

# **SECRETS OF SUCCESSFUL LIVING**

**STUDIES 1 - 10**

**TEACHER MANUAL**

**Stephen Nemeth Lectures**

---

# Secrets of Successful Living

---

Studies 1 - 10  
Teacher Manual

<h2>TABLE OF CONTENTS</h2>
----------------------------

<u>Study</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Pages</u>
1	How To Find The True God	1
2	The Benefits Of Knowing God	6
3	Making It Our Ambition To Please Him	15
4	Finding God's Plan For Our Lives	23
5	How To Experience Perfect Peace	32
6	The Secret Of Abiding Joy	38
7	What To Do When Trouble Comes	45
8	Being Concerned For Others	54
9	Our Best For The Lord Jesus	60
10	Life On The Highest Plane	66

*Stephen Nemeth Lectures*

# ***HOW TO FIND THE TRUE GOD***

## ***STUDY 1***

### **Scripture Portion: 2 Chronicles 15:1-19**

In this series we are to consider some of the Secrets of Successful Living. Of course, no one can begin to live successfully without knowing God. First of all, we must understand how we can come to know Him for ourselves.

The subject is brought before us in **2 Chronicles 15:1-19**.

It is pin-pointed in the key verses -

**2 Chronicles 15:3-4** - *Now for a long season Israel hath been without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law.*

*4 But when they in their trouble did turn unto the LORD God of Israel, and sought him, he was found of them.*

There is only one true God, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ -

**2 Corinthians 1:3** - *Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;*

The greatest blessing which anyone can experience in this life is to find the true God. The greatest tragedy is to pass through life without ever finding Him.

In our key verses, we have a brief description of one phase of Israel's history, but it also describes thousands of people throughout the world today. Notice how this brief portion of scripture unfolds to give us a sequence of teaching.

---

#### **THEY WERE WITHOUT THE TRUE GOD.**

---

Verse 3 tells us that this had been true of them *for a long season*. They were Godless, less God -

**Ephesians 2:12** - *That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:*

This is a perfect description of multitudes of people today; they are living without God.

He does not enter into their thoughts, except in times of emergency. He has not been welcomed into their lives.

The Israelites still believed in the existence of God. They experienced and benefited from His providences, but for all that, they were without the true God. We are not told they were without *a* god, for everyone worships a god of some kind - the god of self, money, pleasure or ambition.

These words in **verse 3**, therefore, are descriptive of many people - *for a long season .....without the true God.*

---

## **2. THEY WERE WITHOUT A TEACHING PRIEST.**

---

A teaching priest was one whose duty it was to teach the people the truth of God. Who are the teaching priests today? Every faithful preacher and teacher of the Word of God is one of God's teaching priests.

But the majority of people are outside the influence of these teachers and preachers. They do not attend church or listen to an exposition of the scripture. They do not read the Bible or the kind of literature which would inform them about the truths of God. In consequence of this, there is an appalling ignorance of the things of God. The average person knows nothing of God's way of salvation. Look at -

**Ephesians 2:8-10** - *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*

*9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

*10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*

Many have experienced a taste of *churchianity* or *religiosity*, but very few know the way of salvation as it is revealed in the person of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Compare -

**John 14:6** - *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

**Acts 4:12** - *Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*

**Romans 1:16** - *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*

---

1.                   THEY WERE WITHOUT LAW.

---

**Verse 3** tells us this. The priests were the guardians of the law. To be without a priest meant, therefore, to be without the law. If anyone wanted to know the law in those days, he had to go to a priest. Today, thank God!, we have His law, His Word in the Bible.

However, the majority of people do not read the Bible. Therefore they are *without (the) law*.

The law is God's standard of what is right and wrong. The vast majority of people take their standard from the media:

1. the newspaper,
2. the radio,
3. the television, and
4. the cinema.

Therefore, because God's standard has been rejected and the world's, or man's or the devil's standard has been substituted, our civilization has become increasingly corrupted.

The great need today is to get back to the Bible, the true standard, the only book which contains the authentic revelation of God, of His love, of His grace, of His Son, and of His way of saving men and women.

---

**4.    WHEN TROUBLE CAME THEY TURNED TO THE LORD.**

---

**2 Chronicles 15:4** - *But when they in their trouble did turn unto the LORD God of Israel, and sought him, he was found of them.*

tells us this.

From **2 Chronicles 15:5-6** - *And in those times there was no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but great vexations were upon all the inhabitants of the countries.*

*6 And nation was destroyed of nation, and city of city: for God did vex them with all adversity.*

We find that the trouble came because they had left God out of their reckoning and out of their lives. Trouble will always come to nations and to individuals if they reject the

Lord.

Notice that it was the Lord who sent the trouble. It was His judgment on sin and His loving method of causing them to turn back to Him. See what it says at the end of -

**2 Chronicles 15:6** - *And nation was destroyed of nation, and city of city: for God did vex them with all adversity.*

Does God work like this today? He does! He often sends trouble into a man's life in order that that man, who for many years has lived only for himself, might turn back to the Lord and find Him. The Prodigal had to come to himself before he was ready to come to his father - **Luke 15:11-24**.

For a further illustration of this truth, read **Psalm 106**, where we see that when these people had been severely chastened they turned to the Lord. Then what happened?

---

2.                   THEY FOUND THE TRUE GOD.

---

In

**2 Chronicles 15:4** - *But when they in their trouble did turn unto the LORD God of Israel, and sought him, he was found of them.*

there are three words which tell us how to find God, or, more correctly, how to be found of Him. We must:

1.                   TURN from sin and from self -

**1 Thessalonians 1:9** - *For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;*

2. SEEK the Lord and His pardon -

**Isaiah 55:6-7** - *Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:*

*7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.*

3. FIND the true God -

**2 Chronicles 15:2** - *Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel, unto Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the city of David, which is Zion.*

**2 Chronicles 15:4** - *But when they in their trouble did turn unto the LORD God of Israel, and sought him, he was found of them.*

**2 Chronicles 15:15** - *And all Judah rejoiced at the oath: for they had sworn with all their heart, and sought him with their whole desire; and he was found of them: and the LORD gave them rest round about.*

How wonderfully this little bit of ancient history ends - *He was found of them.*

**2 Chronicles 15:4** - *But when they in their trouble did turn unto the LORD God of Israel, and sought him, he was found of them.*

**2 Chronicles 15:15** - *And all Judah rejoiced at the oath: for they had sworn with all their heart, and sought him with their whole desire; and he was found of them: and the LORD gave them rest round about.*

Have you found Him? Read -

**Proverbs 8:17** - *I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.*

# ***THE BENEFITS OF KNOWING GOD***

## ***STUDY 2***

**Scripture Portion: Job 22:21-29**

In the key verse -

**Job 22:21** - *Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee.*

we are told of the good, the blessing, the benefits which will come to us if we really know God. Of course, there is a great difference between knowing God and simply knowing about Him. Millions of people know about Him who do not really know Him.

There is a theoretical and an experiential knowledge of God. It is the experiential knowledge of Him which is so vital.

How do we know God? The words *return* and *receive* in -

**Job 22:22-23** - *Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thine heart.*

*23 If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles.*

give us the answer. Notice that we return once - that is a crisis; but we go on receiving continually - that is a process.

### **(1) RETURN -**

**Job 22:23** - *If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles.*

We have wandered from Him.

**Isaiah 53:6** - *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

**Luke 15:13** - *And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.*



and by nature we are *far off*; therefore our first need is to return and be reconciled to Him, to be *made nigh*-

**Ephesians 2:13** - *But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.*

**1 Peter 2:25** - *For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls*

There is only one way back to God. Look up -

**Isaiah 55:6-7** - *Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:*

*7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.*

(2) **RECEIVE** -

**Job 22:22** - *Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thine heart.*

Having returned to the Lord, we must then receive Him and trust Him as our personal Saviour -

**John 14:6** - *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

**Hebrews 7:25** - *Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.*

**Revelation 3:20** - *Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.*

Then we must receive His law and obey His commandments.

