I walk, and do not become weary. Based on Isaiah 40:31.

34) No weapon formed against me prospers, every tongue that accuses me in judgment, God condemns. This is my heritage, God vindicates me! Based on Isaiah 54:17.

35) I know my God, I am strong and I take action! Based on Daniel 11:32.

36) Jesus has given me power and authority over all demons, He has given me power to cure diseases! Based on Luke 9:1, Mark 6:7,13 and Matthew 10:1,6, Matthew 28:18.

37) I go out and preach everywhere, the Lord working with me and He confirms His Word with signs and wonders! Based on Mark 16:20.

38) Jesus has given me authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all power of the enemy, nothing injures me. Based on Luke 10:19.

39) I receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon me. (I invite the Holy Spirit to enter my life, I believe I have His power!) Based on Acts 1:8.

40) With great power, I give witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, abundant grace is upon me! Based on Acts 4:33.

41) In all things, I overwhelmingly conquer through Christ who loves me. Based on Romans 8:37.

42) I bear up under everything, I believe all things, I hope all things, I endure all things. Based on 1 Corinthians 13:7.

43) I am steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, and I know that my toil is not in vain, in the Lord. Based on 1 Corinthians. 15:58.

44) I am alert, I stand firm in the faith; I act like men, I am strong! Based on 1 Corinthians 16:13.

45) I may be afflicted in every way, but I'm not crushed. I may be perplexed, but I'm not in despair, I may be persecuted, but I'm not forsaken; I may be struck down, but I'm not destroyed! Based on 2 Corinthians 4:8,9.

46) Christ's grace is sufficient for me; His power is perfected in my weakness. Based on 2 Corinthians 12:9.

47) Finally, I am strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might. Based on Ephesians 6:10.

48) I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Based on Philippians 4:13.

49) The Lord makes me to increase in love toward others so that He establishes my heart without blame in holiness before God at the coming of my Lord Jesus with all His saints. Based on 1 Thessalonians 3:13.

50) The God of all grace, who has called me into His eternal glory, in Christ, will himself perfect, confirm, strengthen, and establish me! Based on 1 Peter 5:10.

Let's go back to the Affirmation Speaker role.

AFFIRMATION #3

"I FLOW IN HARMONY AND LOVE"

****

Throughout your day, try to recite out loud, the "I Flow in Harmony and Love" Affirmation.

Prayer of Dedication: "Father, I dedicate myself to live this day with a love-saturated mindset. I now speak these Bible-based statements out loud, to build in me a heart of love that is present in everything I think, say, and do."

****

1) I am careful to remove the "log" out of my own eye, before trying to remove the speck out of my brothers (or sisters) eye. Based on Matthew 7:5.
2) When Jesus saw the crowd, He had compassion on them. (I too have compassion on all who are in my life.) Based on Matthew 9:36.
3) I work hard to support the weak, I remember the words of the Lord Jesus, it is more blessed to give, than to receive. (Jesus is making me into a very compassionate, giving person!) Based on Acts 20:35.
4) I do not think of myself more highly than I ought, but I have sound judgment, allowing others to have importance too. Based on Romans 12:3.
5) I am devoted to others, with brotherly love; I give preference to others, I give them honor. Based on Romans 12:10.
6) I contribute to the needs of the saints, I practice hospitality. Based on Romans 12:13.
7) I do not repay evil for evil, I respect what is right in the sight of all men. Based on Romans 12:17.
8) I am not overcome by evil, I overcome evil with good. Based on Romans 12:21.
9) I love my neighbor as myself. I never do wrong to my neighbor. When I love, I am fulfilling the law. Based on Romans 13:9,10.
10) I behave properly, as in the day, never carousing and drunkenness, never in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, nor in strife or jealousy. Based on Romans 13:13.
11) I pursue things which make for peace, and the building up of others. Based on Romans 14:19.
12) I please my neighbor, for His good, for His edification. Based on Romans 15:2.
13) God who gives me perseverance and encouragement, helps me to be likeminded with other people, according to Christ Jesus. Based on Romans 15:5.
14) Father, your love has been shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Spirit, I therefore am patient, I am kind, I am not jealous, I do not brag, and I am not arrogant. Based on 1 Corinthians 13:4.
15) I do not act unbecomingly. I do not seek my own way. I am not provoked. I do not take into account a suffered wrong. Based on 1 Corinthians. 13:5.
16) I do not rejoice in unrighteousness, I rejoice in the truth. Based on 1 Corinthians 13:6.
17) I bear up under all things, I believe the best about people. I'm very hopeful, I endure all things. (Thus, I am very patient with people.) Based on 1 Corinthians 13:7.
18) My love never fails. Based on 1 Corinthians 13:8.
19) I pursue love. And I desire spiritual gifts. Based on 1 Corinthians 14:1.
20) When I see a brother or sister caught in a trespass, I restore such a person in a spirit of gentleness. And I watch myself to be sure that I myself do not fall into sin. Based on Galatians 6:1.
21) With all humility and gentleness, and with patience, I show tolerance toward others, in love. Based on Ephesians 4:2.
22) I am diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit with others, in the bond of peace. Based on Ephesians 4:3.
23) My conduct is worthy of the gospel of Christ, I stand firm in one spirit, with one mind, striving together, for the faith of the gospel. Based on Philippians 1:27.
24) I make Paul's joy complete, I have the same mind with others, I am united in spirit, I am intent on one purpose. Based on Philippians 2:2.
25) I do nothing from selfishness, or empty conceit, but with humility of mind, I regard others more important than myself. Based on Philippians 2:3.

26) I don't merely look out for my own interests, but also for the interests of others. Based on Philippians 2:4.

27) I do not neglect doing good, and sharing with others, for of such sacrifices, God is pleased. Based on Hebrews 13:16.

28) I have some of the world's goods, and when I see my brother in need, I do not close my heart against him, because God's love abides in me. Based on 1 John 3:17.

Let's go back to the Affirmation Speaker role.

AFFIRMATION #4

"I ONLY SPEAK RIGHT WORDS"

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Throughout your day, try to recite out loud, the "I Only Speak Right Words" Affirmation.

Prayer of Dedication: "Father, I dedicate myself to live this day speaking only right words, words that are free of all negatives. I now speak these Bible-based statements out loud to remind me to keep all my words positive and faith-filled!"

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1) My words are as a honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and healing to the bones. Based on Proverbs 16:24.

2) My words are like a wellspring of wisdom, and as a flowing brook. Based on Proverbs18:4.

3) Because I guard my mouth and my tongue, I guard my soul from troubles. Based on Proverbs 21:23.

4) Because I am righteous, my mouth speaks wisdom, and my tongue speaks what is just. Based on Psalm 37:30.

5) My heart thinks of good things. I speak things that help others. My words are like those of a ready writer, recording good things. Based on Psalm 45:1.

6) I put away from me a deceitful mouth; and devious speech, I put far from me. Based on Proverbs 4:24.

7) I speak God's Words, because they are life to me, they are health to all my body. Based on Proverbs 4:22.

8) All the words of my mouth, are in righteousness; there is nothing crooked, or perverted in them. Based on Proverbs 8:8.

9) I speak noble things, and the opening of my lips reveal right things only. My mouth speaks truth, and wickedness is an abomination to my words. Based on Proverbs 8:6,7.

10) I have the mouth of a righteous man, my words are like a fountain of life. Based on Proverbs 10:11.

11) Because I am righteous, my words are like choice silver. Based on Proverbs 10:20.

12) Because I am righteous, my words feed many. Based on Proverbs 10:21.

13) Because I am righteous, the words of my mouth bring forth wisdom, continually. Based on Proverbs 10:31.

14) Because I am righteous, my lips know what is acceptable. Based on Proverbs 10:32.

15) I am satisfied with good, by the fruit of my words. Based on Proverbs 12:14.

16) Because I have God's wisdom, my words bring healing. Based on Proverbs 12:18.

17) Because I guard my words, I preserve my life, He that talks too much invites ruin into his life. (Therefore, I watch what I say.) Based on Proverbs 13:3.

18) Because a harsh word stirs up anger, I answer people gently, and my gentle answers turn away wrath. Based on Proverbs 15:1.

19) Because I continually seek knowledge, my wisdom helps me speak what is acceptable. The mouth of fools spout foolishness. Based on Proverbs 15:2.

20) My soothing words produce a tree of life. Based on Proverbs 15:4.

21) I have joy when I answer properly. My timely words produce delight! Based on Proverbs 15:23.

22) As I prepare my heart each day with prayer and the Word, I believe the answers of my tongue will be from the Lord. Based on Proverbs 16:1.

23) Gold and jewels are valuable. My knowledgeable words are also valuable. Based on Proverbs 20:15.

24) My soft words break a bone. (Bone-like resistance from others). Based on Proverbs 25:15.

25) Because I am wise, the words of my mouth are gracious. Based on Ecclesiastes 10:12.

26) The Lord has given me the words of a disciple. This helps me speak uplifting words to him who is weary. Based on Isaiah 50:4.

Let's go back to the Affirmation Speaker role.

AFFIRMATION #5

"I ONLY THINK RIGHT THOUGHTS"

****

Throughout your day, try to recite out loud, the "I Only Think Right Thoughts" Affirmation.

Prayer of Dedication: "Father, I dedicate myself to live this day thinking only right thoughts, thoughts that are free of all negatives. I now speak these Bible-based statements out loud to remind me to keep all my thoughts positive and faith-filled!"

****

1) I trust in the Lord with all my heart, and I do not lean on my own understanding. In all my ways, I acknowledge Him, and He makes my paths straight. Based on Proverbs 3:5-6.

2) I meditate on God's Word day and night, I am like a tree planted by streams that yields forth its fruit in season. And my leaves do not wither, in whatever I do I prosper. Based on Psalm 1:2-3.

3) I pray every day for God's help to keep the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart acceptable in His sight. Based on Psalm 19:14.

4) I thank God that he leads me (and my thoughts) beside quiet waters, and he restores my soul (with good thoughts), and he leads me in paths of righteousness, for His name's sake. Based on Psalm 23:2,3.

5) I am diligent to treasure God's Word in my heart, so that I may not sin against Him. Based on Psalm 119:11.

6) I ask God to search me every day to know my heart and try my thoughts, to see if there is any anxious thoughts in me, and if there is any hurtful way in me, And to lead me in the everlasting way. Based on Psalm 139:23,24.

7) I watch over my heart (my thoughts) with all diligence, for out of it flow the springs of my life. Based on Proverbs 4:23.

8) I bring to God the plans in my mind, and he helps me to know which way to go. (This keeps my mind at rest.) Based on Proverbs 16:3.

9) My joyful heart is good medicine. (So I keep myself happy, hopeful, and trusting in God.) Based on Proverbs 17:22.

10) Because I keep my mind steadfast on God, He helps me to have perfect peace. Based on Isaiah 26:3.

