

# Held Secure

Heritage Christian Church

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*“All my longings lie open before you, O Lord; my sighing is not hidden from you.”*

*Psalm 38:9 (NIV)*

*“You know what I long for, Lord; you hear my every sigh.” Psalm 38:9 (NLT)*

My questions??

My picture of God??

## ENVELOPED

God loves you with a **unique**, specific-to-you love more than you can imagine.

*“God is love and the one who abides in love abides in God.” 1 John 4:16*

*“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.” Genesis 1:27*

You are God’s **child**. (You are His baby.)

*“How great is the love the Father has lavished on us that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!” 1 John 3:1*

*“You are not your own; you were bought at a price.” 1 Corinthians 6:20*

*“For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed....but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.” 1 Peter 1:19*

*“And since you are a Son, God has made you also an heir” -- “because you are His child, everything He has belongs to you.” Galatians 4:7*

*“For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will – to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.” Ephesians 1:4-6*

*“For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father. The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.” Romans 8:15-16*

## God is **crazy** about you.

*"And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ." Ephesians 3:18*

*"The LORD your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing." Zephaniah 3:17*

We are the object of His affection.

*He cares for us tenderly as our shepherd: John 10:3,4; Ezekiel 34:15, 16*

*We are called the bride of Christ: Revelation 21:2*

*You are referred to as the apple of His eye: Zechariah 2:8, Psalm 17:8*

*He has engraved your name on the palm of His hand: Isaiah 49:16*

*He says He has feelings for us like a mother nursing her baby: Isaiah 49:15*

## You are incredibly **valuable** to God's Kingdom and when you act as if you aren't, it has a big impact.

*"But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light." 1 Peter 2:9*

*"You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden." Matt. 5:13, 14*

*"I, the LORD, have called you to do what is right. I will take hold of your hand. I will protect you. I will appoint you as my promise to the people, as my light to the nations." Isaiah 42:6*

## God has a specific **purpose** for you that no one else can fill.

*"For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." Ephesians 2:10*

*"In his heart a man plans his course, but the LORD determines his steps." Proverbs 16:9*

## God doesn't want you to be like **anyone else**.

*"For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well... All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be." Psalm 139:13-14*

*"Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows." Luke 12:6, 7*

## God's love for you will not **waiver** based upon how good or bad of a girl you are.

*"I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness."  
Jeremiah 31:3*

*"Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those that are in Christ Jesus."  
Romans 8:1*

*"Therefore the Lord longs to be gracious to you, He rises to show you compassion."  
Isaiah 30:18*

**Nothing, absolutely nothing, can separate you from His intense love for you.**

*"For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:38-39*

*His love endures forever. Psalm 118:1*

**As God's child, He wants the very best for you.**

*"For it is by grace you have been saved through faith – and this not from yourselves - it is the gift of God." Ephesians 2:8*

*"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11*

*"For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ." Romans 5:17*

*"...to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment."  
1 Tim. 6:17*

*He promises daily bread – Matthew 6:11*

**As His child, he loves to give us good gifts.**

*"If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!"  
Matthew 7:11*

**As His child, He has provided for us complete forgiveness.**

*"When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins..." Colossians 2:13*

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

*"...who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases..." Psalm 103:3*

**As His child, he has set before us ways to live that He knows will bless us.**

*"...for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose."  
Philippians 2:13*

*"not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it he will be blessed in what He does."  
James 1:25*

*"And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him."  
Hebrews 11:6*

**As His child, it breaks His heart when we don't choose the best, but He will never give up on us.**

*"Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning, great is your faithfulness." Lamentations 3:22-23*

*"For I am confident of this, He who began a good work in you will continue to perfect until the day of Christ Jesus' return." Philippians 1:6*

*"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings...". Matthew 23:37*

**God's grip on you is so fierce that we literally do not exist, take a breath, have a thought without Him, make a move. Though we may try, we can't run away from God!**

