

# **You Are Greatly Loved**



Sonya M. Davis



**DEDICATION**

**John 3:16** The love of God

I dedicate my book to the love I have found in Jesus. Knowing just how greatly we are loved is life-changing and freeing.

You Are Greatly Loved

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# Chapter 1

## GOD GREATLY LOVES YOU

**This is a well-known Bible verse in the New Testament of John.**

“For God So Loved the world that He gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him will not perish but will have eternal life.”

That is some love He gave His one and only Son; what an incredible and freeing promise. We can live in this troubled world and know that no matter what, we have someone who loves us that much!

Sometimes, it may be hard to believe that we have someone who loves us that much.

God’s Word says all we must do is have faith and believe in His son, and we will have eternal life. God’s love is foundational and is the basis for creation, redemption, and salvation.

Jesus Christ, as the Son of God, came to earth, lived a sinless life, and ultimately sacrificed himself on the cross to pay the penalty for the sins of humanity. I hope this book highlights how amazing it is when you truly understand this fact.

Have you ever thought to yourself that no one cares? If you know this one verse to be true, you will be attacked by the spiritual enemy to convince you that no one cares or you're not good enough. However, in the Bible, God tells us in His Word that we can fight those thoughts with our shield of faith.

Yes, our shield of faith; you will be in a daily spiritual battle when you are a believer. That is why God's Word says we must renew our minds daily. Jesus came so that we would have hope of salvation through Him.

He is our rock and the foundation on which we, as believers, stand. His Word gives us strength. I know when I am feeling low or stressed. I can read a verse from God's Word, and the feelings disappear.

I have read self-help books, and they do put things in perspective sometimes. Nothing, and I mean nothing, helps like the Word of God. Think about that for a minute. Jesus said that when he left this earth, he was leaving us the Holy Spirit; He left us help and strength in our troubles because He knew we would have them. When we go to God's Word for Help and pray to Him, we seek our Creator. Our Heavenly Father loves us so much that He sent His one and only Son to die for our sins! When we connect with Him through His Word, He meets us where we are. His Word is the Living Word, the only Living Word.

Remember, **Matthew 6:33** reads, “Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all things shall be added unto you.” We are God’s children. It doesn’t matter our age or even what place we may be in when we reach out to him. God loves us so much that He sent His one and only Son to die for us!

**Matthew 7:7** says, “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.”

God wants a relationship with His children; He desires us to pray and ask Him. He likes to bless us with the relationship only He can provide. God is omnipresent. He sees all and knows all. He knows what is going on in our lives. He knows what we need before we ask. He wants us to ask. He desires a relationship, a personal relationship with you!

Sometimes, something will happen to disrupt my day, and I will say, God, I can't do this on my own; I need help in Jesus, name! It helps if you have never done this; try it. I always mention the name of Jesus when I talk to God our Heavenly Father and ask in His name. The Bible says that when you speak the name of Jesus, those demons must flee! Why? Because Jesus has claimed victory, we as believers have victory through Jesus!

God loves us, and He is watching over us. God's love and foundation have helped me so much through my life that I feel that without God, it is the most challenging way to live this life. I have lived this life without Him. He was always there; however, I walked through life thinking I was in

control. I feel God will let us do that. It's like we are spinning our wheels and never really going anywhere. God's Word says His timing is not our timing.

**2 Peter. 3:8** “But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day.”

God wants to be the one in control. We can talk directly to God anytime, anywhere. Do you know that if we have faith, He can do in one day what would take us a lifetime to do?

God knows we need His help in this life. He gives us strength, wisdom, and peace beyond our understanding. Think about your own life. How many times did you just know something in your life happened, and there was no doubt that it was God? That has occurred to my husband and me so many times! The fact that I am writing this book, and it is my fourth book, is all God. I have been a Realtor for eighteen years, and a miracle from God happened: We adopted not

one, not two, but three children from the foster care system.

We did not know them but stepped out in faith to help these children. It was a challenging journey. Have you ever thought that God sometimes puts us in the hard places in life, so we must ask Him for help? Oh, I believe He does. He is our Heavenly Father. In His Word, He says He wants to give us, as his children, blessings. However, He declares He desires us to ask.

Therefore, if you, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those asking Him? Do you see how precise God's Word is? I had never thought of writing a book before, yet through the experience and the very challenging situations we had gone through, I wanted to share and help someone who may be going through some of the same trauma as a family. When my husband and I were on that journey, we prayed a lot and made it through.



We love our kids and always will, yet I would have loved more advice going through some of the things we went through then.

I will not go into too much detail in this book except to say that God was there and out of that challenging time, and he worked it out for good. During that time of our lives, we were all changed, shaped, and made stronger in Christ. My book, *From Foster Care to Adoption*, was written during that difficult time.

That book has been out for a year and has helped several families I know at my church. A few people even emailed me through social media to tell me it benefited them. It is also in the local library in my hometown. Since then, I have written four children's books, two about adoption and three-chapter books.

Do you see how God will turn a challenging situation into a good thing? Of course, He wants you to be usable and faithful and ask for His guidance.

God, our Heavenly Father, desires a relationship with us, His children. He loves us so much that He sent His one and only Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for our sins so that if we believe in Him, we are promised eternal life. God created humanity in His image. We see this in **Genesis 1:26-27**.

I grew up without an earthly father, yet I told myself constantly that I have the best father anyone could ever have. Why, you may ask. As a child, I didn't have a relationship with Jesus; however, I knew there was a God, and He was my Heavenly Father, and He was always there with me.

I prayed to Him to my Heavenly Father; when I got older, I was blessed to have a relationship with Jesus, my Savior. My point here is that I think we all have this yearning in our hearts to have a relationship with God.

God has revealed Himself to humanity through various means, such as prophets, scriptures, and ultimately through Jesus Christ. Prayer is a meaningful way we communicate with God.

Jesus reconnected people with God, providing a pathway for a renewed and redeemed relationship to eternal life with Him.

**Romans 5: 8-11** says, “But God demonstrates his love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since his blood has justified us, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him? For if, while we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.”

**Deuteronomy 31:8** “The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.”

You Are Greatly Loved

## Chapter 2

### HE GAVE HIS ONLY SON

**John 3:16** states that God loved the world, us, you, and me so much that He gave His one and only Son so we could be saved from sin. Is that amazing, or what? Do you ever think of that if you are down and out and feeling all alone? Sometimes, I forget, even for a moment, and then I rise and remember I am the daughter of a King.

I will tell you this: I lived part of my life without really knowing who Jesus was; I always knew there was a God. I knew there was a Creator. I didn't know in my heart that God loved me so much that He sent His one and only Son to die on the cross for my sins. Then, one day, I met a woman, a friend's mom. She was very nice; she talked to me about Jesus a lot. Now, by this part of my life, I had been married several years, and my

husband was a Christian, and his mom was a spirit-filled Jesus-loving Christian.

But I had never been saved, and my husband and I didn't attend church. So, this woman God placed into my life at this time led me to Christ. She invited me to come to her church. Now, I was a bartender, and even though I believed in God, I did not have a relationship with Jesus.

To be honest, I felt unworthy to go to church. That was thirty-one years ago. Now that I have a relationship with God because of what Jesus did on the cross, I can see that Jesus was with me and that God was making my paths straight; that is how I believe I eventually started walking with Him.

I think that God sometimes has people intercede in our lives so we can see there is a different direction we can take a direction to victory if we are paying attention.

I think that's what happened to me. I felt out of place when my husband and I first walked into that church. I felt out of place and unworthy. That is precisely what our enemy, Satan, wanted me to think. One thing

I have learned in my walk with God is that Satan wants you to stay defeated. If you feel hopeless and defeated, you cannot live the life Jesus died for you to have. Once you proclaim Jesus Lord of your life, you will have trials and setbacks; however, you will always have victory.

Jesus died on the cross, and He left us the Holy Spirit so we can walk in His light and shine it; as the Bible says, you do not cover the light with a basket, or covering you shine it, to glorify God.

We walk through life defeated if we don't understand that Jesus died on the cross for our sins. Why, you may ask. Well, because we are born into a corrupt world where we are going to sin. When we sin, we feel defeated after a while; the Bible says sin equals death.

We have an actual enemy, and that is Satan, and he will try and keep you down in the valleys of life. When your hand reaches up and grabs ahold of your Savior, Jesus, your life changes literally. God loves you and me that much! According to **John 3:16**, He sent His son to die for us the way we were sinful, to give us hope and victory.

He wants our faith, a relationship, and trust in Him. God's word says we are strong in our weaknesses because He is giving us strength.

When we accept what God has done for us, we are still human. We will mess up and sin. The difference is that instead of feeling defeated, we can repent, stand back up, and live in victory. We keep fighting the spiritual battle every day.

We are enough because of Jesus. God gave His Son, and the Son was obedient. Jesus said let this cup pass from me, if possible, but He said, You will be done, Father, not mine.

I wake up daily thankful for Jesus and what He did for me. What He did was for all of humanity. We only need to believe and accept that God loved us so much that He gave his one and only son for us.

I have friends in church who tell me they have always gone to church and always had a relationship with Jesus if you are this blessed, amen!



It doesn't matter if you have always gone to church or began a relationship with Jesus at a later stage in your life. The only thing that matters is that you do.

From my personal experience, I know life is more complicated when we do it without a relationship with God through Jesus. We can't win our spiritual battles when we do it alone. We must have Jesus to have a victory here and eternally.

Don't struggle through this life; walk with Jesus in victory! This decision will be life-changing for you. There is no time like today tomorrow, the Bible says, is not promised to anyone.

You don't have to be religious or perfect; what you have to do is accept Jesus as your Savior. When I accepted Jesus as my savior, it was the best day of my life. I felt something different about myself. I came to find out that as time went on, God changed me from the inside out. He gave me a true sense of strength and belonging.

