
The New Life...The Start of Something Wonderful

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WELCOME TO THE NEW LIFE ... the start Of Something Wonderful! You have made a decision to follow Jesus Christ. It is my desire to see you get off to a good start in your walk with the Lord. I hope you are prepared for an exciting life. The Bible says, "... the godly man's life is exciting! " And exciting, it is!

Part of that excitement comes from learning about Jesus and getting to know Him better, through His Word, the Bible. This book will help you learn more about Jesus. It will teach you how to talk with Him, how to read His Word, how to introduce Him to your friends, and much more! You will want to look up all the Scripture meditations in your Bible. Doing that will help you learn where the various books of the Bible are located, and will teach you the importance of referring to "the Word" in all situations of life. You'll find studying God's Word will be a thrilling, heart-stirring experience.

After you have completed reading this book and looking up all the prescribed Scripture meditations, ask your pastor or fellowship group leader to fill out the certificate of completion for you. You may want to keep little notes on it, such as the day you decided to follow Jesus, the day you were baptized in water, etc. It will remind you of your commitment to Jesus, and of His Promises to you!

God bless you now as you "... study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that doesn't need to be ashamed." (2 Timothy 2:15).

Introduction

A young man named Reggie had the dream of becoming a famous rock music associate. As the months went by, up the ladder of success he went to fame and fortune, working with several well-known rock and roll groups.

With several gold records to his credit, Reggie had reached the top. He saw his dreams coming true, yet there still remained an unexplainable emptiness in his life. There was no genuine peace, no joy, and no love.

Surrounding this successful writer of rock music were all the things he had always dreamed about: fame, money, travel, women, popularity, excitement. But something was drastically wrong. Reggie saw many of his so-called "successful" friends dying from drug overdoses. Some were committing suicide. Others were turning to homosexuality and other forms of sexual debasement in order to experience some strange "kicks." What was wrong?

Disillusioned with life, unfulfilled by success, running away from reality, Reggie turned on the television set in his hotel room one night after returning from a concert, and there was Billy Graham!

"You've run far enough," Billy's voice rang out, "You've come to the end of the road. it's time to turn your life over to Jesus Christ - completely and wholeheartedly!"

Tears swelled up in Reggie's eyes as he experienced God's call to his heart. He knelt there by the television and prayed, "Oh, God, please be merciful to me, a sinner. I'm sorry for the wrong I have done. Please come into my heart, Jesus, and change me around."

That night Reggie became a new creation. He began a NEW LIFE. Now instead of having selfish desires, carnal dreams and plans, HE WANTED to give all his dreams and plans to Jesus Christ. In return, the Lord gave Reggie a new dream, a new vision, a new desire, and a NEW LIFE!

Now Reggie travels the country telling people about Jesus. He has written a book, made gospel music albums, and has been appearing on national television giving his testimony of how Jesus Christ changed his life and made him brand new.

You see, Reggie made the decision to follow Jesus 100%; not 75% or 80%, but 100%. And Jesus gave him new desires. Now the desire to sin is gone. Oh yes, there are still temptations, but the root desire to sin is gone. Now his greatest desire is to please the Master. He has found that the only true success - eternal success - is found in a man named JESUS CHRIST.

Today Reggie has real peace, real joy, real love, real fulfillment ... not some phony thing. Why? Because he has been given a NEW LIFE! The old things are passed away!

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, ALL THINGS ARE BECOME NEW." (2 Corinthians 5:17)

SOME THINGS YOU WILL WANT TO DO

In order to truly make Jesus Christ the Lord of your life as Reggie did, there are certain things you will WANT to do after receiving THE NEW LIFE. These things will help you become a victorious, successful Christian - a "hundred percenter!"

□ 1. YOU WILL WANT TO TAKE A PUBLIC STAND FOR CHRIST.

- **SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:**

Matthew 10:32-33

Luke 12:8-9

2 Timothy 2:12

Let others know immediately that you have decided to follow Jesus. The longer you wait, the more difficult it will become.

People may persecute you, ridicule you and criticize you. Be prepared for it!

- **SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:**

2 Timothy 3:12

The reason for this is because you have become a prime target for the devil. He wants to rob you of your victory in Christ. He hates to see people happily rejoicing in Jesus, so he stirs up trouble to try to rob you.

- **SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:**

Ephesians 6:10-11

As a Christian you should pray for the people who criticize you. Ask God to bless them and help them see the "light." Ask God to convict them of their sins that they too will come to know the joy of following Christ.

- **SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:**

Romans 12:14

□ 2. YOU WILL NEVER WANT TO LOOK BACK TO THE OLD LIFE.

Keep your eyes on Jesus, not on people, projects, programs, or things. People will fail. They are not perfect. We all have certain weaknesses and cannot live up to our expectations all the time. That's why you must always look to Jesus.

You will probably go through a fault-finding period in your Christian experience. Most Christians do. This is where the devil shows you everything wrong in everybody else. He will show you the pastor's shortcomings. He will show you other people's faults and weaknesses. If you listen to him, you might even quit your church and go somewhere else, only to discover the same cycle all over again. Or you may try to grow spiritual by watching religious shows on the television or by listening to teaching tapes; not realizing that, though most of these programs are good, they cannot substitute God's plan for your growth which is the Church. (Ephesians 4:11-16) Sad to say, some Christians have never grown beyond this fault-finding stage of development.

Keep your eyes on Christ. Don't ever look back to the old life. You are in a race now according to the Bible. Run the race to win; not come in second or third place - RUN TO WIN! Don't be satisfied with a mediocre, lukewarm life. Go all out -- victory or death! Burn all the bridges behind you and move ahead with Jesus Christ.

- **SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:**

Revelation 3:15-16

Luke 9:62

I Corinthians 9:24

□ 3. YOU WILL WANT TO BE BAPTIZED IN WATER.

This should be done at the FIRST opportunity. Don't put it off. If you were baptized as a baby or before you were genuinely converted to Christ, it doesn't count. Being baptized in water is a sign of true belief. It means you are open confessing that you are now dead to the old life and alive to the NEW LIFE through Jesus Christ.

- **SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:**

Mark 16:16

Acts 8:12

Acts 16:33

Matthew 28:19

Acts 8:36-39

Acts 18:8

Matthew 3:6

Acts 9:18

Acts 22:16

Acts 2:38

Acts 16:15

Romans 6:3-9

□ 4. YOU WILL WANT TO BEGIN A REGULAR PRAYER LIFE.

This is perhaps one of the most exciting areas of our Christian walk. We have the unique privilege of communicating with our Creator. That's really what prayer is: communion with God. Prayer will help you find the perfect will of God for your life as you begin to seek Him on a daily basis.

Prayer is one area that Satan will try to attack you the hardest. It's because he knows that through faith-filled prayer, great advances are wrought in the Kingdom of God and great wreckage is brought to his own miserable kingdom of darkness.

Prayer is a source of the Christian's power. It should be a DAILY HABIT. Start out by setting aside 15 minutes regularly each day for prayer. As you grow in the Lord, you will have more to pray about and will want to spend even more time talking with your Heavenly Father. Some Christians spend one or two hours a day in prayer. Of course, the amount of time isn't nearly as important as the quality of the time you spend. Some people can pray for 15 minutes in faith and accomplish more than a person who spends five hours in prayer with no faith. Make sure your prayers are filled with faith based upon God's promises.