11) I forsake my old deeds and thoughts, and I return to the Lord, He has compassion on me, and He abundantly pardons me. Based on Isaiah 55:7.

12) I keep myself hopeful, because God has plans for my welfare, He has plans to give me a future and a hope. Based on Jeremiah 29:11.

13) I am diligent to love God with all my heart, with all my soul, with all my mind. Based on Matthew 22:37.

14) Jesus left His peace with me, Jesus gave me His peace. I stop my heart from being troubled, I never let it be fearful. Based on John 14:27.

15) Because I live after the Spirit, I mind the things of the Spirit, and not the flesh. Based on Romans 8:5.

16) I do not let myself be conformed to this world, but I allow myself to be transformed by the renewing of my mind. This way I am able to know the good, the acceptable, and the perfect will of God for my life. Based on Romans 12:2.

17) The weapons that God has given me are not fleshly, but divinely powered for the destruction of fortresses in my mind. I destroy speculations and every lofty thing that rises up against the

knowledge of God, and I take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. Based on 2 Corinthians 10:4,5.

18) As a person thinks, so are they. (And because I am a Christian, saved by the sacrifice of Jesus, I have been Born Again. I am a new creature in Christ Jesus. I have traded my sin nature for God's nature, And now God's nature is in my thoughts as I give my mind to God and His Word.) Based on Proverbs 23:7 & 2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 4:22-24

19) This one thing I do, I forget those things which lie behind, so I can reach forward to what lies ahead. Based on Philippians 3:13.

20) I make sure to not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, I let my requests be made known to God, and the peace of God which surpasses all comprehension, guards my heart and my mind through Christ Jesus. Based on Philippians 4:6,7.

21) (My mind is an amazing gift from God, and I use it only as intended.) I use it to think on things that are honorable, right, pure, lovely, things that are of a good repute, things that have excellence, and are worthy of praise. Based on Philippians 4:8.

22) I can do all things through Christ, (including keeping my mind on right thoughts.) Based on Philippians 4:13.

23) I set my mind on thoughts of God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and of heaven, not on the things that are on earth. Based on Colossians 3:2.

24) (Because I keep my mind on godly things, I am able to) let the peace of Christ rule in my heart. And I am thankful. Based on Colossians 3:15.

25) I thank God that he has not given me a spirit of timidity, but a spirit that is powerful and love-filled and disciplined. (He has given me a mind that is sound in every regard so all my thoughts are faith-filled and peace-filled.) Based on 2 Timothy 1:7.

26) Because I consider what the Apostle Paul says (2 Timothy 2:1-6), the Lord gives me understanding in everything. Based on 2 Timothy 2:7.

27) I am diligent to present myself approved of God, as a workman who is never ashamed. This helps me to accurately handle the word of truth. Based on 2 Timothy 2:15.

28) The Word of God in me is living and active, and sharper than a two-edged sword, it helps me to discern negative thoughts, and the intentions of my heart (so I can quickly uproot them). Based on Hebrews 4:12.

29) I stay close to God so I am never a double-minded person, a person who is unstable in all their ways. Based on James 1:8.

30) Greater is He who is in me than he who is in the world. (Because God lives big in me, His Word lives big in my thinking and it triumphs over all my negative thoughts.) Based on 1 John 4:4.

Let's go back to the Affirmation Speaker role.

AFFIRMATION #6

"I AM HAPPY BECAUSE..."

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Throughout your day, try to recite out loud, the "I Am Happy Because…" Affirmation.

Prayer of Dedication: "Father, I dedicate myself to live this day rejoicing in the things you have given me. I now speak these Bible-based statements to remind me of all the good things I have because I am your child!"

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1) I am happy because those who mourn, will be comforted! Based on Matthew 5:4.

2) I am happy because I know how to glorify God, by letting my light shine before men by doing good works. Based on Matthew 5:16.

3) I am happy because I don't have to have negative feelings about my enemies, I love them and I pray for them. Based on Matthew 5:44.

4) I am happy because when I give, and pray, and fast, in secret, God rewards me openly! Based on Matthew 6:4,6.

5) I am happy because all my needs are met when I seek first God's kingdom, and His righteousness. Based on Matthew 6:33, Luke 12:31.

6) I am happy because when I ask - I receive, when I seek - I find, when I knock - it is opened. Based on Matthew 7:7, Luke 11:10.

7) I am happy because when I labor and am heavy laden, Jesus bids me to come, and he gives me rest! Based on Matthew 11:28,29.

8) I am happy because even a small amount of faith can do so much. Based on Matthew 17:20.

9) I am happy because when two people agree in prayer, it will be done by my Father in heaven. Based on Matthew 18:19.

10) I am happy because where 2 or 3 believers are, Christ is in the midst. Based on Matthew 18:20.

11) I am happy because all things are possible! Based on Matthew 19:26 & Mark 9:23.

12) I am happy because when I give to the needy, I give to Christ! Based on Matthew 25:40.

13) I am happy because Jesus can take what little I have and multiply it! Based on Mark 8:1-9.

14) I am happy because Jesus lays out an easy way to become great – become a servant of all! Based on Mark 9:35, 10:44

15) I am happy because Jesus said whatever I pray for, and believe I have received it, I shall have it! Based on Mark 11:24.

16) I am happy because I don't have to worry about saying the wrong things, Jesus said the Holy Ghost will give me the words to say. Based on Mark 13:11.

17) I am happy because Jesus doesn't care how little my offering is, it's how much is left over that counts. Based on Mark 12:43,44.

18) I am happy because God gives me purpose! Jesus tells me to "Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to all creation." That's my purpose! Based on Mark 16:15.

19) I am happy because whoever believes and is baptized, will be saved! Based on Mark 16:16.

20) I am happy because Jesus said we can heal people, in His name! Based on Mark 16:18.

21) I am happy because Jesus said those who weep now, will one day laugh! Based on Luke 6:21.

22) I am happy because I don't have to care when people dislike me, Jesus said to rejoice, for my reward in heaven will be great! Based on Luke 6:22,23.

23) I am happy because when Jesus is around, things happen, the blind see, lepers are cleansed! deaf people hear, the dead are raised, and the poor hear the gospel! Based on Luke 7:22.

24) I am happy because I don't have to be upset when people reject my Gospel message, Jesus tells me to just leave them. (I leave them but I pray for them that the Gospel message I gave them will somehow awaken their need of Jesus, and that they will come to Christ, In Jesus's name!) Based on Luke 9:5.

25) I am happy because even devils are subject to us! through Jesus's name! Based on Luke 10:17.

26) I am happy because Jesus gave us power to tread on serpents! And scorpions! And over all power of the enemy! And nothing shall injure me! Based on Luke 10:19.

27) I am happy because my name is written in heaven! Based on Luke 10:20.

28) I am happy because God has numbered the hairs on my head! Jesus said I have great value! Based on Luke 12:7.

29) I am happy because if God feeds the ravens, He will certainly feed me, and if God clothes the lilies, He will certainly clothe me. Based on Luke 12:24,28.

30) I am happy because God says "whosoever"! John 3:16 says, God so loved the world, that He gave His only beloved Son, that <u>whosoever</u> believes in Him, should not perish, but have eternal life! Based on John 3:16.

31) I am happy because the water Jesus gives me is a well of water, springing up into eternal life. Based on John 4:14.

32) I am happy because Jesus tells me what to work for, I do not labor for food that perishes, I labor for food that endures to eternal life, which Jesus gives me. Based on John 6:27.

33) I am happy because Jesus is the bread of life, when I come to Jesus, I never hunger, and I never get thirsty. Based on John 6:35.

34) I am happy because Jesus is the light of my life, When I follow Him, I do not walk in darkness. I have the light of life! Based on John 8:12, 12:35,46.

35) I am happy because it is truth that sets me free! (So I keep searching for truth!) Based on John 8:32.

36) I am happy because Jesus is my shepherd, I can learn His voice, Jesus lays down His life for the sheep! Based on John 10:14-18,27.

37) I am happy because Jesus gives us an easy way for people to know that we are His, when we love one another. Based on John 13:34,35.

38) I am happy because I can keep my heart from being troubled! Based on John 14:1,27.

39) I am happy because Jesus is preparing a place for me in heaven! Based on John 14:2.

40) I am happy because Jesus tells me who He is, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes to the father but by me." Based on John 14:6.

41) I am happy because Jesus tells us, the works that He does, we shall do also! And greater works! Based on John 14:12.

42) I am happy because Jesus has given me another Helper, the Holy Spirit. And He never leaves me! Based on John 14:16.

43) I am happy because Jesus leaves me His peace. Based on John 14:27, 20:21.

44) I am happy because I bear fruit! Jesus says, as I abide in Him, and He in me, I will bear much fruit! Based on John 15:2,4,5,16.

45) I am happy because Jesus says, if I abide in Him, and His Word abides in me, I will ask whatever I wish, and it'll be done for me! Based on John 15:7, 17:24.

46) I am happy because Christ's joy remains in me, and my joy is FULL! Based on John 15:11. My joy is a joy that no man can take from me! Based on John 16:22.

47) I am happy because Jesus calls me His Friend! and not a servant. I am His friend if I do whatsoever He commands. Based on John 15:14.

48) I am happy because Jesus says, I didn't choose Him, but He chose me! Based on John 15:16.

49) I am happy because the Holy Spirit teaches me all truth! Based on John 16:13.

50) I am happy because I can rejoice in my tribulations, because I know my tribulation brings about perseverance, and perseverance character, and character hope! Based on Romans 5:3,4.

51) I am happy because God shows me His love! While I was still a sinner, Christ died for me! Based on Romans 5:8.

52) I am happy because God gives me eternal life! The wages of my sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, in Christ Jesus. Based on Romans 6:23.

53) I am happy because my present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in me! Based on Romans 8:18.

54) I am happy because God works all things for my good, because I love Him. Based on Romans 8:28.

55) I am happy because if God is for me, who can be against me? Based on Romans 8:31.

56) I am happy because in all my trials, I am more than a conqueror! through Christ! who loves me! Based on Romans 8:37.

57) I am happy because I don't have to conform to the world, I'm being transformed by the renewing of my mind. Based on Romans 12:2.

58) I am happy because I am joyful! I'm joyful in hope, I persevere in tribulation, and I'm faithful in prayer. Based on Romans 12:12.

59) I am happy because I am enriched by Christ, in all my speaking and in all my knowledge. Based on 1 Corinthians 1:5.

60) I am happy because God uses my foolishness to confound the wise, and He uses my weaknesses to confound the mighty. Based on 1 Corinthians 1:27.

61) I am happy because God has planned amazing things for me in my after-life! Things eyes can't see, ears can't hear, nor things minds can imagine! Based on 1 Corinthians 2:9.

62) I am happy because I am important! even with my flaws! Based on 1 Corinthians 12:22,23.