## Ephesians 6:12

*“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.”*

Jesus tells us in God's Word that we will have battles to overcome while we are here in this world. He also said not to be anxious or fearful because He has already claimed victory!

When you can go through life knowing that with Jesus, you can have victory, things come together in a whole different light. You can walk with Him in his light because His Word also says He will make our paths straight!

**Jesus came into the world not to condemn the world but to save it.** He said to pick up our cross and follow Him. This tells me that we put Him first. When we get saved by His grace, we put Him first. Our old way of life is not our lifestyle anymore; we want to please Him.

God's Word in the Bible tells us He wants to have a relationship with us. He is our Father. He wants to bless us.

We are no longer alone. We have Him in our weakness and are made strong because of Him. If you have ever struggled in this life, as most have, this is great news. You don't have to walk it out alone. Jesus said we now have the Holy Spirit and that the Holy Spirit guides and comforts us. We have a tugging or a knowing that guides us.

We must have faith to have victory, strength, and peace beyond our understanding. The Bible says that without faith, it is impossible to please God.

### **Hebrews 11:1-3**

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it, the elders obtained a *good* testimony. By faith, we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.”



## Chapter 3

### THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD

Have you ever heard that you need to put on full armor? How can you be in this battle and have victory without your armor on? Let's see what the Bible says about the armor we are to put on in the spiritual battle we all will face as believers.

#### **The Whole Armor of God**

**Ephesians 6:10-19** “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, that you

may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; always praying with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints— and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel.”

There it is from God’s Word. The belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, shoes of peace, the shield of faith that we use to extinguish the enemy’s attacks from fiery darts, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

If we read the Word of God, we are setting ourselves up for success. The world, your circumstances of the day, or whatever happens

to you will be suited up and ready for that battle. When you are not walking alone trying to control it all by yourself, when you cast your care on Jesus, I can personally tell you that you can have peace through faith.

Jesus talked about peace beyond our understanding; it's real. Oh, I am not saying everything is going to be trouble-free. I am talking about knowing you are not alone in whatever comes your way. Have you ever had something happen to you in your life, and God showed up, and there was no doubt that it was God?

When I was in doubt, God showed up to make my path straight again. Here is just one quick example, and there are many. I have written three books, and this will be my fourth about my faith and how God has intervened in my life.

I have had doubts about it each time, but particularly this time, a flood of negative thoughts streamed through my mind. Like, what do you know about God? Who are you to share about God?

You are not a psychologist or preacher or didn't attend a fancy college. It was terrible; a dreadful feeling came over me.

The following day, a client from my real estate job called me. We talked business, and then, out of nowhere, she started talking to me about Spiritual warfare and how she had been being attacked. She told me she had been reading Spiritual warfare books to deal with it, and I thought, thank you, Jesus! I knew it was something I was supposed to pay attention to.

If the Holy Spirit tells us to do something and you know it in your heart, do it. Don't question it; faith believes in something we cannot see. God's Word says His ways are higher than our ways. Just trust and proceed. God has a purpose for our lives. Pray for God to guide you. His word says He will make our paths straight. Ask Him to show you clearly, and then trust Him.

Anytime God has a plan for you or a blessing coming your way, the enemy will attack like never before. God is God, and we are not. He knows what He is doing. We need to have faith



and move forward. So, I did; you know we should share the good news of Jesus no matter who we are. Jesus said we should be like a city on a hill.

We all have a story. Every test is a testimony of victory to the glory of God. That is the light that we all have to shine and point others to Jesus.

**Deuteronomy 20:4** - For the Lord your God is he who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies, to give you the victory.'

**1 Corinthians 15:57** - But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. **Philippians 4:13** - I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

The above verses are some verses I use when in spiritual battles. God is our vindicator; we don't have to carry the burden. He will give us victory, and because we have accepted Jesus as our Savior, He lives in us; greater is He who lives in us than in this world!

**Matthew 5:14**

“You are the light of the world. **A city** that is set **on a hill** cannot be hidden.”

As Christians and as knights in God’s army, we are called **by God to defend against the devil’s evil schemes**. If doubt tells you not to shine, do it anyway, especially if you are shining that light toward God for others to see. Before I was saved, I didn’t know I had a light. I was so consumed with myself. I couldn’t see what I was missing because I lived in the dark. I thought I couldn’t give up whatever was too important to me at the time. Jesus said we would have to lay down those things and follow Him.

When I was younger, I thought I had so much time that I would do it later. I hate to admit it, but it’s true. I wasted so much time in the dark, not understanding that the truth of Jesus would set me free; I am so thankful today that I can shine brighter than ever before.

I will be strong when trouble comes because He gives me strength.

The Bible says greater is the one who resides in me as a believer than he who is in the world. That is all I need to know.

He instructs us that if we have the armor of God on the way, we should be in God's Word, the Bible. Our sword is His Word, which, by renewing our minds, keeps that sword sharp and ready for battle. The belt of truth is God's word; Jesus said the truth would set us free. If we know the truth, we can fight the spiritual battle with that truth against the devil's lies.

We must have the shoes of peace when things happen to us that can make us mad. I believe that is a feeling God gave us, and we are human. However, the Bible says not to sin in anger. God's word says He is our vindicator.

**Ephesians 4: 26-27**: “Be angry, and do not sin”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil.”

With our helmet of salvation, we can guard sinful thoughts that the enemy tries to plant to

harm our walk with Christ because we know the truth of God.

The breastplate of righteousness protects our hearts from the enemy.

The Roman soldier wore a breastplate to cover his vital organs, heart, lungs, and other organs necessary for life.

God's Word talks about the condition of our hearts in the Bible. We must protect our hearts and not let the devil's schemes harden them. Our swords are the Word of God; we fight the devil with God's truth!

The shield of faith is what we get by simply believing. Jesus died on the cross and rose again on the third day so you and I could have victory in this life and eternally.

You Are Greatly Loved

Get into God's Word. Put on the **whole armor** and get ready for victory!



**John 5:4** “For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world --our faith.”

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

**Romans 8:37** says, “No in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him who loved us.”

**2 Corinthians 2:14** “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.”

**Philippians 4:13** “I can do all this through Him who gives me strength.”

## CHAPTER 4

### ACCEPT THE INVITATION

In **John 3:16**, the Bible tells us that God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. Do you see here that it doesn't say we have to?

God allows us the option; it's our free will. He allowed Adam and Eve to have free will. He told them what was good and what was not. They chose to trust themselves. We have that same choice every day. What are you choosing?

If we choose to walk with Jesus, we will have the strength, as hard as it may be sometimes, to walk in victory. The Bible says that in our

weakness, we are strong because of Him. This doesn't mean that you will have a life A You will have the spiritual strength to get through them. You will have peace beyond your understanding.

### **Proverbs 3:5-6**

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart,  
And lean not on your understanding;  
In all your ways acknowledge Him,  
And He shall direct your paths.”

**In Proverbs 3:5- 6, God tells us to trust Him and not lean on our understanding. This is not always easy to do. When our world is upside down, or things are falling apart, trusting that God will make it better or help us through it is hard. Let's face it; that is why it is called faith.**

**Hebrews 11:1** – “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”

I don't know about you, but many instances have forced me to have faith in



something other than myself. If our faith is only in ourselves, we will struggle; it will be much harder than it has to be. Why, you may ask. God knew we needed Him; He knew we were weak.

In **2 Corinthians 12**, Paul quotes Jesus, who said, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”

God is perfect in every way, giving Him the power to compensate for our weaknesses.

There have been many challenges in my life before I knew the forgiveness and love of Jesus. I am so thankful somebody shared the forgiveness I could have through Jesus.

Trying to live on your own is much more difficult. You feel you must be in control, and when you don't get it right, you don't feel good enough or worry about how things will turn out. It's a never-ending circle of life.

The Bible says we should not be anxious or worried; instead, we should cast our care on Jesus. We should trust that He is in control and can handle whatever is happening in our lives. We only need to trust.

**Philippians 4:6** says, “Be **anxious** for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.”

God loves us so much that He gave His one and only son to die on the cross for our sins. He wants us to trust in Him and Have faith that He will make our paths straight. It makes life much easier when we cast our care on God and let Him be in control.

As you trust God, have faith, and pray as He tells us to in His Word, He shows up and reveals Himself to you. Many times, I have prayed about things and did not doubt that when things happened, it was God.

Accepting God's invitation and following Jesus is grace and opportunity that leads to spiritual transformation. It is a personal decision rather than something that is imposed.

God invites us to have a relationship with Him; it's a relationship that offers grace, love, and salvation. This invitation allows people to acknowledge their need for forgiveness, accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior, and enter into a relationship with God.

**Matthew 11:28-30**“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

God's love and grace for us invites us to turn to a life guided by faith, love, and the teachings of Jesus.

God wants us to live a life of eternal victory. His Word tells us we should have a light inside us that shines for others to see so we will glorify Him.

**Matthew 5:14**

“You are the light of the world. **A** town built **on a hill** cannot be hidden.”

After we accept Jesus as our Savior, we will have supernatural victory. Peace is when we don't understand how it could be possible, and strength is our weakness.

**2 Corinthians 12:9-10** "But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore, I will boast even more gladly about my weaknesses so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong."

Life can be very challenging when you are going through a life situation, and you don't have God's grace resting on you. Let's face it: this life can get wild.

We are born into a dark world. God's word tells us that He will be there with us in the valleys of life and that in our troubled times when we may feel weak, we can still hold up the light of victory—Jesus in us!



## Love Undeniable

Without Jesus, we are separated from God. God's love came from above, and the love of God through Jesus Christ connects us back to our Heavenly Father.

This love brought us victory; yes, it made history. Thousands of years later, people worldwide talk about this undeniable love from above. God said all you must do is believe Jesus died on the cross for you, rose to life again on the third day, and made way for your eternal destiny.