*"Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." Hebrews 13:5*

*"Surely I am with you always, to the end of the age." Matthew 28:20*

*"The Lord is righteous in all his ways and loving toward all he has made. The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth." Psalm 145:17-18*

*"O Lord, you have searched me and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O Lord. You hem me in—behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain. Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast." Psalm 139:1-10*

## God's love for you is enough.

*"His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires."*

*2 Peter 1:3-4*

*"And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus."*  
*Phil. 4:19*

## God has given you a cure for your loneliness.

*"So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord." Romans 14:8*

*"Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you." 1 Peter 5:7*

*"Come near to God and He will come near to you." James 4:7*

*"Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel." Isaiah 7:14*

## God has given you a cure for your insecurity.

*"If God is for us, who can be against us?" Romans 8:31*

*"That you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God." Ephesians 3:19*

*"Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed.. for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning, great is your faithfulness. I say to myself, the Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for Him. The Lord is good to those whose hope is in Him, to the one who seeks him." Lament. 3:22-25*

## It is Christ's real power and presence in us.

*"God who knows the heart, showed that He accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us." Acts 15:8*

*"God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." 2 Corinthians 5:21*

*"For if, by the trespass of one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ." Romans 5:17*

*"When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory." Colossians 3:4*

*"If we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him." Romans 6:8*

*"Count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus." Romans 6:11*

*"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." Deuteronomy 31:8*

*"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." Galatians 2:20*

**All of Him is enough – more than enough for what we need. We have all power, all authority, all peace, all perspective, all comfort, all healing, all deliverance, ALL VICTORY.**

*"But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed." Isaiah 53:5*

*The very power that raised Jesus from the dead is the power that is working in those who believe. Eph. 1:19-20*

*"If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, move from here to there, and it will move." Matthew 17:20*

*"Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory." Romans 8:17*

*"To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." Colossians 1:27*

*"I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you." Luke 10:19*

**All of this results in being held secure.**

*"Let the beloved of the Lord rest secure in him, for He shields Him all day long, and the one the Lord loves rests between his shoulders." Deuteronomy 33:12*

*"You were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of the light." Ephesians 5:8*

*"We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure." Hebrews 6:19*

**"God speaks and then waits for those with real faith to step into the Truth He has spoken. The question is whether we will take His words as the reality they are.**

**It's not about knowledge, but a person.**

**Understanding our questions can never be ultimately answered horizontally.**

*"I said to the Lord, 'you are my Lord. Apart from you I have no good thing.'" Psalm 19:2*

Your best response to such limitless love: **to worship**

“Our hearts are restless until they find their rest in Thee.” Augustine

“It is not that you have got God, but that He has got you.” Oswald Chambers

## **BARRAGED**

*"I came so they can have real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of." John 10:10 (MSG)*

Given the security we have in Christ that encompasses absolutely every aspect of ourselves and our lives, why in the world do we ever struggle?

What would ever make us question (or take our questions to others) again?

Why is it so difficult for us to hold onto our immovable security in God's infinite and unending love and power?

**The truth we discover after becoming Christians is that we are in the middle of a war.**

*"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." Ephesians 6:12*

*"Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings." 1 Peter 5:8-9*

*"I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." John 10:9-10*

*"Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes." Ephesians 6:11*

*"...in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes." 2 Corinthians 2:11*

**The battlefield in this war is your mind.**

*"As a man thinks within himself, so he is." Proverbs 23:7*

*"Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable--if anything is excellent or praiseworthy--think about such things." Philippians 4:8*

*"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will." Romans 12:2*

*"You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free" John 8:32*

*"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28*

*"Even so, consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus."  
Romans 6:11*

*"We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ."  
2 Corinthians 10:5*

*"The thoughts of the righteous are right." Proverbs 12:5*

*"Be careful what you think because your thoughts control your life." Proverbs 4:23 (New Century Version)*

## **We have two options, flee or fight.**

But, the war exists whether we want to acknowledge it or not. If we ignore it, we've lost already. A battle mentality is essential for the Christian life.