DIFFERENT KINDS OF PRAYER

There are different kinds of prayer for different situations and circumstances. Let's look at some of them.

1. **PRAYER OF CONFESSION.** (See I John 1:9.) This is the kind of prayer you pray when you have sinned under a sudden temptation. Simply tell the Lord what it is you have done and ask Him to forgive you for it. He will forgive you and it will be as though you had never sinned at all! "The Lord will see his people righted and will have compassion on them when they slip." (Deuteronomy 32:36 TLB)
2. **PRAYER OF PETITION.** (See Mark 11:24 and Matthew 21:22.) This is the type of prayer you pray when you desire something from the Lord. It can be just a simple request. Use your own words and talk to the Lord like He is your best friend, right there in the room with you. (He is!)
3. **PRAYER OF WORSHIP AND PRAISE.** (See Luke 24:50-53 and Acts 16:22-25.) This is the kind of prayer when you simply praise and thank the Lord. You don't ask Him for anything, only tell Him how much you love Him and appreciate Him. Thank Him and adore Him for who He is and all He has done for you. Thank Him in advance for answering your prayers. This is one of the most powerful forms of prayer!
4. **INTERCESSORY PRAYER.** (See I Timothy 2: 1.) This is the kind of prayer you pray when you are approaching God on behalf of another person. For example, you may intercede for your family members, your friends, your pastor, the president, the governor, the mayor, etc.
5. **UNITED PRAYER.** (See Matthew 18:19 and Acts 4:23-30.) This is when two or more believers pray together. This also is a dynamic form of prayer.

There are other types of prayer, but you will learn them as you continue in your Christian walk.

- **SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:**

Matthew 7:7-8	I Peter 5:7	Jude 1:20
Philippians 4:6	Luke 11:5-13	Luke 22:42
John 16:23-24	I Timothy 2:1-2	Luke 24:52-53
John 14:14	James 5:13-16	2 Chronicles 20:15
Romans 8:26	I Peter 3:12	Acts 1:14
I Corinthians 14:14-15	Jeremiah 29:12-13	Matthew 6:5-13
Matthew 21:22	I John 5:14	Matthew 7:7-11
Acts 13:1-4	Mark 11:23-26	I Thessalonians 5:16-18
Acts 16:22-25	John 15:17	I Timothy 2:8
2 Chronicles 20:17-22	Ephesians 5:20	James 5:17-18
Acts 4:31	Matthew 18:18-20	Mark 13:33
Psalm 37:5	Ephesians 6:18	

You will never be able to find the time to pray. **YOU MUST MAKE THE TIME TO PRAY.** Almost immediately the enemy attacks the new believer's prayer life. He may try to inject obscene thoughts into your mind and make you think they were yours, in hopes of causing you to feel guilty and ashamed and unable to pray effectively. Or he will try to get you thinking about all the work around the house that needs to be done so you can't concentrate on praying. But remember this: **MORE CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED IN 3 MINUTES OF PRAYER THAN IN 3 HOURS OF HARD WORK!** Of course there must be a good balance, but prayer your time of conversation with God - is extremely important to your own spiritual health, growth, and stability. Make prayer a way of life. Jesus did!

ENEMIES OF ANSWERED PRAYER

The devil doesn't want your prayers to be answered. He knows that when they are answered, God's kingdom moves forward while damage is brought to his kingdom of darkness. Therefore, he sends out many enemies to hinder your prayers. It is important to recognize these enemies in order to eliminate them.

1. AN IMPURE HEART. The Lord said He will not listen to you if you regard iniquity (sin) in your heart. The solution to this problem is to put Jesus Christ first place in your life. Let His Word become your authority. A Christian who has confessed his sin to God and is sorry for that sin has been cleansed of all unrighteousness and his heart is made pure by the Blood of Jesus. God then listens because the Blood of His Son has made your heart pure.

2. WRONG MOTIVES. The young man prayed, "Oh, Lord, please send me a new Corvette sports car. The only reason I want it, Lord, is so I can pick up kids and take

them to Sunday School." Oh yes! Check your motives carefully when asking God for something.

3. FAILING TO PRAISE GOD. Learn the secret of praising God in all situations and many of the prayer enemies will automatically be eliminated.

4. POOR HUMAN RELATIONS. You must forgive others if you want to receive answers to your prayers.

5. PRAYING OUT OF THE WILL OF GOD.

6. NEGATIVE PRAYING. Quit telling God how rotten you are. He knows everything! He considered you worthy enough to die for you. Confess your sins quickly, then forget about them! Center your attention upon Jesus Christ and His strength, NOT upon your weaknesses. Negative prayers = negative results.

7. FAILING TO BE HONEST WITH GOD. We must worship God in Spirit and IN TRUTH. Be honest with God. He knows your heart anyway.

8. FAILING TO GET QUIET BEFORE THE LORD. There are many spiritual motor-mouths today. They can talk for six hours about nothing! They say, "Listen, Lord, I'm talking now." The Lord can't even get a word in edgewise! Learn the secret of getting still before the Lord and say, "Speak, Lord, your servant is listening." Listen for God to speak to you through a still, small voice or through a Scripture verse. Perhaps He wants to tell you HOW He wants to answer your prayer and what you should be doing about it.

9. LACK OF PERSISTENCE. You must keep claiming the promises found in God's Word if you are to be successful.

10. LACK OF HONEST DESIRES. You must really DESIRE the answer to your prayer. For example, some people pray for healing, but deep down in their hearts they really DESIRE to be sick so that they can get sympathy from others.

11. FAILING TO VISUALIZE THE ANSWER. When you pray, make sure you are picturing the answer through your "eye of faith."

12. FAILING TO BELIEVE THE ANSWER IS ON THE WAY. God hears and answers EVERY PRAYER as we abide in Him and His Words abide in us.

Resist these prayer enemies, submit yourself to God, and watch your prayer life perk up!

- **SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:**

1 John 5:14

Psalm 66:18

James 4:3

Mark 11:26

Isaiah 30:15

I Peter 3:7

Hebrews 10:23

Mark 11:24

Matthew 18:19

Psalm 150:6
John 4:24

Psalm 81:13
Psalm 46:10

Psalm 37:4
John 15:7

□ 5. YOU WILL WANT TO BEGIN A PROGRAM OF DAILY BIBLE READING.

The Bible is God's letter to you. When you receive a letter in the mail, you read it, don't you? Well, God has sent you a letter. The Bible is a list of all your assets in Christ. When you accepted Christ into your heart and life, you became a joint heir with Him. Read the Bible to find out all you inherited when you started THE NEW LIFE.

WHY READ THE BIBLE? (See 2 Timothy 3:16.)

1. IT TEACHES YOU DOCTRINE. It gives you guidance and shows you the right path to walk.
2. IT GIVES YOU REPROOF. This means that It shows when you are getting off the right path.
3. IT GIVES YOU CORRECTION. It tells you how to correct your course; how to get back on the right path.
4. IT GIVES YOU GOD'S INSTRUCTIONS. This means that It shows you how to stay on the right path.

• SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:

Acts 20:32 I Thessalonians 2:13 Ezra 7:10

The word of God will provide genuine guidance for your life. It is the primary way that God guides His people. (Psalm 119:105)

The Word of God is to be used in your spiritual warfare against the devil. (Matthew 4: 1 - 11 and Ephesians 6:17)

Get to know God better in His Word. Read it and study it daily. Let's discuss this some more.

HOW TO READ THE BIBLE

1. FIND A QUIET PLACE. This may be difficult but it can be done. You may have to get up an hour earlier or find yourself a spot in the basement or in the attic, but you can do it ... if you really want to!

2. SET A REGULAR TIME. Human beings are creatures of habit. If you work various shifts you'll not be able to have a definite time, but you could set aside the first hour of each day for Bible reading and prayer.
3. READ IT PRAYERFULLY. Ask God questions as you read. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you understanding of the Word and to teach you some great, practical truths that you can apply to your life personally.
4. READ IT EXPECTING GOD TO SHOW YOU SOMETHING WONDERFUL! It's easier to read your Bible when you really EXPECT God to speak to you through it.
5. READ IT AS IF GOD WERE SPEAKING DIRECTLY TO YOU. God's Word cannot lie. The prophets wrote it as they were moved upon by the Holy Spirit. (See 2 Peter 1:21.) Read the Bible as if it were written especially for you. Remember, the Bible is God's letter to you.
6. HAVE A NOTEBOOK HANDY. You will want to write down the things God reveals to you as you read His Word.
7. USE COLORED PENCILS OR SPECIAL MARKERS. You will want to make notes in your Bible and mark certain passages that really speak to you.

SATAN'S ATTACKS

Satan is God's enemy. He is also your enemy. He will subtly attack the scriptures to make you doubt the integrity of your Heavenly Father. On television and in the movies, Satan has used ungodly producers and comedians to attack the Bible. You should be very selective in your entertainment so that seeds of doubt are not sown in your mind regarding God's Word.

SOME EXCUSES SATAN WILL HELP YOU THINK OF FOR NOT READING THE BIBLE:

1. I don't have the time.
2. I'm too tired.
3. I can't fit it into my tight schedule.
4. Every time I read it I get sleepy.
5. I can't remember what I read anyway.
6. I don't get anything out of it.
7. I don't understand it.
8. My spouse calls me a fanatic when I read it.
9. It offends people.
10. People will say I'm crazy if I read that Book.
11. I'm ashamed of it.
12. It's boring.

Oh yes, and there is a whole host of other excuses for not reading the Bible. But YOU be strong! YOU be aware of Satan's tactics. He is the author of all these flimsy excuses. Be wise to his cunning devices. The more Bible you can get into you, the more genuine faith you will have, and the more accomplishments you will experience.

- **SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:**

Romans 10:17
John 6:63

Psalm 1:1-3
Luke 4:4

Acts 17:10-11

□ 6. YOU WILL WANT TO RENOUNCE YOUR OLD LIFE OF SIN.

WHAT IS SIN?

1. To miss the mark of the standard.
2. A lapse or deviation from truth and uprightness.
3. A transgression.
4. Disobedience.
5. Falling short of one's duty.
6. Doing wrong, even though done in ignorance.
7. Activity contrary to law.

Humans are sinners for two reasons. First, we are sinners by nature, inherited from Adam. Secondly, humans are sinners by deliberate choice.

Sin loves to get a grip on people and hold them in bondage. Sin doesn't like to let go of a person it has in its grips. If it weren't for a Holy God who provided a remedy for sin, we'd all be lost, on a journey to hell.

- **SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:**

Romans 3:23
Psalm 51:5
Isaiah 64:6
Romans 6:23
Matthew 18:15, 21-35

Matthew 6:14-15
2 Corinthians 5:19
Ephesians 1:7
Colossians 2:13
Galatians 6:1

James 5:16
Romans 5:15-20
Romans 11:11
Galatians 3:19
Romans 3:9-20

JUMPING THE CHASM

It is not how many sins we have committed that separates us from God. It is the fact that we have sinned and continue to sin. Regardless of how good we try to be, we cannot be good enough. We cannot earn salvation or be saved by our own merits.

For example, suppose three men try to jump across a chasm fifteen feet wide. To fail would be sure death. The first man tries hard but jumps only six feet and falls. The

second man is more successful. He jumps ten feet, but he also falls. The third man jumps fourteen feet! However, he suffers the same end as the first two. It makes no difference how close they came to jumping the chasm, the end result was the same.

It is the same in dealing with our sins. Salvation is offered to us as a free gift. The only forgiveness is in Jesus Christ, and no one is too great a sinner to be saved.

- **SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:**

Romans 6:23

Isaiah 1:18

□ 7. YOU WILL WANT TO SHARE CHRIST WITH OTHERS.

Witnessing means to tell others what you know about Christ. You don't have to be a Bible scholar or expert to share Christ with others. But you must know Him in order to introduce Him to people.

HOW TO WITNESS

1. Prepare your heart by prayer. The more you pray and commune with the Father, the more effective you will become and the more power you will have.
2. Do not argue with people. Present Christ as a person, not as a religion.
3. Scriptures for the presentation:
 - a) Romans 3:23 describes the problem.
 - b) Romans 6:23 tells the penalty.
 - c) Acts 3:19 gives the solution.
 - d) John 1:12 tells that Christ must be received personally.
 - e) Revelation 3:20 tells that Christ is waiting and knocking, ready to come into a person's life.
4. Pray with the person a simple prayer of repentance and ask Jesus to come into his or her heart.

- **SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:**

Acts 1:8
Matthew 28:19-20
Mark 16:15-18
Acts chapter 4
I Peter 3:15

List at least one person you can witness to:

How do you plan to do this?

QUESTIONS

1. What must you do before leading others to Christ? (Matthew 4:19)
2. What did God want Paul to do since he was to be His witness? (Acts 22:14-15)
3. How does a person acknowledge Christ as Lord in his life? (Romans 12:1-2)
4. What may cause people to ask about your relationship to Christ? (Matthew 5:16)
5. What should you tell others? (Acts 4:20)
6. What should characterize your conversation? (Colossians 4:5-6)

8. YOU WILL WANT TO BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Now that you are a born-again Christian, there is another experience you may have with God. It is caused the baptism in the Holy Spirit. It is an experience that is promised to all who will believe. The Holy Spirit will give you the power to do unusual things such as speaking in other languages you have not learned. It may sound strange but this experience will give you the ability to be a powerful witness for Christ.

Jesus taught us to ASK for the Spirit. He didn't say to merely assume that the Holy Spirit has filled you upon conversion, but ASK ... (read Luke II: 13). Some people are afraid to ask God for the Holy Spirit Baptism with the evidence of speaking in other tongues because they are afraid they will receive a demon. But Jesus explained carefully in the eleventh chapter of St. Luke that God, being a good God, would NEVER allow such a thing to happen. If you ask for the Holy Spirit, do you honestly believe that a good God would allow an unclean spirit to come upon you? Of course not!

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit was described by Jesus as "rivers of living water flowing out of your belly." Strange as it may seem, people who ask God for the Holy Spirit Baptism, begin to experience a surge of excitement through their belly area as they begin to speak in other languages of praise unto God. It's not necessary to feel this sensation before speaking in tongues, but it comes often when the Holy Spirit fills a person.