Reach out your hand and take ahold of His. Shine your light and glorify Him. He will meet you where you are; you haven't sinned too far. He came to save sinners like you and me. Let Him break those chains and be set free.



Sonya M. Davis

## *As I walk with You*

Before I met You, Jesus, my life was a mess!  
Walking through the dark valleys without  
You, life was full of stress. I listened to the  
devil's lies. He said this was as good as it gets.

The devil whispered in my ear, you're no  
good at all. He placed roadblocks in front of  
me, which caused me to fall.

Then, one day, Jesus, I stopped looking down.  
I looked up and heard with my spiritual ears  
for the very first time; I heard you whisper to  
me; you are mine.

You told me to stop living in defeat. You  
should live in victory. But then you said you  
must first choose me.

Thank you, Lord, for not leaving me here in  
this deserted land, for taking my hand and  
walking me into the new victory with you, the  
rock on which I now stand.

*By, Sonya M. Davis*

You Are Greatly Loved



## CHAPTER 5

### DAILY WALK WITH GOD

Embracing God's love daily is a profoundly personal and spiritual journey. Through this daily relationship with God, you will grow to know that God's love is constant, unconditional, and transformative.

Prayer and communication are very important. We communicate when we have any relationship, whether it be our husband, wife, or children. We love our family, and it's important to us that we want to communicate with them. Think about this for a minute: God loves us so very much that He gave His one and only son for our sins.

He is our Heavenly Fatherly, and He loves us; he wants us to communicate with Him through prayer. He wants us to seek guidance, express gratitude, and have inner peace and strength because we can through Him. This daily communication can open

your heart to receive God's love. Prayer is communicating with God as you would with a friend.

God doesn't require us to come to Him with large words or fancy language; He wants to know the desires of our hearts. His Word tells us not to worry or be anxious about anything. He wants us to tell Him our worries and what we are thankful for.

**Philippians 4:6-7** "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Daily study and reflection on God's Word will deepen your understanding. God will supernaturally meet you where you are in life. Sometimes, we are in a deep valley of life, and then we pray to God.

The thing is, if we have a relationship with our Heavenly Father when things are good, whenever life gets hard, we have the peace Jesus promised us and the strength in our weakness. Studying God's Word will provide you with guidance and wisdom.

Have you been in a situation that wasn't the best, and you were angry, sad, or anxious, and then you turned on some music to a song praising Jesus, sang to it, and it changed your mood?

The Bible says when you are being spiritually attacked that, just saying the name of Jesus, the darkness of the world (the devil) has to flee from you. Praising Jesus can give you peace in trials and lift your spirit.

**James 1:5**

"If any of you lacks **wisdom**, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you."

## **Trials and Temptations**

**James 1: 2-12:** "Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters,<sup>[a]</sup> whenever you face trials of many kinds because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do.

Believers in humble circumstances ought to take pride in their high position. But the rich should take pride in their humiliation—since they will pass away like a wildflower. For the sun rises with scorching heat and withers the plant; its blossom falls, and its beauty is destroyed. In the same way, the rich will fade away even while they go about their business.

Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.”

Embracing God's love often involves extending love, compassion, and forgiveness to oneself and others. Recognizing the worth of all individuals and practicing forgiveness can lead to a more profound experience of God's love. God says we should forgive just like we, as sinners, have been forgiven. When you read the Bible, you will notice God talks about the condition of a person's heart quite often.

If we aren't careful, we can get caught up in the devil's trap when someone hurts us, and our hearts can become hard.

Think about it like this: we are sinners and have all come short of the glory of what God wants us to be, right? We have all fallen short in this life in one way or another. That is what God's word plainly says. What if God was unforgiving? We wouldn't have hope. When we truly accept God, He works in us, and the Holy Spirit lives in us.

The Bible clearly says we are the temple. If all that is going on, our hearts must soften. We must forgive and understand that God is our vindicator.

This is clearly why reading our Bibles is so very important. **Romans 12:2**  
“Do not conform to the pattern **of** this world but be transformed by renewing **your mind**. Then, you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing, and perfect will.”

When we renew our minds, we can see where and how God gives us wisdom and guidance. Have you ever gotten out of bed, walked outside, said good morning, Jesus, and thanked Him for another day? I must be honest; I do it all the time.

That's how we have a relationship with God. We don't ignore Him until we need Him. I haven't always done that, however.

In my thirty-two years of being saved, I have found that something as simple as acknowledging God first thing in the morning makes a difference. If I want to have a good day, I read God's Word, whether it be a verse, a chapter, or two chapters. Sometimes, I read a verse and God has me meditate on His point for me that day. I truly believe that God will meet you where you are in your spiritual journey. When I got saved, I was truly broken. The Bible says we are all broken; I suspect some more than others.

Humanity is lost without God's love through Jesus Christ. This, my friend, is why we all need to understand and know without a shadow of a doubt that we are greatly loved. We are not alone in this world, even though we try to walk in this world and fight our everyday battles alone.

It's much more challenging than if our loving Father guides us and gives us wisdom that we read earlier; He so freely gives if we only ask. Just know this: God loves you no matter what has happened in your life. He loves all his children.

He only wants us to accept that He sent His one and only Son to die on the cross for our sins and rose to life again so that we may have eternal life with Him. When we accept Jesus, we walk with Him through our lives and glorify Him.

What does the Bible say about glorifying God? I would like to share some verses with you.

**Romans 16:27**, "To the only wise God be the glory forever." **Galatians 1:3**, "God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forevermore." **Ephesians 3:21**, "To Him be the glory to all generations forever and ever." **Philippians 4:20**, "Now to our God and Father be the glory forever and ever."

When we glorify God and shine the light from within us, we point others to Him.



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***Matthew 11:28–30:*** “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavily laden, and I will give you rest. “Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. “For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

This is the thing: God won't make you choose Him. He gave us free will. It must be a personal choice. The relationship you have with God because of Jesus Christ is personal. Through Him, you are connected to God.

When we walk with Jesus daily, we can walk in this life with a spirit of victory. In our weakness, we are strong. The Word of God says we can cast our care on Him, for His burden is light. God's glory is displayed in our weakness.

Have you ever been in a situation where you have caught yourself worrying or feeling anxious about something?

Well, I must confess I have; I am right now. I have a periodontist appointment tomorrow, and I wouldn't say I like going there.

However, when I walk up to that building, I will declare victory and give my cares to God. I know my Heavenly Father cares for me, so I don't have to worry or be anxious. That is how we must look at life. If we walk with God daily, it's easy to realize He is with us, whatever the situation.

Whether you are wondering how you will pay your next bill, have kids that have gone astray, or have a marriage that needs God's blessing. Through faith and trust in God, I have learned that He cares about every aspect of our lives.

He helps us walk through this life not because it's easy but because He has claimed victory through Jesus. He gives us strength in our weakness to glorify Him. When we go through something hard and other people, our friends, or family see us handling it in faith, we shine because of God's glory.

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**“Not unto us, O LORD,  
not unto us, **But to Your  
name give glory,**  
Because of Your mercy,  
Because of Your truth.”  
**Psalm 115: 1****

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## Chapter 6

### FAITH DOESN'T MAKE YOU RIGHTEOUS.

**Faith does not make us righteous; Jesus does.** The Bible tells us that without faith, it is impossible to please God. We must have faith in Jesus and what He did to save us from spiritual death, which is essential to our relationship with God.

However, there is nothing we can do ourselves to save ourselves. We will never be that “good.” Jesus was perfect; HE lived a perfect, blameless life. When He died on the cross, He said it was finished.

Jesus has already done what is necessary to restore our relationship with God. God’s Word says that we must have faith in Jesus.

To have faith that God gave His one and only son for our sins and that He died on the cross and rose again on the third day.

When we are believers, God works in our hearts so that we change our lifestyle, and we want to please God through our actions and choices. However, this will not save us from our sins. We are born sinners, and the Bible tells us that with Jesus, we are forgiven.

God gives us mercy; according to His Word, it is new every morning. As a believer, the Bible calls you God's temple because God's spirit dwells in you.

**1 Corinthians 12:13** “For we were all **baptized by one Spirit** to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.”

The lifestyle you had before, after you accept Jesus as your Savior, will fade as the Holy Spirit does His work in you. You may say, well, I am not ready to change, or I like my life the way it is. I thought that way thirty years ago; I was very foolish.

The Bible says tomorrow is not promised to any of us. Whether you believe in God now or have knowledge of Jesus but have not accepted Him as your Savior, once you take your last breath on this earth, it's too late; there are no do-overs. I listened to the devil's lies about how good I had it and how I didn't want to give up my wonderful, sinful ways. I was unhappy. Down deep, something was missing, a hole in my spirit. I believe we all have that hole. It's like a longing we sometimes try to fill with something other than Jesus, but it never works.

We can never fill a hole in our spirit with anything other than the connection to our Creator, God. Oh, we can try, and it may bring you temporary happiness. However, it won't last. Jesus said the truth will set us free. I can tell you, it did me.

I realized after I was saved that all the time, I was living this life on my own, trying to figure it all out, worrying when things would go wrong and how much easier it is with Jesus. Now, when things happen, I fight in the spirit. I imagine my Heavenly Father holding my hand, being in control.

I trust Him, knowing He is in the details. I pray and have faith. I cast my care on Him.

God's Word tells us to; it says we are not to be anxious or to worry about anything. The Bible also states, do not fear 365 times; that's one time each day!

God sent His only Son to die on the cross and save all who believe in Him as our Savior. Do we actually think our daily problems are too big, or does He not care about them? We are greatly loved; we only need to rest in that love, knowing God is in control. Did you know that the Bible says sin equals death? When we worry, it makes us sick, and sometimes we can't sleep.