**"To live in ignorance of spiritual warfare is the most naïve and dangerous thing a person can do...And let me tell you something: you don't escape spiritual warfare simply because you choose not to believe it exists or because you refuse to fight it." ~Eldredge**

**"You are but a poor soldier of Christ if you think you can overcome without fighting." ~John Chrysostom**

## **How do we know how and what to fight? The primary weapon used against us? Lies**

*"You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies."  
John 8:44*

*"Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: 'Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony..."  
Revelation 12:10-11*

## **There is a diabolical scheme to get you to not believe the truths of God.**

If evil can place a thought in your mind – and he can, it isn't much more of a trick for him to make you think it's your idea.

Evil has no power over us except what we give over to him by failing to stand firm in the truth.

When we expose the lie, we win the battle.

Your defense is the truth. Reject anything inconsistent with biblical truth.

It's not a power encounter, it's a truth encounter.

That's why we are urged to stay alert! The evil one is the father of lies and his deceptions can worm their way into your mind if you let down your guard.

**We become susceptible to lies through:**

## **Comparison**

*"They measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves. They are not wise." 2 Corinthians 10:12*

## **Past hurt or wounds**

Evil uses our thinking by suggesting thoughts that tap into the lies in our painful memory. Then we act out in the present from the pain of our past.

## **Division**

*Jesus...said, 'Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand.' Matthew 12:25*

**Any distortion, confusion, deception, untruth, half-truth, doubt, discouragement, fear-invoking or faith-killing suggestion is part of this larger war where evil lies to us about: God, ourselves or others.**

(Look at his first act in Genesis 3:4, "You will surely not die," the serpent said to the woman.)

### Examples of common lies:

There's nothing special about me.

I'm fat/unattractive/not smart.

I'm not worth anyone's time.

I'll never be free.

I'm not good enough.

I'm not as spiritual as others, so I won't apply/try/join/reach out.

God can't use me.

Others are more valuable than me.

People are all self-centered.

Life is not fair.

My efforts won't do any good.

I'm a failure.

I have struggles/sins no one else does.

There is no use trying.

The Bible is full of contradictions.

I'll never succeed.

No one will ever love me for me.

I'll never be as good as him/her.

I'm dirty.

People can't be trusted.

I don't have what it takes.

I can't be forgiven for that.

God doesn't love me like others.

God is not fair.

It's not worth it.

It's too late.

I have nothing unique to offer.

My life is not making a difference.

God doesn't make sense.

The Bible doesn't apply to today.

## **We win by:**

### **Capturing**

*“We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”  
2 Corinthians 10:5*

*“For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.” 2 Corinthians 10:3*

### **Counting on**

*“In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.”  
Romans 6:11*

It is a matter of accepting what the Bible says about the death and resurrection of Jesus. Did His death defeat Satan? Is His resurrection eternal and invincible? Are we participants in both? If the Bible is true about these things, “counting” ourselves dead to sin isn’t a psychological ploy, it’s an effort to deny a lie and embrace the truth. It is believing what God says.

*“Then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free.” John 8:32*

*“So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.” John 8:36*

*“In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.” Ephesians 6:16*

### **Countering**

*“Resist the Devil and he will flee from you.” James 4:7*

*“My prayer is not that you take them out of the world, but that you protect them from the evil one...Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.” John 17:15, 17*

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

*“For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you receive the spirit of sonship.” Romans 8:15*

*“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” John 16:33*

*“You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.” 1 John 4:4*

*“It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then...” Galatians 5:1*

## **Greater is He!**

Remind the enemy of the end of the story! (Philippians 2)

