

The Butterfly Wonder

Discovering the Metamorphosis
of the New Creation



Introduction

It is a marvel of nature, almost too poetic in its construct, yet profoundly real and scientifically validated. The transformation from a caterpillar into a butterfly—a process known as metamorphosis—presents one of the most stunning illustrations of profound change imaginable.

Scientifically, the process of metamorphosis is nothing short of spectacular. The process is not a simple change but a total reconstruction of its form and function. The caterpillar's body breaks down into a cellular soup, only to be reformed into a completely new entity. The genes that lay dormant in the caterpillar activate, not altering but fulfilling a predestined blueprint: that of a butterfly.

In the quiet corners of nature, a humble caterpillar weaves itself a cocoon, a sanctuary where it undergoes one of the most intense transformations known to biology. This creature, once earthbound and limited to the slow meandering of its many feet, emerges with the delicate, iridescent wings of a butterfly—a being seemingly unrelated to its former self, now graced with the ability to soar above the world that once confined it.

Observing a caterpillar, one would find no hint of the potential for flight; it possesses no wings, no semblance of the beauty and agility that characterize a butterfly. How then does this creature, so plain and confined, transform into a being of such elegance and freedom?

I'm convinced that God, in His wisdom, crafted the butterfly with a specific intention—to showcase the possibility of radical change and the new life that follows. The very nature of this transformation is emblematic of the grace offered through Christ, who enables believers to transcend their original, sin-bound identities. It is no coincidence that such a creature was designed; rather, it serves as a divine symbol of hope and renewal, a demonstration of God's promise of regeneration through faith.

Could it be that God when creating this caterpillar/butterfly miraculous phenomenon was intending to show the transformation that takes place when a person is created anew by God through faith in Christ. Does every human bear the imprint of a divine blueprint? Could it be that within each of us lies the potential for transformation so radical, so complete, that we can rightly be considered a new creation. The design of the butterfly, with its capacity for flight and its breathtaking beauty, serves more than a functional role in nature. It also stands as a divine metaphor, crafted by God to illustrate the transformative work He desires to do in every human heart.

This process is meticulously engineered to show us a physical representation of what He offers spiritually through the new birth in Jesus Christ. Just as the caterpillar encloses itself within a cocoon to be reborn, we too are invited to leave behind our old selves and be spiritually transformed. There is no semblance in our former selves that could predict the glory of what we are to become through Christ.

This natural phenomenon exemplifies too beautifully the concept of being 'born again'. Just as a butterfly emerges from the chrysalis, completely transformed and equipped for a new life, so too are believers spiritually transformed through the power of the resurrection of Jesus. This concept is not merely a changing of habits or an improvement of the old self but is a profound rebirth into a new life. Just as the butterfly emerges with properties that were not visible in its former self, so too does the born-again believer exhibit qualities and capabilities that were not apparent before.

This new creation, referred to as the 'new man' in the New Testament, represents a total renewal of the self—a shedding of the old ways of sin and the earthly limitations, much like the caterpillar sheds its restrictive skin.

The scripture tells us that if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, and the new is here (2 Corinthians 5:17). This new creation is not a mere improvement or upgrade of the old self, but a complete new identity, crafted and designed by God for a glorious purpose.

Such a metamorphosis has happened to me personally. I was born and raised in religion. But I only knew the traditions of men and the mechanics and rituals which are so prevalent in most denominations and churches nowadays. The lack of true life in Christianity overall has let me down and in my later teen years, I chose to cancel out all that was related to faith and, on my own, I left my hometown and traveled to Europe in hopes of finding the purpose and meaning of life, and perhaps more so, how could I make a worthy difference in this world.

I was “born again” shortly after meeting the “Jesus revolution” people in Amsterdam. And I truly had an enormous transformation in my life and definitely knew that I had found my place, my calling, and my mission for life. My newfound faith and mission took me around the world as over the years, I got involved in many different Christian projects.

However, after four decades or so I grew pale in faith. I had more unanswered questions than solutions, and a series of events caused me to again become quite distant from anything that had to do with Christianity. I had grown bitter and fell back into a life of drinking, drugs and uncleanness.

Bitterness is “bitchiness” and it stains and alters your personality. We are not meant to focus on negative, corrupt, or vicious thoughts. Our mind was created for positivity, enthusiasm and thankfulness. And whenever we focus on negative and nefarious thoughts, such as when angry, jealous, unforgiving, fearful or frustrated, our mind seems to poison our very own body with aches and pains and illnesses.

I lived through this state of bitterness for a number of years, however I was still interested in the spiritual. My wife and I, at one point, got quite captivated by the power of divine healing and this curiosity brought me to reading about it, which of course introduced me again to the divine.

I started to read about the great men of faith, many of which seem to have the power to heal people. I watched many YouTube videos and I witnessed obvious manifestations of the power of God to heal. And listening to their preaching, of course, ended up blowing some of God's breath on the embers of my faith.

I was living in Chicago at one time, and for exercise every morning I would go rolleblading in the empty parking lots of the big stores. However, I would first stop at a coffee shop and while sitting in my car, sipping my morning drink, I would listen to some of those sermons from those powerful preachers on YouTube.

One morning I listened to A.W. Tozer who was preaching on the power of the Holy Spirit. And I got so touched in the spirit that I broke down and started speaking in tongues, and right there and then Jesus appeared to me, the resurrected Jesus, filled with light! And as He turned towards me, without a word, the light emanating from His eyes alone was so bright and powerful as if I was looking at a welding flame without a mask; it nearly blinded me. But what it did to me was something so wonder-full; it healed me! It rinsed out my heart entirely from all that bitterness and negativity, and I was “born again” again. I don't know whether this is even scriptural, but it sure felt like a total rebirth. It was such a powerful experience that I couldn't stop speaking in tongues for virtually three days. I think I experienced a feeling of what Adam must have felt like when God breathed His divine spirit into his dirt-like body. It was as if I'd been five minutes under murky waters and finally surfaced, gasping for air. I came back to life.

I went out skating in that parking lot that morning with my hands raised, praising and yelling at the top of my voice, in tongues. It was such a powerful rebirth. I was like that butterfly born out of this sorrowful soup of nothingness, similar to the caterpillar's cocoon, and my heart had found wings. Meaningfulness came back into my life, along with purpose and a light that could not be quenched.

Again, the butterfly wonder is a vivid illustration of the believer's transition from a life bound by sin to a new existence in Christ. Just as the caterpillar could never achieve flight in its original form, humans cannot attain the spiritual heights for which they are destined without undergoing a profound, spiritual transformation. The metamorphosis signifies not just change, but an ordained redesignation from a mundane to a heavenly, purpose-driven existence.

To come to Christ without fully understanding the revolutionary transformation that takes place within the spirit of man is missing out on all that Jesus did in order to redeem man. There is an underlying message in the New Testament that every Christian must fully understand in order to walk into the NEW CREATURE that God has given us when born again. The New Testament talks about the 'old man' and the 'new man', or the 'old self' or the 'new self'. The scriptures say that the old man is corrupt, in every area, spiritually, morally, and physically because the old self is the offspring of Satan. It is of the seed of the deception of Satan.

Consequently, God told the serpent in Genesis 3:15 that his seed would then be corrupt, and therefore be the enemy of the seed of the women... "I will make your offspring and her offspring enemies of each other" (Genesis 3:15a). So, the old self is actually at war constantly against the new self. Paul said that the carnal mind is enmity against God. "For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will" (Romans 8:7).

Being born of God gives us a NEW identity and we live under a different set of rules. Plus we are empowered and deputized by Christ to bring the Kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven.