Occasionally, people get ulcers from worry or anxiety; our health is greatly affected by stress and worry. Worry steals our joy, and we cannot see God's best for us. If we just give it to God, we can relax and have peace beyond our understanding. Jesus talked about how we can live this life hand in hand with Him, in victory. It's not always easy to do. I get that, and when this happens, we have to



ask God to help us let go and trust. He says in His Word that we only have to ask, seek, and knock, and the door will be opened; we will find the answer through Him. He says He will make our paths straight.

**Philippians 4:6-7 KJV** Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

In **John 14:27**, Jesus tells us, “Peace I leave with you; the peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let your hearts not be troubled, and do not be afraid.”

The peace that transcends all understanding comes from knowing that no matter what life throws at us, we understand that our victory lies in Jesus Christ and not in our circumstances. God wants us to live life fully,

including being at peace. When worried or anxious, read God's word, pray, and listen to encouraging worship music.

The Bible reminds us that true peace comes from God and that we can find strength and comfort in Him. Through prayer and faith, we can experience the peace that surpasses all understanding, even amid chaos and uncertainty.

**2 Corinthians 13:11** Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for complete restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, and live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.

The phrase "Faith does not save, Jesus does" emphasizes that faith itself does not bring salvation; instead, it is through faith in Jesus Christ and what He did on the cross. He died for our sins and rose again on the third day. Jesus is the redeemer and the source of salvation for all humanity. **John 14:6**, Jesus declares, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

**Jesus Christ is the Son of God.** He is the second person of the Holy Trinity and is divine.

**Jesus Christ is the Savior:** Jesus came to earth to save humanity from sin and reconnect people with God. Jesus Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life: This phrase is taken from the Gospel of John (**John 14:6**)

**Jesus Christ is the Messiah:** Jesus is the promised anointed one who fulfills prophecies in the Old Testament.

**Jesus Christ is Love Incarnate:** Jesus embodies divine love and came to demonstrate and teach love.

God is always with us; he is omnipresent, which means he is present or everywhere simultaneously. Some people get angry or reject God because they pray when something devastating is going on in their lives and feel God doesn't answer them the way they want or think God is silent. Sometimes, I feel God will allow things to happen because His Word says His ways are higher than ours.



God in His Word also tells us that in our weakness, we are strong because He strengthens us.

You know, whenever I was going through some tough things with my three adopted, very traumatized kids, I would say loud enough for the devil to hear me but not loud enough for the people around to listen to me; I wouldn't want them to think I was out of my mind, **Psalms 23:1-6** which reads;

*“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.”*

We can get through it when we worship God and enjoy His protective care even in the most challenging times of our lives. He will make a way when there seems to be no way

for us. When we are in uncharted territory, out of our security zone, so to speak, our Shepard knows the way. We have only to be still and know he is in control. God knows what we need before we ask; He only requires that we ask. Since I was saved over thirty years ago, I can honestly say I have messed things up repeatedly. I always rise back up and say, Lord, I can't do this alone, forgive me, help me, and He always has.

You see, God our Heavenly Father knows we are not perfect. Yet He loves us so much that He sent His one and only Son to die on the cross and rise again on the third day so that we would have eternal life, never to perish.

God loves us so much that He wants us to have a relationship with Him while we are here in this world and shine from within ourselves the light that can only come from Him to glorify Him.

Ask yourself these questions: What do you do when facing life challenges? And we all: Do you pray? Do you seek God's Word for the answer?

Do you try and fix your life's challenges on your own? Do you get anxious, worried, or angry? Why?



If we are busy being worried, anxious, or mad, we can't see what God has for us to do in this life. God's Word tells us we should be like a light, not hidden.

If you believe in Christ, you are greatly loved and more than enough. God wants you to be victorious in this life and to shine the light inside of you, which is Christ in you because when you do this, you point others to Him.

We will all fall short of greatness every day. We are who we are because of Him. Remember this: when you go on to your eternal life with God and go into heaven, it will be because of

nothing you did while you were in this world; it will be because of everything Jesus did while He was in this world.

God is our shepherd in the dark valley of scarcity, pain, and the unknown. He will direct us, and we can be sure and comforted in this.

In **Psalm 23:4**, it says that the rod and the staff will guide and protect us. The shepherd's rod was used to fend off predators; the staff was a guiding tool with a hook to secure the sheep around its chest. Only the two tools together provided comfort to the sheep.

When we experience a challenging time in our lives, God (if we look to him through prayer and faith) walks us through it, giving us the strength to get through it.

If we put our faith in God in this life, God will give us the strength to get through hard things and help us grow through them for our next journey.

Others, whether family, children, friends, or coworkers, notice how you react to challenges in your life. Do you act with faith, trust, and prayer? It's not always easy to do. Our fleshly

bodies, along with our minds, want to react in anger and disbelief and control the situation. If we cast our care on God through Jesus Christ, we can have peace beyond the understanding that Jesus talked about.

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

God wants us to have peace not just after we die but while we are still in this world. Think of it like this: if we were quickly angered, worried, or stressed out because we felt like we had to be in control and everything around us felt like it was out of control, where would our faith be? We are called to have supernatural strength and peace beyond our understanding, to shine in the darkness, and not to fall apart. If we ask him, God will give us what we need in His timing.



## 2 Corinthians 13:9

“For we are glad when we are weak, and you are strong. And this also we pray, that you may be made complete.”

Can you see how we are called to trust and have faith in our challenges here? When we do, God can shine through our victories, and He will be glorified through it all.

Have you ever heard the saying God is good all the time? Have you ever asked yourself how this could be with all of the heartache and evil in this world?

Well, here are some verses that could explain this.

**Proverbs 16:4** “The LORD has made all for Himself, Yes, even the wicked for the day of doom.”

If you are walking with God, and your heart is right with God, I didn't say you will be perfect. Only HE is. God knows your heart. You will be victorious; God's ways are higher than our ways.

When you come up against a spiritual battle, speak His words, have the peace He left us, and walk in victory. Yes, there is evil in this world. Jesus talks about the evil in this world in God's Word, yet he also tells us He had overcome the world. So, if you are walking with God, you should walk in victory.

I mean, isn't it remarkable how detailed God's words are? They're so exciting and fundamental to our lives that I don't see how they could be undeniable. It's not about being religious or keeping rituals.

The Bible speaks about the condition of our hearts, our faith in Jesus Christ, what He did on the cross for humanity, and our relationship with Him through Jesus.

In my younger years, when I did not have this unique relationship with Jesus, life would happen, and it was hard, lonely, and sad. I dealt with life a whole different way. I worried; I was anxious; I didn't reach out to God for the answers.

I don't believe I thought God cared that much about the details of my life; to write it down is unbelievable to me now, but it's true. Our spiritual enemy, the devil, wants us to believe this lie to keep us in the dark. When you accept Jesus Christ as your Savior, your spiritual eyes are opened and set free.

The best thing I have ever done is to accept Jesus as my Savior. The ways He has changed me are remarkable. One of the biggest challenges was that I thought I had to be in control.

I used to feel incomplete and not enough. I wholeheartedly can tell you that when you accept Jesus as your Savior, you will know that because of Him, you are enough! Every time something happened in my younger years, depression, anger, and worry would set in. Now, I may get upset or worried, but it is quickly replaced with the Words God says about me, and then I rest in Him, knowing he is in the details, and I don't have to be.



## CHAPTER 7

### BEING TRANSFORMED



#### **John 8:32**

“Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

We are set free when we accept what Jesus did on the cross for all who believe. We begin to look at life differently. Things that interested us before that don't, please God, fade away in time. What I mean by that is you want to do what is right by God. You begin to see the world differently. You start to seek God's purpose for your life. I am not saying what you do will save you; however, your heart changes.

This transformation takes time; the things you leave behind are your sinful ways and are replaced with ways God blesses. For me, the change was the places I went to and the things I watched and listened to. Now, God doesn't make us change or have a change of heart. Because you received Jesus as your Savior, you want to. Believe me when I tell you the devil will try and make you think you are giving up so much that you won't be able to bear it. I slowly faded from a few of my friends I once was very tight with because my life changed. I changed.

We all have choices in this life; our choices come with victories or consequences. Let me add, by the way, that there are no perfect people. We all live in a world that needs Jesus.

One difference between someone who accepts Jesus as their Savior and someone who is lost is that they have the supernatural strength that Jesus left us through the Holy Spirit to fight the battles of this world. God's Word is the sword, and we should read it daily.

We need to be prepared and equipped for the day spiritually. Let me tell you a short story as an example of how God showed me this. My husband and I moved to Florida about twenty years ago. A month to that day, a massive five-hundred-year hurricane came through the area and destroyed the home we had just bought. We had just moved there and had new jobs.

The money from the sale of our home in another state where we lived had to be put down as a deposit for our new home in Florida, where we had just moved.

Some people stayed and did not leave the area during the hurricane and died on the street where we had just bought our house. This was like nothing we had ever experienced before.

The house we bought was across from the bay. When the hurricane hit, it flooded the homes with the water surge. We heard that a lot of people stayed behind with their pets, and when the water started to rise, they had nowhere to go, so some went into the attics and were found deceased.

That was devastating, and the home we had just bought was destroyed as we pulled up. We weren't even unpacked and had to throw out things that were still in boxes. We tried to save what we could, but black mold grew on these things, and there was just no saving some of it.

Death and destruction were all around us. This was supposed to be the happy time of our lives. This was an uncharted area of the unknown of pain and darkness. We need our Shepard, our Heavenly Father, and the guidance and protection that can only come from knowing Him.

I won't pretend this was easy because it was challenging, stressful, and depressing. Some people were getting divorced and committing suicide over the loss and devastation. You may have heard of Hurricane Ivan. It hit the panhandle of Florida on September 16, 2004.

There is a fundamental difference between going through life thinking you are in control and knowing the one who is.



Initial feelings included despair and loss, sadness, and confusion; however, once the fog from the shock was cleared, we knew God was in control no matter what the circumstances appeared to be.

God didn't take away the pain; He walked us through it. We grew through it; our faith and dependence on Him grew.