**Joshua 1:8** - *This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.*

**John 14:15** - *If ye love me, keep my commandments.*

**John 14:21** - *He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.*

Only thus shall we really get to know Him, not only as our Saviour but also as -  
our Friend -

**John 15:14-15** - *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.  
15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.*

our Sanctifier -

**1 Corinthians 1:30** - *But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:*

our Supplier -

**Philippians 4:19** - *But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

and our Keeper -

**Jude 24** - *Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,*

That is, we shall get to know Him as our all in all -

**Colossians 3:11** - *Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.*

### ***There are degrees of knowing God.***

Compare -

**John 14:9** - *Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?*

with what Paul said thirty years later. Look up -

**Acts 9:4-6** - *And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?*

5 *And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.*

6 *And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.*

**Philippians 3:10** - *That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;*

The measure in which we know God is determined by the measure we receive from Him. The more we receive (hear, obey, live out) His Word, the more we shall know Him.

What then is the good that comes by knowing God? What are the benefits of knowing God?

---

3. WE SHALL BE BUILT UP.

---

Job 22:23 - *If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles.*

tells us this. In other words, by knowing Him we become spiritually strong, virile, robust men and women.

**Ephesians 6:10** - *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.*

Have you returned to God by *receiving* Christ as your own personal Saviour?

Turn to -

**Colossians 2:6-7** - *As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:*

7 *Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.*

**2 Peter 3:18** - *But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*

There is no need to be a weak, anaemic Christian. Be the Daniel kind -

**Daniel 2:32** - *And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.*

---

4. WE SHALL DEAL DRASTICALLY WITH SIN.

---

**Job 22:23** - *If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles.*

tells us this. Our bodies are the temples (tabernacles) of God -

**1 Corinthians 6:19** - *What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own.*

When and as we really know God, we shall share His hatred of sin. We will deal with it.

**2 Corinthians 7:1** - *Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*

A Christian who has light views of sin certainly does not know God very intimately.

But, *thy tabernacles* may not refer only to the body but to the home and the business. Have we dealt drastically with all sin and every doubtful thing in these *tabernacles*?

**2 Chronicles 29:16-17** - *And the priests went into the inner part of the house of the LORD, to cleanse it, and brought out all the uncleanness that they found in the temple of the LORD into the court of the house of the LORD. And the Levites took it, to carry it out abroad into the brook Kidron.*

*17 Now they began on the first day of the first month to sanctify, and on the eighth day of the month came they to the porch of the LORD: so they sanctified the house of the LORD in eight days; and in the sixteenth day of the first month they made an end.*

Compare with -

**Psalms 51:6** - *Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.*

---

5. WE SHALL BE GREATLY ENRICHED.

---

Job 22:24-25 - *Then shalt thou lay up gold as dust, and the gold of Ophir as the stones of the brooks.*

25 *Yea, the Almighty shall be thy defence, and thou shalt have plenty of silver.*

The word *defence* may be translated *treasure*, so to know Him is to become enriched indeed - gold and silver in abundance -

**Colossians 2:9-10** - *For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.*

10 *And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:*

If you are a true believer, you are an heir of God and a joint-heir with Christ.

**Romans 8:16-17** - *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:*

17 *And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.*

*Possess your possessions -*

**Obadiah 17** - *But upon mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions.*

and you will experience perfect peace -

**John 14:27** - *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*

fulness of joy -

**John 15:11** - *These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.*

power to witness -

**Acts 1:8** - *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

and grace sufficient -

**2 Corinthians 12:9** - *And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.*

---

6. WE SHALL DELIGHT IN THE LORD HIMSELF.

---

**Job 22:26** - *For then shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, and shalt lift up thy face unto God.*

This means that we shall be weaned away from earthly and temporal things, for which we may be very grateful but which will always disappoint. We shall find our true satisfaction in the Lord Himself, who never changes and who will never disappoint -

**Hebrews 13:8** - *Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.*

As we get to know God, our delight increases in His gifts, His service, His house, but most of all in Himself! Also, we begin to find a new desire for the things which give Him pleasure.

**Psalms 37:4** - *Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.*

---

**5. WE SHALL RECEIVE ANSWERS TO PRAYER.**

---

**Job 22:27** - *Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him, and he shall hear thee, and thou shalt pay thy vows.*

Prayer is the great privilege of every Christian, even the youngest. But the testimony of the whole Bible and of experience proves that it is the people who really know God intimately who receive answers to their prayers.

**1 John 3:22** - *And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.*

**1 John 5:14-15** - *And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing*

*according to his will, he heareth us:*

*15 And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.*

---

7. WE SHALL HAVE A FRUITFUL TESTIMONY.

---

*Job 22:28-29 - Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee: and the light shall shine upon thy ways.*

*29 When men are cast down, then thou shalt say, There is lifting up; and he shall save the humble person.*

The people who are effective witnesses for the Lord, by life or by lip, are the people who really know Him.

4. Job 22:28 - *Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee: and the light shall shine upon thy ways.*

If we really know God and are working according to His gracious will, none of our work will be lost.

**Mark 14:8-9** - *She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying.*

*9 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.*

**1 Corinthians 15:58** - *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

**Galatians 6:9** - *And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.*

5. Job 22:29 - *When men are cast down, then thou shalt say, There is lifting up; and he shall save the humble person.*

What a glorious promise of *results* in our work!.

**Psalms 107:2** - *Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy;*

**John 3:14-15** - *And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:*

15 *That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.*

---

8. WE SHALL HAVE GOD'S SMILE UPON OUR LIFE.

---

**Job 22:28** - *Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee: and the light shall shine upon thy ways.*

*The light shall shine upon thy ways.* That speaks of His good pleasure, of His guidance, of His blessing.

**Numbers 6:24-26** - *The LORD bless thee, and keep thee:*

25 *The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee:*

26 *The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.*

**Psalms 90:17** - *And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.*

**Proverbs 4:18** - *But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*

**Proverbs 10:22** - *The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.*



# *Making It Our Ambition To Please Him*

## STUDY 3

Scripture Portion: 2 Corinthians 5:9

A literal translation of

**2 Corinthians 5:9** - *Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.*

is *We make it our ambition to please Him.*

The constant aim of everyone who really knows the Lord should be to be well-pleasing to Him. Compare -

**John 8:29** - *And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.*

**John 13:16** - *Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.*

Could anyone, anywhere, have a greater ambition than this? Is it your ambition to please Him? - for here, surely, is the secret of successful living.

In this series we are considering ten of these *secrets*, but it could rightly be said that all ten are summed up in the theme of this study. There is nothing greater than living day by day a life which is well-pleasing to the Lord.

See what the Holy Spirit has recorded about Enoch -

**Genesis 5:22-24** - *And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters:*

*23 And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years:*

*24 And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.*

**Hebrews 11:5** - *By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.*

All down the ages there have been men and women whose supreme ambition it has been to please God. Most people today are bent upon pleasing themselves.

Compare -

**Judges 17:6** - *In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.*

**1 Corinthians 10:5** - *But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness.*

**2 Timothy 3:4** - *Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;*

But, there are those who are seeking to fulfil God's conditions of a life that is well-pleasing to Him.

---

9. WHAT ARE THE CONDITIONS FOR PLEASING GOD?

---

a. *We must be born again.*

Compare -

**Romans 8:8** - *So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.*

**John 3:5** - *Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*

Every man and woman is by nature *in the flesh*. While we are *in the flesh*, we can never please God. The first need, therefore, is to be born again so that we are not *in the flesh but in the Spirit*.

**Romans 8:9** - *But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.*

a. *We must separate ourselves from all sinful and doubtful things.*

When we are born again we become children of God.

**1 John 3:1** - *Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.*

But the Christian life is a warfare, and we are soldiers.

**2 Timothy 2:3-4** - *Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 4 No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.*

The lives of worldly Christians are full of sinful and hindering things, but those who wish to please Him disentangle themselves from the things which hinder them in their Christian life.