Embracing this new identity requires faith and surrender, akin to the caterpillar surrendering to its cocoon stage, trusting in the process that must occur in obscurity before beauty and purpose are revealed. Just as the butterfly emerges with a new form and capabilities, our spiritual rebirth through Jesus Christ equips us with new desires, a new purpose, and a new way of being that seeks to honor God.

"The Butterfly Wonder: Unwrapping the Inheritance of the New Man" aims to awaken every one of us to that new identity given to us by Christ. We will explore how the truth of the new birth can radically alter our understanding of our potential and purpose. And we will unwrap the inexhaustible inheritance that awaits the new man, destined to rise and soar in the limitless expanse of God's love.

To help you in your Born Again life, and to adhere to a life of Discipleship, you may also go to my website: www.faithwithoutborders.us and avail yourself of

- **“The Handbook for a Disciple of Jesus”**
- **“Who Do You Say That I Am?”** -- why Christ is everywhere and can't be missed!
- **“Triumph Every Day”**: Daily Reflection for Success,
- **“The Discipline of A Disciple”**,
- **“Power for The Hour”** Discipleship memorization booklet”.

Chapter 1

I Just Had to Buy the Field

What took place inside of me in that moment when Jesus manifested Himself to me was beyond any experience I had ever had. An overwhelming rush swept through every fiber of my being and I longed to plumb the depths of this revelation, to lay hold of the secrets it contained.

Jesus puts it into words so vivid and so energetic in the parable of the pearl of a great price. He illustrates an very important aspect of the Kingdom of God — its worth!! In this parable found in Matthew 13:45:46, Jesus compares the Kingdom of Heaven to a merchant in search of fine pearls. Upon finding one pearl of exceptional value, the merchant sells everything he has in order to purchase that one field just so he could acquire that one pearl.

This kingdom became a reality to me, in fact, my only reality and it was all encompassing. I had come across a revelation of this reality, and all I wanted was to give everything I had to get that pearl. I wanted to find the kingdom's true values, and understand this "new identity in Christ" that is passed on to a new believer once he is born again.

The man in the parable understood it would cost him everything that he had. He didn't haggle for it or try to get a deal. Giving everything he had for such a pearl was a deal. Such is the kingdom. The rush in the spirit that I experienced that day must have been similar to what this pearl seeker felt when he found that one pearl of immense value. To me, it was worth giving my all to enter into the riches of the Kingdom of God. I knew I'd get far more than what I'd give up; a life that I would lose anyway, for an eternal life that I can never lose and an inheritance not in heaven only, but here and now.

To try and give less than my all was for me to live a lie, to cheapen what has ultimate value. Jesus says in Matthew 16:24, *"If any man will come after Me let him deny himself."* In my case, this was a steal of a deal. I had nothing more important to live for. I wanted to find out more and to pass it on. It was too rich a revelation to keep it for myself.

It propelled me into studying the Word of God, digging to find what all the kingdom offered. I had met the King Himself in His full attire and the light emanating from His eyes caused me to go into a deep dive to find out more about what it really meant to be accepted as a child of God.

Fired up by this new found passion, I immersed myself in fervent study of the Bible. I did not want religion. I wanted the kingdom. I had had religion with all of its stipulations and regulations but I wanted freedom. I wanted to discover what Jesus meant by, *"If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed"* (John 8:36). I had read God's Word plenty before, but now it was as if I was reading it for the first time. Each discovery unveiled new layers of living light, and it fuelled my craving to know more. I had found my axis, my true north, and nothing could tear me from tracing its beacon of light.

I wanted nothing to do with that old cocoon and I absolutely rejected the caterpillar life. As that butterfly I had broken through the walls of my cocoon prison; I was no longer a lowly caterpillar. As if through the death of my old self, I had been reborn as a glorious butterfly. My new life of beauty and flight had only just begun.

Such is the metamorphosis each soul undergoes when born anew into the Kingdom of God. Though once blind to greater realities, living aimlessly on earth as a mere caterpillar, within each person lies divine seeds of re-creation. And when one hears the call to salvation, their spirit is quickened to lay aside the ways of this world. In my case, I had come to the end of self effort. The old sinful nature has to dissolve in order to take on the likeness of the Savior.

Then on the day of resurrection, emerging from the chrysalis of rebirth, we behold with wonder--having been transformed into a child of God. Forever changed, and with eternal life flowing through our veins, our flight into the heavens has just begun.

This, then, is the pearl of great price - a revelation that transforms the soul, demanding to fully possess everything the kingdom has to offer. By God's grace I had found it, and I rejoiced to spend all in its pursuit, counting all else loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.

Chapter 2

We've been Deceived

In order to understand the “glitch” in man’s programming, referred to as the “sin-nature”, we have to go to the beginning. God originally created man after His own image (Genesis 1:26-28). And the first commandment that God gave to Adam was to have dominion over the whole earth, and to subdue it and to govern it. God crowned man the “prince of this world” and it is only through the disobedience of Adam that Satan could then steal that title, and thereby gain that authority and rulership over the world.

Remember how, after Adam and Eve had been created, God gave them a warning that there was one tree in the garden that they were not to touch or to eat of. *“But the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat of it: for on the day that you eat of it, you shall surely die” (Genesis 2:17).*

In the next chapter Satan, in the person of the serpent, comes to the woman Eve, and tempts her with ‘deceitful lusts’. His main tactic was to falsify the truth and embellish the desired outcome. *“And the serpent said unto the woman, You shall not surely die: For God does know that in the day you eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened and you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat” (Genesis 3:4-6).*

In essence, temptation is to ignore God’s warning and to disobey what God says. And in tempting Eve to do this through lustful persuasion, Satan brings forth his bold lie, camouflaged in a deal of a lifetime. His deception led to all humans being deceived and consequently all humanity was born with this “corrupt” nature.

Mankind was crafted in God's image to rule this earthly domain. Since God had made man so powerful and so blessed even above the angels, Satan disguised as a serpent coveted our sovereign birthright. And through cunning deceit, he sought to cheat us of our God-given dominion.

In the garden of delights, our first parents knew only innocence. Yet this viper waiting to inject his venom of lies, whispered to Eve of forbidden fruits, promising divine wisdom rather than God's warned death. Appealing to her desires, he painted a false picture where obedience meant loss and disobedience led to gain. Through the twisting of truth, the father of lies stole into Eve's trusting heart. Her eyes were opened, but not to truth - only to doubt the truth she once knew. Partaking of falsehood, she offered the same to Adam, and he joined in her fall. Their disloyalty rent the order God decreed to Adam, passing corruption's curse to all their seed.

Now the deceiver claimed the title which was rightfully ours. He has stolen the rulership that was originally given to Adam and Eve. All humanity fell under Satan's deceiving influence.

This actually came out of Satan's mouth when he tempted Jesus in the wilderness, after His 40 days of fasting on the onset of His ministry. Remember how the devil tempted Jesus by showing Him all the kingdoms of the world, and he said *'I will give you all their authority and splendor; it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. If you worship me, it will all be yours''* (Luke 4: 6,7). When was all this authority given to him? When Adam relinquished his dominion and rulership over the earth by disobeying God. And Satan could now empower whoever would worship him.

Because of that disobedience, sin and death entered into the world. *"Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned"* (Romans 5:12). This was not an instant physical death, but it was a spiritual death. Spiritual death actually means separation from God.

The Bible says that the devil is a liar from the beginning. *"He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it"* (John 8:44).

The apostle John explains that Jesus came to redeem man from his sin nature. He came to destroy the works of the devil that began in the garden. *"He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil"* (1 John 3:8).

The apostle Paul also explained how the new identity that Christ gives us at the rebirth is a full departure from the previous creation we were born into. *"... put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness"* (Ephesians 4:20-24).