- **SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:**

Matthew 3:16	John 7:37-39	Luke 11:13
Acts 1:4-5	Acts 10:46	Acts 8:14-17
Acts 2:1-4	Acts 8:17-18	Acts 2:4
John 14:16-17	Mark 16:15-17	Acts 9:17
Romans 8:26	John 4:23-24	Acts 19:6
I Corinthians 12:14	John 16:12-13	Luke 3:16

□ 9. YOU WILL WANT TO USE YOUR PRAYER LANGUAGE DAILY.

When you receive the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, you will have the ability to pray in another language. Have you ever wanted to thank God for all He has done, but couldn't seem to find the right words? Well, the Holy Spirit will give you the right words through a language known as "tongues." Some call it the "prayer language."

When you use your prayer language, you are bypassing your intellect and speaking right out of your spirit. We don't always know how to pray as we ought. That's why we need the help of the Holy Spirit and the prayer language. Sometimes you may feel depressed or worried and not know why or how to deal with it. Begin to use your prayer language. You may not "feel" like using it, but do it anyway. You will be energized by the Spirit of God. It may sound foolish, but God has taken the foolish things to confound the wise. (See I Corinthians 2:14 and I Corinthians 1:27.)

"He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself. . . ." (I Corinthians 14:2-4)

The word "edify," in the Greek, means to "charge up, like electricity." When you use your prayer language, you are being edified, or charged up with power. Use It every day whether you feel like it or not and you will experience the ever-increasing joy of watching your prayers being answered supernaturally.

Sometimes it seems as though obstacles remain in the way of answered prayer. The answer seems just out of reach. What could it be? Secret sin? Secret habit? Some chronic affliction? What is the answer? There is a deep dimension of prayer that we can use when we don't know how to pray as we should or what we should pray.

As we begin to yield to the Spirit of God in our prayer life, we will begin to achieve victories that seem quite beyond us.

- **SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:**

Romans 8:26	Ephesians 6:18
I Corinthians 14:2	I Corinthians 14:15

□ 10. YOU WILL WANT TO GET RID OF ALL REMINDERS OF THE OLD LIFE.

This is very important although some do not recognize it as such. Have you ever heard an old record and immediately were reminded of exactly what you were doing when it was popular? And have you ever experienced a depression after listening to a song that brought back old memories? It is not a good practice to keep remnants of the old life around.

Some Christians report throwing out such things as:

1. Pot smoking pipes and accessories.
2. Photographs (old boyfriends, girlfriends, etc.)
3. Liquor.
4. Tobacco products.
5. Record albums.
6. Astrology books and other occult artifacts.
7. Pornography and other suggestive material contrary to Christianity.
8. Books of philosophy and other religions.
9. Party records and tapes.
10. Other unwholesome materials.

• SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:

2 Corinthians 5:17 Acts 19:18-19

□ 11. YOU WILL WANT TO SELECT THE RIGHT COMPANIONS.

"Bad company corrupts good character." - I Corinthians 15:33 NIV

"A mirror reflects a man's face, but what he is really like is shown by the kind of friends he chooses." - Proverbs 27:19 TLB

When you really become a Christian, you will no longer desire to go to the old hang outs and associate with the people you once did. Of course this doesn't mean you should shun them or treat them with disrespect, it's just that you simply no longer need to chum with them. In fact, when you start witnessing to them about how Jesus transformed your life, your old friends will either get saved or decide they don't want you around anymore. You are now a "holy Joe" or a "holy roller" to them. They can't understand why you say, "Praise the Lord," at the strangest times. They can't figure out why you want to go to church all the time and talk about Jesus all the time.

In the Old Testament, there is a story about King Jehoshaphat that vividly illustrates the importance of selecting good associates. Jehoshaphat was a godly king that went into a business alliance with an ungodly, unconverted king named Ahaziah. They built ships in a joint effort and God allowed all of the ships to be sunk before ever being put to use BECAUSE Jehoshaphat went into this unwholesome partnership. (2 Chronicles 20:35-37)

You cannot drink from the cup of the Lord and demons too. I knew a young lady who said she had accepted Christ, but refused to quit going to her card parties. She deliberately threw herself into a place of compromise and temptation. As a result, her experience was frozen in a matter of just a few weeks. The last time I saw her, she was back to drinking and running around with no interest in the Lord at all. She claims that the "dirty devil" made her do it, but it wasn't the "dirty devil" that made her do it - it was HER choice; she made herself do it!

When you become a genuine Christian, you will have an intense desire to associate with other Christians. You will want to be around people who can help you grow in the faith and come closer to Christ. You don't want to be around someone who serves the devil in dragging you back to the old life. That's why church fellowship is so vitally important.

- **SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:**

Proverbs 1:10	I Corinthians 5:6	Proverbs 14:7
Proverbs 25:26	Proverbs 24:1	Galatians 5:7-12
1 Corinthians 10:21	Psalm 26:4-5	Proverbs 12:26
Galatians 2:4-5	Proverbs 25:4-5	Ephesians 5:3-
Ephesians 5:11		14

If you choose the wrong associates, they will become a snare to you; a thorn in your side. Make sure you are very selective in your friendships. Find faith-filled people who love Jesus and who love to pray; people you know to be spiritual and will be a positive influence upon your life. Your eternity is too important to take a chance on making friends with people who will be open to satanic suggestions and help you to stumble.

Don't misunderstand. You cannot isolate yourself. You must still rub shoulders with people and tell them about Jesus - just don't make a habit of "running" with them.

□ 12. YOU WILL WANT TO DEAL PROPERLY WITH TEMPTATION.

Just because you are now a born-again Christian, it doesn't mean that you will no longer be tempted. The reverse is true. Satan wants to win you back. He already controls, more or less, the person who doesn't love the Lord, so he concentrates his efforts on trying to trip up Christians.

You will at times be tempted with certain sins of the flesh. Then there are times you will be tempted with sins of the mind such as worry and fear. You will be tempted in subtle

ways. You must learn to live one day at a time without worrying about tomorrow. Discipline yourself to stay away from tempting situations. Some ex-drunkards go back to the bars just "to witness to their old friends." That's what they think, but actually it is a temptation from the enemy to get them back on his territory and into the old habits again. You be wiser than that! Get yourself out of tempting situations immediately.

Sometimes a young person will continue to go on dates with the unsaved. They compromise their principles, guilt sets in, fellowship with God is broken, and they go back to the same old rutand the devil has succeeded in his mission.

You are a child of God. You do not have to let Satan make you a failure. You do not have to give in to temptation. Remember, though, you cannot resist the devil in your own strength; you must do it in Christ's strength, claiming His Blood over your life and His strength over your whole being.

HOW TO GET VICTORY OVER TEMPTATION

1. CLAIM YOUR POSITION IN CHRIST. When you received Christ, you received authority over the devil. He doesn't have authority over you, although he'd like you to think so.
2. DECIDE FIRMLY, WITHOUT WAVERING, TO WALK IN OBEDIENCE TO GOD AND HIS WORD. This is where many new Christians go wrong. They try to hang on to some secret sin instead of making the quality decision to "put off the old man" and let the fullness of the new life begin! Holding onto a secret sin will open the door to greater and more powerful temptations. (Read Hebrews 12:1-4.)
3. ACTIVELY RESIST THE DEVIL!