63) I am happy because God gives me victory! through Christ! Based on 1 Corinthians 15:57.

64) I am happy because God comforts me in all my afflictions. Based on 2 Corinthians 1:4.

65) I am happy because God causes me to always triumph! In Christ! Based on 2 Corinthians 2:14.

66) I am happy because I am a sweet smell of Christ to those around me. Based on 2 Corinthians 2:15.

67) I am happy because I'm an able minister of the gospel! Based on 2 Corinthians 3:6.

68) I am happy because I have strong hope! and great boldness in my speech! Based on 2 Corinthians 3:12.

69) I am happy because I have freedom! Because the Spirit of the Lord is in me. Based on 2 Corinthians 3:17.

70) I am happy because I am transforming into God's image, from glory to glory! Based on 2 Corinthians 3:18.

71) I am happy because my inner man is being renewed! day by day! Based on 2 Corinthians 4:16.

72) I am happy because I have glory! My light affliction is producing in me an eternal weight of glory! Based on 2 Corinthians 4:17.

73) I am happy because I have a new home! My earthly "tent" is being torn down, and I have a new building that God is making for me, eternal in the heavens! Based on 2 Corinthians 5:1.

74) I am happy because I am righteous! God made Christ to be sin for me, that I might have Christ's righteousness! Based on 2 Corinthians 5:21.

75) I am happy because I have great grace! God is able to make all grace abound to me, so that I might abound in abundance, for every good deed! Based on 2 Corinthians 9:8.

76) I am happy because God's grace is sufficient, When my life gets hard, Jesus tells me His grace will get me through! Based on 2 Corinthians 12:9a.

77) I am happy because I can even boast about my weaknesses! because that's when Christ's power comes in and makes me strong! Based on 2 Corinthians 12:9b.

78) I am happy because I know what's most important - Faith! And that faith works by love. (I'm developing my faith!) Based on Galatians 5:6.

79) I am happy because God calls me to freedom! I use my freedom to serve others in love. Based on Galatians 5:13.

80) I am happy because God gives me the fruit of the Spirit, I have Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control! Based on Galatians 5:22,23.

81) I am happy because I can choose to crucify my flesh! with its passions and desires. Based on Galatians 5:24.

82) I am happy because I have help in carrying my burdens! Others are helping me, and I help them! Together, we fulfill, the law of Christ! Based on Galatians 6:2.

83) I am happy because I never lose heart! I don't get weary in well-doing, (I keep working, and I keep helping, with God's help!) Based on Galatians 6:9.

84) I am happy because God has chosen me before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless, before Him. Based on Ephesians 1:4.

85) I am happy because of God's rich mercy and great love toward me, even when I was dead in my sins! He made me alive with Christ! It is by God's grace that I've been saved. Based on Ephesians 2:4,5.

86) I am happy because God has raised me up with Christ, I am seated with Him in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus. Based on Ephesians 2:6.

87) I am happy because I am God's workmanship! created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which He prepared for me to walk in them. Based on Ephesians 2:10.

88) I am happy because I am a part of God's home! Together, we are a habitation for God, by His Spirit. Based on Ephesians 2:22.

89) I am happy because I have access to God's wisdom! I have boldness and confident access through my faith in God! Based on Ephesians 3:10,12.

90) I am happy because God can do exceeding abundantly above all I can ask or think, according to His power that works within me. Based on Ephesians 3:20.

91) I am happy because I am a peace-maker! With God's help I do my best to preserve the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace. Based on Ephesians 4:3.

92) I am happy because God didn't leave me on my own! He's given me apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, who help me grow and serve, and to be a blessing to the Body of Christ. Based on Ephesians 4:11,12.

93) I am happy because I have a new self! God tells me to put on my new self, created in His

likeness, created in righteousness, and holiness of the truth. Based on Ephesians 4:24.

94) I am happy because I don't go to bed mad! I forgive everyone before going to bed. Based on Ephesians 4:26.

95) I am happy because I am tender-hearted, and quick to forgive! just like God! who forgave me through Christ. Based on Ephesians 4:32.

96) I am happy because God made me a singer! I sing to myself psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in my heart to the Lord. Based on Ephesians 5:19.

97) I am happy because God made me a great worker! I serve my boss as if I'm serving the Lord. I know whatever good I do, I will receive a reward from God! Based on Ephesians 6:5-9.

98) I am happy because God wants me strong! Every day I wear the armor of God, so I can stand against the schemes of the devil. I put on the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of the gospel, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Based on Ephesians 6:11-17.

99) I am happy because I have confidence! I am confident that God, who began a good work in me, will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus. Based on Philippians 1:6.

100) I am happy because I can stand firm! I stand firm in one spirit, with one mind, striving together with others, for the faith of the gospel, and I'm never alarmed by my opponents, nor their opinions of me. Based on Philippians 1:27,28.

101) I am happy because of humility! I never do things from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility, I regard others as more important than myself. Jesus made Himself nothing, taking the form of a bond-servant, being made in the likeness of men. (With God's help, I will do the same.) Based on Philippians 2:3,7.

102) I am happy because one day I'm going to see every knee bow, and hear every tongue confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord! Based on Philippians 2:10,11.

103) I am happy because of purity, I do everything without grumbling or disputing, and I choose to be blameless and innocent, a child of God, above reproach, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, in which I shine like a light in the world, holding fast the Word of Life! Based on Philippians 2:14-16.

104) I am happy because I can forget my past! and reach forward, to what lies ahead! I press toward the goal, for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Based on Philippians 3:13,14.

105) I am happy because God wants me joyful! in Him! Always! So I rejoice! Based on Philippians 4:4.

106) I am happy because I've learned to be gentle! to everyone! Based on Philippians 4:5.

107) I am happy because God wants me carefree! He tells me to not be careful about anything! I just pray about what I need, with thanksgiving, and the peace of God which surpasses all comprehension, guards my heart and my mind in Christ Jesus. Based on Philippians 4:6,7.

108) I am happy because God gives me guidance on how to think, I only think on things that are true, honorable, right, pure, lovely, things of good repute, things that have excellence, and are worthy of praise. Based on Philippians 4:8.

109) I am happy because I'm content! I have learned to be content in whatsoever circumstances I'm in. Based on Philippians 4:11.

110) I am happy because I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Based on Philippians 4:13.

111) I am happy because God promises to supply all of my needs! Based on Philippians 4:19.

112) I am happy because I am being strengthened with all power! according to God's glorious might, unto all steadfastness, and patience, and joyfulness! Based on Colossians 1:11.

113) I am happy because God qualifies me to share in the inheritance of the saints in light! Based on Colossians 1:12.

114) I am happy because when I was dead in my sins, and in the uncircumcision of my flesh, God made me alive with Christ! He forgave me, all my sins! and He canceled the certificate of debt that was against me! He took it away, nailing it to the cross! Based on Colossians 2:13,14.

115) I am happy because God has disarmed the rulers and authorities! And made a public display of them! By triumphing over them, through Christ! Based on Colossians 2:15.

116) I am happy because I have a new self! I have put off the old self, with its evil practices, and I've put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge, in the image of my creator. Based on Colossians 3:9,10.

117) I am happy because of my peace! I can let the peace of Christ rule in my heart! Based on Colossians 3:15.

118) I am happy because God makes me diligent in my work, I obey my boss, not just when he's watching. I work with a sincere heart and Godly reverence. Based on Colossians 3:22-24.

119) I am happy because God wants my life to win respect! so I lead a quiet life, attending my own business, working diligently. Based on 1 Thessalonians 4:11.

120) I am happy because Jesus is returning! The day is coming when the Lord Himself, shall descend from heaven with a shout, and the voice of the archangel, and the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ shall arise! Then we who are alive shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we be forever with the Lord! Based on 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17.

121) I am happy because of God's help! He gives me people who comfort me and edify me. (And I return the favor.) Based on 1 Thessalonians 5:11.

122) I am happy because God is a God of peace. He's sanctifying my spirit, soul and body, so that I'll be blameless at the coming of my Lord. Based on 1 Thessalonians 5:23,24.

123) I am happy because my faith and love are growing larger and larger! Based on 2 Thessalonians 1:3.

124) I am happy because I can persevere in my faith! in spite of my persecutions and afflictions. Based on 2 Thessalonians 1:4.

125) I am happy because God is counting me worthy of His calling! and is fulfilling every desire He has for me, so that my life yields goodness and power. Based on 2 Thessalonians 1:11.

126) I am happy because the name of the Lord Jesus Christ is being glorified in me! as I am in Him, according to the grace of God and the Lord Jesus Christ. Based on 2 Thessalonians 1:12.

127) I am happy because God chose me to be saved through the sanctifying by the Spirit, and through faith in the truth. Based on 2 Thessalonians 2:13.

128) I am happy because God loves me and gives me eternal comfort and good hope by grace. Based on 2 Thessalonians 2:16.

129) I am happy because the Lord of peace, Himself, continually gives me peace! Based on 2 Thessalonians 3:16.

130) I am happy because the grace of our Lord to me is more than abundant! Based on 1Timothy 1:14.

131) I am happy because God wants all men saved! and to come to the knowledge of the truth! Based on 1 Timothy 2:4.

132) I am happy because my godliness profits me in this life, and in the life to come! Based on 1Timothy 4:8.

133) I am happy because nobody looks down on me because I'm young! I'm a good example to all believers, in my speech, in my conduct, in my love, in my faith, and in my purity. Based on 1Timothy 4:12.

134) I am happy because I have great gain because I have godliness and contentment! Based on 1Timothy 6:6.

135) I am happy because God did not give me a spirit of timidity! but of power, of love, and of discipline! Based on 2 Timothy 1:7.

136) I am happy because Christ Jesus destroyed death! and has brought me life! and immortality! Through the gospel! Based on 2 Timothy 1:10.

137) I am happy because I have no shame! I know in whom I believe, and I am convinced that Christ is able to guard what I've entrusted to Him, until that day. Based on 2 Timothy 1:12.

138) I am happy because I am fully convinced in the marvelous grace that is given to me, in Christ Jesus! Based on 2 Timothy 2:1.

139) I am happy because I've learned how to endure hardship! like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. Based on 2 Timothy 2:3.

140) I am happy because God tells me not to get entangled in my life's affairs! so that I may please Christ who has enlisted me as a soldier! Based on 2 Timothy 2:4.

141) I am happy because God tells me not to quarrel! which leads to stress, but to be kind to everyone, able to teach, patient when wronged. Based on 2 Timothy 2:24.

142) I am happy because all scripture is God-inspired! and is profitable in teaching, reproof, correction and training in righteousness. Based on 2 Timothy 3:16.

143) I am happy because there is stored for me a crown of righteousness! which Jesus will award me on that day! Based on 2 Timothy 4:8.

144) I am happy because the Lord stands beside me and gives me strength! so that through me, the gospel is preached! and Gentiles are being rescued from the lion's mouth. Based on 2 Timothy 4:17.