**c.      *We must dedicate our lives to Him.***

**Romans 12:1** - *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*

(The word *acceptable* means *well-pleasing*.) Separation from sinful and doubtful things is negative, but the dedication of ourselves to the Lord is positive.

Have you handed over to Him the *members* of your body?

**Romans 6:13** - *Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.*

- your hands, feet, eyes, ears, lips.....in other words - yourself?

1.            We must be good witnesses.

God has put us in trust with the gospel, and what a sacred trust it is! The gospel is for everybody. Our whole business is to make it known.

**1 Thessalonians 2:4** - *But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.*

Notice that Paul says, *even so we speak*..... Do we speak? Perhaps we need to pray the prayer of the psalmist in order to please Him.

**Psalm 51:15** - *O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall show forth thy praise.*

Believers who witness to the Lord's grace and power, by lives which are consistent and by lips which are ready to speak for Him, are well-pleasing to the Lord.

2. We must be obedient.

**Colossians 3:20** - *Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.*

If it is well-pleasing to earthly parents when their children obey them, how much more must it please the Lord when His children obey Him? Obedience is very important.

**1 Samuel 15:22** - *And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.*

**John 2:5** - *His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.*

**John 14:15** - *If ye love me, keep my commandments.*

**Acts 9:6** - *And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.*

*f. We must have faith in God.*

**Hebrews 11:6** - *But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

We are told here that unless we have confidence in God we cannot please Him. Thank God, we can trust Him -

Not only for forgiveness -

**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.*

but for food -

**Psalm 34:10** - *The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing.*

Not only for salvation -

**Acts 4:12** - *Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*

but for the supply of our every need -

**Philippians 4:19** - *But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

3. We must be large-hearted.

**Hebrews 13:16** - *But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.*

One translation renders this: *Don't forget to be kind and liberal*- full of love, sympathy, understanding, readiness to help, encouragement, unselfishness.

**Romans 12:13** - *Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.*

**Galatians 6:6** - *Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.*

This is the successful Christian life in action!

---

1. WHAT ARE THE RESULTS OF PLEASING GOD?

---

The most wonderful result is that, if we make it our ambition to please Him, *we shall have His smile upon our life.*

**John 8:29** - *And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.*

**Matthew 3:17** - *And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

The Lord Jesus is the Son of God in an unique sense; but every Christian is a son of God through faith in Him.

**Galatians 3:26** - *For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.*

How wonderful to have God's smile upon our life!

*There are three practical results of pleasing God.*

4. Answers to Prayer.

**1 John 3:21-22** - *Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God.*

*22 And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.*

Notice why we are so sure that God will hear and answer our prayer. Notice also the word *whosoever*, for this covers all our needs. This promise is very challenging, for it not only tells us the way to get our prayer answered, but it explains why some of our prayers are not answered!

5. Enemies at peace.

There is a wonderful promise in -

**Proverbs 16:7** - *I will bless the LORD, who hath given me counsel: my reins also instruct me in the night seasons.*

Note again that the blessing promised is conditional upon our being well-pleasing in His sight.

**Romans 12:17-21** - *Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.*

*18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.*

19 *Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*

20 *Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.*

21 *Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.*

It may well be that in the matter of human relationships you need to prove the Lord on these verses!

**c. Special overcoming power.**

A special temptation is referred to in -

**Ecclesiastes 7:26** - *And I find more bitter than death the woman, whose heart is snares and nets, and her hands as bands: whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be taken by her.*

If deliverance is promised from this evil, surely it is promised from every evil.

**1 Corinthians 10:13** - *There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*

**2 Timothy 4:18** - *And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

---

2.                   WHAT ARE THE MOTIVES WHICH SHOULD CONSTRAIN US TO PLEASE HIM?

---

6.                   Even the Lord did not please Himself.

**Romans 15:3** - *For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.*

7. Only thus can we glorify Him.

**1 Corinthians 10:31** - *Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*

**c. The Judgment Seat of Christ.**

**Romans 14:10** - *But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.*

**1 Corinthians 3:13** - *Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.*

But be sure to note this: We cannot please Him in our own strength.

**Philippians 2:13** - *For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*



# ***FINDING GOD'S PLAN FOR OUR LIVES***

## **STUDY 4**

**Scripture Portion: Acts 9:6**

**Acts 9:6** -*And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.*

We shall base this study upon the question asked by Saul of Tarsus at the very moment of his new birth: *Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?* Did Saul's conversion just happen? Was it by chance that he was suddenly converted on the Damascus road, or was it according to a divine plan and purpose?

**Acts 9:15** - *But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:*

tells us that it certainly was according to plan - God's plan. But has God a plan for my life? If so, how may I know it and what is involved in finding it? These and many other questions demand an answer.

---

3. THE LORD HAS A DEFINITE PLAN AND PURPOSE FOR THE LIFE OF EVERY ONE OF HIS CHILDREN

---

There are three strong reasons for believing this.

8. It is reasonable to expect it.

God is a God of order and method. If we are building a house or designing a dress, we work according to a plan, a pattern. God does the same.

***b. It is according to experience.***

Think of Abraham -

**Hebrews 11:8-10** - *By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.*

9 *By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:*

10 *For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*

Moses -

**Hebrews 11:24-27** - *By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;*

25 *Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;*

26 *Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.*

27 *By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.*

David -

**1 Chronicles 17:7** - *Now therefore thus shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, even from following the sheep, that thou shouldest be ruler over my people Israel:*

Isaiah -

**Isaiah 6:8** - *Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.*

Jeremiah -

**Jeremiah 1:5-8** - *Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.*

6 *Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child.*

7 *But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.*

8 *Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD.*

Paul -

**Acts 9:15** - *But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:*

**c. God's Word teaches it.**

**Ephesians 2:10** - *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works,*

*which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*

Compare with -

**Psalm 27:11** - *Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies.*

**Psalm 37:23** - *The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.*

**Psalm 73:24** - *Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.*

**Psalm 148:8** - *Fire, and hail; snow, and vapours; stormy wind fulfilling his word:*

**Proverbs 3:6** - *In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*

**Proverbs 15:19** - *The way of the slothful man is as an hedge of thorns: but the way of the righteous is made plain.*

**Proverbs 16:3** - *Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established.*

**Isaiah 6:8-9** - *Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.*

*9 And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not.*

**Isaiah 30:21** - *And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.*

**James 1:5** - *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.*

---

4. Notice the following three characteristics of God's plan for our lives.

---

9. It is a personal plan.

Notice the personal pronouns - *thou* and *me* in -

**Acts 9:4** - *And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?*

and the same two words in -

**Acts 9:6** - *And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.*

There is no one else in the world like you, therefore God's plan for you is unique and personal - just for you! He has a purpose to fulfil in and with your life which cannot be fulfilled in and with the life of any other person.

10. It is a perfect plan.

In **Romans 12:2** - *And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

which should only be read in conjunction with -

**Romans 12:1** - *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*

we are told that the will of God, or God's plan and purpose in the lives of His children, is *good, and acceptable, and perfect.*

**c. It is a practical plan.**

It is workable and it is thoroughly related to everyday living and service. It is not a plan which only sounds *good, and acceptable, and perfect* in a theoretical sense, but it proves to be so in experience!

---

5. THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN LIFE, THEREFORE, IS TO DISCOVER GOD'S PLAN AND PURPOSE FOR OUR LIFE.

---

This is obvious, but it is sadly true that some Christians fail to discover God's plan and purpose for their life, and, in consequence, their whole life is filled with disappointment and defeat, frustration and failure.

How wonderful to feel that we are achieving something really worthwhile and to know

that we are doing it, not for ourselves, but in accordance with the will of our loving heavenly Father!

Every unconverted person is living a self-planned life, as Saul was up until the time of his conversion.

**Acts 9:5** - *And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.*

It is also sadly true that many Christians plan their own lives. We make decisions and choices which afterwards prove to be so wrong -

**John 21:3** - *Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing.*

There is nothing greater or more comforting than to know we are in the center of God's will. Every one of us can know just that.