4. TRUST IN GOD'S KEEPING POWER.

- **SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:**

John 1: 12	I Samuel 15:22	I John 4:4
Luke 10: 19	Genesis chapter 39	Jude 1:24
Mark 16:17	James 4:7	I John 5:1-5
Ephesians 1:1-23	Ephesians 6:11-17	I Corinthians
James 1:5-8		10:13

□ 13. YOU WILL WANT YOUR FAITH TO GROW.

What is faith anyway? "It is the confident assurance that something we want is going to happen. It is the certainty that what we hope for is waiting for us, even though we cannot see it up ahead." (Hebrews 11:1 TLB)

There is one impossibility. That's this: You can never please God without faith. All of God's work must be done by faith. You will stand firm when the trials come. Your faith will always be tested to prove its genuineness.

The universe is expanding at the rate of 128,000 miles per second. Just as there is no limit to this ever-expanding universe, there is no limit to God's power for the person who is operating by faith.

There are different degrees, or measures, of faith. God gave to every person a measure of faith to start them off. But after that, it's up to us to make our faith grow. In the Bible we read about "weak faith," "little faith ... strong faith," and "growing faith."

Faith is claiming and laying hold of the unrealities of hope and bringing them out of the realm of the invisible and into the realm of the visible.

Faith is not hope. Hope is good, but it focuses upon the future. Faith takes what is hoped for and begins claiming it NOW. "Now faith is... " the Bible says.

HOW DOES FAITH GROW?

1. You must desire it to grow.
2. You must believe it can grow.
3. Let the Word of God be your authority, Read it, study it, meditate upon it daily. Develop a craving for the Word of God.
4. Put action to the Word. If it tells you to do something...do it!
5. Speak the Word with your mouth. Learn to speak the Word no matter what the conditions look like. Walk by faith, not by sight. Say what the Word says.
6. Be willing to pass through the "waiting period" or "testing period." This is the period of time between the time you start believing a promise, and the time it actually becomes a reality in the visible realm.
7. Exercise your faith and it will grow. It's just like a muscle; it grows with the proper exercise.

- **SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:**

Mark 11:23-24	2 Corinthians 1:24	Romans 3:22-31
Matthew 17:20	2 Corinthians 5:7	Romans 12:3
Mark 6:4-6	2 Thessalonians 1:3	Ephesians 3:12
Hebrews 11:1-40	Luke 5:17-26	Psalm 37:7
Luke 7:50	I Peter 1:7	Luke 7:1-10
James 1:1-4	Romans 1:5-31	Mark 10:46-52
Romans 3:3-4		

□ 14. YOU WILL WANT TO GROW UP SPIRITUALLY AND PRODUCE FRUIT IN YOUR LIFE.

Nothing in life is static. Nothing remains as it is. Everything from the tiniest cell to the highest man has an urge for a fuller, more mature life. If a person does not want to grow - to mature - it is indeed a sad picture. Yet we see Christians who have been saved for several years but have never developed beyond spiritual babyhood. This ought not to be. God gave us His Word and the ability to communicate with Him in order that we might grow into maturity. The only thing that will prevent us from growing up spiritually is our refusal to yield to the Holy Spirit in us. If we refuse to read the Bible, or refuse to pray, or refuse to fellowship with other Christians regularly, we will not grow, but will remain spiritually immature. (Remember, it's not difficult to recognize a twenty-year-old "baby.")

You can grow as quickly or as slowly as you desire. You can go as far with God as you want. God is willing to bring you into a deep, fruitful, meaningful relationship with Himself, but you must be willing to CRAVE spiritual things. You must WANT spiritual things more than your very breath. A time will come when the excitement of the NEW LIFE will wear off. You will not feel as full of enthusiasm as you did at the start. That's the time to make the decision to seek God through His Word and prayer regardless of how you feel. Feelings have nothing to do with our walk with God. You will know you are growing when you begin to pray because you WANT to, and not because you feel like it.

Let's look at three basic stages of growth in the believer's life:

1. **BABYHOOD.** Babies can't do things for themselves very well. They must depend upon others. They have to be spoon-fed. Their diapers need changing once in a while. You can't get too angry with them over the little fusses they make. After all, they are just babies; they don't know any better. In the spiritual sense, it's okay to "spoon feed" a new Christian for a couple of months, and change his "diapers" when he has an accident, but if it continues, something is wrong.

There comes a time when Christians must grow out of the stage where they have to call the pastor every day and request other people to pray for them all the time. There comes a time when a baby should learn to feed himself and change his own clothes. Babies should learn to do things for themselves and grow up into a child.

Babies are easily spoiled. They are easily irritated. They are easily distracted, easily frustrated, easily hurt. Nobody minds helping a little baby, but when it comes to spiritual things, we don't like to see babies that are satisfied with being babies forever!

2. **CHILDHOOD STAGE.** Children are unsteady, curious and talkative. A child doesn't know any better so he's always talking - always blabbing about something (but usually

nothing). A person in the childhood stage of spiritual development will most likely be a talker. He will talk usually about himself, his petty accomplishments, his plans, his projects, his interests, etc. His conversations are generally self-centered.

Another characteristic of children is they haven't learned good discipline yet. They are unreliable and spasmodic. In the spiritual sense, a "child" hasn't learned the discipline of budgeting his time and money. He hasn't learned to get his life organized. Like in the natural, a spiritual child is unreliable; he's up and down, in and out, on and off. He reminds you of a roller coaster.

3. ADULTHOOD STAGE. Here are some signs of spiritual maturity:

- a) More implicit and universal trust in God.
- b) A separation from the world and an increasing deadness to all the world has to offer.
- c) Less temptation to sins of omission (example: neglect of prayer, Bible reading, etc.).
- d) A growing steadiness and intensity of zeal in promoting the cause of Christ.
- e) Less self-consciousness and more Jesus-consciousness.
- f) A growing deadness to the praise of men.
- g) A growing warmth and sincere acceptance of the whole will of God.
- h) A growing calmness and quietness under great afflictions.
- i) A growing patience under much provocation.
- j) A joyfulness even when disappointments come.
- k) Less temptation to gripe, complain, criticize, and murmur.
- l) Less temptation to resentment and the attitude of retaliation when insulted, criticized or abused.
- m) Less temptation to dwell upon and magnify our trials and troubles.
- n) Less anxiety about the future.
- o) Less inclination to speak uncharitably about another individual.
- p) A growing readiness to forgive others and forget old injuries.
- q) An increasing naturalness in treating people kindly and praying for them.
- r) Finding it easier and easier to make wholehearted sacrifices.
- s) We find ourselves more and more impressed with revelations of Bible truths.
- t) A growing jealousy for the honor of God, and for the honor and purity of His Church.

HOW TO GROW UP SPIRITUALLY

1. Proper diet. The Word of God and prayer feed the human spiritual life.
2. Exercise. Practice faith, hope and love. Reach out to others in practical ways. Look for opportunities to reach out to others and to share your testimony.

Just as a baby cannot grow without the proper nourishment and adequate exercise, neither can the spiritual baby grow without the proper spiritual food and practical exercise.

