

# Overcoming Life's Problems for the Christian

By  
Prof. Mario Velez TH.M.  
[www.MarioVelez.Net](http://www.MarioVelez.Net)

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# Problem Solving Methods of the Christian Life

## Introduction

Every problem in life has a solution that is stated in the Word of God; thus, Scripture establishes the fact that God can solve all problems in the human race. Yet, today God reveals Himself and His teachings through the written pages of the Bible, which we call the Word of God, the mind of Christ, and the voice of the Holy Spirit. The definition of inspiration is that God so supernaturally directed the human writers of Scripture that without waiving their personal feelings, human intelligence, literary style, or any human factor, His complete and accurate message toward mankind was recorded. The original languages of Scripture are the very words that bear the authority of God's divine authorship.

God never left us with biblical truth sitting in our souls and only human power to apply it. Your doctrinal truth is not applied through human functions but through the divine functions that the Lord has provided. Therefore, there is no such thing as a problem in life that does not have a solution in the Word of God. For the unbeliever, on the other hand, solutions are always related to establishment principles, for only in establishment principles can the unbeliever derive virtue and make it a part of his life. Thus, solutions for the unbeliever are limited because he does not have a relationship with God in time or in eternity. As a result, problem solving is restricted to the person who is not a believer in the saving work of Jesus Christ. Although unbelievers may be able to solve some of their problems, due to their lack of relationship with the Lord, unbelievers do not have answers to all their problems.

Consequently, the subject of problems and solutions are always directed toward the believer in Jesus Christ. I am specifically speaking about the Church Age believer who possesses the mystery guidelines of the Church Age, as they are found in our New Testament Scriptures. The Church Age believer has been given a collection of invisible spiritual assets such as the problem-solving methods we are now studying. In addition, we have available the unique divine power of God the Holy Spirit and extraordinary privileges that are related to being a royal child of the living God. In other words, beyond worldly knowledge there is the most marvelous system of solving your own problems from your own thinking since each one of our lives are basically what our thoughts make them. So unless you put biblical truth first in your life, you will always have unsolvable problems in your life. For any believer to have unsolvable problems in their lives simply means they have failed to execute God's plan, will, and purpose for their life in this great power experiment of the Church Age. The malfunction of the renovating of the mind through biblical truth is a testimony that the Christian has failed to learn the Word of God as it relates to the doctrinal New Testament truth of the Church Age. Subsequently, the spiritual causalities of believers are because they have failed to advance to spiritual maturity and failed to learn God's most fantastic system whereby you can actually solve every problem in your own life totally apart from counseling or help from another human being.

There are two general causes for a believer not achieving the mental renovation through God's Word that Paul exhorts every believer to maintain in *Romans 12:1-2*. Either a believer simply rejects the doctrinal truth of the Church Age when they hear it or they are simply indifferent to that same doctrinal truth.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. (KJV Rom. 12:1-2)

## *Understanding the Problem-Solving Methods*

As an overview, the problem solving methods begin with the *confession technique* that is taught in 1 John 1:9. As a result, we become *filled by power of God the Holy Spirit*, which is the second method for the Christian. The remaining steps in progressive order continue with the *practice of resting in faith*, being *oriented to God's grace* and being *oriented to God's Word*. Staying consistent in using these first five methods allows the Christian to develop a *personal love for God the Father*, which in turn will give us the ability to have an *impersonal or unconditional love for all mankind*. The progression continues by also *sharing God's happiness* and a *true personal sense of destiny* and ultimately we reach the state of having a *complete occupation with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*.

The first three methods of *confession*, being *filled with the Spirit* and *resting in faith* are part of our spiritual childhood. The fourth and fifth steps of being *oriented to God's grace* and *Word* are part of our spiritual adolescence. The last five problem solvers for Christians constitute our spiritual adulthood and consist of having *personal love for God the Father*, *impersonal or unconditional love for all mankind*, *sharing the happiness of God*, having a *personal sense of destiny* and being *occupied with Jesus Christ*.

The problem-solving methods positioned within the stream of consciousness of our soul provide an accurate and objective application of those learned methods to our experience as believers. Doctrinal truth is applied to experience by learning and using the problem-solving methods. The problem-solving methods are the only means of applying biblical truth in our mind to the outside pressures of adversity or to prosperity. When you apply God's Word apart from any one of the problem-solving methods, it is inaccurate, it is distorted, and inevitably it leads to false doctrinal conclusions.