---

6. WE ENTER GOD'S PLAN WHEN WE ACCEPT AND ACKNOWLEDGE JESUS CHRIST AS OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR.

---

Saul entered the plan of God when he said -

**Acts 9:6** - *And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.*

The Lord Jesus revealed Himself to Saul, saying, *I am Jesus.....*- that is, Saviour.

**Matthew 1:21** - *And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.*

This is not to say that God was not interested in Saul and watching over him prior to his conversion, but it is true to say that Saul only really entered into the plan of God when he bowed at the feet of Jesus Christ and accepted Him as his Saviour and Lord.

---

**5. WE GO ON TO DISCOVER, AND WE CONTINUE IN GOD'S PLAN, BY A DAILY SUBMISSION TO HIM AND TO HIS REVEALED WILL.**

---

He has the whole plan of our life in front of Him, but He only reveals it a bit at a time.

**Psalm 37:23** - *The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.*

He knows the end from the beginning -

**Isaiah 46:9-10** - *Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:*

But the human condition which has to be met, if we are to know and to do God's will, is complete submission to Him and a strong desire to obey Him.

**Acts 9:6** - *And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.*

This enquiry as to what God's will is involves four things.

11. Communion with Him in prayer.

A suitable prayer is recorded in -

**Psalm 27:11** - *Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies.*

It is when we know what it is to go regularly into the secret place that the Lord graciously reveals His plan to us step by step.

12. Studying and searching His Word.

How wonderfully all the saints of God have been led as they have read and submitted their lives to the commands and guidance of the Word of God!

**Psalm 119:105** - *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*

**c. Prompt and unquestioning obedience.**

God reveals His will as we obey Him.

**1 Samuel 15:22** - *And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.*

He only does it a step at a time. Saul had to go into the city before the Lord told him the next step He wanted him to take.

**Acts 9:6** - *And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.*

13. Complete and implicit trust.

We can rarely trace God's working in our lives, for we are living by faith and not by sight. This means that we have to trust Him.

The Lord chose Saul to be *a chosen vessel*, and Saul had to trust Him in all that He permitted in his life - sufferings, privations, stonings, imprisonments.

**2 Corinthians 11:24-28** - *Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. 25 Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;*

*26 In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;*

*27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.*

*28 Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.*

We must remember that God's plan includes His permission of life's testings.

**1 Peter 4:12-13** - *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:*

*13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.*

**1 Peter 4:19** - *Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.*

---

## **6. GOD'S PLAN FOR OUR LIVES IS AN ETERNAL ONE.**

---

Perhaps, as you have reached this last point in our study, you are saying, *What a thrilling theme for young people who have the whole of life before them!*

But it is an equally thrilling theme for the most aged Christian, for all of us who belong to the Lord have a glorious eternity before us. God's plan has an earthly and a heavenly part.

The earthly part is like the foundation of the building. The heavenly part can be likened to the structure of the building.

We are apt to have a very limited conception of God's plan.

When a Christian dies at the age of 30 or 40, we say, *What a tragedy!* - which it is from earth's limited view- point; but God's loving plan for His children is an eternal plan.

**Ephesians 2:10** - *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*



**1 John 2:17** - *And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.*

**2 Timothy 4:7-8** - *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:*

*8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*

# ***HOW TO EXPERIENCE PERFECT PEACE***

## ***STUDY 5***

**Scripture Portion: Isaiah 26:3**

**Isaiah 26:3** - *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.*

This wonderful promise was given in the darkest period of Israel's history, so it may well prove to be a special help to us today, when we are surrounded by much gloom and depression, when we are constantly threatened with the three great enemies of doubt, fear and worry.

When all is going well and the skies are bright, it is easy to read our key text in a very superficial way. But, when clouds of trial, disappointment, fear and alarm drift across our sky and the sun is hidden, then how precious these words become to us!

There is no promise anywhere in the Bible which encourages us to believe that, while we are in our earthly bodies we shall experience freedom from trouble. But, there is something far better - there is the promise of peace in the midst of trouble.

Of what value would freedom from trouble be if we had no inward peace? Yet how wonderful it is that, in the midst of the fiercest battle, and while the storm is at its height, the trusting soul may experience inward peace, a deep down calm and a quiet confidence!

---

7.           WHAT IS THIS GREAT BLESSING THAT IS OFFERED TO  
              US?

---

It is described as *perfect peace*.

But what is perfect peace? Can we define it? Yes. It is a condition of freedom from disturbance within the soul. It is perfect harmony reigning within.

The Hebrew word *shalom* has in it the idea of soundness of health, so that to be filled with perfect peace is to be spiritually healthy and free from all discord within the soul.

There can be no room for jealousy, envy, discontent, uncontrolled temper, selfishness,

pride or intolerance in the soul which is filled with peace. All these things are disturbing factors in the heart. They are discordant notes.

The peace which God offers, and which we, by His grace, may experience, is very practical. It is none other than a great calm which He commands.

**Mark 4:39** - *And he arose rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.*

God calls the peace which He gives, *perfect peace*.

*In what sense is it perfect?*

*a. It is perfect in QUALITY.*

That is to say, it is perfect in the kind of peace it is. There is imperfect peace, e.g., the *peace of ignorance*, when we imagine that all is going well whereas, in fact, if our eyes were open to see the truth, we would know that all is not well.

**Jeremiah 6:14** - *They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace.*

There is also the imperfect *peace of stagnation*. The pool of water may be calm and peaceful, but underneath it is foul and green with slime.

Many men and women know only a peace like that. One day the shock of God's judgment will stir up their pool and they will find that they have no real peace at all.

There is also the imperfect *peace of dependence* which is a peace which is dependent upon some thing or person. How unsatisfactory this is, for the *thing* may fail and the *person* may die! Then, where is their peace?

In contrast with these three kinds of imperfect peace, God's peace is perfect.

14. It is perfect in QUANTITY.

That is to say, the supply of it is sufficient and it exactly meets our need. The marginal rendering of *perfect peace* is *peace, peace*, in other words, *double peace*.

This is very significant when we turn to -

**Philippians 4:7** - *And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

There we are told that this double peace is peace of heart and mind, and that is the kind of peace we need - a peace which garrisons our mind and calms our heart.

This double peace is also double in the sense that it is:

(1) *peace with God.*

**Romans 5:1** - *Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:*

and

(2) *the peace of God.*

**Philippians 4:7** - *And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

15. It is perfect in CONSTANCY.

That is to say, it is permanent and not intermittent. The promise says, *Thou wilt keep ....*”.

Compare -

**Psalms 121:4** - *Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.*

---

8. HOW DOES THIS PERFECT PEACE COME TO US?

---

16. By Christ Jesus.

**Philippians 4:7** - *And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

Notice that the Lord Jesus Christ is the channel through whom the peace of God flows into our souls. This peace within is the possession of the Christian alone.

There is no peace for anyone who does not possess Christ and who is not resting on the finished work of Christ for salvation. It is the *blood of Jesus (which) whispers peace*

*within.*

**Colossians 1:20** - *And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.*

17. By the Holy Spirit.

The Lord Jesus Christ procured peace for us upon the cross of Calvary. That peace is offered to us through Him as the channel, but it is conveyed to our hearts and minds by the Holy Spirit.

**Galatians 5:22** - *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.*

As the Holy Spirit fills and floods our lives, so He produces this wonderful fruit within us.

**c. By His Word.**

See the great promise which is made in -

**Psalms 119:165** - *Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.*

A better rendering of the word *offend* is *disturb*. Things and people so often disturb us, but here is a promise of perfect peace to those people who love and meditate in and obey the Word of God.

18. By our obedience.

**Leviticus 26:3-6** - *If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; 4 Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.*

*5 And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time: and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely.*

*6 And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid: and I will rid evil beasts out of the land, neither shall the sword go through your land.*

Be sure to notice that most important word **if**. God guarantees to us that if we will walk

in His statutes and keep His commandments, He will keep our hearts in perfect peace. If we will do our part, then God will surely do His part.