- **SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:**

John 3:1-7

I Peter 2:2

Ephesians 4:8-

□ 15. YOU WILL WANT TO JOIN A CHRIST-CENTERED, SPIRIT-FILLED CHURCH.

The Church is the foundation of the Christian ministry. Jesus founded and endorsed the Church when He said, "I will build my Church." It is in the heart of every believer to have the feeling of "belonging." And church membership is a scripturally-sound approach to meeting that need to "belong." Acts 5:12-14 indicates a very definite membership in the Early Church days.

- **SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:**

I Corinthians 5:2-13 Acts 1:15
Titus 3:10-11 Acts 2:41

Acts 4:4
Hebrews 10:25

Also, by joining a church, you will become a voting member of that body, and will be able to prayerfully help plan the programs offered by the church. For example, you will have a voice in business decisions the church must make, etc. If you see something wrong in your church, and you are not a voting member, it will be difficult to change it.

You will grow spiritually as you fellowship with believers of like precious faith. You will be a contribution to the health, growth and stability of the church. To illustrate the importance of fellowship with other Christians, let us look at this example: When working with charcoal briquettes, you gather them together. Once started, you can spread them out and cook a very large meal. But, you cannot cook much with one little coal. As a member of a larger body of believers, you will have a greater impact.

Church membership is extremely important to your growth. Make the selection of a church a matter of much prayer. Although we are all members of one Church (God's heavenly Church), God puts us in a local assembly where we can do the most good for Him. Pray and discover which local assembly you should attend.

INTERESTING NOTE: Did you know that the military services get their chaplains based upon church membership? It's true. The armed forces get so many chaplains per so many church members. If your church has more members, the military is entitled to more chaplains of your particular faith. The more members a denomination has, the more military preachers they qualify for.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR IN A CHURCH:

1. Salvation is by faith in the shed Blood of Jesus Christ. It is a work of grace, not human effort.

2. The Bible is the Inspired Word of God, from Genesis to Revelation.
3. God is eternally existent in three Persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. This is known as the Trinity; the Triune God.
4. The Holy Spirit baptism.
5. Divine healing.
6. Mission-mindedness. (Make sure your church supports missionary projects.)
7. Evangelism. (Make sure your church believes in and practices soul winning.)
8. The imminent return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

BEWARE OF SO-CALLED MINISTERS WHO DENY:

- 1 .The Virgin Birth of Christ.
2. The Deity of Christ. (Deity means that Jesus Christ is actually God, the Second Person of the Trinity.)
3. The Blood Atonement.
4. The Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Christ.
5. Christ's miracle-working power today.
6. The imminent return of Jesus Christ.
7. The Inspired Word of God.
8. Everlasting punishment for the unsaved.

Ministers who deny any of these cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith are not ministers of God, but of Satan!

• **SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:**

2 Corinthians 11:14	Matthew 8:16-17	John 17:5
Galatians 1:7-9	I Thessalonians 4:13-18	Hebrews 1:2
Philippians 3:18	Titus 2:13	John 3:16-17
1 Timothy 4:1-2	Matthew 25:46	Acts 1:5
2 Peter chapter 2	Revelation 20:11-15	Acts 19:1-7
Mark 12:29	2 Peter 1:21	James 5:13-16
Philippians 2:5-11	2 Timothy 3:15-17	Romans 8:23

John 3:3	Deuteronomy 6:4	I Corinthians
Romans 10:8-13	Matthew 28:19	15:51-52
Acts 2:4		Revelation 19:20

□ 16. YOU WILL WANT TO BE FAITHFUL IN GIVING TO GOD.

Some Christians wonder why they can never get ahead. They always seem to be in debt. They are uncertain as to why they can't seem to make ends meet. With things continually breaking down, clothes wearing out all too fast, grocery prices soaring like a skyrocket, and bills becoming "past due," they just can't find any money left over to give to God's work.

They don't seem to realize that THIS is the real root of their problem. God didn't ask us for the "leftovers." He said that if we would give to Him FIRST, He would see to it that our "barns would be filled to overflowing. . . ."

- **SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:**

Proverbs 3:9-10	Malachi 3:8-11	Deuteronomy 14:23
Matthew 6:33		

TYPES OF GIVING

. **THE TITHE.** This is 10% of your gross income which is to be given to God's work.

"The purpose of tithing is to teach you always to put God first in your lives." - Deuteronomy 14:23 TLB

If a person does not put God first in his financial affairs, it is certain that he does not put God first in other areas of his life. Some do not pay tithes because they contend that tithing was under the Old Testament Law and not meant for the age of grace. It must be pointed out that grace is grace, but willful disobedience is not grace - it is DIS-grace. The principle of tithing was instituted BEFORE the Old Testament Law was given. (Genesis 14:18-20, 28:22) Moreover, Jesus Himself, in the New Testament, placed His endorsement on the practice of tithing when He said, "these are the things you should have done without neglecting the other (tithing)." - Matthew 23:23

When the tithe is withheld, the law of prosperity is violated, the law of blessing cancelled, and it becomes increasingly difficult for a person to balance his books.

2. **THE OFFERING.** This is anything above and beyond the initial 10%. Christians who dedicate themselves to Christ will soon give beyond the tithe. As God blesses them, they will increase their giving. Some now give 20%, 30% , and even more of their income to Gods work. And the more they increase their giving, the more God blesses them.

3. THE SPECIAL OFFERING. This is the offering you give beyond your ability to give. (Read 2 Corinthians 8:3.) With the special offering, you ask God what you should give, you commit yourself to giving it, then you trust God to supply it supernaturally as He uses you as a channel for the special offering to flow. Some people call this a *Faith Promise* and many churches use this method of giving for missionary projects.

Some people give only what they can afford. Others give beyond what they can afford and learn to experience God's supernatural blessings of supply!

PRINCIPLES OF GIVING

1. You must purpose in your heart to give. Don't wait for a bolt of lightning from heaven to strike you and a thundering voice to tell you to start giving. YOU must purpose in your heart to do it.

2. Giving must be regular. It must become a habit; a way of life with you. The enemy will give you a great number of excuses for not giving. They will seem reasonable and logical, but don't listen to him. ". . . at the proper time we will reap a harvest IF WE DO NOT GIVE UP" (Galatians 6:9). Don't be discouraged when the times of testing come. Continue to give regularly and you will see God work miracles on your behalf.

3. Giving must be done cheerfully. (Read 2 Corinthians 9:7.)

4. Giving should be sacrificial. (Read Philippians 4:18, Mark 12:41-44, 2 Samuel 24:24.)

5. Giving must be generous. (Read 2 Corinthians 8:7 and 2 Corinthians 9:5.)

"A stingy man is eager to get rich and is unaware that poverty awaits him." (Proverbs 28:22 TLB)

"A generous man will himself be blessed." (Proverbs 22:9 NIV)

"The righteous give generously." (Psalm 37:21 NIV)

"One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another man withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. A generous man will prosper . . ." (Proverbs 11:24-25 NIV)

6. Giving must be done in faith and in obedience to God's Word. (Read 2 Corinthians 9:13 and Malachi 3:8-11.)

7. Giving must be done for Jesus and for the Gospel's sake.

- **SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:**

2 Corinthians 9:7
James 1:5-8

Matthew 6:1
Mark 10:29-30

2 Corinthians 8:8

PROMISES TO THE PERSON WHO GIVES IN FAITH

1. PROSPERITY FOR THE GENEROUS (See Psalm 112:1-6, Luke 6:38, 2 Corinthians 9:6.) Remember: "whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously."