So, he makes it clear that there are two 'selves'. The 'old' self and the 'new' self. And the Word tells us to put off the old self and to put on the new self. In the above admonition, Paul talks about the 'deceitful lusts'. He's explaining that the origin of the old self is listening to and obeying the voice of Satan's deception. The old self is actually the product of deceit. It's the result of man heeding Satan's lies against God's truths and laws. Freed from such bondage, the believer has put off the old self of lies for the new identity in Christ. No more are we enslaved by lust, but renewed in spirit by truth's life-giving power.

Chapter 3

There's a Rebel Living Inside of You

The main goal of our enemy, Satan, is to deceive people; to lie about what God has said and to get people to disobey God's Word. Deception actually sets in motion a process of degeneration: first, deception produces lust; lust is a perverted and rebellious desire designed to contradict God. Lust in turn produces sin, and sin produces death.

James explains this clearly. *"Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am tempted by God; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own lusts and enticed. Then, when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death'" (James 1:13-15).*

So the old self is actually at war constantly against the new self. Paul said that the carnal mind is enmity against God. *"For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will" (Romans 8:7).*

Jesus said, *"A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bear good fruit" (Matthew 7:18).* Man in his original state is corrupt, and consequently cannot bear good fruit. Isaiah 53:6 says, *"We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all."* That is the mark of the old man and his behavior. He turns to his own way, he goes away from God and seeks his own will, his own pleasure and satisfaction.

Paul explains this further. *"And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind" (Ephesians 2:1-3).*

So, that is the product of Satan's lies and rebellion in the sons of disobedience. This is the description of those who live by the old self, the sons of disobedience. Satan is able to work in them because of the spirit of disobedience.

Notice that it says "by nature" we are the children of wrath. By default, we're born in sin, and consequently children of wrath. There is GOOD NEWS! The new man is created from an incorruptible seed.

Chapter 4

Could Self-Improvement Solve the Problem?

What solution can remedy humanity's sinful self? Contemporary answers point to self-improvement, yet the corrupt tree cannot bear good fruit. The self, by nature, remains fallen.

So what is the solution for the problem of the old self? It's a universal problem facing each and every one of us. There are a few potential solutions that are NOT part of God's plan.

We can rule out all the 'self' solutions beginning with contemporary psychology which promotes self-realization, self-fulfillment, self-expression and self-improvement, because all these give power to the old self, which is the rebel.

Another thing that hinders God's solution for mankind, after being born again, is to be forced by the church system into a legislation of laws that are not scriptural, but made by man. So, too is religion insufficient, with its formalities and restrictions that condemn but fail to transform. *"Making void the word of God by your tradition"* said Christ to the legalists (Mark 7:13). Many people look to the law to deal with the problem of the 'old self'. The righteous laws of Moses, given by God, revealed man's sin, but could not renew the heart. As Paul wrote, *"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh"* (Romans 8:3).

Jesus said, *"Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire"* (Matthew 7:17-19). The old corrupt nature cannot be repaired or reformed, but must be destroyed utterly. This was why God resurrected Jesus from the grave to be a new creation in us.

He sent His Son as the final sacrifice to redeem man from sin's bondage once and for all. *"Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree,"* wrote Peter, *"that we, having died to sins, might live to righteousness"* (1 Peter 2:24). Through death, Christ defeated Satan. Through His sacrifice, Jesus regained the dominion for the born again man. *"Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness"* (1 Peter 2:24).

After His resurrection, Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, *"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth"* (Matthew 28:18). The devil's dominion and rule over man and over the earth was returned to man. Jesus bridged the gap between God and man by conquering sin. *"For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him"* (2 Corinthians 5:21). Remember, the spiritual death of Adam meant separation from God. But Jesus reconciled man to God through His sacrifice on the cross. *"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life"* (Romans 5:10)

Chapter 5

You are Barabbas

God's solution to get rid of the old self in man was execution. There is no other solution for that rebel.

But the good news of the Gospel is that execution has already taken place in Christ. This is really the key to understanding the Gospel message. It is God's program for dealing with the old self. *"Oh what a terrible predicament I'm in, who will free me from that slavery to this deadly lower nature"* (Romans 7:24) But then he turns to thankfulness by saying, *"Thank God it has been done by Jesus Christ our Lord, He has set me free"* (Romans 7:25). –FREE from that deadly lower nature, this old self, has been sacrificed with Christ.

The old self has been crucified so that the body of sin might be rendered powerless and that we should no longer be slaves to sin. That's the only way to escape from the slavery of sin. It's by knowing and by believing that our old self, the rebellious nature of man was crucified with Jesus when He died on the cross. Apostle Paul says, *"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me"* (Galatians 2:20). No more rebel. That old self was executed.

I love the testimony the Derek Prince gives when the Lord asked him, "Who do you think that center cross was prepared for? Who was supposed to be on THAT cross? It was prepared for Barabbas; the robber and murderer." The actual truth is that Barabbas was the one who was supposed to be executed that day. But then there was a sudden change of events. Jesus took the place of Barabbas. But in actual fact, the criminal that was supposed to be executed was US. Jesus took the place of the old self and died in our stead. That's the good news of the Gospel.

That's the grace of God that paid the price of redemption for all of us. He made it so that we all died on that cross with Jesus. We were all crucified with Him. God's remedy for the old self was not to improve him or reform him or make him religious, but to execute him and resurrect him with Jesus.

Not only the old man was crucified with Jesus, but when Jesus arose, we arose as well. We resurrected into a new creature, a new creation, born of God and made after His own image, just as He had intended for man to be, in the garden: reconnected with God, no longer a slave to sin, but a son of righteousness.

That's the wonderful MERCY and GRACE of God; the awesome mystery of the Gospel! --Man redeemed through Christ dying for man's sinful nature, and Christ living in us and through us.

Chapter 5

The Greatest Victory in all History

Something spectacular happened on the day of the resurrection of Christ.--Jesus Christ crushed the heads of Satan and all of his demonic forces. Through His unimaginable suffering and death, He defeated the kingdom of darkness.

As our victor and conqueror, Jesus took upon Himself to the cross every sin, regret, and stain imposed by the devil upon humanity. He faced the full fury of hell itself and emerged conqueror. He took upon himself all of our guilt, all of our failure, all our condemnation, and every heavy burden that sin had brought upon the human race. He met our enemy face to face, defeated him, and rose as our representative and the head of a new race, to lead us forth in victory and in triumph.

Colossians 2.15 tells us, *“And having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.”* Jesus Christ has triumphed over principalities and powers. Jesus flaunted His dominion over demons for all to witness, parading His spoils of war in open celebration.

The word "triumph" signifies not only victory in battle but public revelry in the aftermath. Jesus emerged from the tomb, not as a conquering general, but as a divine emperor demonstrating his supremacy. He rode in a chariot through the streets of eternity, displaying the defeated forces behind him. Where tigers or enemy chieftains would be chained, so now were bound the serpents and minions that had deceived humanity. And this is how He could proclaim in Matthew 28:18, *“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”*

And we, God's people, are granted the high honor of joining Christ in this eternal procession. Through faith in his finished work, we too are seated on the throne of triumph, parading the dominion that He has won for us. As Paul says, *“But thanks be to God, who always leads us as captives in Christ’s triumphal procession and uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere“ (2 Corinthians 2:14).* This means that in every place and time we are destined to flaunt the Savior's power and glory. For the victory is ours to demonstrate here on earth until He returns to complete what He has begun.