### Another helpful tool:

**Recognize** – lies, schemes designed to make susceptible to lies, division, wayward thoughts, etc.

**Reject** (Rebuke/Renounce/Resist) – say “no” and push back, reminding self/evil of victory in Christ

**Replace** – with the truths of God, any and all you can think of

Sarah Young writes from the perspective of our Heavenly Father:  
“Beloved, don’t be surprised by the fierceness of the battle for your mind. The enemy and his evil army abhor your closeness to Me, so they send missiles of deception into your mind. Fixing your thoughts on Me will continue to be a struggle, because of this ongoing barrage of demonic inter-ference. Another factor is your own fallen nature: You mind did not escape the effects of the Fall. Many things can affect your ability to think clearly – poor sleep, health, or nutrition: lack of fresh air and exercise, worries of the world, excessive busyness. Nonetheless, it is still possible to exert much control over your thinking. Ask My Spirit to help you in this endeavor. Don’t simply let your thoughts run freely; set a guard over them. Be self-controlled and alert. When you become aware of hurtful or unholy thoughts, bring them to Me. Talk with Me about your struggles; choose to make your thoughts a conversation with Me. As you persevere in making good thought choices, you will enjoy my refreshing presence more and more.”

**Expect that every step you take towards God and His Kingdom will be opposed.**

*“The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers.” 1 Corinthians 4:4*

Common results when we believe lies and are attempting to find security, comfort or truth elsewhere:

*guilt feelings  
compulsive behaviors  
obsessive thoughts*

*substance abuse  
shame  
overeating*

*symptoms like anxiety  
overspending  
depression*

**Spiritual battle is not some mystical, mammoth effort, but an everyday internal commitment to believe God over circumstances, and choose Christ’s truth over self’s feelings.**

*The first piece of armor Paul names for standing against evil’s schemes? The belt of truth. Ephesians 6:14*

## **ACTIVATED**

*“No eye has seen nor ear has heard what God has in store for those who love Him.”  
1 Corinthians 2:9*

*“Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy.” Psalm 126:6*

*“Now the Lord is Spirit and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.”  
2 Corinthians 3:17*

### **God wants your life to be an exhibition of His presence.**

Walking close to Him on the path of life is far more important than comfort.

### **A woman who is held secure:**

#### **Battles spiritually every day**

What is one lie evil tried to tell me today?

What are the warning signs going off to tell me that I’m being lied to?

Fear, confusion, discouragement, doubt, insecurity, hopelessness,  
powerlessness

### **Perseveres in directing wayward thoughts back to Jesus**

*“Therefore, fix your thoughts on Jesus.” Hebrews 3:1*

*“For He Himself is our peace.” Ephesians 2:14*

*“I have set the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.” Psalm 16:8*

### **Understands the power of choice – the force of our will**

*“Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me bless his holy name.” Psalm 103:2*

*“Why so downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.” Psalm 43:5*

*“Find rest, O my soul, in God alone; my hope comes from him.” Psalm 62:5*

Who, in these verses, is that a “conversation” between?

For example, here are some daily choices we have for our behavior:

give grace	OR	hold grudges	reach out first	OR	wait for others
isolate	OR	be in community	personalize	OR	pray
be insecure	OR	secure	be anxious	OR	trust
judge	OR	release to God	run to friends	OR	run to Jesus
defensively	OR	courageously	complain	OR	be thankful
distant		reach out	hold anger	OR	show mercy
join in gossip	OR	redirect	have faith	OR	have fear
forgive	OR	become embittered			

### Is constantly on the lookout for **God!**

His love  
 His movement  
 His provision  
 His sovereignty

**A God hunt!!**

To the degree that Christ is present in our actions, our discussions, our prayers, and our lives, there's power.

### Accepts **struggles** and difficulties with eyes of faith

Doesn't assume somehow God lost track of you, but instead wonders how God might use you in the midst of it.

If we really believe we are agents for God's Kingdom, secure in our victory now and forever, only then can we see nearly every situation as an occasion in which to be Jesus to the world. Every problem then becomes an opportunity.

Seeing God right where you are in the situation instead of always crying for deliverance.