The problem-solving methods are how you relate doctrinal truth to your experience and this is how sharing the happiness of God is developed. The application of doctrinal truth to experience establishes spiritual values that are not shaken by anything you see or hear in your experience. Spiritual values are established through the application of doctrinal truth to your reality. This same truth circulating in our stream of consciousness of our soul is the mirror into which we can look and see ourselves as we really are or what could be referred to as having an objective self-evaluation. God's methods for solving problems provide the basis for our decisions

and values. God's biblical truth changes your values in life that are related to your decisions. Having God's methods in our stream of consciousness of our soul establishes right priorities and true spiritual values, which causes us to be able to fulfill the protocol plan of God. Protocol is a reference, a set of rules or code of behavior. There is a precise set of rules within God's perfect plan that we are not to deviate from at all. These rules are the code of behavior mandated for every born-again child of God.

The problem-solving methods actually provide the means of winning four great battles in our soul since God's divine solutions are the only solutions, and not human solutions. Paul certainly learned the lesson of the four great battles that we are mandated to win in our Christian race. These four battles pertain to *stress, sin, false doctrinal teaching* and *wrong solutions* in our soul. The last battle of wrong solutions would include having defense mechanisms. (2 Cor. 12:9)

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

The problem-solving methods are designed to provide self-motivation in order to persevere in our spiritual life. Motivation is based on the spiritual values that are created by our spiritual skills, and that is the only true motivation for the spiritual life. We are called to persevere by deploying the problem-solving methods as we grow spirituality. It is only when we position these problem-solving methods in the stream of consciousness of our mind when we are able to withstand the outside pressure of adversity from becoming an internal stress pressure within our soul. A failure for a Christian to deploy these problem solvers within their mind will result in being under the control of our sin nature.

Adversity is an inevitable part of everybody's life, yet stress does not have to be, as we always have the option of allowing adversity in our lives to become stress within our soul or not. The external circumstances that constitute adversity in our lives do not actually hurt us, yet the stress that we allow those circumstances to create within our soul can be detrimental. Stress in our soul neutralizes our spiritual life because it is nothing more than being under the control of our sin nature and this is a contradiction to the plan of God for our lives. As a result, the instructions for us to confess our sins privately to the Lord, as instructed in First John 1:9 becomes vital in maintaining our fellowship with the Lord. Confession is the method by which we restore our fellowship with God the Holy Spirit and it is imperative for the born-again believer to consistently walk under the power of Spirit.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (KJV 1 John 1:9)

Thus, the problem-solving methods of the Christian life function to provide the God-given spiritual environment for our soul. This soul environment is not only the best, but also the only perfect environment in all of human history. So, the issue is not actually our outside environment but the environment of our soul. The environment of our soul completely depends on us knowing and applying the ten problem solving methods of the Christian life. Not only did mankind fall at the beginning of history with Adam and Eve, but at the end of history as well. Therefore, the issue should not be our overt environment, but our inner soul environment.

These problem solvers that the Lord has graciously provided for us are based on us learning, retaining and applying all aspects of God's Word. These methods should go beyond mere academic knowledge, but should be part of our frame of reference so that we can master and apply them to every area of our life. This is the ultimate objective for every born-again believer in Jesus Christ that is referred to as attaining the fullness of God that Paul brings out in Ephesians 3:19.

And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God. (KJV Eph. 3:19)

Achieving the fullness of God is a tremendous beneficial victory because it is at this stage of our spiritual race that we understand that all these problem-solving methods are infinitely more than what we could ever ask or think (Eph. 3:20). We glorify the Lord when we make these methods part of our mode of operation consistently and become a testimony that the Lord's power system does indeed work (Eph. 3:21). Yet, all these devices are always dependant upon learning all the biblical truth that is connected with each one, they are not mere isolated devices, but are dependant on a full understanding of the different categories of doctrinal New Testament truth that is found in God's Word. The born-again believer in Jesus Christ was designed to perceive, understand and apply the problem-solving methods under the privacy of their priesthood<sup>1</sup> through a qualified and humble pastor-teacher. The Lord never designed the Christian to grumble and get emotional about any of our sins and failures that might invade our lives. To do so means that we have not yet reached the fullness of God that we are commanded to obtain. Sharing our problems with others is a contradiction to God's power system for the Church Age, which is designed so that we can solve our own problems from our thinking, and there is absolutely no benefit in trying to solve problems from the thinking of someone else.