Chapter 6

The Incredible Swap that Took Place at the Cross

“For by one offering or by one sacrifice He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified” (Hebrews 10: 14)

The one offering is the sacrifice He made of Himself on the cross. And by that one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified. That means He has provided every need for eternity in every area of the life of every person who trusts in Him. There is nothing more that He has to do. He has done it all. It is one complete all-sufficient sacrifice.

Jesus' one sacrificial offering on the cross was complete and perfect. In John 19:30, when Jesus uttered, "It is finished" on the cross, He communicated that His work was perfectly perfect and completely complete. The Holy Spirit later confirmed this was a perfect work in every respect (Hebrews 10:14).

Jesus, the Son of God, loved us so much that He willingly gave up His glorious life in heaven and came to earth as a man. Though He was sinless, He took on human form and lived among us. This was the first part of His sacrifice--humbling Himself by becoming one of us.

As the perfect Lamb of God, He lived a sinless life so that He could offer Himself as the perfect sacrifice for our sins. Even though He did nothing wrong, He knew His purpose was to give His life to save mankind.

On the night He was betrayed, Jesus knew His hour had come. Willingly and of His own accord, He went to the cross so that God's plan of salvation could be fulfilled. There He bore our sins and the just punishment we deserved for our wrongdoing. He, who knew no sin, became sin for us so that we could become the righteousness of God.

Jesus endured immense physical, mental and spiritual suffering as He hung on the cross. He felt the full weight of God's wrath being poured out against sin. He experienced the darkness of being forsaken by His Father as He took on all of humanity's iniquity. Through His death, Jesus triumphed over sin and broke its power over those who would believe in Him.

By His death, Jesus paid the price for our redemption--buying us back from sin, Satan, and the curse of the law. Because of His sacrifice, all who repent and trust in Him are granted forgiveness of sins, made righteous in God's sight and given eternal life. Jesus also reconciled us to God, restoring the relationship that was broken by Adam's disobedience.

Through His death and resurrection we have been adopted as God's children and made heirs according to the promise given to Abraham. All the blessings associated with Abraham now belong to those who are in Christ. We have been redeemed from the curse of the law to receive the blessing of the Spirit. Eternally secure in Jesus, we can boldly enter God's presence through the new and living way that He paid for us. *"Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy"* (Hebrews 4:16).

Specifically, the exchange included:

- Jesus was punished for our sins so we could be forgiven and have peace with God (Isaiah 53:5).
- Jesus tasted death so we could be freed from death's penalty (Hebrews 2:9).
- Jesus was cursed so we could receive God's blessings (Galatians 3:13-14).
- Jesus became poor so we could be co-heirs with Him. (2 Corinthians 8:9).

Through Jesus' perfect work and God's grace abundantly given, we are provided everything needed for every good work, *"God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work"* (2 Corinthians 9:8). Jesus endured humanity's poverty and evil so believers could share in His abundance and righteousness.

This is the magnitude of Jesus' sacrifice - it was complete, perfect and totally sufficient to save all who believe. He paid the ultimate price so that we might be fully redeemed in every way, both now and for all eternity.

Chapter 7

BACK to the BEGINNING?

“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin” (Romans 6:6).

Paul explains that the body of sin has been done away, and therefore we are no longer slaves to sin. That was God’s solution to ending the slavery to sin, and the only escape for man’s corrupt nature: to execute it on the cross when Jesus died.

Through faith in the sacrifice of Jesus, man can now be back in full relationship with his Father just as God had intended from the beginning. *“Which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church” (Ephesians 1:20-22).*

God has positioned Jesus above all. He is the head and we are His body; we’re not separate. We are ONE and therefore we are in the same position of authority. The enemy has been unarmed from all authority and dominion through Jesus only.

The new man is created by God. It’s not something that man can ever produce by his own effort, with good works or legalism or religion or anything of that nature. It is strictly from a creative act of God which proceeds out of the truth of God’s Word. *“Put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness” (Ephesians 4:24).*

It is exactly opposite to the old self which is a product of Satan’s lie. The truth of God produces righteousness and holiness, whereas the lie of Satan produces deception and sin. And Paul says the new self is created according to God’s original purpose for man, that is to be in the likeness of God. The new man is restored to what it was meant to be originally.

God recreated man, through the death of Christ and His resurrection. And the whole purpose of God and the destiny of man was restored. And Paul goes on to say: *“Put on the new self which is being renewed in the true knowledge according to the image of the one who created him” (Ephesians 4:22-24).* So the new man, while fully born again into the redemption of God, must be renewed in his mind. Your spirit is made anew, but your mind needs renewal. We have been recreated in the likeness of God but we must progressively grow into the true knowledge of God. John 1:12, 13 says, *“But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”*

And 1 Peter 1:23 says, *“For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring Word of God.”* The new man is created by God through an incorruptible seed. The seed of

God is the Word of God. We first receive the seed of God's Word by faith, and obey it, and consequently God's Spirit brings forth within us the very nature of God's divine, incorruptible and eternal nature.

In the very first verse of the book of John, Jesus is called the Word of God three times. *"In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God."* In Revelations 19:13 there is a description of Jesus returning to earth in glory and power to reign, and He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood and His name is called, 'The Word of God'.

In receiving God's Word, we receive Jesus, and we receive the incorruptible seed of God, and as we obey the Word of God, Jesus, we are being transformed into the original nature of God.

This divine nature is imperishable and incorruptible, born from the seed of God. This is why the old self, being essentially corrupt, is transformed into the new man, a newly created being, born from God, coming forth from the very seed of God's incorruptible Word. Through our obedience to the Word (Jesus), we express the new nature and the new incorruptible creature created in the image of God.

This is why Paul says, *"It is no longer I who lives, but Christ who lives in me. The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God"* (Galatians 2:20). It is the new self, the very nature and person of Jesus reproduced in us, and as we believe and receive and obey the Word of God, we become the divine eternal incorruptible seed of God's Word that produces in us the very nature of God's Son, Jesus.

Being born again, we are back to the beginning, fulfilling the destiny that God originally had for us to multiply His image. Jesus said that He came reproducing the image of His Father, and we in turn must reproduce the image of Jesus to the world.

After His death and resurrection, Jesus commissioned His disciples to do the same for Him as He had done for the Father. In John 20:21 when Jesus appeared to His disciples in a group, He said, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, I also send you." In other words, He reproduced the image of the Father Who sent Him, and now He would be reproducing His image to the world thru His disciples.

"For those God foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters" (Romans 8:29).

God's destiny for the new man is reinstated; to become conformed to the image of His Son Jesus, the One who is the first born amongst many brethren. God wanted to bring forth many children, but all children reproducing the likeness of God's oldest Son, His first born, His only begotten Son.

God made a promise of blessing to Abraham in Deuteronomy 28. And that promise has now been passed on to us through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. *"That the blessing of Abraham might come upon the gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith"* (Galatians 3:14). Jesus was the first partaker of the Spirit!--Then to all who believe in Him after the day of Pentecost! And what is the Holy Spirit for? It is given for miraculous power to witness, and to bring the Kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven. "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have

put on Christ. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal 3:26, 27, 29). This means that we are heirs of the promise of the Spirit just like Christ was and is! So as heirs, we got what He got! And therefore we should be able to do what He did! We get the same inheritance as Jesus! We, therefore, have the same power to set the captives free from all oppressions of the devil. Joint heirs means that we get the full inheritance, one hundred percent (100%) of whatever He has. Not only part of it.

"But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" Therefore, you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ" (Galatians 4:4-7).

However, we are to grow up to be conformed to the same exact image of Christ in this world. Not in the world to come, but here and now is when we need the power. *"Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the Day of Judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world" (1 John 4:17). "For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power" (Colosians 2:9 and 10).*

So, realizing who we are in Christ and the power that has been given us is the key to us understanding the life that Jesus intended for us to live as His followers. Not only are we complete in Him, but we are also empowered by His Spirit to do what He has done.