Lives with a broader perspective: Let others see eternity in your perspective of events. Let them see your confidence in the midst of your trials.

*"He will have no fear of bad news; his heart is steadfast, trusting in the Lord."  
 Psalm 112:7*

**Hope can see heaven through the thickest cloud. Thomas Benton Brooks**

### God wants to lead us to a place closer to Him through trials.

Any trial or difficulty has the purpose of shaping us so that we hear God's voice.

God is using everything to bring about greater communion with him.

*"So do not fear for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold y with my righteous right hand." Isaiah 41:10*

*If we embrace adversity, it brings a depth and richness to our soul. That capacity that will grow within is the new capacity to be “sorrowful, yet always rejoicing.” 2 Cor. 6:10*

**Remembers Jesus has been there – He has faced what you face in some form, and is determined to help you do the same.**

*“Every high priest...is able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray, since he himself is subject to weakness.” Hebrews 5:1-2*

*“During the days of Jesus’ life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission.” Hebrews 5:7*

*“Nevertheless, I am continually with you; you hold me by my right hand. You will guide me with your counsel and afterward receive me into glory.” Psalm 73:13-14*

*“As sure as God puts His children in the furnace He will be in the furnace with them.” Spurgeon*

**When God doesn’t deliver you out of a trial, He promises it will never be more than you can bear.**

*“When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze.” Isaiah 43:2-3*

*“We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.” 2 Corinthians 4:8-9*

*“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for you are with me, your rod and your staff, they comfort me.” Psalm 23:4*

*“In your unfailing love you will lead the people you have redeemed. In your strength you will guide them to your holy dwelling.” Exodus 15:13*

Though it can be overwhelming, the world and its troubles cannot crush the Spirit within you.

**The tribulations, distresses and persecutions that come into our lives are not meant to destroy us. They are designed to drive us into His arms of love.**

*“The joy of the Lord is your strength.” Nehemiah 8:10*

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

God is love, and everything that comes into your life must be filtered through His fingers of love. No one can touch you, speak to you, look at you, or do anything to you without His permission. If adversity comes into your life, it comes with His permission (Isaiah 45:7). And if it comes, it will work together for your good. It will be used to conform you to His image (Romans 8:28-29)...Whatever God allows to come into your life, you can know it is not designed to embitter, disfigure or destroy you. It is permitted by a loving God for the purpose of conforming you to the image of His Son, Jesus.

*"Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial that you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed."*  
1 Peter 4:12-13

*"The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles." Psalm 34:17*

**The will of God will never lead me where the power of God cannot enable me. When we live this way, then and only then can we give thanks in all circumstances.**

*"Trust me in your times of trouble, and I will rescue you, and you will give me glory." Ps. 50:15*

*"Some boast in chariots and some in horses, but we will boast in the name of the Lord our God." Psalm 20:7*

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

*"Should we accept only good from God, and not adversity?" Job 2:10*

Have you learned for yourself that, though God's grace does not exempt us from trials, it is more than enough to take us through them?

**Speaks and practices gratitude**

*"Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."*  
1 Thessalonians 5:18

**Having been made in the image of God, we can't ever underestimate the shaping power of speech.**

*"Set a guard over my mouth, o Lord, keep a watch over the door of my lips."*  
Psalm 141:3

*"The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit."*  
Prov. 18:21

*"Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing."*  
Proverbs 12:18

*"Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." Colossians 3:17*

**Focuses on what is not what *is not***

*"So, we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal." 2 Corinthians 4:18*

*"Blessed are those who have learned to acclaim you, who walk in the light of your presence, O Lord. They rejoice in your name all day long; they exult in your righteousness." Psalm 18:15-16*

### **Uses the equipment constantly: prayer, His Word and His Spirit**

It is easy to take prayer for granted. It's so commonly encouraged and God is so readily accessible that we treat prayer like a favor we do for Him; it becomes trivial to us. But the right to communicate with God was bought with a heavy price, and there is nothing trivial about it. It is a privilege and it is powerful. It is the most effective thing a Christian can do.