The mastering of God's problem-solving methods will result in us having a relaxed mental attitude powered with God's happiness regardless of whether we find ourselves in a moment of prosperity or difficulty. The key to our spiritual growth is to face every circumstance in life from the viewpoint of God's problem-solving methods as we apply them to all of our circumstance and advance in our spiritual growth. Our problem-solvers from God are designed to defuse the mental anguish that might invade our mind. These problem-solvers from the Lord are designed to take priority in our life since they are all based on God's Word, and without them being prioritized appropriately, they will never be able to be used effectively. Without the benefit of their effectiveness, a

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<sup>1</sup> Scripture teaches that all believers in Jesus Christ are royal priests and have no need of a mediator other than Jesus Christ (*1 Pet. 2:5, 9; Rev. 1:6*). As royal priests we are now privileged to be able to come boldly before God's throne (*Heb. 4:16*).

Christian will never be consistent, and regress to things that will cause malfunction within their spiritual life, causing them to function in a crisis as an unbeliever.

Let's take a look at why there is so much confusion when it comes to the life of a born-again believer in Jesus Christ and the problems that cause believers to malfunction when it comes to their method of operation in their spiritual life. Afterwards we will study each problem-solving method individually and in more detail.

### ***Problems to a Believer's Method of Operation in their Spiritual Life***

A believer's problems begin with them having a higher emphasis in regards to their relationship with people as opposed to their relationship with God. In addition, believers also encounter problems when they attempt to execute the Christian way of life for the Church Age through their own human power instead of through the divine power available through being under the power of God the Holy Spirit. Another problem for believers is that they lack understanding about what the Bible teaches in regards to such subjects as love. Most believers associate the love that the Bible teaches with some particular concept of what it means to them and they never truly grasp the understanding of the command to love God and to love all people.

Therefore, the basis for believers having such problems in their lives all begin from having a malfunction in regards to learning and applying accurately what the Bible teaches on a consistent basis. As a result, many believers are confused about what constitutes the precise method of operation in regards to their spiritual life and they do not allow that method of operation to take precedence over the Old Testament and the Mosaic Law. This results in a failure to understand that true spirituality is an absolute.

There is also a lack of understanding of our collection of invisible assets that God the Father prepared for us in eternity past. It also means that there is a total lack of understanding of the mystery doctrines of the New Testament Church Age. Needless to say, Christians today have failed to understand the unique assets we have in this dispensation of the Church Age. Above all, it means that there is a failure to understand the problem-solving methods of the Christian way of life and how each one works and what each one does.

### ***Emphasizing your Relationship with People over your Relationship with God***

Not only is there a present trend today, but also in past generations in Christianity to emphasize a relationship with people over a relationship with God. There is a prevailing assumption in every generation that a good relationship with people means that you automatically have a good relationship with God, which is not the case. In actuality, a truly good relationship with people only occurs from first having a good relationship with God. This erroneous assumption is one of the signs of our spiritual death, which is seen in our original parents in the garden.

Immediately upon committing the original sin, both Adam and Eve assigned first priority to their relationship with one another in covering themselves with fig leaves. They did not give consideration to the Lord until He came in the garden, and they hid from Him. Adam and Eve were naked after their original sin of disobedience, and proceeded to resolve their problem of nakedness by covering themselves. In fact, their first function in spiritual death was one of self-righteousness. They made the erroneous assumption that by covering their naked bodies with fig leaves and adjusting to each other that they would be adjusted to God, which was not the case at all. When the Lord came to visit in the garden, they discovered the true meaning of spiritual death, which is total helplessness to have fellowship with God on the basis of their own merits, and as a result they hid from our Lord.

Of course, this trend has continued throughout the history of mankind so that even today, many believers in ignorance and/or rejection of biblical truth allow their emphasis on people to take precedence over an emphasis on the Lord. This by far would have to be a major obstacle as to why the majority of born-again believers never come to understand these marvelous problem-solving methods. This problem can only be resolved by consistent perception of biblical truth. Specifically, this involves the learning, believing and applying God's biblical principles to every situation in life on a consistent basis. This will require that our number one priority in the Christian way of life be our relationship with the Lord.