The apostle Paul was preaching in all of his epistles about the revelation that He received from Jesus as he mentioned the "mystery" of the Gospel. *"To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27). Paul said: "How that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel" (Ephesians 3:3-6).*

So, knowing that we are co-heirs with Christ, we are to exercise the same authority that Jesus has given us through the power of the Holy Spirit, to bring God's will on earth as it is in heaven.

"Then Jesus came to them and said, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matthew 28:18-20). Jesus was telling His disciples that, because all authority has now been given to Him, He is now sending us to exercise that authority on His behalf as His delegated representatives and reproduce His image by making disciples.

You Have Been Deputized

*“You have not chosen Me but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bear much fruit”
(John 15:16).*

Our commission is to replicate what Jesus did, and to push back the kingdom of Satan. Just before ascending into heaven, Jesus commissioned His disciples: *“He said to them, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:15). “And these signs (miracles) shall follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up snakes with their hands; and if they drink deadly thing, it will not hurt them; they shall lay hands the sick, and they shall recover” (Mark 16:17-18).*

When Jesus first sent out the 70 disciples to go into all of the different surrounding cities where he was planning to go preach, when they returned, they were all amazed at what all they could do, using the authority and the name of Jesus. *“And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name” (Luke 10:17).* The demons had to obey the name of Jesus. Why? Because Jesus gave His disciples His authority. And before departing He also gave authority to all believers. This means that we too have His total authority as His disciples.

So any believer can and should be manifesting these signs and miracles! Notice that Jesus did not tell them to pray for the sick. He said, *“Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely you have received, freely give” (Matthew 10:8).* These are all authoritative commands.

Again, *“Jesus said: All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:18,19).* So, if Jesus has ALL power, that means the devil has none. John the disciple reminded us to walk as Jesus walked: *“He that says he abides in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked” (1 John 2:6).* It must be possible for us to do the same things He did. *“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father” (John 14:12).*

Jesus is now sending us to enforce His victory and exercise the authority He’s given us. We’re His delegated representatives and we’re assigned to reproduce His image by making disciples.

Chapter 9

Just 'Do It'!

The true depth and meaning of the new birth, is that Jesus not only raised us up, but God's Spirit now dwells in us. And Jesus has given us His name and His authority to use as He has shown us. *"Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. And hath put all things under his feet, and given him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that fills all in all"* (Ephesians 1:21-23).

Jesus gave the authority to subjugate the devil, and He promised to send us the power of the Holy Spirit to do it. *"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth"* (Acts 1:8). The power of the Holy Spirit is the power to perform miracles just as He did. *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation"* (2 Corinthians 5:17, 18).

This means that the same ministry of reconciling all things unto God has been given to us, along with the authority, the power and the name of Jesus to do it with. But the key words are to do it. Jesus kept insisting on being doers of His Word and not hearers only, thus deceiving ourselves. Jesus made a very clear distinction between hearing and doing. He said, *"Therefore, whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house*

on the the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall” (Matthew 7:24-27).

We were predestined by God, before the foundation of the world, to rule here on this earth, to take care of the works of His hands, to replenish the earth with His image (make disciples of all nations), to subdue the earth (by destroying the works of the devil) and have dominion over all things. Jesus sent us the Holy Spirit to live in us in order to empower us to do all that.

This is what Jesus paid a mighty price for. To bring not only man, but the earth back into full reconciliation to God. This is why Paul was so adamant in teaching. *“That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; (opened), that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all” (Ephesians 1:17-23).*

Chapter 10

We're God's SWAT Team

“And having disarmed the powers and authorities, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross” (Colossians 2:15).

Jesus has disarmed Satan's powers and whatever authority he may have had over us. He made a public spectacle of Satan, triumphing over him at the cross. Satan's main weapon against us was guilt (accusing us as sinners), but Jesus deprived him of that weapon by forgiving our sins on the cross. We no longer have to live in shame and guilt. We're delivered of that sin nature. God canceled the written code, the law and its requirements, because we could never meet those requirements.

The law was nailed to the cross when Jesus died on our behalf, as our representative. Jesus paid the final penalty for all who had broken the law. Therefore we are no longer subject to the requirements of the law. *“Wherefore, my brethren, you also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that you should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God” (Romans 7:4).* We can now come to God on the basis of our FAITH in the death of Jesus. Our faith is credited to us as righteousness. We are now free to approach the Father having been made justified (“just as if I'd” never sinned). *“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:16).*

“He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins” (Colossians 1:13 and 14). We're now living in the kingdom of light and are now sent by God as His representatives, His army to charge against the forces of darkness in order to administer the victory that Jesus won.

We've been ordained and deputized. All believers have been given that same authority to fight against the forces of evil, now. Why? We are living in the kingdom of light, now, and while we still live in a world which is filled with lies, darkness, confusion and mind pollution, we have the victory in Christ along with the words of life and truth to use as our weapons. now!

Truth has power over lies just the same as light has power over darkness. We know that the devil is the prince of darkness and lies, and that Jesus is the TRUTH and the light. *“Then spoke Jesus again to them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (John 8:12).* *“You are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father you will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own, for he is a liar, and the father of it” (John 8:44).*

“Be not overcome with evil but overcome evil with good” (Romans 12:21). It is within our power to overcome in this spiritual warfare and be winners, now! Yes, there's a war on. We're assigned to enforce the victory won by Jesus, and claim back the souls that the devil keeps stealing from God. *“The thief comes not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (John 10:10).* His main tactics are to deceive, tempt, entice and accuse. That's who and what we're fighting against. He's the real terrorist in this world.--And we've been deputized as SWAT officers. We're in a spiritual warfare against terror! Satan is the one terrorizing God's children. We're a spiritual warfare attack team.

“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual wickedness in the high places” (Ephesians 6:12). We have to win the war in the spiritual realm first, and in order to do so, our minds have to be renewed to who Christ says we are and can do, so that we can walk out the assignment given to us.

Once we know and are fully aware of the devil’s devices, it’s pretty easy to make a clear distinction in our thoughts and hearts and know whether we’re listening to God or the devil. If our thoughts are of the devil they can be overcome with the truth of God’s Word. The Word is the most powerful weapon we have against the forces of Satan. In the wilderness, Jesus used the Word in order to refute and rebuke the devil. *“Then said Jesus to him, Get away from Me, Satan: for it is written, You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve” (Matthew 4:10).*

“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:4 and 5).

“The word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12).

Chapter 11

Winning the Mind War

“Who has delivered us from the power of darkness, and has translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son” (Colossians 1:13).

When we were born again we got translated into the kingdom of his dear son. Our spirit was dead but through the redemptive power of Christ, it was made alive. But our soul (mind, emotions) and our bodies are not yet redeemed. When we are born again, and we receive the Spirit of God, we have all the power within us to do anything and everything that Jesus has asked us to do. None of us get a lesser version of the Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit does not grow within us. We get the full power of the Holy Spirit living within us. He is the very Spirit of God living in us.

However, our carnal mind gets in the way. *“The carnal mind is an enemy of God: it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be” (Romans 8:7).* We try to get our carnal mind lined up with the Word of God, but actually it can't be. We have to learn to live out of the Spirit. Because we are a new creation, we have a new nature, and we have the mind of Christ abiding in us. And that's what needs to get “activated” in order to receive the things of the Spirit. Romans 12:1 and 2 tells us to “renew our mind”, meaning that we need to yield our natural mind to the mind of the Spirit. The natural mind wants to see proof, or manifestation before it will move towards the things of God; it has to make common sense otherwise the carnal mind will not move. But our spiritual mind, the mind of the Spirit, allows us to operate by faith, without sight, knowing that the Word of God can alter the circumstances that we actually see before our eyes.