19. By plenty of praise and prayer.

The promise of -

**Philippians 4:7** - *And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

is preceded by the conditions in -

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

---

9. TWO CONDITIONS ARE MENTIONED IN ORDER THAT WE MAY HAVE PERFECT PEACE.

---

Who is it that God will keep in perfect peace? It is the one -

20. whose mind is stayed on Thee, and

21. who trusteth in Thee.

Both these expressions denote faith, but whereas one is a head word, the other is a heart word. What is the difference?

With our head we believe, with our heart we trust.

With our head we believe that God is the Author of peace, the Giver of peace, with the heart we trust Him to bestow what He promises.

One concluding word: notice that

**Isaiah 26:3** - *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.*

begins with God and ends with God. It begins with *Thou* and it ends with *Thee*.

The trusting soul goes in between.

Perfect peace is, by faith, to get between these two words *Thou* and *Thee* and to stay there.

Perfect peace is the Lord Himself within us, not an experience, a doctrine, an *it*, but the Lord Himself.

Then, when we are stayed upon Jehovah, our hearts will be fully blessed. Then and only then shall we find that He has promised - *Perfect peace and rest*.

# ***THE SECRET OF ABIDING JOY***

## **STUDY 6**

**Scripture Portion: John 15:11**

**John 15:11** - *These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.*

These words were spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ. It is most important for us to notice when He uttered them. It was a very strange time to talk of joy and gladness for, in a little while, He would be in dark Gethsemane. Shortly after that, He would be facing His accusers, hearing the taunts and mockings of those who hated Him.

Yes, it was just prior to facing the agonies of Calvary that He spoke of *My joy*...

It is very significant that, so far as the scripture records are concerned, this is the only time He did speak of His joy. How unique the Lord's joy must have been if it still remained with Him in the time of such great trial and testing!

His desire and provision for us, that is, for every believer, is that His joy, which is so different from that of the world, should be our joy -.....*that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.*

---

10. CHRISTIAN JOY SHOULD BE THE PREVAILING CHARACTERISTIC OF THE LIFE OF EVERY CHRISTIAN.

---

Too often we are sad, gloomy and dejected: but as Christians we ought to be joyful in everything.

**Phiippians 4:4** - *Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.*

**1 Thessalonians 5:16** - *Rejoice evermore.*

The Christian experience from beginning to end (A to Z) should be marked by joy:

joy at conversion -

**Luke 19:6** - *And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.*



**Acts 8:39** - *And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.*

joy when reading God's Holy Word -

**Jeremiah 15:16** - *Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.*

joy in prayer -

**John 16:24** - *Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.*

joy in the midst of trials -

**James 1:2** - *My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;*

joy when suffering -

**Acts 5:41** - *And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.*

joy when serving -

**2 Corinthians 1:24** - *Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.*

joy at the journey's end -

**Acts 20:24** - *But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.*

If we love and belong to the Lord, we should always be rejoicing.

---

11. WHAT, THEN, IS CHRISTIAN JOY, THE JOY WHICH WE AS CHRISTIANS SHOULD EXPERIENCE?

---

22. It is Christ's Joy.

**John 15:11** - *.....that My joy might remain in you.*

*My joy.....in you.....* The Christian life is the life of the Lord Jesus Christ in a man or a woman.

**Galatians 2:20** - *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*

**Colossians 3:4** - *When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.*

Christian joy is Christ's joy in a Christian. This means that this deep-down, abiding joy is not found anywhere else except in Him. There are other kinds of joy found in other places, but His joy is found in Him alone.

23. It is Fulness of Joy.

**John 15:11** - *.....that your joy might be full.*

There is a great difference between joy and fulness of joy. The vessel may be partly filled or completely filled. Our Lord's desire for us is that we should experience fulness of joy continually.

**Psalms 16:11** - *Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.*

**John 17:13** - *And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.*

**1 Peter 1:8** - *Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:*

**c. It is Abiding Joy.**

**John 15:11** - *.....that My joy might remain in you.*

This word *remain* indicates that the Christian's joy is not an intermittent experience, but a permanent one. It is a joy which is unaffected by circumstances. See what the Lord said to His disciples in -

**John 16:22** - *And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.*

These first followers of our Lord were to pass through many trials and testings, but He told them that nothing could rob them of their joy - His joy in them.

*Consider the following three illustrations of the abiding nature of Christian joy, and the fact that Christ's joy in us is unaffected by outward circumstances and conditions.*

- (1) **John 15:11** - *These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.*

As we have seen, our Lord experienced this joy in the shadow of the cross.

Compare -

**John 17:13** - *And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.*

- (2) **Luke 10:20** - *Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.*

Surely our Lord meant by this: *Do not let your joy depend upon anything earthly or temporal, but let it depend upon that which abides.....in Heaven.*

- (3) **Acts 16:25** - *And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.*

Paul and Silas, though in great trouble, were filled with Christ's own joy which enabled them to sing praises at midnight.

Compare -

**Isaiah 61:3** - *To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.*

**2 Corinthians 8:2** - *How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.*

**Hebrews 10:34** - *For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the*

*spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.*

It is a remarkable and a wonderful thing that true Christian joy is not only unaffected by adverse circumstances, but it is actually promoted by such trials and testings.

**James 1:2** - *My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;*

---

### **3. HOW MAY WE HAVE THIS JOY?**

---

#### **a. By having Him.**

If this deep-down, abiding joy is Christ's joy, we can only have it by having Him.

In **Acts 8:8**, we read that - *There was great joy in that city.* Why was this?

**Acts 8:5** - *Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them.*

In **Acts 8:39** - *And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.*

we read that the eunuch *went on his way rejoicing.* Why was this?

**Acts 8:35** - *Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.*

If we would possess His joy, we must possess Him.

**John 17:13** - *And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.*

#### **b. By reading His Word.**

When we read the Bible and receive the truth, we experience great joy.

**1 John 1:4** - *And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.*

This is akin to having a *burning heart* as the result of fellowship with the Lord as He speaks to us.

**Luke 24:32** - *And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?*

24. By submission to Him.

Notice **Luke 10:21** - *In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.*

We are told two things: first, that *Jesus rejoiced.....*, and second, that He was completely submissive to His Father's will. His joy was the joy of complete and continual submission to the will of His Father in Heaven.

It was Madame Guyon who said, *Oh, the blessedness of an accepted sorrow!*

When we accept suffering from His hand, sorrows as well as pleasures, then our joy will be full indeed.

**d. By the Holy Spirit.**

The literal rendering of -

**Luke 10:21** - *In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.*

is: *Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit,*

and one translation reads: *In that hour Jesus was filled by the Holy Spirit with rapturous joy.*

Compare with -

**Romans 15:13** - *Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.*

At this very moment, the Lord Jesus is exalted, the perfect Man in a perfect human body, in Heaven. His desire is that His joy should remain in us.

How can this be, for He is there and we are here? He is in Heaven and we are on earth!

The answer is - by the Holy Spirit. *The fruit of the Spirit is .....joy.....*

**Galatians 5:22** - But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

**Acts 13:52** - *And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.*

**Ephesians 5:18** - *And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.*

# **WHAT TO DO WHEN TROUBLE COMES**

## **STUDY 7**

**Scripture Portion: 1 Samuel 30:1-6**

**Key Verse - 1 Samuel 30:6** - *And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.*

In this study, which is based on -

**1 Samuel 30:1-6** - *And it came to pass, when David and his men were come to Ziklag on the third day, that the Amalekites had invaded the south, and Ziklag, and smitten Ziklag, and burned it with fire;*

*2 And had taken the women captives, that were therein: they slew not any, either great or small, but carried them away, and went on their way.*

*3 So David and his men came to the city, and, behold, it was burned with fire; and their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, were taken captives.*

*4 Then David and the people that were with him lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep.*

*5 And David's two wives were taken captives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite.*

*6 And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.*

we are to consider a period in David's life when he was plunged into great distress and trouble. We shall see what he did in his time of trouble and how wonderfully the Lord undertook for him. Trouble is no respecter of persons.