Thus, all the problem-solving methods are tied to having our relationship with the Lord as our number one priority, which we will see as we begin to examine each problem-solving method individually. It is no coincidence that every Church Age believer is a royal priest and as such is able to represent himself before God. In actuality, our royal priesthood is the basis for the function of all ten problem-solving methods of our Christian life. Therefore, it is imperative to understand that there can be no solution to our human relationships until we first understand accurately our relationship with God, which begins to occur when we reach the high ground of Spiritual adulthood.

### ***Using Human Power is not Part of God's Plan***

Many believers make the mistake of attempting to execute the plan of God through their own human power or what could also be referred to as the energy of the flesh. Yet, God is perfect and He can only design a perfect plan for us. The problem does not reside in God's plan but instead with us since we are clearly not perfect. Therefore, our perfect Lord designed His plan for the Church Age so that we as believers can have a relationship with Him first as we make Him our number one priority. We have to keep in mind that although we may be born-again believers in Jesus Christ, we still have a sin nature and will still sin and fail as First John chapter one teaches. Throughout the New Testament Epistles we find examples of problems that believers experienced due to their sin nature and their failure to use the problem-solving method of confession.

The perfect plan of God was designed by Him to be performed by perfect power, and we have it available by staying in fellowship, under the power of God the Holy Spirit combined with the power of His Word circulating in the stream of consciousness of our soul. The problem occurs when we continue to intrude with our own ability in all forms of self-righteous legalism. God has provided His power for the execution of His plan and nothing else will compare. Each eternal, immutable, infinite, omnipotent, sovereign person of the Trinity indwells every believer in Jesus Christ and we are all guaranteed divine power through the indwelling of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is certainly sad that never before in human history has so much power been made available to each individual believer, as we have in our present Church Age, yet so many squander it because of ignorance or indifference. The key of the matter is that God's problem-solving methods all function on the thinking of Christ, which is nothing more or less in what we know as the Bible or the thinking of our Lord. With that in mind, our life on this earth is basically what our thoughts make it.

Therefore, the key to the perfect plan of God is the fact that divine power is guaranteed to each one of us, as believers in Jesus Christ, and is available to each one of us for the taking. God's divine power is delegated to each one of us through the learning, believing and applying the mystery doctrines of the Church Age. This utilization comes to us through the use of the problem-solving methods. Therefore, these problem-solving methods become the real key to successful experiential Christianity.

### ***The Consequence of Staying Ignorant or Rejecting God's Word***

The consequence of believers rejecting God's Word is a guarantee that they will be ignorant of every subject that is related to solving problems from their own base of thinking, making it impossible for them to execute God's perfect protocol plan. The alternative to not using God's perfect plan will mean that we will find a very inadequate substitute. In fact, the use of inferior methods that are not based on God's Word is the reason that so many Christian marriages fail.

It is an absolute impossibility for a believer to fulfill the will, plan and purpose of God for his life apart from learning, believing and applying the mystery New Testament doctrinal principles for the Church Age. Therefore, the root problem for believers failing is simply that they are ignorant of what the Bible teaches for the Church Age and end up having shoddy and erroneous thinking. As I have mentioned, the key to our success is to understand that each one of our lives is what our thoughts make them (Prov. 23:7).

For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee. (KJV Prov. 23:7)

Yet, there is no excuse for any believer to remain ignorant because God always provides prepared pastor-teachers for every generation of the Church Age to communicate all the necessary doctrinal truth that is required for any Church Age believer to succeed. The success of every believer is based on the mystery doctrinal truth for the Church Age. Simply put, understanding of the doctrinal New Testament truth for the Church Age will result in a believer becoming an invisible hero, but ignorance will result in a tremendous amount of problems for a believer.

### ***The Problems Associated in a Life of Biblical Ignorance***

As we have already seen, emphasizing your relationship with people over a relationship with God can certainly put our priorities out of order. Believers can also get absorbed in such emotional sins as being fearful, worrying and having anxiety. Emotional sins strengthen when we reside in Satan's world system of arrogance, of which would include such things as striving for human wealth and success as oppose to striving for divine wealth and success, which will transcend this life.