Since Satan couldn't keep us from making Jesus our Savior and becoming a child of God, he's going to try all he can to keep us from operating in the Spirit. And the best way he has is by trying to control our carnal mind.

If he can control our carnal mind, he can get us distracted and turned away from the Lord and His Word. We are taught by the apostle Paul how to win in the mind war: *“Casting down imaginations, and every high thing (thought) that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (2 Corinthians*

10:5). Instead of tuning in to the devil's mind programs, we can learn to turn to the mind of the Spirit by reading, meditating on and obeying His Word.

We are taught to resist the Devil. *"Give no place to the devil" (Ephesians 4:27). "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7).* Temptations from your enemy come first to your natural mind. That is where the war is. We are at war against the works of the devil on earth. To be an effective warrior, we must fight to obey the Word. *"No man that goes to war entangles himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please Him who has chosen him to be a soldier" (2 Timothy 2:4).* Winning the mind-war is winning over the mind tricks of the enemy. Once you know how the enemy's power lies in lies, you get it and you refuse to tune in. So the key to overcoming temptation is not to push back and get into a tug-of-war game with the devil.. It's to change your focus as soon as you're attacked in your natural mind.

This is why we are to keep our mind "on guard" at all times. *"Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness" (Romans 6:16).* Whatever gets your attention gets you.

The battle for sin always starts in the natural mind. But If you're focusing on God's truth, you're not thinking about whatever else the devil wants you to tune into. If you focus on Godly truths in the Word and praises, you will experience real freedom! But if you focus on negative news of any kind, or yield to depression, that will only pull you down into the devil's pit. The key is to change your focus. There's a pattern to every temptation. First attention, then arousal, and then action. Your mind gets hooked, your feelings kick in, and then you act on it.

Most people aren't very good at capturing their thoughts and turning them to Christ, because it takes practice and discipline. But that's just it. Renewing your mind means disciplining your mind. *"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing (disciplining) of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Romans 12:2).*

We can't always control our circumstances, nor the way we feel, but we can control our thoughts, and conform our feelings to God's Word. We can just turn our mind to something else just as easily as we can turn off the TV, or walk away from conversations that aren't edifying. If you see something you're not supposed to look at, you can decide not to look again. Seeing is not the same as looking. We can't always control what we see, but we can control what we look at. And we can control what we think about. Kenneth Hagin used to say, "You can keep the birds from flying over your head, but you can keep them from building a nest in your hair." And if we change the way we think, it changes the way we feel, and that will change the way we act.

The best way and the quickest way to tune out the devil and tune into God's voice is to start praising. Whenever you're worrying or fearing, whenever you're feeling insecure, just start thanking God, or praising God or worshiping God. Whatever you do, just love God.

You get empowered when you praise. Praise breaks the power of the devil.

Faith is fueled by praise. We were created to praise! *“Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord” (Psalm 150:6)*. The more we praise the more our mind flourishes. It is a proven fact in quantum physics that our mind is in full operating function and creative mode when we praise.

Praise has three main benefits:

- 1.Praise causes us to enter into the presence of God. *“Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, & into His courts with praise” (Psalm 100:4)*.
- 2.Praise defeats the devil because he hates for you to give God praise. Remember Satan’s sin was pride, wanting the glory of God for himself. *“I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most high” (Isaiah 14:14)*.
- 3.Praise calls on the blessings of God because praise is the voice of faith. *“I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things; thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth” (Isaiah 25:1)*.

If you want to win the mind-war, you’ve got to learn to praise. It’s an exercise of faith, and it’s a sacrifice, it’s a discipline of the mind, but it’s the most rewarding and rewarded activity. Paul calls it a sacrifice. Why? Because there are two times when we are supposed to praise the Lord; when we feel like it, and when we don't feel like it. *“By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His Name” (Hebrews 13:15)*.

Philippians 4:8 is more than just good advice, It is actually a law of God! *“Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any virtue, if there be any praise, think (only) on these things” (Philippians 4:8)*. Keeping on mine on all the “positive things of God” helps us bring every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. Our mind was created to think on good things. And it cannot operate properly in negativity. That’s a fact.

When you praise God, you’re letting the light in. The devil sure hates the Word of God and he hates the praise and thanksgiving that we give to the Lord. For as long as you’re thinking about the Word and the Lord and you’ve got a song or a praise in your mouth, there’s no room left to complain, murmur, groan and bemoan about how bad you feel!

Murmuring is a sin. Look at the poor example of the Israelites in the wilderness who kept complaining and murmuring. – God was about to slay them on the spot except for Moses’ pleading for their lives (Exodus 32:7-14). Why? Because when you murmur, you’re turning your victory and your testimony over to the devil. Complaining is voicing the enemy’s lies. It is taking God’s promises in vain.

If you want to knock the devil for a loop, just start praising the Lord no matter what’s happening! The Lord loves praise. The Psalms of David, as well as many scriptures in the Bible extol the value and virtues of praises. As in the song, *“Count your blessings, name them one by one, count your blessings see what God has done...and it will surprise you what the Lord has done!”*

I would like to leave you with a little assignment. Throughout any day set an alarm to stop for 10 minutes, as often as you can, for praising God. Read some of the verses below during those times. Just see what victories and blessings come into your life through praising. Commit to do it! It’s a discipline, but the results are awesome. It’ll make you want to permanently change your thought pattern.

* * *

Deuteronomy 10:21 He is your praise and He is your God, that has done for you these great and terrible things, which your eyes have seen.

2 Chronicles 20:22 And when they began to sing and to praise, the Lord set ambushments against their enemies, which were come against Judah; and they were defeated.

Psalms 18:3 I will call upon the Lord, Who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from my enemies.

Psalms 33:1 Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous: for praise is beautiful for the upright.

Psalms 34:1 I will bless the Lord at all times: His praise shall continually be in my mouth.

Psalms 35:28 And my tongue shall speak of Thy righteousness and of Thy praise all the day long.

Psalms 50:23 All who offer praise glorifies Me: and to him that orders his conversation correctly will I reveal the Salvation of God.

Psalms 71:14 But I will hope continually, and will yet praise You more and more.

Psalms 92:1, 2 It is a good thing to give thanks to the Lord, and to sing praises to Your Name, O most High: To show forth Your lovingkindness in the morning, and Your faithfulness every night.

Psalms 98:1 O sing to the Lord a new song; for He has done marvelous things: His right hand, and His holy arm, have gotten Him the victory.

Psalms 103:1, 2 Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy Name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.

Psalms 104:33 I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being.

Psalms 107:8 Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men.

Psalms 107:22 And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare His works with rejoicing.

Psalms 113:3 From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the Lord's Name is to be praised.

Psalms 118:24 This is the day which the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

Psalms 119:7 I will praise You with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned Your righteous judgements.

Psalms 138:1 I will praise You with my whole heart: before the gods will I sing praise to You.

Psalms 146:2 While I live will I praise the Lord: I will sing praises to my God while I have any being.

Proverbs 27:21 As the fining pot for silver, and the furnace for gold; so is a man to his praise.

Isaiah 38:18,19 For the grave cannot praise You, death cannot celebrate You: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for Your Truth. The living, the living, he shall praise You, as I do this day: the father to the children shall make known Your Truth.

Lamentations 3:41 Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the Heavens.

Matthew 21:16 And Jesus saith unto them, Have you never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings you have perfected praise?

Mark 14:26 And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives.