**Job 5:7** - *Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward.*

**Job 14:1** - *Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble.*

Maybe you are passing through a time of trouble now? If so, there is help in this study for you.

If you are not in the midst of trouble today, here is ministry in advance which will prepare

you for some future day. For trouble comes to us all and it is a good thing when we know what to do in a time of trouble.

Notice, from **1 Samuel 30:1-6**, that:

---

12.           DAVID'S TROUBLE WAS VERY REAL.

---

There was nothing imaginary about it, as we learn from these verses. How does your trouble compare with him? Does yours have to do with some great loss in your life?

**1 Samuel 30:1** - *And it came to pass, when David and his men were come to Ziklag on the third day, that the Amalekites had invaded the south, and Ziklag, and smitten Ziklag, and burned it with fire;*

Is it connected with your loved ones?

**1 Samuel 30:3** - *So David and his men came to the city, and, behold, it was burned with fire; and their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, were taken captives.*

Is it so great that you have wept until you have had no more power to weep?

**1 Samuel 30:4** - *Then David and the people that were with him lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep.*

How real are our troubles! There is nothing imaginary about them. It is not wrong to weep and to find relief in this way when we are overwhelmed.

**John 11:35** - *Jesus wept.*

---

**2.   DAVID WAS IN TROUBLE ALTHOUGH HE WAS A CHILD OF GOD.**

---

It is very important for us to notice this. The Lord loved David.



**Acts 13:22** - *And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.*

Yet David found himself in the midst of these very distressing circumstances.

We must not expect immunity from trouble because we are Christians. Think how much -

the Lord suffered -

**Hebrews 13:12** - *Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.*

the apostle Paul endured -

**2 Corinthians 11:23-30** - *Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft.*

*24 Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.*

*25 Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;*

*26 In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;*

*27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.*

*28 Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.*

*29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?*

*30 If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.*

Indeed, can you think of one true child of God who has not experienced something of the bitterness of trial and testing? We are not to think that God does not love us when trouble comes across our path.

**1 Peter 4:12** - *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:*

---

13. THE LORD PERMITTED DAVID'S TROUBLE.

---

He allowed it to happen. He permitted distress to come into the life of His child, just as He did with

Joseph -

**Genesis 39:20** - *And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison.*

Jeremiah -

**Jeremiah 37:15** - *Wherefore the princes were wroth with Jeremiah, and smote him, and put him in prison in the house of Jonathan the scribe: for they had made that the prison.*

Peter -

**Acts 12:5-6** - *Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.*

*6 And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and the keepers before the door kept the prison.*

and John Bunyan - just as He has with many of His servants today.

When Job was overwhelmed with distress, his faith was so firmly established in the Lord and in the fact that God is sovereign, and that nothing had happened in his life, or would happen, without God's gracious permission, that he was able to say -

**Job 13:15** - *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him.*

The Lord could have prevented Job's trouble. He could prevent all our troubles; but He does not do so.

The biggest lesson that He wants us to learn is to trust Him where we cannot understand the *whys* and the *wherefores* of His dealings with us.

**Romans 8:28** - *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*

is true, and it always will be true.

---

14. DAVID'S TROUBLE WAS IN A VERY REAL SENSE HIS OWN FAULT.

---

This is very solemn, for David had backslidden. No child of God can do that and escape God's chastening. It seems clear that the Lord allowed trouble to come into David's life in order that he might be corrected.

Compare -

**Psalm 55:19** - *God shall hear, and afflict them, even he that abideth of old. Selah. Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God.*

**Deuteronomy 8:2-3** - *And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.*

*3 And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.*

**Hebrews 12:6** - *For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.*

Saul, whose story is told in this same First Book of Samuel, threw off the authority of God, as David did, but in the two cases, we see the difference between judgment and chastening.

In the case of Saul, his life and career were terminated as the punishment for his offences.

In the case of David, however, the rod was lifted

- to correct - not to destroy;
- to bring him back, not to drive him away for ever;
- to fit him for service, not to cut him asunder.

It may be that your trouble is your own fault? Notice the word *therefore* in -

**Genesis 42:21** - *And they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us.*

God only permits the testings and trials of life for His glory and always for our good.

---

15.            DAVID'S TROUBLE WAS REALLY A BLESSING IN  
                 DISGUISE.

---

You say, *How can this be, with wife, home and friends gone?* It was a blessing in disguise because in -

**1 Samuel 30:8** - *And David inquired at the LORD, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop? shall I overtake them? And he answered him, Pursue: for thou shalt surely overtake them, and without fail recover all.*

we are told that David enquired of the Lord. Any experience which drives us to the Lord is worthwhile.

**Psalms 119:67** - *Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.*

**Hebrews 12:11** - *Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.*

The one thing that God is seeking in your life and mine is a complete surrender of ourselves to Him. He wants us to love Him and His will, and to trust Him completely.

What did David do in his time of trouble?

**1 Samuel 30:6** - *And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.*

tells us he *encouraged (or strengthened) himself in the Lord his God.*

It is good to encourage others, but sometimes we need to encourage ourselves in the Lord. How can we do this?

Remind yourself that you belong to Him.

*David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.* Rest upon the assurance of this personal relationship.

**b.    Recall His past mercies.**

Remember the wonderful way in which He has undertaken for you, led you, blessed you, provided for you and used you in the past.

**1 Samuel 7:12** - *Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.*

25. Turn to Him -

in confession -

**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.*

in petition -

**Psalm 34:6** - *This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.*

Humble yourself before Him and look to Him alone for deliverance -

**Psalm 69:17** - *And hide not thy face from thy servant; for I am in trouble: hear me speedily.*

**d. Enquire of Him -**

**1 Samuel 30:8** - *And David inquired at the LORD, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop? shall I overtake them? And he answered him, Pursue: for thou shalt surely overtake them, and without fail recover all.*

Ask Him what you should do in your trying situation.

26. Obey Him.

**1 Samuel 30:9** - *So David went, he and the six hundred men that were with him, and came to the brook Besor, where those that were left behind stayed.*

Notice how this verse begins - *So David went....*

27. Trust Him.

At the end of **verse 8** we read that the Lord promised David a complete victory. He went forth -

**1 Samuel 30:9** - *So David went, he and the six hundred men that were with him, and came to the brook Besor, where those that were left behind stayed.*

He trusted the Lord to fulfill His word.

All God's promises are made to us in order that we may take Him at His word and trust Him to fulfill in us and for us that which He has promised.

**Psalms 37:5** - *Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.*

**Proverbs 3:5-6** - *Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.*

*6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*

**Matthew 11:28** - *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

**Romans 8:28** - *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*

**Philippians 4:19** - *But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

**g. Acknowledge His goodness.**

**1 Samuel 30:23** - *Then said David, Ye shall not do so, my brethren, with that which the LORD hath given us, who hath preserved us, and delivered the company that came against us into our hand.*

**Psalm 9:9** - *The LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.*

**Psalm 27:5** - *For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.*

**Psalm 46:1** - *To the chief Musician for the sons of Korah, A Song upon Alamoth. God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.*

**Psalm 143:11** - *Quicken me, O LORD, for thy name's sake: for thy righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble.*

**Nahum 1:7** - *The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and He knoweth them that trust in Him.*

# ***BEING CONCERNED FOR OTHERS***

## **STUDY 8**

**Scripture Portion: Matthew 14:35-36**

**Matthew 14:35-36** - *And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased; 36 And besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole.*

No Christian can live successfully who does not constantly and systematically seek to share the love of the Lord Jesus Christ with those who do not know Him.

No Christian will ever begin to do this until he or she feels a real concern, a burden for the salvation of the multitudes of men and women who are lost -

**Luke 19:10** - *For the Son man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*

condemned already -

**John 3:18** - *He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*

and are under the wrath of God -

**John 3:36** - *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

Do you feel any concern for the lost? Have you any passion for souls? Are you burdened as you think of your loved ones, and friends, and of the thousands of others who are not saved?