145) I am happy because God rescues me from every evil deed! He will bring me safely to His heavenly kingdom. Based on 2 Timothy 4:18.

146) I am happy because Christ gave Himself for me, to redeem me from every lawless deed! to purify me for Himself, a person for His possession, zealous to do good deeds! Based on Titus 2:14.

147) I am happy because the Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword! revealing the difference between my soul and my spirit, and my joints and marrow, it helps me judge my thoughts, and the intentions of my heart. Based on Hebrews 4:12.

148) I am happy because of faith! I picture in my mind what I want, and I have a conviction that I will get it! Based on Hebrews 11:1.

149) I am happy because I know what pleases God - faith! When I come to God, I believe He exists, and that He rewards me because I seek Him. Based on Hebrews 11:6.

150) I am happy because I'm not alone! there's a heavenly crowd watching me "run my race", so I lay aside every encumbrance, and sin which seeks to entangle me, and I run with endurance, the race that is set before me, fixing my eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of my faith. (Jesus endured the cross, I can certainly endure my trial.) Based on Hebrews 12:1,2.

151) I am happy because I count it all joy when I encounter various trials! because I know the testing of my faith develops endurance, and I let my endurance have its perfect result, so that I am perfect and complete, lacking nothing! Based on James 1:2-4.

152) I am happy because of humility! When I humble myself in the presence of the Lord, He exalts me! Based on James 4:10.

153) I am happy because of humility again. When I humble myself under the mighty hand of God, He exalts me! at the proper time. Based on 1 Peter 5:6.

154) I am happy because I can cast all my anxieties onto Christ! because He cares for me! Based on 1 Peter 5:7.

155) I am happy because the God of all grace, who has called me into His eternal glory, in Christ, will Himself perfect me and confirm me! and strengthen me and establish me! Based on 1 Peter 5:10.

156) I am happy because when I confess my sins, God is faithful and righteous to forgive my sins, and cleanse me from all unrighteousness! Based on 1 John 1:9.

157) I am happy because there is no fear in love, rather perfect love casts out fear! Based on 1 John 4:18.

158) I am happy because I have Life! He who has the Son has life! Based on 1 John 5:12.

Let's go back to the Affirmation Speaker role.

Core Beliefs

****

Choose Your Core Beliefs

Our thoughts are influenced by our beliefs. Positive beliefs help keep our thinking and our responses to life's problems positive.

The goal is to make these core beliefs the final word in our lives. No matter what our feelings say or what the circumstances try to tell us, these foundational beliefs are what we are going to use when thinking about ourselves, when making decisions in our lives, and when we are praying about our needs and wants.

If we come across a belief that we would like to adopt but seems untrue to us, read out loud the scripture verses associated with the belief. The truth of these verses will slowly sink into our minds and over time will become real in our hearts.

CORE BELIEF #1

****

"Based on the following scriptures, I believe God loves me, and that I am valuable."

****

Below are some scriptures that talk about God's love for humanity. The most notable way God showed His love for us is in the offering of His only Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for our sins. Indeed, His love for us is great.

Remember that this is a Core Belief. Unless we believe this to be true, our lives can seem meaningless and hopeless. So let's renew our minds to the truth that God loves us, and that He has an amazing plan for our lives!

1) **Nehemiah 9:17** "But You are a God of forgiveness, Gracious and compassionate, Slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness; And You did not forsake them."
2) **Psalm 17:7** "Wondrously show Your lovingkindness, O Savior of those who take refuge at Your right hand From those who rise up against them."
3) **Psalm 25:7** "Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions; According to Your lovingkindness remember me, For Your goodness' sake, O Lord."
4) **Psalm 36:7** "How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God! And the children of men take refuge in the shadow of Your wings."
5) **Psalm 48:9** "We have thought on Your lovingkindness, O God, In the midst of Your temple."
6) **Psalm 52:8** "But as for me, I am like a green olive tree in the house of God; I trust in the lovingkindness of God forever and ever."
7) **Psalm 63:3** "Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, My lips will praise You."
8) **Psalm 86:15** "But You, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, Slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness and truth."
9) **Psalm 103:8** "The Lord is compassionate and gracious, Slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness."
10) **Psalm 103:11** "For as high as the heavens are above the earth, So great is His lovingkindness toward those who fear Him."
11) **Psalm 109:26** "Help me, O Lord my God; Save me according to Your lovingkindness."
12) **Psalm 136:26** "Give thanks to the God of heaven, For His lovingkindness is everlasting"
13) **Exodus 34:6** "Then the Lord passed by in front of him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth;"
14) **Isaiah 41:10** "Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, Surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.'"

15) **Isaiah 41:13** "For I am the Lord your God, who upholds your right hand, Who says to you, 'Do not fear, I will help you.'"

16) **Isaiah 49:16** "Behold, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; Your walls are continually before Me."

17) **Isaiah 54:10** "For the mountains may be removed and the hills may shake, But My lovingkindness will not be removed from you, And My covenant of peace will not be shaken," Says the Lord who has compassion on you."

18) **Jeremiah 29:11** "For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope."

19) **Jeremiah 31:3** "The Lord appeared to him from afar, saying, "I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness."

20) **Zephaniah 3:17** "The Lord your God is in your midst, A victorious warrior. He will exult over you with joy, He will be quiet in His love, He will rejoice over you with shouts of joy."

21) **Mark 10:21** "Looking at him, Jesus felt a love for him and said to him, "One thing you lack: go and sell all you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

22) **John 3:16** "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."

23) **John 14:21** "He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him."

24) **John 15:9** "Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love."

25) **John 16:27** "for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me and have believed that I came forth from the Father."

26) **Romans 5:5** "and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us."

27) **Romans 5:8** "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

28) **Romans 8:35** "Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?"

29) **Romans 8:37** "But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us."

30) **Romans 8:38,39** "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

31) **Romans 15:30** "Now I urge you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me,"

32) **2 Corinthians 5:14** "For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died;"

33) **2 Corinthians 13:11** "Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you."

34) **2 Corinthians 13:14** "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all."

35) **Galatians 2:20** "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me."

36) **Ephesians 2:4** "But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,"

37) **Ephesians 3:17-19** "so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God."

38) **Ephesians 5:1,2** "Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma."

39) **Ephesians 5:25** "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,"

40) **2 Thessalonians 2:16** "Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has loved us and given us eternal comfort and good hope by grace,"

41) **2 Thessalonians 3:5** "May the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the steadfastness of Christ."

42) **Titus 3:4** "But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared,"

43) **1 Peter 5:6,7** "Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you."

44) **1 John 3:1** "See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him."

45) **1 John 3:16** "We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."

46) **1 John 4:7,8** "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. [8]The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love."

47) **1 John 4:9** "By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him."

48) **1 John 4:10** "In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

49) **1 John 4:11** "Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another."

50) **1 John 4:16** "We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him."

51) **1 John 4:19** "We love, because he first loved us."

52) **Jude 1:21** "keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life"

53) **Revelation 1:5** "and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood."

The goal of speaking these verses out loud is to fully believe the truth that God loves us and that we have immense value. We need to become so convinced of this that nothing could convince us otherwise. Reading these scriptures over and over will help us make this truth more a reality in our hearts.

Let's turn back to the Beliefs Speaker role.

CORE BELIEF #2

****

"Based on the following scriptures, I believe Christ's crucifixion on the cross has paid the penalty for my sin, and that I am destined to live eternally with Christ."

****

Unless we are convinced that our sins are forgiven, we'll never reach full happiness. If need be, we can read out loud the following scriptures to renew our minds to adopt this vital Core Belief.

1) **John 3:16** "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."

2) **John 3:17** "For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him."

3) **Acts 13:38** "Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through Him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you,"

4) **Acts 13:39** "and through Him everyone who believes is freed from all things, from which you could not be freed through the Law of Moses."

5) **Acts 15:11** "But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are."

6) **Acts 16:30,31** "and after he brought them out, he said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."

7) **Romans 1:16** "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."

8) **Romans 3:22-24** "even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;"

9) **Romans 3:25** "whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed;"

10) **Romans 5:1** "Therefore, having been justified by faith, have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,"

11) **Romans 10:4**."For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes."

12) **Romans 10:9** "that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;"

13) **Romans 10:12,13** "For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; for "Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved."

14) **1 Corinthians 6:11** "Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God."

15) **1 Corinthians 15:3** "For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,"

16) **2 Corinthians 5:18** "Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation,"

17) **2 Corinthians 5:19** "namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation."

18) **2 Corinthians 5:20** "Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God."

19) **Galatians 1:4** "who gave Himself for our sins so that He might rescue us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father,"

20) **Galatians 2:16** "nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified."

21) **Galatians 3:14** "in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."

22) **Galatians 3:26** "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus."

23) **Ephesians 1:7** "In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace."

24) **Ephesians 1:13** "In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise,"

25) **Ephesians 2:4,5** "But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),"

26) **Ephesians 2:8** "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;"

27) **Ephesians 2:13** "But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ."

28) **Ephesians 3:9** "and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things;"

29) **Ephesians 4:32** "Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you."

30) **Colossians 1:13,14** "For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins."

31) **Colossians 1:20-22** "and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace

through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven. And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach."

32) **Colossians 1:27** "to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."

33) **Colossians 2:13** "When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions,"

34) **1 Thessalonians 1:10** "and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come."

35) **1 Thessalonians 5:9,10** "For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him."

36) **2 Thessalonians 2:13** "But we should always give thanks to God for you brethren, beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit, and faith in the truth."

37) **1 Timothy 1:15** "It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all."

38) **1 Timothy 1:16** "Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life."

39) **1 Timothy 2:5,6** "For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time."

40) **2 Timothy 1:9** "who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity,"

41) **2 Timothy 1:10** "but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,"

42) **2 Timothy 2:10** "For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory."

43) **2 Timothy 3:15** "and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

44) **Titus 2:14** "who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds."

45) **Titus 3:3-7** "For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. [4] But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, [5] He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, [6] whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, [7] so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

46) **Hebrews 7:25** "Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them."

47) **Hebrews 9:12-15** "and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. [13] For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, [14] how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? [15] For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were *committed* under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance."

48) **Hebrews 9:28** "so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him."

49) **Hebrews 10:10** "By this will, we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

50) **Hebrews 10:12** "but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God,"

51) **1 Peter 1:18-19** "knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ."

52) **1 John 1:7** "but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin."

53) **1 John 1:9** "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

54) **1 John 2:2** "and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world."

55) **1 John 2:12** "I am writing to you, little children, because your sins have been forgiven you for His name's sake."

56) **1 John 2:25** "This is the promise which He Himself made to us: eternal life."

57) **1 John 4:9** "By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him."

58) **1 John 4:10** "In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

59) **1 John 2:1** "My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;"

60) **1 John 5:11** "And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son."