Professing Christians can also have a misunderstanding when it comes to the problems of substituting emotion for spirituality, or making emotion the criteria for their life. There is certainly nothing wrong with emotions since God did give them to us, but as appreciators to what is in our frame of thinking. Making emotions the criteria for our life can make for an unstable individual.

Another prevailing problem for professing Christians is related to security, such as ignorance of our eternal security as of the moment of our salvation, or confusion about our temporal security, which means we do not understand God's logistical grace.

The tendency for us to create panaceas or universal cure-alls for our lives can also range from marriage, a social life, pleasure-seeking, health, achievement, sex to material things and possessions as a panacea or status symbols for happiness. The achievement syndrome can make an individual a workaholic when they attempt to derive their happiness from this condition.

Therefore, it is vital for the born-again Christian to avoid all these problems by not being ignorant of what the Bible teaches. Our mental health depends on us having God's doctrinal viewpoint; otherwise, we will be deceived by what Satan's world system has to offer us as an alternative to what God's divine system has for each believer. Let us examine the thinking skills that we will need to execute in order to operate effectively within God's wonderful power system and then we will breakdown the actual methods for solving our problems.

### ***Understanding God's Methods for Solving Our Problems***

Before studying each problem-solving method individually, let us look briefly at what constitutes the thinking skills of our mind that God the Holy Spirit will use to allow us to be able to learn, retain and apply the Biblical principles that pertain to each problem-solving method. Of course, it will always start with getting under a qualified pastor-teacher on a consistent basis.

The first thinking skill that we will explore is *comprehension*, which is simply the capability of the mind to be able to perceive and understand. God the Holy Spirit is He who provides the divine power that we need to understand God's Word. It is the Holy Spirit who teaches our spirit in order for us to grasp the doctrinal truth that is taught by the qualified pastor-teacher. Of course, it does no good to understand God's Word unless we retain it, so the thinking skill of *memory* is used by the Holy Spirit to retain or recall what has previously been comprehended. We will also need our thinking skill of *problem solving*, which is useless if we lack common sense and allow our sin nature to be in control. We will also need our thinking skill of *decision-making*. Our *decision-making* will be as good or bad as the facts that we have available to base those decisions on. Therefore, good decisions will be based on having good and accurate information. This is why it is so important that believers base their information on all aspects of God's Word. The last two thinking skills that will need to be developed in order to use the problem-solving methods effectively will be that of *creativity* and *awareness*. *Creativity* is referring to our state of being creative or having the ability to have original thoughts, expressions, impressions or designs. In order for us to be able to be original in communicating or expressing God's Word, we will have to maximize our understanding of what the Bible teaches by being under a qualified pastor-teacher and being consistent in staying under the power of the Holy Spirit. *Awareness* is having an understanding of the things that make us alert to such things as dangerous situations or repercussions of certain decisions. *Awareness* is also part of knowing that application of God's truth to our experiences is important. Thus, there is no accurate application of God's truth to our experiences unless we have all the problem-solving methods operating in our soul through the means of all our thinking skills that I have just mentioned.

I know we talk about equality as far as the world is concerned, but only the Lord has provided true equality for every believer to have a chance to reach the high ground of maturity. Every born-again believer in Jesus Christ has a completely equal chance and privilege to execute God's plan for their life. The basis for a believer reaching maturity in Christ does not depend on intelligence, height, nationality or gender, but on the maximization of the problem-solving methods that the Lord has graciously provided to each one of us. The only mental handicaps that may hinder us from maximizing the fullness of Christ in our lives are the ones that we create by being negative or indifferent to what the Bible teaches. The Lord is the only person who can solve our problems and has given us His problem-solving methods for each one of us to use, not maximizing these methods in our lives only hinders us. We are the only ones who can choose to learn and maximize these methods in our spiritual life. No one can learn and apply these methods for you except you! Therefore, any weak links in our spiritual life will be because we choose to be ignorant or have failed to form these methods within our stream of consciousness of our mind and having them ready to apply to our experiences. These methods are not operational until we put them to use in our life. Without application we have failed to follow through in our spiritual life and this will result in confusion and instability.

With all this in view, let us begin our examination of each of God's problem-solving methods in more detail so that we can learn and apply them to our experiences.