How long do folk have to be in our company before, with the help of God, we tell them of our wonderful Saviour?

Or are we unconcerned?

Could those of our unconverted loved ones and friends say -

**Psalms 142:4** - *I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would*



*know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul.*

Notice the following in **Matthew 14:35-36** - *And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased;*

*36 And besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole.*

---

16. WE HAVE A DESCRIPTION OF THE MANY PEOPLE AROUND US FOR WHOSE SALVATION WE NEED TO BE DEEPLY CONCERNED.

---

If we ask the question: What is the real need of the lost? - how does this portion of scripture answer it?

It tells us three things about the people of that day which are true of people today.

They were Diseased.

**Matthew 14:35** - *And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased;*

Many people today may be religious, respectable and living morally decent and upright lives, but every unsaved soul is gripped by the disease of sin.

**Luke 5:12** - *And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.*

Unless they are cured, their prospect is indeed solemn.

**Romans 6:23** - *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Man's first need is to be made perfectly whole through faith in the Lord Jesus. Multitudes of people live and die in a diseased condition, without God and without hope.

**Ephesians 2:12** - *That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:*

**b. They were at a Distance - Matthew 14:35.**

*The men of that place.....sent out.....*, which indicates distance. They were at a distance from the Lord in a geographical sense. What was true of them in that sense is true of multitudes today in a spiritual sense.

The young people of our day and generation are, to a very large extent, growing up without any knowledge of God and of the gospel of His grace. There is an appalling ignorance of the Bible and of the gospel. How concerned we need to be for the multitudes!

**Matthew 9:36** - *And besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole.*

28. They were Disabled - Matthew 14:35.

They had to be brought into the presence of the Lord. It is true that every sinner is disabled by sin -

**Romans 5:6** - *For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.*

It is also true that, beneath the outward cloak of respectability, many are disabled by the sins of falsehood, drink, lust, drugs, immorality, etc.

It is for these we need to feel and show a deep concern.

---

17. WHEN IS IT THAT WE REALLY BEGIN TO GET CONCERNED  
ABOUT THE SOULS OF OTHERS?

---

The answer to this question is found in -

**Matthew 14:35** - *And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased;*

It was *when the men of that place had knowledge of Him that they sent out into all that country.....*

It is easy to see what happened. These men found the Lord for themselves. They immediately became concerned that others might find Him too.

That is what always happens; **knowing** and **going** go together. When we really know Him, we shall go for Him. The measure in which we know Him determines the measure in which we go.

**John 14:9** - *Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?*

**Philippians 3:10** - *That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;*

and compare

**Psalms 126:6** - *He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.*

**Daniel 11:32** - *And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.*

Here, then, is the qualification as well as the incentive to seek the lost. It is knowing the Lord personally and intimately.

**John 1:41** - *He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.*

**John 1:49** - *Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.*

---

18. WHEN DOES THIS CONCERN SHOW ITSELF?

---

If we really have a passion for souls and have a concern for their salvation, how shall we act?

**Matthew 14:35 and 36** tell us that *when the men of that place had knowledge of Him, they did three things.*

29. They sought .

**Matthew 14:35** - *And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased;*

They went out into all the surrounding country in search of those who needed the healing and saving touch of the Lord Jesus Christ. They scoured the district for needy souls. This is the Lord's commission to us.

**Mark 16:15** - *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*

It was C. T. Studd who gave the following advice to the missionaries in Central Africa:  
*Get the simple gospel out into the whole of your vast district, see that every soul knows the way of salvation and has a fair chance of being saved.*

**b. They brought.**

**Matthew 14:35** - *And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased;*

The word ***brought*** is the most important word in this study. It indicates an emphasis which we must regain if we are to be successful in winning others to Christ. It is important to go to them. But, rescue work involves more than simply going to those who are lost.

Souls must be brought to Christ. A fisherman is not content simply to fish. He is only satisfied when he catches fish.

You and I must not be content just to tell others of the Saviour's love; we must seek His grace to bring them to Him.

30 .            They Besought .

**Matthew 14:36** - *And besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole.*

They pleaded with Him that those whom they had brought might be healed. In other words, they prayed. A true passion for souls will quickly show itself in persistent prayer for their salvation.

In prayer, God shows us those whom He would have us seek to win for Him. In prayer, we become channels through whom the Holy Spirit effects His work of winning them.

---

19.            WHERE DOES THIS CONCERN FOR OTHERS BEGIN TO OPERATE?

---

**Matthew 14:35** again gives the answer. It tells us that *.....the men of that place.....sent out into all that country round about.* They became evangelists to their own people!

And when we get a passion for souls, we shall begin to be burdened and concerned for the salvation of those with whom and amongst whom we live. We shall begin *in Jerusalem -*

**Acts 1:8** - *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

# ***OUR BEST FOR THE LORD JESUS***

## **STUDY 9**

**Scripture Portion: Mark 14:3-9**

**Mark 14:3** - *And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head.*

This incident is a very touching one. Simon had provided a feast in his house out of gratitude to the Saviour for the blessings he had received. Jesus, His disciples, Mary, Martha and Lazarus were all there.

Mary moved towards the Lord. She was holding in her hands a beautiful alabaster box which contained very precious delicately perfumed ointment. To the surprise of everyone there, she broke the box and poured its contents over the head -

**Mark 14:3** - *And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head.*

and the feet -

**John 12:3** - *Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.*

of our Lord and anointed Him.

The alabaster box and the ointment were worth a considerable amount of money. But what did Mary's act signify? It signified that she was giving her very best to the Lord Jesus - indeed her all, for, as she broke the alabaster box and poured out the precious nard, she was saying, in effect:

*Take my love: my Lord, I pour  
At Thy feet its treasure-store;  
Take myself, and I will be  
Ever, only, all for Thee.*

In those days, every young woman would prepare a box of precious perfume. This she would keep until the time came when the man she loved would ask her to marry him. If

she were willing and could give him her love and devotion, she would break the precious box of ointment and pour it at his feet. No matter what she paid for the box, it was counted as her best, and this is what she gave to him.

That is what Mary did with her Lord, the One who loved her so much that soon He would die for her upon the cross. Mary wanted to be spiritually betrothed to Him.

**Isaiah 62:5** - *For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.*

**Hosea 2:19** - *And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies.*

Therefore, she gave her very best, her all, to Him.

---

20. WHAT CAN WE GIVE TO THE LORD JESUS?

---

We have no alabaster box of precious ointment. So what can we give? There are at least three gifts which all of us can bring to Him.

We can give Him the best of our Love.

This, supremely, is what Mary did. Though the ointment was costly and the box was of great value, the real gift she brought to Him was that of her love.

We can all give Him our love. It is this above everything else which He most desires. Have you given to Him the very best of your love? Compare -

**Matthew 10:37** - *He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.*

with

**John 21:15-17** - *So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.*

16 He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.  
17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

We can give Him the best of our years.

What a privilege it is for anyone to give to the Lord his or her whole life in all its freshness and vigour! Is He not worthy of our best - the best of our strength, our manhood or womanhood?

It is possible to know that we belong to the Lord and yet to keep the best of our strength, time and gifts for ourselves instead of giving them to Him.

*c. We can give Him the best of our talents.*

Every one has some talent. What is yours? Whatever it is, the Lord wants to use it. If you will only place it at His feet and yield it wholly to Him, He will use it in a most wonderful way.

Have you ever read through Frances Ridley Havergal's Consecration Hymn, *Take My Life and Let It Be*, and really given over to the Lord your moments, days, hands, feet, voice, lips, silver, gold intellect, will?

---

21. BUT WHY SHOULD WE GIVE OUR BEST TO THE LORD  
JESUS?

---

Here again, there are three answers to this question.

31. Because He is worthy of our best.

Who is He? He is the eternal Son of God.