2. A 30, 60, or 100-FOLD RETURN NOW, IN THIS LIFE! (Luke 18:29-30, Mark 10:30) Where else can you find such a tremendous yield of interest on your investment?

3. TREASURE IN YOUR HEAVENLY BANK ACCOUNT!

You have a bank account in heaven that is gaining interest every day. It's an account that no depression or recession can touch; no thief can steal from it; no corruption can destroy it. You can draw from this account by faith when you have a need. (Matthew 6:20, Philippians 4:17-19, Luke 12:32-34)

4. YOU WILL "EAT" FROM THE BEST OF THE LAND! God promises you His best when you give Him your best. (Isaiah 1:19-20, Psalm 81:6, Psalm 84:11)

5. YOU WILL BE BLESSED BEYOND HUMAN UNDERSTANDING! (See Malachi 3:10 and Proverbs 3:9-10.)

6. GOD WILL REBUKE THE DEVOURER FOR YOUR SAKE! (Malachi 3:11) Things you own will for "some strange reason" seem to last longer. For example, while others are getting only 40,000 miles on a set of tires, you may be getting 80,000!

7. YOUR NEEDS WILL AL WAYS BE MET. After the Philippians had given so that St. Paul was amply supplied to carry on his work of promoting the gospel, he told them, "And my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Even during times of trouble, famine, and despair, the faithful, obedient giver will have plenty to eat! (Psalm 37:18-19)

"I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread. They are always generous and lend freely; their children will be blessed." (Psalm 37:25-26 NIV)

□ 17. YOU WILL WANT TO USE YOUR TALENTS FOR GOD.

You are unique - one of a kind. When God made you He threw away the blueprint. There is not another person on earth quite like you. You have special gifts and talents from God which He wants you to use for His glory.

It may be a gift of singing, or teaching, or being able to play a musical instrument. It may be the capacity to preach or even mow lawns, wash windows, paint ... whatever! But you can be sure of this: God has given you a special talent.

When a person comes to know Jesus Christ in a real way, he will not have much desire to use his talents to glorify himself. Instead he will want to glorify Jesus with the talents God has given.

- **SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:**

Matthew 25:14-30

Exodus chapter 35

□ 18. YOU WILL WANT TO PREPARE FOR THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

Jesus Christ promised to return to the earth. By all indications, His return could take place any day now. Many discerning Bible scholars believe that we are now in the final hours of history. The stage is set; the conditions are right; the scriptures are being fulfilled concerning the "last days," and Jesus could appear at any moment to evacuate His people from the earth just prior to the world's deepest hour of agony.

Many people do not understand that the Second Coming of Christ will occur in two distinct phases:

Phase I - Christ comes **FOR** the Christians.

Phase 2 - Christ comes **WITH** the Christians.

I believe that some of the people who are reading this book will never see death, but will be translated to meet the Lord in the air at His coming. That's how close I believe we are to that day of the "Blessed Hope." (Titus 2:13)

HOW TO PREPARE TO MEET JESUS

1. Receive Him personally into your heart by faith.
2. Be walking in all the light that you have. In other words, do what you know is right, the best you know how.
3. Be developing your faith. It was by faith that Enoch was translated without ever tasting death. He went directly to heaven without dying!
4. Be looking for his Second Coming any day now.
5. Be evangelistic - be a soul winner.
6. Be missionary-minded.
7. Develop a genuine love for people.

8. Don't be a hypocrite.

9. Stay close to Jesus and to fellow believers.

10. Be doing the Lord's work patiently and unselfishly.

11. Watch and pray always that you will be counted worthy to escape the coming time of trouble and to stand before Jesus.

- **SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:**

John 14:1-3

I Thessalonians

4:13-18

I Corinthians

15:51-52

2 Corinthians 5:10

Luke chapter 21

Acts 1:10-11

I Timothy 4:1-2

Luke 18:8

Matthew chapter 24

Titus 2:11-13

Romans 8:23

2 Timothy 3:1-5

Luke 17:26-30

I John 3:3

□ 19. YOU WILL WANT TO BE A GOOD CITIZEN.

You are now a representative of Jesus Christ. It is important that you represent Him accurately. This means that we pay our bills on time, we keep our word, we pray for our governmental officials instead of complaining about them. In other words, we decide to become good citizens. Although this earth is not our final home, we are here now and have certain responsibilities to our country and to our fellow man.

- **SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:**

Romans 13:1-7

I Timothy 2:1-2

As God's people, we have the duty to pray for our leaders, both spiritual and political. Daily we need to take authority over the powers of darkness that would seek to destroy our nation (Ephesians 6:12). We must bind them in the Name of Jesus (Matthew 18:18). The devil will do his dead-level best to ruin our country and our leaders if we don't use our God-given authority over him.

□ 20. YOU WILL WANT TO GET ALONG WITH PEOPLE.

It's no easy task to get along with others because we are an so different. We have different backgrounds, different schooling, different upbringing, different past experiences. Our opinions vary on certain issues and we have different ideas on different

subjects. It's not easy to be at peace with someone who disagrees with you even on the minor issues.

Nonetheless, the Holy Spirit, through the writings of St. Paul, said to " . . . live peaceably with all men." We don't have to agree with everyone about everything, and we don't even have to respect their opinions, but we must respect them as human beings, having been created in the image and likeness of God.

GENERAL RULES FOR GETTING ALONG WITH PEOPLE

1. TAKE A GENUINE INTEREST IN OTHER PEOPLE. (Philippians 2:20-21)
2. NEVER RESORT TO CHEAP FLATTERY TO WIN A PERSON'S FAVOR. (I Thessalonians 2:5, Proverbs 26:28)
3. NEVER REBUKE AN OLDER PERSON HARSHLY. (I Timothy 5:1)
4. AVOID FOOLISH AND STUPID ARGUMENTS. (2 Timothy 2:23)
5. ALWAYS OFFER HOSPITALITY WITHOUT GRUMBLING. (I Peter 4:9)
6. NEVER EMBARRASS ANOTHER HUMAN BEING FOR ANY REASON. (2 Samuel 10:4-5)
7. LET YOUR CONVERSATION ALWAYS BE FULL OF GRACE. (Colossians 4:6)
8. ALWAYS SAY "THANKS" TO ANYONE WHO HAS HELPED YOU. (Luke 17:15)
9. APPRECIATE OTHER PEOPLE.
10. DON'T PRAISE YOURSELF OR BRAG ABOUT YOURSELF. (Proverbs 27:2)
11. ALWAYS BE SINCERE, NOT PHONY. (Romans 12:9)
12. SAY MUCH TO ENCOURAGE AND STRENGTHEN OTHERS. (Acts 15:32)
13. DON'T BE UNJUSTLY CRITICAL OF OTHERS. (Luke 6:41-42)
14. DON'T TALK TOO MUCH. (Proverbs 20:8, 10, 19)