Because we held on to our faith in Him being in the details at that time of our lives, He made us stronger and ready for the next journey that was to come through adopting three children from the foster care system. We had no idea then that we were even considering such a thing.

I think that God gets us ready in these times for our next life journey, and if we choose Him and stay usable, He will take us through journeys in this life we never thought possible.

That was a challenging process at the time, yet God blessed us with a different home. Through that time, I felt our faith grow; my husband and I prayed together, asking God for help. We could have fallen apart. I mean, that was an option.

I am so thankful we held on to God that we decided to hold on to Him more than ever.

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**Galatians 6:9** And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.

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**Matthew 7 24-27** says, “Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds

blew and beat on that house; 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.”

When I read these verses, they grip my heart. God wants us to know He’s there. I believe He cares about every detail of our lives when we pray and ask God for what we want. The key here is that when trials happen in our lives, we have to have faith, trust He knows better than us what we need, and stay in the word, His Word. He doesn’t always give us what we want; sometimes, the answer is no.

I know for sure because it has happened in my life that if the answer is no, then it’s because God has a different plan, and if we trust Him and have faith, He will work it out for our good. When we pray, it is powerful. It’s like we are having a conversation with our creator, having a relationship with Him. God’s Word says He knows what we need before we ask. He wants us to ask. If we ask our Heavenly

Father for a need and get a no, He will give us the strength and walk us through to the other side while He works it out for our good.

In trying times, God prepares us for the next journey of our lives. We all know about technology, but have you ever heard about knee—ology? When troubles come, we should refer to this term: get on your knees, humble yourself before the Lord, tell Him what you need, and remember He already knows what we need before we ask Him. When we go to God in prayer, we activate our faith.

This is a part of being set free. When we give our troubles to God, He gives us peace in our hearts. The Bible tells us what we should keep our thoughts on. Why would God use people to write His Words down for us to read over two thousand years later? Let me revisit the book title because you and I are greatly loved!

**Philippians 4:8-9** "Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things *are* noble, whatever things *are* just, whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* lovely, whatever things *are* of good report, if *there is* any

virtue and if *there is anything* praiseworthy—meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.”

You and I are loved so much that our Creator and Heavenly Father want us to know that we are to think of good and lovely things, the opposite of the devil, our spiritual enemy. If you go around thinking negative thoughts, how can you glorify God?

You are a child of God; the devil cannot read your mind; however, he can put thoughts of negativity in your mind. He can hear your words; do not speak words that align with your spiritual enemy. This life is a spiritual battle. Use the Word of God and speak the words He says about you!

This is all about being set free from the bondage of your spiritual enemy and being spiritually set free. If you have accepted Jesus as your Savior, this is what the Bible says about you!

## **Ephesians 1:1-23**

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus and faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

### **Redemption in Christ**

Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has **blessed** us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, just as **He chose us** in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and **without blame** before Him in love, having predestined us to **adoption as sons** by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us **accepted** in the **Beloved**.

In Him **we have redemption** through His blood, the **forgiveness** of sins, according to the riches of **His grace** which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us

the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him. In Him also we have **obtained an inheritance**, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were **sealed with the Holy Spirit** of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

### **Prayer for Spiritual Wisdom**

Therefore, I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you,

making mention of you in my prayer places, 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; 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.”



According to God's Word and what He says about You and Me as believers in Jesus as our Savior.

1. WE ARE BLESSED
2. WE ARE CHOSEN
3. WE ARE ADOPTED INTO HIS FAMILY
4. WE ARE BLAMELESS
5. WE HAVE FORGIVENESS
6. WE HAVE REDEMPTION
7. WE ARE ACCEPTED
8. WE HAVE HIS GRACE
9. WE OBTAINED INHERITANCE
10. SEALED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

These are things the devil, our spiritual enemy, doesn't want you to know. You are what God says you are, and you are set free. Let's dive a little further into God's Word here. I want you to see who God says we are as saved believers in Christ Jesus.

## **Ephesians 2: 1-22**

### **By Grace Through Faith**

*"And you He made **alive**, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.*

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit

together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of **His grace** in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace, you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast, for we are **His workmanship**, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

### **Christ Our Peace**

For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, *that is*, the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man *from* the two, *thus* making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were

near. **For through Him, we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.**

## **Christ Our Cornerstone**

Now, therefore, **you are no longer strangers and foreigners but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God**, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, **Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone**, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.”

Can you see how greatly you are loved through these two chapters? You need to know who you are in Jesus Christ as a saved believer.

According to **Ephesians 2**, you were made **alive** through Jesus once you believed and accepted Him as your Savior. You have access to the Father through Jesus. Because of Jesus and what He did through the cross, He reconnected humanity to the Father. We, as

believers, are saved by the grace of God. We can live in victory even when life gets complicated because we are greatly loved and have been set free the moment we accepted Jesus as our Savior.

We don't have to live in defeat, Jesus said; He has claimed victory. I know He will not force it on you; oh, we can live with the consequences of our choices. The Bible says that the choice of living a sinful life is death. The good news is that the blessing of coming to Jesus is life!

Jesus said, in **John 14:6**, that He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.



You Are Greatly Loved

## Chapter 8

### YOUR IDENTITY



If I were to ask you who you are? What would you say? What is the first thing that pops into your mind? Are you a

mom, a dad, maybe a businessperson, or a salesperson? Perhaps you would say you are a student or maybe a daughter, son, man, or woman. Possibly, you don't quite know who you are. The Bible says we are adopted into God's family. We are God's sons and daughters.

It doesn't matter how old you are. We are His children. We, as believers in Christ, should know this for sure. Your identity is whatever you give your heart to. If you didn't say Christian or Jesus follower first, maybe you need to ask yourself why. Most of us strive to be successful in this life, and God wants us to be successful. Can you imagine being successful and shining your light for Jesus? The Bible says we should seek Him first, and everything will be added according to His will.

We see this in **Matthew 6:33** "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."

Some people make their whole lives all about themselves and what they can do. The Bible does talk about faith without works, and I believe we should activate our faith through prayer and using our God-given gifts to help others and walk in love. We are called to shine in love, pointing others to Him.

We are called to be wise as serpents yet gentle as doves.

**Matthew 10:16** says, "Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of



wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.”

I point this verse out because God wants us to walk in love and be wise, trusting in Him as we walk in faith. There are so many lost people in the world today trying to find their way. I wrote this book because so many lost people need hope. People need to know they are greatly loved and don't have to do it alone.

I didn't grow up going to church, and just by a woman opening up to me about her feelings about Jesus, letting me know how much I was loved, and inviting me to her church, I was saved and baptized. That was thirty-two years ago.

What if this woman who became my friend and our tax person never told me about Jesus? What if she was only concerned about her occupation, family, or whatever she perceived herself as? We are what we give our hearts to; if you are a believer in the salvation Jesus came to bring, tell somebody. You may see them in Heaven one day, and it just may be because you told them about the love of Jesus. When you tell someone about Jesus, you can't hit them over the head with the

cross and expect them to respond. God wouldn't even do that. God, in His word, says don't worry about the words you will say; I will give you the words. If you believe in Jesus, you have the Holy Spirit inside you. Just share the good news and let Jesus do the rest.

My husband and I have three adopted children through the foster care system, and they were all very troubled kids when they moved in with us over ten years ago. We poured the love of Jesus into their hearts while they were all still with us. I won't go into too many details other than to say God expects us to share the good news of Jesus, but we are not God, and we shouldn't expect to change someone. That has to be up to the person to accept the gift of salvation through Jesus freely.

Let's go back to our identity. I have a short story here to share with you. I said earlier that I grew up not going to church; we, as a family, just never went. Well, we did have an uncle who would come and pick up my sister and me on special holidays and take us to his church, and we went to church for weddings

and funerals. My Mom was an executive secretary for Monsanto.

What I can say about my Mom is she was very smart. She went to business college and was fortunate enough to retire early, so she was very successful. But did she know Jesus? I don't know. I am her oldest daughter, and I honestly don't ever remember her talking to me about Jesus. I will say, though, that she bought me my first Bible, and I still have it today.

My Mom passed away twenty-three years ago, and I was told by a pastor that she accepted Jesus as her Savior before she did. My hope is that I will see her again one glorious day!

My Mom received early retirement from a very successful career and did not get to enjoy it. I love my Mom, I will always will, and as devastating as that was, I have the hope of seeing her again.

If you know about Jesus and the great news of the cross, don't keep it a secret; share it! It's good news! Share Jesus and the good news of the cross with your family and

friends. They will make their own choice, but the fact that you shared this news with them may have a life-changing effect on their life one day. The Bible tells all believers to share the good news of the cross and the salvation made available through Jesus. So, when I asked you the question who are you? Your answer was what?

When we say our identity is in Christ, it is deeply personal; being a Christian is a spiritual journey. It shapes how we perceive ourselves and the world around us.

In this identity, we have unconditional forgiveness, are redeemed, and are a new creation according to 2 Corinthians 5:17. Therefore, if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things become new. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person.

As Christians, we know that God has a plan for our lives, and understanding this plan becomes an essential part of our identity.

Our relationship with God through Jesus Christ is individual; however, it should also involve a community of believers. This shared community helps us grow in our faith and emphasizes the importance of love, support, and accountability as Christians. Instead of conforming to the social standards or expectations of the world, we, as Christians, have the freedom to know who we are in Christ. We are greatly loved, and we are more than enough. When we know who we are in Christ, we want to align our values and behavior with what pleases God.

The Bible becomes our compass in life based on faith, hope, and love. Our faith gives us hope in life's challenges and uncertainties. We read God's Word and strive to live out the teachings and values of Jesus, such as love, compassion, humility, and selflessness.