**John 1:1** - *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

**John 1:14** - *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*

He is the Lord of glory.

**1 Corinthians 2:8** - *Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.*

He is the Saviour of men.

**1 Timothy 1:15** - *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.*

He is our Saviour.

**Galatians 2:20** - *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*

Is He not worthy of the very best that we can give to Him? - worthy of our all?

32. Because He has given His best for us.

He has given His all for us and has shed His precious blood for us in order that we might be redeemed.

**1 Peter 1:18-19** - *Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;*

*19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:*

It was when Mary realised all that her Lord had given and would give for her that she was constrained to give her best, her all, to Him. From -

**Mark 14:8** - *She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying.*

we learn that it was Calvary that constrained her.

**2 Corinthians 5:14** - *For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that*

*if one died for all, then were all dead:*

**c. *Because only by giving Him our best shall we enjoy His best.***

This moment of dedication was for Mary the happiest moment of her life. From now onwards she would know deep joy -

**John 15:11** - *These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.*

and abiding peace -

**John 16:33** - *These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*

for she had given her very best, her all, to the Lord.

If we give Him little, we shall only have the capacity to enjoy a little (of Him). But if we give Him our very best, our all, He will become to us unspeakably precious.

**1 Peter 2:7** - *Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner.*

---

22. WHAT WILL BE THE RESULT OF GIVING OUR BEST TO THE LORD JESUS?

---

If we give Him our very best, our all, three things will follow.

33. Some people will object.

Immediately Mary gave her best to the Lord, there was indignation, murmuring, criticism and misunderstanding.

**John 12:5** - *Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?*

Judas was very quick to speak of Mary's act of dedication as *waste*. This is how the world often assesses the dedication of a life wholly given to the Lord.

**Matthew 26:8** - *But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste?*

34.           The Lord Jesus will be pleased.

The greatest thing in the world is to have His commendation.

**Mark 14:6** - *And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me.*

Does it matter what the world thinks, so long as He is pleased with us?

**c.     *Others will be helped.***

What a marvelous result there was from Mary's simple act of devotion and dedication!

**Mark 14:9** - *Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.*

Who can estimate the far-reaching influence of one life which is utterly given to the Lord?  
Is your life completely given over to Him?

# ***LIFE ON THE HIGHEST PLANE***

## ***STUDY 10***

**Scripture Portion: Isaiah 40:31**

**Isaiah 40:31** - *But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.*

The object of this series of studies has been to share some of the biblical secrets of radiant Christian living. The verse before us tells us that that might well be called the over-all secret.

If we are honest with ourselves, we have to admit that there is very much failure in our Christian living and service.

### ***(1) The Word of God convinces us of our failure.***

Do we not oftentimes *faint* and have *no might* -

**Isaiah 40:29** - *He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.*

Are we not often weary and do we not frequently fall -

**Isaiah 40:30** - *Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:*

This is God's description of the failure which so often characterizes the lives of His children. But -

### ***(2) Observation also convinces us of our failure.***

We know it is true that we fail because our eyes tell us so as we look at ourselves. Our own heart tells us that it is true. How faint and weary we become. How slow we are to learn the way of victory and power!

**Proverbs 14:10** - *The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy.*

---

## **1. WHAT IS THE CAUSE OF OUR FAILURE?**

---

35. The primary cause is Ignorance of the Resources which are at our Disposal.

Yes, ignorance! Look at -

**Hosea 4:6** - *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.*

and compare with -

**Matthew 22:29** - *Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.*

Then see what is said in -

**Isaiah 40:28** - *Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding.*

*Know ye not.....?* What are the resources at our disposal?

**Isaiah 40:28-29** - *Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding.*

*29 He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.*

We read that *the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator....* is offering to give us power and strength.

So, against the sad background of our failure is the promise of God to turn our failure into glorious triumph.

This God, this mighty Lord, is placing all His unlimited resources of strength and power at our disposal. We must tap these resources. This indicates the second cause of failure.

36. The secondary cause is Failure to Tap those Resources.

That is, failure to appropriate them.

**Isaiah 40:29** - *He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.*

*He giveth.....* In response to His giving we must receive.

How does this giving and receiving take place? How can this mighty enabling become mine? What is God's method of transferring His power to Me.?

The answer is found in -

**Isaiah 40:31** - *But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.*

*They that wait upon the Lord.....* But what does it mean to *wait upon the Lord*? Does it mean to pray, worship, attend services, read the Bible? Yes, but not primarily.

We learn from

**Isaiah 41:1** - *Keep silence before me, O islands; and let the people renew their strength: let them come near; then let them speak: let us come near together to judgment.*

that it means to *keep silence before God*.

Compare with -

**Psalms 62:1** - *To the chief Musician, to Jeduthun, A Psalm of David. Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my salvation.*

where the word *waiteth* means *be silent*.

Waiting upon God means to be cast upon Him in utter dependence, ready to hear His voice and do His bidding, having our whole expectation from Him. It implies complete confidence in the Lord, and absolutely no confidence in self or in human help.

---

23.                    WHAT IS THE RESULT OF THUS WAITING UPON THE LORD?

---

There is a four-fold result as indicated in -

**Isaiah 40:31** - *But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk,*

*and not faint.*

and as emphasized by the repetition of the four *shalls* in this verse. This is *life on the highest plane*, the truly successful Christian life.

37. We shall have God's strength in place of our weakness.

The word *renew* may be translated *change* or *exchange*. Have you realized that your greatest weakness is your own strength? If you will go before the Lord in utter weakness, He will exchange your weakness for His strength.

What kind of strength does He give?

(1) *Physical strength?*

Yes. Certainly He can and does renew our physical strength when we wait upon Him.

**Romans 8:11** - *But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.*

(2) *Mental strength?*

Yes. He is the fountain of all wisdom. He certainly quickens our minds when we wait before Him.

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

**Ephesians 4:23** - *And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;*

**2 Timothy 1:7** - *For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.*

(3) *Moral strength?*

Most certainly He gives this. How we need this, living as we do in a world which is full of tempting voices and sights!

**Ephesians 6:10** - *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.*

**2 Timothy 2:1** - *Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.*

(4) **Spiritual strength?**

Yes.

**Luke 24:49** - *And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.*

**Acts 1:8** - *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

**1 Corinthians 1:25** - *Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.*

**Isaiah 30:15** - *For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not.*

38. We shall enjoy life above the average.

We shall *mount up with wings as eagles*, far above earth's level, where, *the things of earth.....grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace*. The eagle is the only bird which flies so high that it is lost to sight. That is where we belong. We belong to Heaven now -

**Philippians 3:20** - *For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:*

Here and now we are *raised up together in Christ* -

**Ephesians 2:6** - *And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:*

**Colossians 3:1-2** - *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.*

*2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.*



Yet how many Christians are earth-bound, hopping on the ground like a bird with a broken wing, instead of flying in the heavenly heights like an eagle. We have been made to fly, not to hop!

39. We shall do supernatural things.

We shall *run and not be weary*. It is not natural to keep running and not to feel weary. God promises supernatural power for the accomplishing of supernatural tasks. We are a supernatural people because we are linked to a supernatural God!

**John 7:38** - *He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.*

**John 14:12** - *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.*

Are the *rivers* flowing through us and are the *greater works* being accomplished through us?

**d. We shall live victoriously in the hardest place of all - in the daily routine of life.**

We shall *walk and not faint*. Notice, it does not say that we shall *run and not faint*. Sometimes it is much easier to run than to walk! The most testing place for each one of us is that place where we engage in the *trivial round and common task*.

**Genesis 5:24** - *And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.*

**Psalms 37:23** - *The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.*

Dr. A. B. Simpson used to frequently get alone in the presence of the Lord and say, *I'm a failure. I have no strength and no life. But Thou art my Life. Thou art my Strength. Thou art my Victory!* Then, by faith, he would take in the life of his risen Lord for body, mind and spirit.

Surely this is what it means to *wait upon the Lord!*

And the result?

*Life on the highest plane* - true spiritual success.