Acts 2:47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

1 Thessalonians 5:16 Rejoice evermore.

Hebrews 13:15 By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His Name.

Revelation 19:5 And a voice came out of the Throne, saying, Praise our God, all you His servants, and you that fear Him, both small and great.

Chapter 13

The Victory of the New Man

Jesus left us the greatest example of following Him as He followed the Father. *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise” (John 5:19).* When He had to leave the disciples, He made a specific promise: *“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you” (John 14:26).* His Holy Spirit speaks to us, guides us, empowers and strengthens us.

Jesus gave us His authority so that we could replicate and multiply His image and His works. He deputized us and gave us His name and ‘power of attorney’ to destroy the works of the devil. He sent us to be His ambassadors, not only as winners but as ‘more than conquerors’.

And the mystery of the ages was revealed!—Christ in us and through us! *“To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory; Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus” (Colossians 1:27, 28).*

He has given to us all of the power and the ability needed to accomplish all that He did. He even said, *“Most assuredly I say to you, He that believes on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to the Father ” (John 14:12).*

Jesus gave us power over the devil! *“Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you” (Luke 10:10).* To win the mind-war, which is where the devil operates, to try to defeat us by keeping us condemned or accused, and thereby render us ineffective before we even start to obey and carry out the commandments of Jesus.

We can actually activate our victories by speaking His Word and by praising Him through everything. In other words, our outspoken testimony, our outspoken praise and our outspoken affirmation make an actual stand against the lies of the enemy.

We have to be fully dedicated, fully possessed by Christ. And there lies that victory, everyday, all day, in all ways, and always. The Word works if we work it. We must be doers. That means that if we are fully convinced in our own heart, and fully walking in the new identity, and exercising the power that God has given us, we just can't lose. We have the victory, now. We're not marching towards the victory, we are walking from a victory and we can walk in full triumphant attire and attitude. And that's what the life the Christian disciple is about.

But we cannot be empowered unless we commit to do the Word. If we do the Word, we will do the works. The miracles come from obeying the Word.

Chapter 14

The Way to Work It

This question often comes up: What to do when the problem persists? I would like to take that question to another level. As we all know, we're now living in challenging times and many signs point to the prophecies in the Bible about the last days. The world is getting worse and worse, and Christian values and testimonies are much more difficult to live out. We know that Christians are going to get ridiculed and persecuted more and more for their faith even in the western world.

If you stand up for one thing, you will eventually need to stand for everything that is true and worth holding on to. If we should stand against abortion, or against homosexuality, or against evolution, will we not eventually need to stand against them all, at once?

So the ultimate question is how will we stand? Right now, governments all over the world are enforcing serious regulations which in many cases violate people's rights. Similar situations have occurred throughout history. People have had to live under very evil regimes. Throughout the Bible, the Israelites have had to endure very difficult hardships. Daniel did when living in Babylon when he was expected to worship Nebuchadnezzar. David did when living under Saul, having to constantly run for his life. Mordecai did, and we could name so many others.

So, how do we stand against evil? Ongoing chronic pain is an evil similar to an ongoing governmental oppression. They're all the devil's works. How can we look to, and trust God through all those times? In the "mean-times", when the times are "mean".

To answer this question in the Spirit of Christ, we must start with knowing that the new man in Christ is a winner, a conqueror. David was a winner even when hiding in the caves of Abdulum fearing for his life.

Daniel was a winner even when kneeling in his room in prayer, facing persecution and possible death. Paul went through so many hardships, but he ran the race as a winner. In every situation when people stood their ground for Christ, the Lord came through for them.

My wife and I have also had different health issues that we've prayed against without seeing the expected results yet. But we have committed ourselves to attack the devil through praise every time the pain returns. Every single time the pain returns, we bust out in praise and thank the Lord for all that He has done for us, knowing that by His stripes we are already healed. We proclaim the Word on our situation. We speak to circumstances about God's power, and that's how we claim our victory--by proclaiming His victory.

My wife and I have made a long list of all His blessings to us, and of all that His love has done for us. And we bust out with that list every time the devil comes back at us. And it works wonders. For two reasons: It gets our eyes off the pain, and by doing so, we rub the goodness of God in the devil's face.

One other thing that you can do is to make yourself a "jewel box" in your heart of one or two, or ten scriptures that you know work for you, and that you can stand on firmly, scriptures that you can use every time, and that you know will defeat the devil. You don't need 100 of them. Only one verse will defeat the devil. Jesus used only one against every temptation of the devil in the wilderness. Just select the one(s) you like the most and use them to stand.

Claim the Word and stand. Linda and I proclaim our faith out loud together by speaking the Word into our lives, in "we" terms. In other words, we make it apply to ourselves. We make a concerted effort to turn to God to stand by us and with us. We remind ourselves that we have authority over all the power of the devil. We keep our thoughts in subjection to what Christ has said about us and what He has done for us.

We need to stand for Christ now, and every day, if we plan to stand in the end. Standing is what we do. We don't just "wait on the Lord" to come through. Waiting is passive, but standing is an action. We stand with the Lord's victory and for the Lord. Let's not be passive Christians, but doers of the Word.

You may be thinking, "You mean to tell me that I can overcome the attacks of the government against our liberty simply by praising?" What I mean is whatever you do, STAND. Don't focus on the bad of the world, don't let the devil conquer your mind. Look to God, keep your mind on God and stand on what you believe, and don't budge till God comes through for you. The victory comes with your fighting for it. The devil cannot win if you don't quit.

It won't be easier tomorrow, the problems will persist. But it will be easier to stand tomorrow if we're in the habit of standing today and every day. Don't let go of your victory.

STAND and PRAISE !

Chapter 15

The Key To Effective Prayers

We need to revisit how we approach God in prayer. Too many of us hold onto ineffective methods despite seeing little result. If prayer seems to be a depressing ritual whereby we are showcasing piety or lamenting our unworthiness, chances are that our approach is altogether wrong and is not a sweet savour to the Father. .

Religion often teaches prayer from a standpoint of feeling unworthy and pleading for God's attention. We want to showcase how sincere we are, although we can be sincerely wrong. Prayer need not be a bargaining tool nor about informing or convincing God. This approach to prayer can not only be ineffective, but discouraging, causing believers to feel disconnected from God.

Jesus taught against hypocritical prayer, which seeks human approval rather than a true connection with God. Jesus emphasized sincere prayer over ritualistic expressions in Matthew 6.

Prayer should come from the heart, free from empty rituals. We are to enter God's presence with thanksgiving and praise, focusing on His goodness. This aligns our hearts with His and fosters a sincere relationship. God already knows our needs. Our approach should be confident, expecting Him to act because He loves us.

In Luke 18, the parable of the importunate women and the unjust judge is actually a contrast, not a comparison. God is not reluctant like the judge. Long-winded prayers filled with explanations and pleas are unnecessary. Jesus highlights how God responds swiftly to our needs. Our lack of faith, not His reluctance, often hinders our prayers.

And in Luke 11, Jesus illustrates that a true friend helps willingly. God, who loves us deeply, is more generous than any friend. We shouldn't approach Him with groveling or manipulation, but with trust in His goodness. It is unbelief that limits our prayers. We focus on our failures rather than Christ's sufficiency. Jesus' sacrifice has already secured our righteousness. We should pray confidently in His name, trusting not in our worthiness but in His completed work. Our approach should reflect our position in Christ. That's what praying in Jesus' name is all about. Our authority and boldness in prayer comes from our faith in Jesus, not our own efforts. True prayer relies on the righteousness of Jesus, not our worthiness. Using the name of Jesus properly means trusting His work, not our own achievements.