We all know someone who, without a doubt you know who guides their life, not because they are boastful or because they demand you think as they do, but just because they share the love of Jesus, and you can tell it comes from the heart. You know, the Bible

talks about the condition of our hearts repeatedly. I know someone like that, and that would be my mother-in-law; she is ninety-one years young, and whenever I get on the phone with her, she starts talking about Jesus and how he works in her life. It's amazing. I have seen her situations that may bring most people to tears, and she has a glow and a smile because she knows who is in control. The confidence in knowing who you are in Jesus is a freeing way to live; you can rest in Him instead of worrying or being anxious.

There was a woman who came into my life when I was about thirty years of age. She told me about the love of Jesus. She was the mom of a coworker and friend I bowled with. At the time, I was a bartender/waitress at a bowling alley. My life was very different then.

I discovered she did taxes; that is how we started talking because she began doing our taxes. At the time, my husband and I didn't go to church, and she invited us to go to her church. I will never forget the first time I walked into that church; I felt like I wasn't worthy of being there. Isn't that something? How do we perceive church people to be

better than ourselves? The truth is Jesus came to save us all because we are all sinners.

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*Luke 19:10” For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”*

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We sat by my friend's mom, so we felt comfortable there. My husband and I continued going there, and sometimes, I would even go to the women's group during the week. This was a new journey in life for me. I had never had anyone really talk to me about my salvation and that I could have a better life with Jesus. This new friend I had, we would sit and talk for hours about the love of Jesus and the salvation He brought into the world.

I was baptized in that little church thirty-two years ago. It was a fantastic day! My friend's mom was in tears. She said when I came out of the water, I was glowing. I am not sure about that, but I will tell you this: my life began to change, and it still is to this day.

When my husband and I got home that Sunday afternoon, I will never forget my mother-in-law calling me and saying, welcome to God's family!

After that day, my life slowly began to change. I started thinking more about my salvation and the purpose God had for me in my life. I didn't want to be a bartender or waitress anymore. I felt God had something different for my life at the time. I always liked doing hair, so I found a school near our home.

We didn't have much money back then. I didn't know how we would pay for it. However, my mother-in-law told me one day while visiting that if it's God's will for you, He will make a way. So, I decided to go and find out how much it was, and maybe they had a payment plan. I didn't know.

I walked into that school, and it was amazing. There was a beauty shop in the front, and I saw students dressed in white doing clients' hair. I started thinking, wow, could this be real? I could be a student here!



The receptionist asked if she could help me. I said, “Yes, I am looking to enroll, and I wanted to see the process and check the enrollment fee.” She asked me to sit down, and she went and got the owner or manager, and they spoke with me for a few minutes. I sat there dreaming of what this new life change could mean for me. They told me it would be \$10,000. And I had no real clue how we would get that kind of money. This was thirty-one years ago. Today, it’s more like \$20,000.

I sat there remembering what my mother-in-law had said about if it were God’s will, he would make away. It wasn’t long before the account manager came to the lobby and asked me to step back into his office; I was expecting a payment plan to start school. I sat in the chair, and he said you qualify for a grant. When can you start school? I could not believe this! A grant I said I didn’t know there was such a thing that I could qualify for!

I walked out of there, thanking Jesus. I knew that would be the first of many amazing days in my new journey with Him. I could not wait to get on the phone and tell my mother-in-law

and husband. I was only supposed to check the prices and process, and God made a way here. God has done many miracles in my life in the last thirty-two years, and He always makes it known that it's Him!

Suppose it wasn't for the encouragement of my mother-in-law or the boldness of my friend's mom telling me about the love of Jesus and how I was good enough. Telling me God did have a plan for my life. I may not have gone to church and got saved, but maybe I would still be in my old job of waitressing and bartending. I had a lot of friends there; why would I quit?

When you get saved, God starts working on your heart. You are no longer satisfied with your old lifestyle. I no longer do hair professionally. I did for eighteen years, and I still keep my license current. I went into real estate and, through my journey with my husband, adopted three children from the foster care system.

My point here is that God wants us to shine so that others can see His glory, and when you believe and have faith, He will take you

from glory to glory! When you go through challenging times in life. You can be strong in those times because you are not walking through it alone; God will give you strength through your faith.

When you tell someone about the love of Jesus and what he did by dying on the cross and rising again on the third day, you really do not know the impact you could have on that person's life, but if they accept what you are telling them it will definitely have an effect that can be life-changing.

The only difference between a believer and a non-believer is either they have not been told the story of how they are truly loved, they haven't sinned too far for God to forgive them, or they haven't accepted Jesus.

As we walk the Christian life together, let's realize, first and foremost, that we cannot save ourselves. Our salvation was secured once and for all on the cross by Jesus's obedience to the Father. How do I know if I am truly saved? If you say with your mind and your heart, "Yes, I believe in Christ and receive what He has done for me"—that He

died for my sins—then you have eternal life.

Faith, then, means surrender and commitment to the claims of Christ. It means acknowledging sin and turning to Christ.

Be bold if you are a Christian and a believer in Jesus. Don't be afraid to share the good news. God's word says not to be fearful of the words you will say; He will give you the words.

Every Christian's journey is unique, and their reactions to challenges may vary. Yet, looking to Jesus as our anchor in our response to life's challenges, with faith, prayer, and trust in God's promises, will be a solid foundation for navigating the ups and downs of life. Jesus is the cornerstone, the rock on which we stand.

God has a great plan for your life! He sent His one and only Son to die on the cross for you. You matter, and He loves you!

# Chapter 9

## EMBRACING GOD'S LOVE



Embracing God's love is a journey of surrendering to God's presence in your life.

It is a journey in which you grow in your relationship with Him. A personal relationship with God comes through prayer, meditation, and regular reading of God's Word.

When you pray, share your thoughts, feelings, and concerns with Him, and listen for His guidance. God will guide you if you ask.

**Matthew 7:7-8** says, “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks, it will be opened.”

When you obey God's commandments, it cannot save you; only faith in Jesus can do that, but it is an expression of your love for Him. **John 14:15** Obedience is a way of aligning your life with His will and demonstrating trust in Him. When we study the Bible, we gain a deeper understanding of God's love, mercy, grace, and faithfulness. God's Word is our guide, and as we read His Word, He speaks to us.

Accept God's forgiveness for your sins by what Jesus did on the cross for you.

**Romans 8:1-2** “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.”

Have an attitude of gratitude for God's blessings in your life. The Bible says all good things come from Him. **James 1:17** says,

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.”

Recognize and appreciate the love God has shown you in various ways. Show kindness towards others. Jesus emphasized the importance of loving and serving others, and in doing so, you reflect God's love in action.

Taking care of yourself physically, emotionally, and spiritually is a way of honoring the gift of life that God has given you. Practice self-love with the understanding that you are fearfully and wonderfully made.

**Psalm 139:14**"I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well."

Living for God daily is a continuous journey of growth and surrender. When we fall, we get back up, repent, turn back to Him, and let Him make our path straight again.

**Proverbs 3:6** confirms that for us,” In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.”

Stay humble and acknowledge your dependence on God. We should recognize that our abilities, gifts, and achievements are blessings from Him.

Regularly examine your motivations for your day-to-day actions. Ensure that you are motivated by love, integrity, and a desire to honor God rather than seeking self-gratification.

We need to forgive as God has forgiven us. Let go of grudges and resentment. When we hold on to resentment, we hold ourselves prisoner.

**Ephesians 4:32**, “And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.”

We should have dedicated time to read and study the Bible regularly. Allow God's Word to shape your thoughts, decisions, and actions.



My husband and I have always tried to read the Bible and study with our three kids regularly at night. It can sometimes be hard to do that when you have a job during the day. The Bible says if we plant the seed in our children, it will not depart from them in their old age. Planting that seed in ourselves is essential, too! A short Bible study is always better than no Bible study.

I know that when I get up in the morning if I start my day with a song praising Jesus, I pray, and I acknowledge God first thing in the morning, it equips me for the day. I find myself talking to God off and on all day, depending on what's going on in my day. Something good will happen. I will say thank you, Jesus! Sometimes, I may say God, thank you for helping me right now because, in the valleys, I always know He is there.

The more you embrace God's presence in your life, the more you depend on Him. When you rely on Him to walk you through this life, your faith and trust in Him grow. Things in your life start falling into place, and there is just no doubt that God is working it out for your good, just like His Word says.

**Jeremiah 17:7 in the NKJV** tells us this;  
“Blessed *is* the man who trusts in the LORD,  
    And whose hope is the LORD.  
For he shall be like a tree planted by the  
    waters,  
Which spreads out its roots by the river,  
    And will not fear when heat comes;  
    But its leaf will be green,  
And will not be anxious in the year of  
    drought,  
Nor will cease from yielding fruit.”

We can't lose hope. We have to stay in faith and trust God. Why do we give up or lose hope? As a believer in Christ, we should read His word repeatedly. God tells us to stay in faith. Yes, even the prophets were human and doubted but rebuked their thoughts as we should. Never let Satan steal what God has for you through doubt or fear. The Bible tells us 365 times not to fear; that's once for each day of the year. God knew we would doubt and fear that we were human. The important thing is not to stay there in that valley with those feelings.



Praise

Jesus and thank Him for all the blessings He has given you and for the blessings to come. Read the Bible, which is God's Word, and absorb what it says about you. Don't listen to the devil's lies or let your thoughts or words come in alignment with what he says!

My friend, you are highly favored and incredibly blessed as a child of God. God gives us a way to fight the spiritual warfare that comes against us daily through His Word.

Life here in this world will be a spiritual battle until the day we are with the Lord. We have to fight the spiritual battle daily; however, if we hold up our shields of faith and use our sword, which is the Word of God, we will be able to walk in faith and victory. If others see us worrying all the time or anxious, are we displaying the trust and peace that God meant for us to have?

I believe that God lets us go through dark times in our lives to test us, shape us, and sometimes get our attention.