61) **Revelation 1:5** "and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood."

62) **Revelation 5:9** "And they *sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation;"

The goal of speaking these verses out loud is to fully believe the truth that Christ's death on the cross paid the penalty of our sin. Our salvation happens when we ask God/Jesus to forgive our sins, and ask Him to guide us the rest of our lives.

We need to become so convinced of God's faithfulness to forgive us, that nothing could convince us otherwise. Reading these scriptures over and over will help us make this truth more a reality in our hearts.

Note

This Core Belief is about believing that the sacrifice that Jesus made on the cross has paid for our sin. Have you ever taken the step to ask God to forgive you for all your sins? Have you invited Him to come into your life? If not, and you'd like to, there is a prayer below you can pray to invite Him into your life:

Invitation Prayer

"Dear God, I see the sins that I have committed. I believe Jesus paid the penalty for my sin by his crucifixion. I receive your forgiveness for my sin. And I ask you to come into my life and guide me. Help me live the rest of my life in a way that pleases you.

In Jesus's name I pray. Amen."

If you've prayed this prayer, call us. We'd love to hear from you, and to help you get a great start in your new found faith!

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Let's turn back to the Beliefs Speaker role.

CORE BELIEF #3

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"Based on the following scriptures, I believe God wants me to enjoy perfect peace at all times."

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If we don't believe this Core Belief, we'll always wonder when it's OK to be nervous. It's best to believe that peace is always available. Then we tackle anything that tries to rob us of God's peace. The peace God gives us passes all understanding* and should never be given up *(*According Philippians 4:7).*

1) **Numbers 6:26** "The Lord lift up His countenance on you, And give you peace.'"
2) **Psalm 4:8** "In peace I will both lie down and sleep, For You alone, O Lord, make me to dwell in safety."
3) **Psalm 16:8** "I have set the Lord continually before me; Because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken."
4) **Psalm 23:1-3** "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters. He restores my soul; He guides me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake."
5) **Psalm 27:1** "The Lord is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the defense of my life; Whom shall I dread?"
6) **Psalm 29:11** "The Lord will give strength to His people; The Lord will bless His people with peace."
7) **Psalm 37:11** "But the humble will inherit the land And will delight themselves in abundant prosperity."
8) **Psalm 37:37** "Mark the blameless man, and behold the upright; For the man of peace will have a posterity."
9) **Psalm 85:8** "I will hear what God the Lord will say; For He will speak peace to His people, to His godly ones; But let them not turn back to folly."
10) **Psalm 91:1** "He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High, Will abide in the shadow of the Almighty."
11) **Psalm 94:13** "That You may grant him relief from the days of adversity, Until a pit is dug for the wicked."
12) **Psalm 125:1** "Those who trust in the Lord Are as Mount Zion, which cannot be moved but abides forever."
13) **Proverbs 1:33** "But he who listens to me shall live securely And will be at ease from the dread of evil."
14) **Proverbs 3:17** "Her ways (wisdom's ways) are pleasant ways And all her paths are peace."
15) **Proverbs 3:23-24** "Then you will walk in your way securely And your foot will not stumble. When you lie down, you will not be afraid; When you lie down, your sleep will be sweet."
16) **Isaiah 26:3** "The steadfast of mind, You will keep in perfect peace, Because he trusts in You."
17) **Isaiah 32:17** "And the work of righteousness will be peace, And the service of righteousness, quietness and confidence forever."
18) **Isaiah 32:18** "Then my people will live in a peaceful habitation, And in secure dwellings and in undisturbed resting places;"
19) **Isaiah 48:18** "If only you had paid attention to My commandments! Then your well-being would have been like a river, And your righteousness like the waves of the sea."
20) **Isaiah 54:10** "For the mountains may be removed and the hills may shake, But My lovingkindness will not be removed from you, And My covenant of peace will not be shaken," Says the Lord who has compassion on you."
21) **Isaiah 54:13** "All your sons will be taught of the Lord; And the well-being of your sons will be great."
22) **Isaiah 55:12** "For you will go out with joy And be led forth with peace; The mountains and the hills will break forth into shouts of joy before you, And all the trees of the field will clap their hands."
23) **Isaiah 57:2** "He enters into peace; They rest in their beds, Each one who walked in his upright way."

24) **Isaiah 57:19** "Creating the praise of the lips. Peace, peace to him who is far and to him who is near," Says the Lord, "and I will heal him."

25) **Jeremiah 33:6** "Behold, I will bring to it health and healing, and I will heal them; and I will reveal to them an abundance of peace and truth."

26) **Haggai 2:9** "The latter glory of this house will be greater than the former,' says the Lord of hosts, 'and in this place I will give peace,' declares the Lord of hosts."

27) **Malachi 2:5** "My covenant with him was one of life and peace, and I gave them to him as an object of reverence; so he revered Me and stood in awe of My name."

28) **Mark 9:50** "Salt is good; but if the salt becomes unsalty, with what will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

29) **Luke 1:79** "To shine upon those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, To guide our feet into the way of peace."

30) **Luke 2:14** "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased."

31) **Luke 21:19** "By your endurance you will gain your lives."

32) **John 14:27** "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful."

33) **John 16:33** "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."

34) **John 20:19** "So when it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you."

35) **Acts 10:36** "The word which He sent to the sons of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all)."

36) **Romans 2:10** "but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."

37) **Romans 5:1** "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,"

38) **Romans 8:6** "For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace,"

39) **Romans 14:17** "for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."

40) **Romans 15:13** "Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

41) **1 Corinthians 1:3** "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

42) **1 Corinthians 14:33** "for God is not a God of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints."

43) **2 Corinthians 1:2** "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

44) **2 Corinthians 7:4** "Great is my confidence in you; great is my boasting on your behalf. I am filled with comfort; I am overflowing with joy in all our affliction."

45) **2 Corinthians 13:11** "Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you."

46) **Galatians 1:3** "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,"

47) **Galatians 5:22** "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,"

48) **Ephesians 2:14,15** "For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace,"

49) **Ephesians 2:16,17** "and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were far away, and peace to those who were near;"

50) **Ephesians 4:3** "being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

51) **Philippians 1:2** "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

52) **Philippians 4:11,12** "Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in

whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need."

53) **Philippians 4:6,7** "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

54) **Philippians 4:9** "The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you."

55) **Colossians 1:2** "To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father."

56) **Colossians 1:20** "and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven."

57) **Colossians 3:15** "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful."

58) **1 Thessalonians 1:1** "Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace."

59) **1 Thessalonians 3:13** "so that He may establish your hearts without blame in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints."

60) **1 Thessalonians 5:13** "and that you esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Live in peace with one another."

61) **2 Thessalonians 2:2** "that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come."

62) **2 Thessalonians 2:16, 17** "[16] Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has loved us and given us eternal comfort and good hope by grace, [17]comfort and strengthen your hearts in every good work and word."

63) **2 Thessalonians 3:16** "Now may the Lord of peace Himself continually grant you peace in every circumstance. The Lord be with you all!"

64) **2 Timothy 1:2** "To Timothy, my beloved son: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord."

65) **Titus 1:4** "To Titus, my true child in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior."

66) **James 5:8** "You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near."

67) **2 Peter 1:2** "Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord,"

The goal of speaking these verses out loud is to fully believe the truth that God wants us peaceful at all times. We need to become so convinced of this that nothing could convince us otherwise. Reading these scriptures over and over will help us make this truth more a reality in our hearts.

Let's turn back to Beliefs Speaker.

CORE BELIEF #4

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"Based on the following scriptures, I believe I have an enemy - Satan."

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In 1 Timothy 6:12, we read, "Fight the good fight of faith..." Here we see the Christian life is a battle, a continuous fight for our faith. If we keep our faith intact, then our minds are kept at rest. If we succumb to the plots of our enemy, Satan, who seeks to undermine our faith, then we lose the peace and happiness God has for us, and life becomes difficult. You may not have faith in God at this time; in that case, the enemy will try to steal your faith in yourself. He knows if he can take your self-confidence, he can pull you down in every other aspect of your life. So beware of your enemy! Here are some scriptures that support this belief that we have an enemy - Satan.

1) **Genesis 3:1** "Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?"

2) **Genesis. 3:4,5** "The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die! For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

3) **Genesis 3:14** "The Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, Cursed are you more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you will go, And dust you will eat All the days of your life;"

4) **Deuteronomy. 32:17** "They sacrificed to demons who were not God, To gods whom they have not known, New gods who came lately, Whom your fathers did not dread."

5) **Job 1:6** "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them."

6) **Job 2:3-7** "The LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man fearing God and turning away from evil. And he still holds fast his integrity, although you incited Me against him to ruin him without cause." [4] Satan answered the LORD and said, "Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. [5] However, put forth Your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh; he will curse You to Your face." [6] So the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your power, only spare his life."

7) **1 Chronicles 21:1** "Then Satan stood up against Israel and moved David to number Israel."

8) **Matthew 4:1-11** "Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. [2] And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. [3] And the tempter came and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." [4] But He answered and said, "It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.'" [5] Then the devil took Him into the holy city and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, [6] and *said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down; for it is written, 'HE WILL COMMAND HIS ANGELS CONCERNING YOU'; and 'ON *their* HANDS THEY WILL BEAR YOU UP, SO THAT YOU WILL NOT STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.'" [7] Jesus said to him, "On the other hand, it is written, 'YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.'" [8] Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; [9] and he said to Him, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me." [10] Then Jesus *said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'" [11] Then the devil *left Him; and behold, angels came and *began* to minister to Him."

9) **Matthew 4:24** "The news about Him spread throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all who were ill, those suffering with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics; and He healed them."

10) **Matthew 8:28-33** "When He came to the other side into the country of the Gadarenes, two men who were demon-possessed met Him as they were coming out of the tombs. *They were* so extremely violent that no one could pass by that way. [29] And they cried out, saying, "What business do we have with each other, Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?" [30] Now there was a herd of many swine feeding at a distance from them. [31] The demons *began* to entreat Him, saying, "If You *are going to* cast us out, send us into the herd of swine." [32] And He said to them, "Go!" And they came out and went into the swine, and the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and perished in the waters. [33] The herdsmen ran away, and went to the city and reported everything, including what had happened to the demoniacs." (See Mark 5:2-20 for same story)

11) **Matthew 10:1** "Jesus summoned His twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness."

12) **Matthew 12:22** "Then a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute was brought to Jesus, and He healed him, so that the mute man spoke and saw."

13) **Matthew 12:24** "But when the Pharisees heard this, they said, "This man casts out demons only by Beelzebub the ruler of the demons."

14) **Matthew 12:43-45** "Now when the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and does not find *it*. [44] Then it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came'; and when it comes, it finds *it* unoccupied, swept, and put in order. [45] Then it goes and takes along with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first. That is the way it will also be with this evil generation."