Prayer should be about relationship, not obligation. It's like spending time with a loved one without needing constant dialogue. True prayer involves heartfelt communication with God. It's about being present with Him and drawing near with confidence.

Prayer is a powerful weapon in our spiritual warfare because it transcends distance and time. And we need to make greater use of prayer but we must pray according to God's rules. Our prayers should align with His will, not attempt to change it.

Jesus said, "What we loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. And what we bind on earth will be bound in heaven" (Matthew 18:19). See, we're not waiting for God, God is waiting for us. The ball is in our court. That's why we can't go about prayer in a ho-hum attitude. Passivity and lukewarmness is never pleasing to God.

Jesus explained another powerful law regarding prayer, He said, "Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven" (Matthew 18:19). So attached to the promise of binding and loosing is the law of agreement.

If two people agree together in prayer and ask for anything, they'll get it. That's a promise. That's why the devil fights unity, because of the power of agreement. Again, that's a law of God that we should make use of. When praying with someone, we could always end our prayer by saying: "...And, we agree together."

Now, add the power of God's infallible Word to your prayer and by doing so, you make it impossible for the devil to intervene. When you assign a promise to a request or to an impossible situation, your prayer is no longer a begging prayer but a legal demand formulated according to the word of the King. It turns your demands into an expectant answer, just as when you wait at the bank having cashed a check, and the teller is preparing your cash.

The reason why using the Word in prayer is so powerful is because faith needs no other proof than the Word of God. Why? Because the Word of God is an incorruptible seed. It cannot return void.

Let's remember that the Bible says that EVERYTHING that happened, both in the Old Testament and the New Testament, all those miracles, all those deliverances, all those healings, are all available to us. So the first thing, when we face an impossibility, is to immediately think of a miracle that took place in the past and accolade ourselves to the same story and claim that miracle for ourselves. We are to come boldly into the throne of grace and tell the Lord, "Wow, you did this miracle for Elijah, or for David, or for Nahum? That means that You will do the same thing for me."

Remember Jesus said, "The things that I do, YOU shall you do also, and even greater things than these." We need to believe that promise for every situation and circumstance. For us to see those greater manifestations that are promised by Jesus, we have to discipline our mind to think like Jesus.--To believe in the miraculous, and to enforce the miraculous on all impossibilities.

We, In our new identity, have the power to change what appears to be facts, into miraculous opportunities. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 4:20, "For the Kingdom of God does not consist in talk, but in manifested power." That means that God's Kingdom is about manifestation, not just pretty words. All talk is meaningless without demonstrating God's power. That's what people don't like about fake Christianity. They can't reconcile what the Bible says is possible with the little that the Christians actually manifest.

God cannot demonstrate His power, unless we believe. "Believe" is an action verb. Faith is NOT passive, it moves mountains. And it's the language and the currency of the Kingdom. You can't walk into the courts of heaven without it. "Without faith we cannot please God."

The evangelist, TL Osborn, said that when you come to the Lord in prayer, if you take out all of the things that God has given us authority over, and all the things that God has already provided for us in His word, there's not much room left for begging God for anything. However there's plenty of room for us to praise Him and thank Him and worship Him.

Chapter 16

Activated Christianity

If we look at the example of Jesus, He didn't ask His Father to do the miracles for Him. He's the One Who performed them by speaking to the need. And this is exactly what He taught in Mark 11:23. He said that you must speak to the mountain, yourself: *"For most assuredly I say to you, that whoever shall say to this mountain, 'Be removed, and be cast into the sea;' and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he says shall come to pass; he shall have whatever he says"* (Mark 11:23).

Jesus didn't ask His Father to raise Lazarus from the dead, He thanked His father for the fact that His father always hears Him (Jesus). And then, He went ahead and called out Lazarus. And, in the same fashion, He spoke to the wind in the sea to calm down and it did. He spoke to the illnesses in people and they were healed. --Or He spoke to the demons, and they left. Even Peter and John commanded the lame man at the Beautiful Gate to stand up and walk. *"In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk"* (Acts 3:6).

The whole point of living out what Jesus tells us in the Gospels is to, "speak the Word only". The centurion really got the point when coming to Jesus for the healing of his servant. He said to Jesus, *"Speak the Word only, and my servant shall be healed"* (Matthew 8:8). We are to speak to the mountain, we are to speak to the problem. We are to command the change to take place. That's what activating the authority means. We put our faith into action. We put our faith into words and by giving a command.

There's no point in asking God to do it when He has told us to do it. He has given us the authority and the power through the Holy Spirit to do as much and more than what Jesus did when He was on earth. *"Whoever believes in Me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father"* (John 14:12).

So, if you really want to live true Christianity, start speaking the changes that you desire. Start destroying the works of the devil with your word.

That authority was given to all Christians.--To all believers. (See Mark 16:15 thru 20.) It is part of our inheritance! --That authority, that power, the ability to activate the Word of God to destroy the works of the devil. And we, all of us, must change our way of thinking, and our way of operating so that we take the responsibility right here on earth to bind and to lose according to God's Word.

Jesus never prayed long prayers. In fact most of the time He never did pray the way we do, He simply commanded. --Or even better, He complimented people on the fact that their faith made them whole. It was their faith and their believing that made them better.

We, as believers, are responsible for the Gospel to be lived out and manifested to the world. Jesus was not only a sermon but a sample as well. He even said if you don't believe Me for what I'm telling you, believe Me for the miracles that I am able to do. *"Though you believe not Me, believe the works: that you may know, and believe, that the Father is in Me, and I in Him"* (John 10:38).

Having heard the truth, we are accountable to obey it by acting it out. By commanding and by proclaiming. We are now supposed to be a replica of Jesus. Whatever He did we can do.

We are no longer ourselves! We are crucified with Christ, and it is Christ living in us! *"For it is God Who works in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure"* (Philippians 2:13). We must be Jesus to those around us! We must act like Jesus and do what Jesus did. Our faith has to be visible and tangible.

Jesus said, "At that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you" (John 14:20). We have to be Jesus to the world.

We have to show the world the miracles that Jesus did, He does today! Jesus said, *"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven"* (Matthew 5:16).

We must get our 'belief' ACTIVATED. Our new name should be, "Jesus Continued".

****Back Cover Text:****

The Butterfly Wonder
by Paul Joseph

Paul Joseph invites readers to explore the miraculous metamorphosis that occurs at the new birth, drawing a vivid parallel between the humble caterpillar's transformation into a beautiful butterfly and the spiritual rebirth in Christ.

In this enlightening exploration, Paul delves deep into the teachings of the Gospel and the Epistles of Paul, illustrating the shift from the old self to the new man. Through the lens of grace, he unveils the boundless inheritance awaiting those who embrace this divine metamorphosis.

Paul offers an inspiring perspective on the incredible work of grace in our lives. He vividly illustrates how grace provides an immeasurable inheritance, leading to a life of purpose and renewal.

This compelling narrative invites readers to witness the beauty of transformation through faith. "The Butterfly Wonder" is a guide to understanding the enriching power of grace and the spiritual blessings it offers to every believer.

Embrace the wonder of new beginnings and discover your true inheritance.

Back text @ author



For over 45 years, Paul Joseph and his wife, Linda, have embarked on an extraordinary journey of faith, transforming lives across continents as dedicated missionaries. Their mission has taken them to far-flung regions, including a life-changing decade in Africa, where they have sown seeds of hope and compassion in a Liberian refugee camp.

Paul is not only a hands-on missionary but also an inspiring author. His acclaimed work, "Handbook for a Disciple of Jesus," is a practical guide that empowers Christians to live out and impart the essence of discipleship. Beyond this, Paul has penned numerous other insightful books and daily devotionals, enriching the spiritual journeys of countless readers.

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