## ***The Problems-Solving Methods of Spiritual Childhood***

### ***The Mandate to Confess Sins***

Again, the procedure to confess our sins is given to us in 1 John 1:9 and is extremely important because this is the only means for a believer in Jesus Christ to recover the filling of the Spirit.<sup>2</sup> All of the other methods for solving problems are dependent on confession because without the filling of the Holy Spirit we are helpless to have a spiritual life.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (KJV 1 John 1:9)

By no means should this verse be taken to be a means of acquiring eternal life for an unbeliever, which is always conditioned on faith in the saving work of Jesus Christ on the cross (John 3:36; 10:28). The mandate to confess sin is the means of recovering fellowship for the born-again child of God who already possesses eternal life. The Apostle John emphasizes fellowship in verse 3, 6 and 7 of this same chapter and begins by calling his readers children of God in 1 John 2:1. The Apostle also included himself in the mandate of confession by the words 'we' and 'us'. Therefore, it should be clear that 1 John 1:9 is a mandate for believers and should not be taken out of context to refer to unbeliever

Confession is the only problem solver that we have available that functions when we are in a state of sin and out of fellowship. As we have seen, every believer is a royal priest and as such we are mandated to use confession to recover the filling of the Spirit, which is lost when we sin and are under the power of our sin nature. Confession is the key to our spiritual life because without the filling of the Spirit we will not be able to learn the rest of God's problem-solving methods, much less apply them correctly. It is unfortunate that confession is one of the spiritual assets that believers neglect the most and the reason there is so much confusion among believers as to what constitutes the Christian way of life for our present Church Age.

God's power system for the Christian can only be executed under the filling of the Holy Spirit and using confession on a consistent basis is how we succeed in using God's system. Any sin contradicts God's power system and hinders us from ever advancing to the high ground of spiritual maturity. Scripture is quite direct about believers who neglect confession and remain in a

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<sup>2</sup> The indwelling of the Spirit is permanent because the believer is the Temple of God and is related to our new regenerate state as children of God. The filling of the Spirit, on the other hand, can be lost through sin and is related to our Christian experiential power and service as we grow to maturity (Rom. 8:9-11; 1 Cor. 6:19; Eph. 5:18). The filling of the Spirit can only be recovered by the confession method that is taught in 1 John 1:9.

state of carnality as a result of it (1 Cor. 3:3). We are told that such a believer is a double-minded enemy and hater of God and the cross (Phil. 3:18; Jas. 4:4,8; Jn. 15:23). Such a believer is also called a disciple of the devil who is either grieving or quenching the Spirit (1 Jn. 3:8,10; Eph. 4:30; 1 Thess. 5:19). Thus, confessing consistently to God the Father through 1 John 1:9 is extremely important because without it no Christian will ever fulfill God's purpose and plan for their life.

We should never lose touch of the reality that we will have a sin nature as long as we are living in our present body of flesh. Confession is the only way we solve the problem of sin in our everyday experiences and we will always have need of it. As we progress in our spiritual growth we will use confession less frequently; although, there will never be a time when we will have no need of it entirely. Even in spiritual maturity we will still sin sporadically.

The word 'confess' in 1 John 1:9 is translated from the Greek verb *homologomen* from *homologeō* meaning, 'admit, acknowledge, cite'. The word refers to citing a case in a courtroom that confirms your argument. It is acknowledging a case that has gone to court and judged. In the case of believers, we are acknowledging our sins that the Lord was judged for on the cross. In addition, the fact that this verb in the present tense lets us know that it will be a continual action on our part. As a result of continually acknowledging our sins, God is faithful in forgiving us and cleansing us of all unrighteousness; thus, recovering our fellowship with God the Holy Spirit.

As royal priest, it is vital for believers to name, or acknowledges our sins privately and directly to God because our sins will destroy our spiritual life. As all of God's grace provisions to us, acknowledging our sins does not carry any merit on our part. How we feel about our sins is not the issue, but simply acknowledging them as we are instructed to do, God is the one who is faithful each time in cleansing us from all unrighteousness. The sins that are to be cited before the Lord are those that we commit after being saved. The sins that we committed before becoming born-again saved children of God were all forgiven and canceled out at the moment of faith in Jesus Christ as our personal Savior (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14). It is because of our justified position in Christ that gives us the right as royal priest to acknowledge our sins before God and be instantly forgiven.