*"Pray without ceasing." 1 Thessalonians 5:17*

*"The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." James 5:16*

### **Nothing will change you more than regular interaction with God's Word.**

*"For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart." Hebrews. 4:12*

*"Every word of God is flawless; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him." Proverbs 30:5*

*"Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ." Romans 10:17*

*"...so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it." Isaiah 55:11*

### **God's Spirit is constantly at work, weaving, guiding, directing, comforting.**

*"Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit," says the LORD Almighty." Zechariah 4:6*

*"In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express." Romans 8:26*

### **Abandons search for self-fulfillment and lives a radical God-oriented, others-focused life**

Live instead for the agenda of Jesus kingdom. Be his witness, live in his spirit, seek his will on earth as it is in heaven. One day down the road, you may notice a startling phenomenon.

**In abandoning your own idea of the kingdom for his, you'll find that his includes everything you deeply desired anyway.**

*"Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it." Matt. 10:39*

*"This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers." 1 John 3:16*

*"Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." John 15:13*

*"Before we can pray 'Thy kingdom come,' we must be willing to pray, 'My kingdom go.'"*  
*Alan Redpath*

**God, who wants to be known, will always be near to those who want to know Him.**

*"It is we who are the circumcision we who worship by the Spirit of God, who glory in Christ Jesus and who put no confidence in the flesh." Philippians 3:3*

**Forgive others regularly**

*"A man's wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offense."*  
*Proverb 19:11*

*"He who is forgiven little, loves little." John 7:47*

**Insecure people hold grudges.**

**Expects God to work**

The key to seeing God's work is to expect Him to work.

The more consistently you rely on God, the better your life will be.

When we pray small prayers, we are underestimating God.

We have been designed to need Christ moment by moment.

What you really need is to keep me always before you – not just truths about me. It's so easy for my children to confuse knowledge of me without knowing me experientially.

**Always always, always does something in response to God.**

God has an amazing ability to multiply our meager efforts.

Don't allow your opinion of yourself to keep you from moving because you judge you're not good enough.

***"Then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free." John 8:32***

## FORGIVENESS

### What it is not:

1. It is not the same as forgetting. You can forgive even if you can never forget.
2. It is not saying that what happened to you was okay. You don't want to soften or deny the reality of the act or the damage.
3. It is not asking for retribution, restitution, or atonement. Forgiving means to let go of vengeance.
4. It is not allowing repetition of the hurt. Forgiveness does not mean that you then need to put yourself in the same hurtful situation.
5. It is not between you and the other person. It is between you and God.
6. It is not using the past against the other person. It is a willingness to stop punishing or judging the other.
7. It is not dependent upon the other person's response. We can't make forgiveness dependent on an apology or recognition from the other person that what they did was wrong.

### What it is:

1. Forgiveness is a choice and decision. You decide to forgive because it is the right thing to do.
2. It is an act of obedience. We are clearly called to forgive no matter how we may feel.
3. It is a spiritual event. It can, as a consequence, have positive psychological and physical effects.
4. It is agreeing to live with the effects of what someone else has done to you. You need to forgive even if the offense has caused you long-term or ongoing damage.
5. It is allowing justice to be handled by God. It is a choice to let go of attempting to control the consequences to the offender.
6. It is a process that often needs to be repeated. With new memories of old offenses and renewed anger, you may have to repeat as necessary.
7. It is without limits. We are urged to forgive all things, even the worst.
8. It is allowing the mercy of God to work through you. It is a recognition that you alone are incapable of having the love and grace to forgive without letting the love of God flow through you.
9. It needs to be done with thoroughness. We need to attempt to forgive all people for all things as God brings them to mind.
10. It is a choice to forgive transgressions whether they were intentional or not. The criterion is: Did their actions result in you being hurt some way.