15) **Matthew 13:19** "When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the one on whom seed was sown beside the road."

16) **Matthew 13:38,*39*** *(Jesus speaking)* "and the field is the world; and as for the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the tares are the sons of the evil one; and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are angels."

17) **Matthew 17:14-18** "When they came to the crowd, a man came up to Jesus, falling on his knees before Him and saying, [15] "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is a lunatic and is very ill; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water. [16] I brought him to Your disciples, and they could not cure him." [17] And Jesus answered and said, "You unbelieving and perverted generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him here to Me." [18] And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon came out of him, and the boy was cured at once." (Same story in Mark 9:17-29, Luke 9:37-42)

18) **Matthew 25:41** "Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels:"

19) **Mark 1:23-26** "Just then there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, saying, "What business do we have with each other, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!" And Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet, and come out of him!" Throwing him into convulsions, the unclean spirit cried out with a loud voice and came out of him."

20) **Mark 3:11** "Whenever the unclean spirits saw Him, they would fall down before Him and shout, "You are the Son of God!"

21) **Mark 3:22-26** "The scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, "He is possessed by Beelzebub," and "He casts out the demons by the ruler of the demons." And He called them to Himself and began speaking to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. If a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. If Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but he is finished!"

22) **Mark 6:7** "And He *summoned the twelve and began to send them out in pairs, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits;"

23) **Mark 7:25-30** "But after hearing of Him, a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately came and fell at His feet. [26] Now the woman was a Gentile, of the Syrophoenician race. And she kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter. [27] And He was saying to her, "Let the children be satisfied first, for it is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." [28] But she answered and *said to Him, "Yes, Lord, *but* even the dogs under the table feed on the children's crumbs." [29] And He said to her, "Because of this answer go; the demon has gone out of your daughter." [30] And going back to her home, she found the child lying on the bed, the demon having left."

24) **Mark 9:38** "John said to Him, "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, and we tried to prevent him because he was not following us."

25) **Mark 16:9** "Now after He had risen early on the first day of the week, He first appeared to Mary Magdalene, from whom He had cast out seven demons."

26) **Mark 16:17** "These signs will accompany those who have believed: in My name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues;"

27) **Luke 4:2,6** "for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And He ate nothing during those days, and when they had ended, He became hungry. [6] And the devil said to Him, "I will give You all this domain and its glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish."

28) **Luke 10:18** "And He said to them, "I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning."

29) **Luke 4:33-35** "In the synagogue there was a man possessed by the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, [34] "Let us alone! What business do we have with each other, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!" [35] But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet and come out of him!" And when the demon had thrown him down in the midst *of the people*, he came out of him without doing him any harm."

30) **Luke 4:41** "Demons also were coming out of many, shouting, "You are the Son of God!" But rebuking them, He would not allow them to speak, because they knew Him to be the Christ."

31) **Luke 8:27,28** "And when He came out onto the land, He was met by a man from the city who was possessed with demons; and who had not put on any clothing for a long time, and was not living in a house, but in the tombs. [28] Seeing Jesus, he cried out and fell before Him, and said in a loud voice, "What business do we have with each other, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me."

32) **Luke 10:17** "The seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name."

33) **Luke 11:14,15** "And He was casting out a demon, and it was mute; when the demon had gone out, the mute man spoke; and the crowds were amazed. [15] But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons."

34) **Luke 13:16** "And this woman, a daughter of Abraham as she is, whom Satan has bound for eighteen long years, should she not have been released from this bond on the Sabbath day?"

35) **Luke 22:31** "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat;"

36) **John 8:44** "You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies."

37) **John 10:20** "Many of them were saying, "He has a demon and is insane. Why do you listen to Him?"

38) **John 13:2** "During supper, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray Him,"

39) **Acts 5:3** "But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back some of the price of the land?"

40) **Acts 5:16** "Also the people from the cities in the vicinity of Jerusalem were coming together, bringing people who were sick or afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all being healed."

41) **Acts 8:7** "For in the case of many who had unclean spirits, they were coming out of them shouting with a loud voice; and many who had been paralyzed and lame were healed."

42) **Acts 13:10** "and said, "You who are full of all deceit and fraud, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease to make crooked the straight ways of the Lord?"

43) **Acts 16:16-18** "It happened that as we were going to the place of prayer, a slave-girl having a spirit of divination met us, who was bringing her masters much profit by fortune-telling. [17] Following after Paul and us, she kept crying out, saying, "These men are bond-servants of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation." [18] She continued doing this for many days. But Paul was greatly annoyed, and turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!" And it came out at that very moment."

44) **Acts 19:12-16** "so that handkerchiefs or aprons were even carried from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out. [13] But also some of the Jewish exorcists, who went from place to place, attempted to name over those who had the evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, "I adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches." [14] Seven sons of one Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. [15] And the evil spirit answered and said to them, "I recognize Jesus, and I know about Paul, but who are you?" [16] And the man, in whom was the evil spirit, leaped on them and subdued all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded."

45) **Acts 26:18** "to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.'"

46) **Romans 16:20** "The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you."

47) **1 Corinthians 7:5** "Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control."

48) **1 Corinthians 10:20,21** "No, but I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God; and I do not want you to become sharers in demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons."

49) **2Corinthians 2:11** "so that no advantage would be taken of us by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his schemes"

50) **2 Corinthians 11:3** "But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ."

51) **2 Corinthians 11:14,15** "No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds."

52) **2 Corinthians 12:7** "Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me—to keep me from exalting myself!"

53) **Ephesians 2:2** "in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience."

54) **Ephesians 4:27** "and do not give the devil an opportunity."

55) **1 Thessalonians 2:18** "For we wanted to come to you—I, Paul, more than once—and yet Satan hindered us."

56) **Ephesians 6:11-16** "Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. [12] For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. [13] Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. [14] Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, [15] and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE; [16] in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil *one*."

57) **1 Thessalonians 3:5** "For this reason, when I could endure it no longer, I also sent to find out about your faith, for fear that the tempter might have tempted you, and our labor would be in vain."

58) **2 Thessalonians 2:9** "that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders,"

59) **1 Timothy 1:20** "Among these are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan, so that they will be taught not to blaspheme."

60) **1 Timothy 3:6,7** "and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. [7] And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil."

61) **1 Timothy 4:1** "But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons,"

62) **1 Timothy 5:15** "for some (young widows) have already turned aside to follow Satan."

63) **2 Timothy 2:26** "and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will."

64) **Hebrews 2:14** "Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil,"

65) **James 2:19** "You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder."

66) **James 4:7** "Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you."

67) **1 Peter 5:8,9** "Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world."

68) **1 John 2:13** "I am writing to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I have written to you, children, because you know the Father."

69) **1 John 3:8** "the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil."

70) **1 John 3:10** "By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother."

71) **1 John 3:12** "not as Cain, who was of the evil one and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother's were righteous."

72) **1 John 5:18** "We know that no one who is born of God sins; but He who was born of God keeps him, and the evil one does not touch him."

73) **Jude 1:9** "But Michael the archangel, when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses, did not dare pronounce against him a railing judgment, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"

74) **Revelation 2:9-13** "'I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. [10] Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. [11] He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death.' [12] "And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: The One who has the sharp two-edged sword says this: [13] 'I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is; and you hold fast My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days of Antipas, My witness, My faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells."

75) **Revelation 2:24** "But I say to you, the rest who are in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not known the deep things of Satan, as they call them—I place no other burden on you."

76) **Revelation 3:9** "Behold, I will cause those of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and make them know that I have loved you."

77) **Revelation 9:20** "The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk;"

78) **Revelation 12:9-12** "And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. [10] Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night. [11] And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death. [12] For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has *only* a short time."

79) **Revelation 20:1-10** "Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. [2] And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; [3] and he threw him into the abyss, and shut *it* and sealed *it* over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time. [4] Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I *saw* the souls of those who had been beheaded because

of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. [5] The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. [6] Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years. [7] When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, [8] and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore. [9] And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them. [10] And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever."

The above scriptures show us that Satan is a real entity.

Let's turn back to the Beliefs Speaker role.

CORE BELIEF #5

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"Based on the following scriptures, I believe I have another enemy - my fleshly appetites."

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In 1 Timothy 6:12, we read, "Fight the good fight of faith...". Here we see that the Christian life is a battle, a continuous fight for our faith. If we keep our faith intact, our minds are kept at rest. If we succumb to the plots of our enemy, Satan, to undermine our faith, then we lose the peace and happiness God has for us, and life becomes difficult. Another enemy of the Christian can be the fleshly appetites of the physical body. They can crave things that are not good and can be a distraction, taking our focus off of Christ and His plan for our lives. Allowing our fleshly appetites to have their way negatively in our lives will lead us toward anxiety and defeat.

1) **Romans 6:13** "and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God."
2) **Romans 7:5** "For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Law, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death."
3) **Romans 7:18** "For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not."
4) **Romans 8:1,2** "Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death."
5) **Romans 8:3** "For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh,"
6) **Romans 8:4** "so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit."
7) **Romans 8:5** "For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit."
8) **Romans 8:8** "and those who are in the flesh cannot please God."
9) **Romans 8:9** "However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him."
10) **Romans 8:10,11** "If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you."

11) **Romans 8:12** "So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh."

12) **Romans 8:13,14** "for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. [14] For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God."

13) **Galatians 5:16** "But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh."

14) **Galatians 5:17-18** "For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. [18] But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law."

15) **Galatians 5:19-21** "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, [20] Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, [21] Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

16) **Galatians 5:22-25** "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, [23] gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. [24] Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. [25] If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit."

17) **Ephesians 4:22-24** "that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, [23] and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, [24] and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth."

18) **Colossians 3:5** "Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry:"

19) **1 Peter 1:14-16** "As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, [15] but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; [16] because it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

20) **1 Peter 2:11** "Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul."

21) **1 John 3:5-7** "You know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin. [6] No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him. [7] Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous;"

The goal of speaking these verses out loud is to fully believe the truth that our fleshly appetites are at war with us. We need to become so convinced of this that nothing could convince us otherwise. Reading these scriptures over and over will help us make this truth more a reality in our hearts.

Let's turn back to the Beliefs Speaker role.

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CORE BELIEF #6

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"Based on the following scriptures, I believe God wants me to enjoy good physical health."

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This belief can be difficult to adopt because many people who pray for healing don't get healed. This is a mystery. However, we know that God responds to faith. Whenever Jesus healed someone, the scriptures say or imply that Jesus marveled at the person's faith. That is what we want Jesus to observe in us; we want Him to marvel at our faith. Thus, the purpose of saying these verses is to help keep our faith strong while we wait for God to move in our situation. As a side-benefit, we will enjoy peace of mind while we wait.

The words in italics below the verse are prayers we can say, based on the scripture above it.