21. YOU WILL WANT TO WATCH OUT FOR COMMON CAUSES OF FAILURE IN THE CHRISTIAN WALK.

Here is a list of the most common causes of failure in the Christian's life:

1. Lack of confidence in God and in His Word.

2. Not plunging ahead wholeheartedly, but dragging your feet.
3. A contrary desire.
4. Beginning to think about what you don't have instead of all you do have.
5. Failing to think in terms of God's supply house which is unlimited.
6. Lack of perseverance during the trials.
7. Wasting time on silly magazines, television shows, etc., instead of using the extra time to get into God's Word and good gospel books.
8. Selfishness.
9. Not desiring the will of God above all else in your life.
10. Flirting with the world and its amusements.
11. Pride.
12. Compromising your principles.
13. Lack of prayer, fellowship and Bible reading.
14. Lack of witnessing.
15. Fear and uncertainty.
16. Poor choice of associates.
17. Laziness.
18. Materialism.
19. Looking for a short cut to spirituality.
20. Becoming negative minded.
21. Allowing Satan to distort your concept of God.
22. Putting anything ahead of Jesus.
23. Conforming to the world and its system and philosophies.
24. Lack of vision and having no goals in your Christian life.

25. Lack of Bible knowledge with the Holy Spirit revealing the Truths to your heart.
26. Resentment of authority.
27. Security hang up.
28. Not expecting the return of Jesus for His Church.
29. Shunning responsibility - not becoming involved in Church activities, etc.
30. Continuing in sin after Christ has set you free.
31. Unbelief in your thoughts, words, and actions.
32. Being self-deceived by (1) not being a doer of the Word and (2) not talking like God talks. In other words, not speaking as though the Word of God were really true.
33. Criticizing or downgrading a man of God.
34. Being unconcerned with people; particularly people who are hurting in some way.
35. Instead of being a diligent seeker of God, being only a "casual inquirer. "

Whenever you notice the victory being squeezed out of your Christian experience, check this list over. You will most likely see where you have been missing the mark.

□ 22. YOU WILL WANT TO BEWARE OF FALSE PROPHETS AND FALSE TEACHERS.

- **SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:**

Matthew 7:15-23	Philippians 3:18-19	2 Corinthians 11:3-4
Matthew 24:4-5	Colossians 2:18-19	Galatians 1:8-9
Acts 13:6-12	2 Peter chapter 2	Colossians 2:8
Romans 16:17-19	John 10:12-13	1 Timothy 4:1-5
2 Corinthians 11:12-25	Acts 20:28-31	

Here is a list of groups considered by most evangelical leaders to be in error:

1. Mormons (Latter Day Saints)	16. Metaphysics
2. Reorganized Church of Latter Day Saints	17. Divine Light Mission
3. Rosicrucians	18. Unification Church (Moonies - Causa)
4. Modernism	19. Jehovah's Witnesses

5. Humanism	20. Christian Science
6. Spiritualism or Spiritism	21. Unity or New Thought
7. Theosophy	22. Transcendental Meditation (T.M.)
8. Armstrongism (Worldwide Church of God)	23. Family of Love
9. Satanism, Occult, Witchcraft, and Astrology	24. Metropolitan Community Church (Gay Church)
10. Scientology	25. World Council of Churches
11. Baha'i	26. Pyramidology
12. Buddhism	27. Moral Re-armament
13. Mind Science	28. Freemasonry
14. The Way International	29. Aquarius Church
15. Unitarian Universalism	30. Eckankar
	31. EST

Our purpose is not to question the character of those individuals involved in these cults, only to point out the error of their teachings. The Bible instructs us to test the spirits to see if they are of God. Jesus said to beware of false prophets. The word "beware" actually means (from the Greek) to shun, avoid, and stay away from. **DON'T DABBLE IN THINGS YOU KNOW TO BE FALSE BECAUSE LITTLE BY LITTLE THE THOUGHTS WILL BEGIN TO PENETRATE YOUR RESISTANCE IF YOU KEEP TOYING WITH THEM.**

"Stop listening to teaching that contradicts what you know is right." (Proverbs 19:27 TLB)

□ 23. YOU WILL WANT TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR BODY.

God created man as a trichotomy. That means that man is a little trinity, so to speak. He is:

(1) Spirit (2) Soul (3) Body

The spirit of man is fed by the Word of God. The soul is the area of the mind and emotions. It too must be fed a healthy diet in order to be kept in tiptop shape. We human beings are interrelated with ourselves. In other words, our spiritual life will affect our mental life and possibly our physical life. In the same way, our mental life, if it is poor, can adversely affect our spiritual lives as well as our physical bodies. We preachers always tell people to take care of their spiritual lives, but sometimes we forget that taking care of our physical bodies is also a part of genuine Christianity. If you are born again, your physical body not only houses your personal spirit, but also has become the abode of the Holy Spirit. God Himself is actually living inside your body!

Therefore, you will want to take care of your body. Watch your diet! In America it has been discovered that we eat way too much sugar and salt. Some doctors believe this could be the cause for the high cancer rate. Learn to regulate your diet. Stay away from foods you know are bad for you.

If you smoke or chew tobacco, ask God to deliver you from it. Believe Him for the full, complete victory over these damaging habits.

Take care of the body you are living in. Get a proper diet and adequate exercise. You will feel better, look better, think better, and most likely live longer!

- **SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:**

1 Corinthians 3:16-17

1 Corinthians 6:19

Romans 12:1-3

□ 24. YOU WILL WANT TO PRESS TOWARD THE FOLLOWING GENERAL GOALS.

1. To become a mature Christian.
2. To develop a Christ-like character.
3. To be trained as a leader/worker.

□ 25. YOU WILL WANT TO DEVELOP THE FOLLOWING TRAITS.

1. A life of prayer.
2. Love for the Bible.
3. Dependability.
4. Loyalty to church and faithful in attendance.
5. Respect for leadership.
6. Continual deepening of your spiritual life.
7. An active life of Christian service.
8. Yieldedness to the will of God.
9. A vision for world evangelism.
10. A heart for worship and praise.
11. A growing love for all people.

□ 26. YOU WILL WANT TO READ GOOD MATERIAL.

The Bible tells us to "renew our minds." We have been programmed to think like the world and it may take a while to reprogram our thinking. But we can speed the process by reading good, well-balanced Christian material. You can ask your pastor for a list of good reading material. He'll be able to help you in selecting some good books and magazines.

- TOOLS THAT WILL HELP YOU STUDY THE BIBLE

1. Dictionary
2. Bible Dictionary
3. Laymen's Parallel Bible
4. Concordance
5. Various Bible translations
6. Study tapes (Ask your pastor for a listing.)

- SPECIAL PROJECT

Get a dictionary, or call an older Christian and find out the meaning of these words:

1. Atonement	7. Repentance
2. Conversion	8. Salvation
3. Doctrine	9. Sin
4. Faith	10. Satan
5. Meditation	11. Temptation
6. Prayer	12. Worldly

After you have read this book and completed all the Scripture Meditations, ask your pastor to fill out the certificate of completion for you.

- SPECIAL PROJECT NUMBER 2

Take a piece of paper and list the 26 things you will WANT to do now that you are a Christian.

NEW LIFE CERTIFICATE