God is the potter, and we are the clay. We are his masterpieces, being shaped to be more like Jesus. These shaping times in our lives help us grow our maturity as Christians. In the dark or challenging times, our faith becomes stronger, and our dependence on God is accelerated.



God never leaves us according to His Word.

He walks us through the troubled times in our lives. We are strong because the Holy Spirit lives within us as believers. Sometimes, it has to get really dark before the light shines the brightest. What if, in our testing and molding period, someone is watching us, whether it be your family, friends, or coworkers? Let's just say they know you are a Christian. Something happens that could cause you to fall apart, but you

don't; instead, you pray, and you come in alignment with God's word. Because you do that, others want that kind of spiritual strength you have, so they reach out to God.

Life can get challenging, yet it's in those difficult times when you pray, and an answer is given that God shows Himself to you in a powerful way! Have you had that happen to you? I have, many times, and when it happens, it strengthens our faith even more.

God doesn't always give us the answer we want. I remember when my Mom passed away, one of the most devastating nights of my life. As I walked out of the hospital that cold December night, asking God why God, Why? I still don't understand why a woman of only fifty-nine had to pass away that night, never to meet her grandchildren.

Why is it that bad things, such as children passing away too soon, or why moms or dads lose their lives, leaving small children behind, or why all the sickness and death have to be in the world?

The Bible tells us that it was never God's intention for the world to have death or sickness. The devil enticed Eve with sin, something that looked good but was attached to death. Death of something good that God had planned for humanity. That is how the devil works. He will put something in front of you that looks good at the time, but if it's attached to sin, the Bible says it is connected to the death of something good.

After sin came to the world to destroy all good things, Jesus showed up because God loved humanity, his creation, so much! Jesus came to give himself as a living sacrifice, God's one and only Son. Then you know what He did. He rose again on the third day. If you haven't read the Bible, I strongly encourage you to start. Get connected to your Creator.

When you start reading the Bible, you will understand that even though we live in a fallen world, we can walk in victory because we have hope through the victory of Jesus. When you accept Jesus as your Savior, Christ lives in you!

**1 John 4:4** “You are of God, little children, and have overcome them because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.”

The death of Jesus on the cross for the sins of humanity provided a way for people to be reconciled with God. Jesus's resurrection is victory over death, eternal life, and the defeat of sin. Knowing this is very exciting for human beings, knowing that we have eternal life and that one day, we will be with our Heavenly Father.

**John 14:1-4** Jesus tells us here, “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions; if *it were* not *so*, I would have told you. I am going to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that is where I am, and *there* you may be also. And where I go, you know, and the way you know.”

There in the above verse tells us He is going to prepare a place for us as believers.

Here we are in chapter nine; I hope that something I have said or testified to from my own life experiences since I accepted Jesus as my Savior inspires you or makes you understand that you are loved. Maybe you already know that, and perhaps you have been a saved Christian longer than I, and if you have, I appreciate you taking the time to read and experience my book.

As Christians, when we experience a miracle or a test that turns into a testimony, it's our obligation to tell others what God did for us or through us. You may not write a book, but sharing your story is powerful. I wrote "We Are God's Masterpiece" and "God You Were Always There" and shared powerful ways God has worked in my life, not to have pity from others but to proclaim victory through Jesus!

You know, I mentioned here in my book that my husband and I adopted three children through the foster care system; our kids then were thirteen, ten, and seven. Back then, which was over ten years ago now, we were going through a lot as a new family; our kids had been through many traumas. My husband and I were saved and were going to church



regularly; we thought, you know, we could handle whatever these kids throw at us; we didn't realize at the time that it was physically going to happen. I say that lightheartedly; as hard as it was back then, God taught us so much. One thing God taught us is that He may not take away the hardships, yet He will help you get through them; another is that you really don't realize what you are capable of until you fully trust that He is going to give you the strength to get you through it.

During that period of our lives, I learned a lot about reactive attachment disorder. Throughout our adoption experience, there were many twists and turns. I told myself that one day, I am going to write a book to help other adoptive parents who may be going through some of the things we have been through. The most challenging and most painful teacher is sometimes experience.

I thought if I could help other people and make it easier in some way by writing about my experience as my three adopted kids' mom, I want to share. During that period, my husband and I relied on God like never before. We didn't just get through that time of

healing and heartache. We grew through it. Now our kids are twenty-three, twenty and eighteen. Two of our kids have moved out, and one is still at home doing very well. Our lives have been much calmer the last few years, and I wrote the book I told myself I would; it is titled.

### **“From Foster Care To Adopted.”**

Things weren't perfect, but there were some great times and incredible breakthroughs.

My husband and I prayed about our decision to adopt before we did, and we prayed that God would put into our lives the kids that God knew needed us the most, and we believe that to this day, that is what He did. I had never written a book before, nor did I really even think about it. When we take our life experiences and share them with others to let them know it all to God's glory and by His grace, it all happened the way it does in our lives. We are shining that light that Jesus said is not to be hidden.

My book “From Foster Care To Adopted” Is in our local library and has helped people

through their adoption journey. When you are looking for God's goodness in things that you have been through and just how God brought you through, you will be amazed at how it falls into place. This is how our faith is built from victory to victory as we trust and have faith in what His plan is for our lives. God knows what He is doing, and I believe He prepares us for the next journey of our lives as we are being tested and shaped in our current journey. I tell my husband well, now that our kids are grown, I wonder what God has for us to do next. If we stay usable, God will use us for His glory. Anyone can share their testimony. I am not a preacher, teacher,

**Psalm 71: 15-16** "My mouth shall  
tell of Your righteousness  
*And* Your salvation all the day,  
For I do not know *their* limits.  
I will go in the strength of the  
Lord GOD;  
I will make mention of Your  
righteousness, of Yours only.

NKJV

or scholar. I am a follower of Jesus and a saved sinner, because I accepted Jesus.

When you accept Jesus as your Savior, the Holy Spirit convicts you of your sins, comforts you, guides you, gives you spiritual gifts and the desire to obey God, and enables you to pray and understand God's Word.

### **Jesus Promises Another Helper**

**“If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray to the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.” John 14: 15-18 NKJV**

You walk with God through the help of the Holy Spirit, even though many blessings come with knowing how greatly you are loved. God will not make you embrace His love; He won't force it on you. God will not change your life or make you change it; the Bible actually says that He will give you over to your ways.

I have seen this happen to our son. It's heartbreaking when you watch someone who you love choose the wrong path.

We cannot change people; we are not God. God tells us to bring our children up and plant the seeds of Jesus, and it will not depart from them. Ultimately, God is in control. He is the one we trust in. When we do trust Him, we can have that peace that Jesus left us, peace beyond our understanding. Cast your care on Him, whatever you may be going through in your life. Activate your faith and read His Word. Let go and Let God.

God chose you for a purpose—just the way you are—not because you're worthy, but because He is. Yet He will not make you choose Him. He doesn't care if you are untrained, unprepared, or how unworthy you think you are. He chose you to be a part of His plan to reach the world for His Kingdom's sake. **John 15:16.** “You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.”

## **God chooses us, and in response, we must choose Him.**

**John 3: 1-7 NKJV** There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, “Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.”

Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?”

Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’

## By Grace Through Faith

**Ephesians 2:1-10 NKJV** “And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace, you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which

God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”

God has already chosen you and sent His one and only Son to die on the cross for you. Because we are sinners, that is the only way to eternal life with our Heavenly Father through Jesus. He is the way, the truth, and the life.



# Chapter 10

## ETERNALLY

From a physical standpoint, death is when the body's vital functions stop, including breathing (respiration), heartbeats, and brain activity. The actual moment of death is part of the process of dying, during which all these functions shut down. What is the difference between spiritual death and physical death? Spiritual death is distinct from physical death and the second death. According to the doctrine of original sin, all people have a sinful nature and thus commit sin and are thereby spiritually dead. Those who have faith in Jesus Christ are, after that, made spiritually alive.

## The Last Enemy Destroyed

1 Corinthians 15: 20-28 NKJV “But now Christ is risen from the dead and has become the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man *came* death, by Man also *came* the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ, all shall be made alive. But each one is his own.

## A Glorious Body

1 Corinthians 15: 42-49 NKJV ”So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. *The body* is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being.” The last Adam *became* a life-giving spirit.

However, spirituality is not first but natural and, afterward, spiritual. The first man *was* of the earth, *made* of dust; the second *man* of dust, so also *are* those *who are made* of dust; and

as *is* the heavenly *Man*, so also *are* those *who are* heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the *man* of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly *Man*.

order: Christ the first fruits, afterward those *who are* Christ's at His coming. Then *comes* the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy *that* will be destroyed *is* death. For "He has put all things under His feet." But when He says, "all things are put under *Him*," *it is* evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted. Now, when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who puts all things under Him, and God may be all in all.

## Our Final Victory

**1 Corinthians 15: 50-58 NKJV** “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a <sup>1</sup>mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.”

“O Death, where *is* your sting?  
O Hades, where *is* your victory?”

The sting of death *is* sin, and the strength of sin *is* the law. But thanks *be* to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 6:23). Physical death is guaranteed in this world because our bodies are broken and sinful. But if you put your faith in Jesus, you will spend eternity in heaven when you die.”

If we receive Jesus as our Savior, the Bible shows us that we will have eternal life with our Heavenly Father the moment we take our last breath here in this world. Suppose you do not accept Jesus and have faith that He died for your sins. In that case, you **separate yourself from God, which is a spiritual separation that eliminates the possibility of living an eternity with God** and Jesus in heaven.

For those who refuse to accept God’s salvation, spiritual death and physical death culminate in the second death.

**Revelation 20:14** NKJV “And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.”

**2 Thessalonians 1:9** NKJV “Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power.”

**Matthew 25:41** NKJV “Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.’”

## **The Rich Man and Lazarus**

**Luke 16: 19-31** NKJV “There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table. Moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores. So it was that the beggar died and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s bosom. The rich man also died

and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

“Then he cried and said, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.’ But Abraham said, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and you are tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.’