1) **Exodus 15:26** "And He said, "If you will give earnest heed to the voice of the Lord your God, and do what is right in His sight, and give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have put on the Egyptians; for I, the Lord, am your healer."

"Because I give earnest heed to your voice oh Lord my God, and I do what is right in Your sight, and I give ear to Your commandments, and I keep all of Your statutes, You put none of the diseases upon me which were put on the Egyptians, and You are my healer."

2) **Psalm 30:2** "O Lord my God, I cried to You for help, and You healed me."

"O Lord my God I cry to you for help and You heal me."

3) **Psalm 103:3** "Who pardons all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases;"

"God, You pardon all my iniquities (through Christ), and You heal all of my diseases."

4) **Psalm 107:20** "He sent His word and healed them, And delivered them from their destructions."

"God, You sent Your Word and healed me, and You deliver me from all my destructions."

5) **Proverbs 3:8** "(Turning from evil) will be healing to your body And refreshment to your bones."

"God, I believe that turning from evil is healing to my body and refreshment to my bones"

6) **Proverbs 4:20-22** "My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. [21] Do not let them depart from your sight; Keep them in the midst of your heart. [22] For they are life to those who find them And health to all their body."

"I give attention to Your Words, Father, and I incline my ear to your sayings. I do not let them depart from my sight. I keep them in the midst of my heart. And they are life to me who finds them and they are health to all my body."

7) **Proverbs 10:27** "The fear of the Lord prolongs life, But the years of the wicked will be shortened."

"God, I believe that because I fear You my life is prolonged."

8) **Isaiah 53:4-5** "Surely our grief's He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed."

"God, I believe Jesus bore all my grief's and He carried all my sorrows. He was pierced through for my transgressions, and He was crushed for my iniquities. By His scourging I am healed."

9) **Jeremiah 17:14** "Heal me, O Lord, and I will be healed; Save me and I will be saved, For You are my praise."

"Heal me o Lord, and I will be healed. Save me and I will be saved. You are my praise."

10) **Jeremiah 30:17** "'For I will restore you to health And I will heal you of your wounds,' declares the Lord, 'Because they have called you an outcast, saying: "It is Zion; no one cares for her."

"O Lord, You restore me to health and You heal my wounds."

11) **Jeremiah 33:6** "Behold, I will bring to it health and healing, and I will heal them; and I will reveal to them an abundance of peace and truth."

"You O Lord bring health and healing, and you heal me. And you reveal to me an abundance of peace and truth."

12) **Hosea 6:1** "Come, let us return to the Lord. For He has torn us, but He will heal us; He has wounded us, but He will bandage us."

"Lord, in Hosea's day you sometimes tore them, but then you healed them. You wounded them but then you bandaged them. I see you healing me today."

13) **Malachi 4:2** "But for you who fear My name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings; and you will go forth and skip about like calves from the stall."

"Lord, I fear your name, and you the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in your wings. I go forth and skip about like calves from the stall. Your healing wings are healing me."

14) **Matthew 4:23-24** "Jesus was going throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people. The news about Him spread throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all who were ill, those suffering with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics; and He healed them."

"Jesus, you healed every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among us. They brought

all who were ill and you healed them. You are healing me. And I thank you for this."

15) **Matthew 8:7** "Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him."

"Jesus, I see you saying to me, "I have come to heal you, and I heal you now."

16) **Matthew 8:13** "And Jesus said to the centurion, "Go; it shall be done for you as you have believed." And the servant was healed that very moment."

"Lord, I see you healing me. And I believe it is being done to me as I have believed."

17) **Matthew 8:15-17** "He touched her hand, and the fever left her; and she got up and waited on Him. When evening came, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed; and He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were ill. This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet: "He Himself took our infirmities and carried away our diseases."

"Jesus, you cast out spirits with a word and you healed all who were ill. You fulfilled what the prophet Isaiah said, You took our infirmities and carried away our diseases. And I see you taking away my sickness."

18) **Matthew 9:35** "Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness."

"Jesus, you went through all the cities and villages teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and you healed every kind of disease and every kind of sickness. I am being healed by you now."

19) **Matthew 12:10** "And a man was there whose hand was withered. And they questioned Jesus, asking, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"—so that they might accuse Him."

"Jesus, you healed people every day of the week. I feel you are healing me today. Thank you."

20) **Matthew 12:13** "Then He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand!" He stretched it out, and it was restored to normal like the other."

"Jesus, I will stretch out my hand or do anything else you tell me to do, to get my healing. Thank you for healing me."

21) **Matthew 12:15** "But Jesus, aware of this, withdrew from there. Many followed Him, and He healed them all,"

"Jesus, many followed you and you healed them. I am following you and I see you healing me too."

22) **Matthew 12:22** "Then a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute was brought to Jesus, and He healed him, so that the mute man spoke and saw."

"Jesus, you healed a deaf and mute man. You can certainly heal me. Thank you for healing me."

23) **Matthew 14:14** "When He went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and felt compassion for them and healed their sick."

"Jesus, you saw a large crowd and you felt compassion for them and you healed their sick. I see you having compassion on me and I see you healing me."

24) **Matthew 15:28** "Then Jesus said to her, "O woman, your faith is great; it shall be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed at once."

"Jesus, this woman's words of faith caught your attention and you healed her daughter. I too speak words of faith, and I see you healing me too."

25) **Matthew 15:30** "And large crowds came to Him, bringing with them those who were lame, crippled, blind, mute, and many others, and they laid them down at His feet; and He healed them."

"Jesus, they brought to you many who were sick and you healed them. I bring myself to you, and I see you healing me too. Thank you."

26) **Matthew 19:2** "and large crowds followed Him, and He healed them there."

"Jesus, large crowds still follow You and You heal them. And You are healing me."

27) **Matthew 21:22** "And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive."

"Jesus, I ask You for healing, believing, and You heal me."

28) **Mark 1:34** "And He healed many who were ill with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and He was not permitting the demons to speak, because they knew who He was."

"Jesus, You healed many who were ill with various diseases, and You are healing me too."

29) **Mark 3:10** "for He had healed many, with the result that all those who had afflictions pressed around Him in order to touch Him."

"Jesus, You healed many in Your day. I approach You now and I touch You by reading

Your Word, and You heal me."

30) **Mark 6:5-6** "And He could do no miracle there except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them. And He wondered at their unbelief. And He was going around the villages teaching."

"Jesus, I keep developing my faith so I don't disappoint You with little faith, and You heal me."

31) **Mark 16:18** "they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."

"Jesus, elders have laid hands on me in prayer and I am recovering."

32) **Luke 4:18** "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, And recovery of sight to the blind, To set free those who are oppressed,"

"Jesus, the Spirit of the Lord is upon You and You are releasing me from my illness."

33) **Luke 4:40** "While the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and laying His hands on each one of them, He was healing them."

"Jesus, I bring myself to you and I allow You to lay Your hands on me, and You heal me."

34) **Luke 5:15** "But the news about Him was spreading even farther, and large crowds were gathering to hear Him and to be healed of their sicknesses."

"Jesus, large crowds still gather to hear You and to be healed by You, and You are healing me."

35) **Luke 6:17-19** "Jesus came down with them and stood on a level place; and there was a large crowd of His disciples, and a great throng of people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon, [18] who had come to hear Him and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were being cured. [19] And all the people were trying to touch Him, for power was coming from Him and healing them all."

"Jesus, great throngs of people still come to You to hear You and to be healed by You, and I am one of them, and You heal me."

36) **Luke 8:43,44,47,48** "And a woman who had a hemorrhage for twelve years, and could not be healed by anyone, [44] came up behind Him and touched the fringe of His cloak, and immediately her hemorrhage stopped… [47] When the woman saw that she had not escaped notice, she came trembling and fell down before Him, and declared in the presence of all the people the reason why she had touched Him, and how she had been immediately healed. [48] And He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace."

"Jesus, the woman with a hemorrhage did something to show her faith in You. I, too, do things that show my faith in You. And you heal me."

37) **Luke 9:11** "But the crowds were aware of this and followed Him; and welcoming them, He began speaking to them about the kingdom of God and curing those who had need of healing."

"Jesus, I see you welcoming me, and curing my ailments."

38) **Luke 9:42** "While he was still approaching, the demon slammed him to the ground and threw him into a convulsion. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the boy and gave him back to his father."

"Jesus, I see You rebuking unclean spirits in me and this heals me."

39) **Luke 13:11-16** "And there was a woman who for eighteen years had had a sickness caused by a spirit; and she was bent double, and could not straighten up at all. [12] When Jesus saw her, He called her over and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your sickness." [13] And He laid His hands on her; and immediately she was made erect again and *began* glorifying God. [14] But the synagogue official, indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, *began* saying to the crowd in response, "There are six days in which work should be done; so come during them and get healed, and not on the Sabbath day." [15] But the Lord answered him and said, "You hypocrites, does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the stall and lead him away to water *him*? [16] And this woman, a daughter of Abraham as she is, whom Satan has bound for eighteen long years, should she not have been released from this bond on the Sabbath day?"

"Jesus, I have been hindered by Satan with this problem for _____ days, and I need to be released. I see myself healed with your help. Thank you for healing me!"

40) **Luke 14:3-4** "And Jesus answered and spoke to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or not?" But they kept silent. And He took hold of him and healed him, and sent him away."

"Jesus, it is lawful to be healed on the Sabbath day and on any day. And I see you healing me."

41) **Luke 17:12-15** "As He entered a village, ten leprous men who stood at a distance met Him; [13] and they raised their voices, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" [14] When He saw them, He said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they were going, they were cleansed. [15] Now one of them, when he saw that he had been healed, turned back, glorifying God with a loud voice,"

"Jesus, I will surely give thanks for my healing. Thank you!"

42) **Luke 22:50-51** "And one of them struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his right ear. But Jesus answered and said, "Stop! No more of this." And He touched his ear and healed him."

"Jesus, you touched the ear that got cut off and you healed the man. I see you healing me too!"

43) **Acts 3:12** "But when Peter saw this, he replied to the people, "Men of Israel, why are you amazed at this, or why do you gaze at us, as if by our own power or piety we had made him walk?"

"Jesus, Peter helped this man get healed. I see myself getting healed as well. Thank you!"

44) **Acts 4:29-31** "And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Your bond-servants may speak Your word with all confidence, [30] while You extend Your hand to heal, and signs and wonders take place through the name of Your holy servant Jesus." [31] And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and *began* to speak the word of God with boldness."

"Jesus, I see you extending your hand to heal me. Thank you."

45) **Acts 10:38** "You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him."

"Jesus, You went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, I see you healing me."

46) **1 Cor**inthians **12:7-10** "But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. [8] For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; [9] to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, [10] and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another *various* kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues."

"Jesus, I place my hand on my head as if you have given me the gift of healing, and I see myself healed."

47) **James 5:14-16** "Is anyone among you sick? *Then* he must call for the elders of the church and they are to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; [15] and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him. [16] Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much."