“Then he said, ‘I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father’s house, for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.’ Abraham said to him, ‘They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.’ And he said, ‘No, father Abraham, but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’

But He said to him, “If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.”



Can you even imagine eternal separation from God, our Heavenly Father? If you have never accepted Jesus as your Savior, I pray that you will consider it. Don't wait because the Bible tells us that tomorrow is not promised, and once you take your last breath here in this world, there are no do-overs.

In this book, I have tried to share with you how greatly God loves you. I don't know where you are in your life spiritually; however, just like the woman who told me about the Jesus I did not know and the forgiveness I had because of what He did on the cross and



rose again on the third day, so I could have eternal salvation, which her boldness caused me to accept Jesus and be baptized. I want to share the love I now know with you. Live a victorious life while you are here in this world. Let Jesus walk with you through the valleys in this life and give you strength and peace beyond your understanding.

Some people may think they don't need a savior because they are a "good person." The Bible says we cannot do anything ourselves to get into heaven; only accepting Jesus as our Savior will save us. **(John 14:6)ESV Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."**

The fear of social rejection deters some people from accepting Christ as their Savior. They love the approval of men rather than the approval of God.

Some people are more interested in worldly goods and what the world has to offer rather than eternal. Here, we read a story of such a man who was not willing to lose his earthly

possessions for an eternal relationship with Jesus.

## **The Rich and the Kingdom of God**

**Matthew 19:16-23** Just then, a man came up to Jesus and asked, “Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?”

“Why do you ask me about what is good?” Jesus replied. There is only one who is good. If you want to enter life, keep the commandments.”

“Which ones?” he inquired.

Jesus replied, “You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, honor your father and mother,’ and ‘love your neighbor as yourself.”

“All these I have kept,” the young man said. “What do I still lack?”

Jesus answered, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions, and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”

When the young man heard this, he went away sad because he had great wealth.

Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Truly I tell you, it is hard for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven.”

Man would rather have His earthly possessions, and he puts them before God.

When you deny God, your heart could harden, and it is mentioned here:

**Acts 28:27** ‘Go to this people and say: “Hearing you will hear, and shall not understand; And seeing you will see, and not perceive; For the hearts of this people have grown dull.

*Their* ears are hard of hearing,  
And *their* eyes they have closed,  
Lest they should see with *their* eyes and  
hear with *their* ears,  
Lest they should understand  
with *their* hearts and turn,  
So that I should heal them.”

Whatever reason people reject Christ, their rejection has disastrous eternal consequences. **Acts 4:12** “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” than the name of Jesus. Those who reject Him for whatever reason face an eternity in the “outer darkness” of hell where there will be “weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

God doesn't make anyone choose Him, yet knowing what you know, why wouldn't you want to? We can live in victory while we are in this world, and when we physically die, we will immediately be with our Heavenly Father in Heaven. We will have troubles in this world, yet He will give us the strength to get through them. We can have victory in our darkest times, and we can be the light at those times because of Him who is in us.

We are all destined to die someday. Where are you going to spend eternity? This is a big question, and you have to make that choice here now, not tomorrow, because tomorrow isn't promised to any of us. If you choose God and what he did because He so greatly loved you and me, then you can walk in this

world in victory. When troubles come, you will not be alone, and when you pray, God will make your paths straight. You will no longer walk alone. You will walk with Christ's hand in hand. You will not be perfect only He is, yet you will be forgiven and saved.

The world will begin to look different to you, and you will see it in a whole new light. As you begin to study God's Word and connect to Him, He will guide you through this life. If you stay useful, hold on. This will be an exciting journey!

How do you walk with Jesus every day?

### **10 Ways to Enrich Your Daily Walk With the Lord**

1. Start and end every day with God in prayer.
2. Talk to God during the day for direction for your day and be thankful for blessings.
3. Guard your mind in life by what you entertain.
4. Read and meditate on scripture.
5. Remember you Are an ambassador for Christ.

6. Show kindness to others.
7. Seek first to understand and be slow to anger.
8. Love others as yourself.
9. Be forgiving.
10. Live in faith and trust the Lord.

As we walk daily with God, we are not to try to walk ahead or lag behind Him. Faith without works is dead, so if you are trusting God for something, pray and ask Him what you should be doing. Don't get discouraged; look up, keep trusting, and believe He is working it out for your good. Look ahead. He will make your paths straight. Our way He will let us do, yet His way and His timing produce blessings.



God walks through every situation with us if we choose Him. He loves and cares for you and me. Walking with Him will give you the comfort of knowing that He is always there for you. He is always there with open arms.



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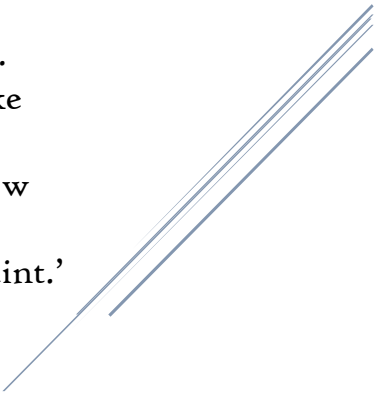
**Romans 5:8** "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

NKJV

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**Isaiah 40:31** “But those who  
hope in the LORD  
Will renew their strength.  
They will soar on wings like  
eagles;  
They will run and not grow  
weary,  
They will walk and not faint.’  
NIV



Do you want to walk in victory knowing that you are not walking through this life alone? Do you want to be able to have peace beyond your understanding? You can.

God, our Heavenly Father, sent Jesus to make a way for us. Will every day be perfect? No, it will not; Jesus said we would have troubles in this world; he also said not to fear. He has claimed victory.

When you accept Jesus as your Savior and pray, and yet you worry you cannot activate your faith this way, remember that.



**Mark 6: 4-6** Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own town, among his relatives, and in his own home.” He could not perform any miracles there except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. He was amazed at their lack of faith.

Can God help you shine your light? The light that can only come from Him. You may say, am I qualified? No, you are not, and neither am I. The thing is, when you accept God’s gift, as the gift of Jesus and the salvation that He brought through God’s love for us, the gift of redemption, then you are qualified. Here are some of the broken people God used in the Bible who humbled themselves and became useable.

1. **King Nebuchadnezzar** – A prideful ruler who was humbled by God and eventually acknowledged His sovereignty (Daniel 4:1-37)
2. **Jeremiah** – Known as the “weeping prophet,” he faced constant rejection and persecution but remained faithful to God’s call (Jeremiah 1-52)

3. **Esther** – An orphan and exile who became a queen, courageously saving her people from extermination (Esther 1-10)
4. **The people of Nineveh** – A wicked city that repented at the preaching of Jonah and was spared God’s judgment (Jonah 3:1-10)
5. **The woman at the well** – Had multiple failed marriages and lived with a man who was not her husband, yet led her town to Jesus (John 4:1-42)
6. **Levi (Matthew)** – A tax collector before becoming one of Jesus’ apostles (Matthew 9:9-13)
7. **King Josiah** – Became king at a young age and led a spiritual reformation in Judah despite the wickedness of his predecessors (2 Kings 22:1-23:30)
8. **King Hezekiah** – Was a godly king who faced a severe illness but turned to God and was granted an additional 15 years of life (2 Kings 20:1-11)
9. **Elijah** – Struggled with depression and fear yet accomplished great feats through God’s power (1 Kings 18-19)
10. **David** – Committed adultery and murder but repented and became a man after God’s own heart (2 Samuel 11-12, Acts 13:22)

God loves you so much that He sent His one and Only Son so that you may live in this world and shine your light for His glory. Are you ready? You only have to say this prayer and start walking with Jesus daily through God's word. Get a Bible, pray to God, and ask Him to help you; he will!

## Sinners Prayer

### **Here is how you can receive Christ:**

1. Admit your need (I am a sinner).
2. Be willing to turn from your sins (repent).
3. Believe that Jesus Christ died for you on the Cross and rose from the grave.
4. Through prayer, invite Jesus Christ to come in and control your life through the Holy Spirit. (receive Him as Lord and Savior)



**My Prayer for you;** “Father, I come before You in prayer and faith, believing. Your Word says You desire all men to be saved and come into the knowledge of the truth, so I bring \_\_\_\_\_ before You this day. “I break the power of Satan from his assignment’s activities in their life in the Name of Jesus.



## **Matthew 27:45-54**

Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. <sup>46</sup> And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lama Sabathani?” that is, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”

Some of those who stood there, when they heard *that*, said, “This Man is calling for Elijah!” Immediately one of them ran and took a sponge, filled *it* with sour wine and, put *it* on a reed, and offered it to Him to drink. The rest said, “Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to save Him.”

And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up His spirit.

Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, <sup>52</sup> and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; <sup>53</sup> and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.

So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, **“Truly this was the Son of God!”**

## About The Author



SHARING THE LOVE  
OF JESUS

Sonya is a published Author who writes books inspired by her love of Jesus.

Available on Amazon

**SONYA M. DAVIS**

I have been married to my husband for thirty-three years. Our three grown adult kids are overcomers and have the knowledge of Christ in them. I love spending time with my family, which includes our three rescue furbabies. We reside in the state of Florida and love the beaches. I love to write about the love I have found in Jesus and the good news of the cross. I have a passion for foster kids and adoptive families, which led me to write my first book.

Thank you for choosing my book. I pray that it inspired you to engage in a relationship with Jesus. There is nothing like knowing how free you can live in God's grace; every morning, His mercies are new. Get in His Word. It will be life-changing.

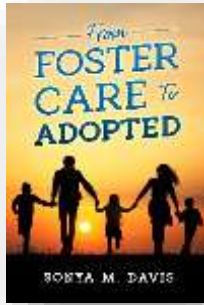
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If you enjoyed this book, please head over to Amazon and give it a review. It will help me spread the word.

*Sonya M. Davis*



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