"Jesus, I approach the elders of my church to pray for me and anoint me with oil so that I may be healed. And I am healed! Thank you!"

48) **1Peter 2:24** "and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed."

"Jesus, I thank you that by your wounds I have been healed."

49) **3 John 1:2** "Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and <u>be in good health</u>, just as your soul prospers."

"Jesus, I thank you that you want me in good health, and so I see myself healed by you."

The goal of speaking these verses out loud is to fully believe the truth that God wants us to enjoy good health. We need to become so convinced of this that nothing could convince us otherwise. Reading these scriptures over and over will help us make this truth more of a reality in our hearts.

Let's turn back to the Beliefs Speaker role.

Types of Abuse

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When most people hear the word "abuse" they usually think of something very extreme, such as punching or kicking. However, abuse can take non-physical forms too. The following is a list of 6 types of abuse.

Physical

- Any unwanted physical contact
- Kicking, punching
- Pulling, pushing
- Slapping, hitting
- Pulling hair
- Arm twisting
- Holding against wall
- Squeezing hand, arm
- Choking
- Shooting
- Locking in a room
- Standing too close
- Stopping from leaving
- Restraining in any way
- Picking them up
- Holding or hugging when unwanted
- Pointing finger, poking
- Murder
- Hitting with objects
- Tickling
- Spitting

Sexual

- Forcing sex (rape)
- Total lack of intimacy
- Forcing certain positions
- Total lack of intimacy
- Sleeping around
- Hounding for sex
- Intimidation by knowledge or reputation
- Retaliating by refusing sex
- Put downs
- Being rough
- Using sex as basis for argument
- Treating someone as a sex object
- Pornography
- Forcing people to have sex with others

Emotional/Verbal/Psychological

- Forcing people to have sex with others
- Refusing to do things with them
- Getting your own way
- Pressuring them
- Not coming home
- Real or suggested involvement with another person
- Manipulation
- Annoying mannerisms, e.g. snapping fingers
- Saying "Do you remember what happened last time"
- Making threats to them about you, e.g. killing yourself

Financial

- Withholding money
- Spending money foolishly or beyond means
- Not spending money on special occasions, e.g. their birthday
- Making the decisions in terms of how money is spent

Environmental

- Locking them in
- Taking the phones with you to work
- Slamming doors
- Breaking things
- Throwing objects
- Turning the stereo/TV up loud
- Harming pets
- Throwing their clothes out
- Ripping their clothes

Social

- Not taking responsibility for children
- Embarrassment in front of children
- Putting down or ignoring in public
- Accusing them of sleeping
- Not saying what is on your mind
- Never really forgiving
- Lying
- Accusing them of sleeping around
- Treating them as a child
- Putting them on a pedestal
- False accusations
- Raising your voice with them
- Agreeing with them even though you don't
- Making them fearful
- Putting them or their family down
- Starting arguments
- Not letting them see their friends
- Using a continual joke or putdown about them with others
- Choosing friends or family over them
- Using kids as a weapon
- Abusing children physically or sexually
- Not taking them out
- Keeping them busy in the kitchen, e.g. during a party
- Change of personality with others
- Not being nice to their friends
- Making a "scene"

Emotional/Verbal/Psychological

- Insulting
- Yelling
- Name calling
- Verbal threats
- Intimidation
- Playing "mind games"
- Overpowering their emotions
- Brainwashing
- Bringing up old issues and arguing with them
- Putting them down for things they have done in the past
- Inappropriate expression of jealousy
- Turning around a situation against them
- Laughing in their face
- Silence
- Walking away from them in a discussion
- Finding and verbalizing their faults
- Comparing them to others to conform to a role
- Overtly sarcastic or critical
- Lack of consideration for their opinion
- Trying to get last word in
- Pre-violence cues – not telling them what you are doing

Author's Message

Dear friend,

I hope this manual helps you realize that with effort you can achieve a life free of nagging anxiety and depression. I wish this manual existed 40 years ago when I needed it. It wasn't, so I had to stumble along in life - hurting, wasting time thinking about life, trying to figure out how to psyche myself up to face life every day, wasting time reading unhelpful books, wasting time and money seeing various counselors who didn't help me. I would like to think this will be the last self-help book you'll ever need, but I would never endorse that. It's important to stay hungry for truth. So buy as many books as you like, keep learning. Trust God to deliver you from anything that is hindering you, so you can become everything He wants you to be. Life is short, so live it to the full. Get well, not just for you, but for your family and friends. Most of all, get well so God can use you to help others who struggle.

"One life 'twill soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last." One way to really make an impact for Christ is by getting involved in helping people with their mental health challenges. This program is one way to do that. We offer you the opportunity to learn how to be a chairperson for a Victory Tips group. In the beginning it can be a conference call group. Then, as your confidence grows, you may want to lead a community group in a public venue where you live. It is exhilarating watching people transform into happy, healthy individuals. You will feel great knowing that you played a part in seeing these people get healed.

For the next 60 seconds, I am taking my focus off of this book, and I'm thinking about you. I am envisioning the potential that resides in you… and I'm thinking back in history at all the world-shakers that the church of Jesus Christ has ever produced, and I'm thinking, "I could be looking at another world-shaker, right here, right now –You!" It is sobering. Thus, my goal is to be there for you, and inspire you to seek God with everything you have. Make Him a priority in your life. I will run alongside you until you reach your goal of peace and happiness. And I will do whatever I can to help you become a world-shaker Christian. That is my commitment to you. I invite you to contact me and we will see where this leads. I'm hoping it leads to tens…, hundreds…, and even thousands more people being helped out of anxiety and depression. Wouldn't that be awesome? Let's see.

To your happiness and success,

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Message To The Strong

The problem of poor mental health in society is so staggering that it is going to require everyone pitching-in to help those who struggle emotionally. The Bible teaches that we who are strong ought to help those who are weak, and this includes those with mental health challenges.

a) Romans 15:1 "Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves."

b) 1 Thessalonians 5:14 "We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone."

c) Hebrews 12:12 "Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble,"

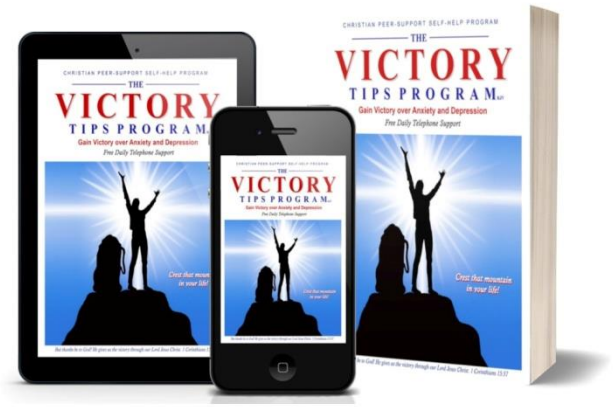
d) Psalm 41:1 "How blessed is he who considers the helpless; The LORD will deliver him in a day of trouble."

e) Isaiah 35:3 "Encourage the exhausted, and strengthen the feeble."

Even if we are strong, and those in our family, and circle of friends are strong, our lives can be severely affected by a stranger who has a random outburst. Please consider what you can do to help those who struggle emotionally.

The Victory Tips Program makes it easy to lead a weekly support group. By using this program, or parts of it, you will be doing your part to reach out to those who struggle. Don't wait until a co-worker, or a classmate of one your children reacts out of deep anxiety or depression. Reach out today. Make a difference where you are. With everyone doing their bit, we can help eradicate desperate feelings and actions in our communities. You are stronger and more helpful than you think!

Occasionally, we meet someone who is head and shoulders above everyone else spiritually. We may not realize it at the time. But years later, we will remember them and say what the two travelers to Emmaus said, "Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way and while he opened to us the scriptures?" This unique person is 'gripped' with the gospel. Sharing it, teaching it, praying for more of God in their life and the lives of others. It permeates everything about them. They are marked by God, and for God. Almost like John the Baptist. It's just on them. They have a narrow focus, so they are unencumbered by life's problems. This makes them jovial and fun to be with. And it attracts others who want to be like them. When a person like that comes into our lives, we'll want to make room on our agenda and spend some time with them. Perhaps, some of the Spirit that is on them will rub off on us. And if nothing else, we'll get to watch a fire burn, and be warmed by it. It is these kinds of people who make the most impact for God, for their family, for their church, and for the world.



Welcome to the Victory Tips Program

Since 2005, Victory Tips has been using the truths in this program to help people find victory over their life's challenges. We live in an age where the problems of discouragement, anxiety and depression, have come to the forefront of people's attention. Jesus told us we would have problems in our lives, He said in John 16:33, "In the world you shall have tribulation." But then He said, "Be of good cheer." This tells us that it is possible to have problems in our lives and still feel hopeful, optimistic, and even cheerful. We *can* because God has given to us His Word. We can use it as a weapon against the darkness that tries to hinder our happiness. Jesus, Himself, was not immune to Satan's attempts to derail His life, and He showed us how to disarm Satan when he tries to disturb our peace and happiness. That's what this book is all about. It lays out the tools in God's Word that we can use to liberate ourselves so that we live the best life possible - a life of Victory!

The primary purpose of this book is to engage people in group discussions about their life's challenges, and how to overcome them. After someone's life has been healed, they are then given the opportunity to use this program to help others who are having difficulties in their life. We encourage healed individuals to team up with others, and commit to leading a weekly recovery group of their own. It can be held in their home, a church, or some other public venue. It can also be held by way of a conference call. A group leader's life becomes so much richer for doing so. They will be helping people see that what Jesus said in John 10:10 is true. He said, "I am come that they might have Life, and that they might have it more abundantly." Together we can show everyone how they can live a life free of anxiety and depression.

This Program Offers:

* **29 In-Depth Happiness Tips**
* **The Happiness Basics** (Helps explain and fast-track recovery.)
* **Dozens of Self-Help Tools**
* **Recovery Group Format** (Anyone can lead a recovery group.)
* **Conference Calls and Friendly Support Staff**

When someone comes to us for help, we take it very seriously. As a peer-led group, we know what it is like to have chronic psychiatric issues. We know the effect they can have on family and friends. We also know how they can impact a career. So when someone comes to us for help, we reach out with empathy and dignity. We do our best to provide daily telephone support. We share Bible truths that have helped us in our own recoveries, and we pray for people. In addition, we help people find personal support right where they live. With everyone working together, we begin to see a brand new person emerge from the pain that once held them down. In the end, lives are changed, the Gospel is proven, and Christ is glorified. We welcome you to inquire how your life, or a friend's life, can be helped by this Bible-based ministry. Contact us today.

www.victorytipsprogram.com

Please Note
While this book has many life-changing tips, treatment for mental health should include oversight by a doctor, therapist, clergy person or group sponsor. We would be happy to help you find such a person in your area. Contact us today to get started.

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