In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: (KJV Col. 1:14)

Therefore, the instruction to confess in 1 John 1:9 is specifically for the born-again believer in Jesus Christ who is in sin and in need of recovering the filling of the Spirit. The fact that believers will sin is brought out by John in the previous and following verse that tells us that if we say we don't sin we only deceive ourselves and are not abiding in the truth and making God a liar (1 John 1:8, 10)

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. (KJV 1 John 1:8-10)

It is an arrogant self-righteous legalistic mindset that tries to insert some sort of system of atonement through our own means by feeling sorry or making a commitment to never do a sin again. This type of mindset disregards God's grace policy, which means that it was God who did all the work in salvation. The saving work of Jesus Christ on the cross is the basis for the forgiveness of our past, present and future sins. There is absolutely no type of atonement that we can do on our part when it comes to the forgiveness of our sins, whether before or after being saved. Forgiveness of sins is a work of God! There is nothing we can add to faith in Jesus Christ for our salvation and there is also nothing we can add to the citing of our sins through confession for recovering our fellowship with God and being filled with the Spirit.

So, the method is very simple when we understand God's grace policy. We are forgiven for our sins as believers as soon as we acknowledge those sins before the Lord in the privacy of our priesthood. As a result, we recover our fellowship with God and are once again under the power of God the Holy Spirit; thus, avoiding the problem of living in carnality. We hinder our spiritual life completely when we fail to use confession to recover our fellowship. We shatter our spiritual life in regards to our relationship with God and people as well as having emotional malfunctions.

Again, it is God who is righteous and just to forgive us because whatever sin we acknowledge has already been judged on the cross. Not only does God forgive the sin that we acknowledge, but also any other sins that we may not even be aware about, which is what is being referred to in 1 John 1:9 when it is declared that He cleanses us from all unrighteousness. These sins of ignorance are the sins we commit when we are out of fellowship, which only perpetuate when we neglect using the confession technique. Not only do we have to understand the method of confession but we also have to put it to use in our lives. For a believer not to use confession in their life means that they are not aware about this problem-solving method or they do not accept the authority of God's Word to use it for the recovery of their fellowship with God. Every born-again believer will always have the option to either believe the mandate found in 1 John 1:9 and use it consistently, or we will not believe it and reject using it in our life. The only proof of knowing that through confession we are forgiven of sins and cleansed of all unrighteousness and filled with the Holy Spirit is because the Bible declares this. Through faith or confidence in this message we put this method to use in our life because we understand that the consequence is being in carnality and out of fellowship.

God's provisional method of confession is the number one basic method for our spiritual life. We have to realize that it is utterly impossible to recover the filling of the Spirit and execute God's plan for our life without using confession. Without the filling of the Spirit we cannot advance to spiritual maturity because none of us are able to execute the Christian way of life without the power of God the Holy Spirit. The Christian way of life is supernatural and only God the Holy Spirit provides this power for us. Not understanding the filling of the Spirit will result in us creating a set of self-righteous legalistic superficial set of dos and don'ts that we

will use to measure our spirituality. By far, not understanding the confession method to recover the filling of the Spirit would probably be the biggest obstacle for so many professing Christian and the reason they are stagnant in their spiritual life.

It is also imperative to know what constitutes sin so that we can either reject it in the temptation stage or we can confess if we do succumb to it. The more understanding we have about sin the shorter account we will have before God and we will be able to build up a resistance against it. There are a tremendous amount of Christians that are committing sins that they do not realize are sin. As a result, even though they may confess, they end up getting out of fellowship very quickly and this makes for an unstable condition that is not conducive to our spiritual growth.

In conclusion, as royal priests, we must understand what constitutes sin so that we can resolve the issue before the Lord through the confession method that He has so graciously provided. Using confession on a consistent basis is extremely important for the simple fact that our entire spiritual life is depending on its proper use of it in our lives. Without the use of confession we will not be able to progress to using the other problem-solving methods, of which the filling of the Spirit is next.

### *The Filling of the Holy Spirit*

Through the use of the recovery method of confession we are put in fellowship or what could be considered as being filled with the Spirit. It is only when we are under the power of the Holy Spirit that we can produce any works that are acceptable before God. In 1 Corinthians Paul used the metaphor of a master builder when describing the works done under the power of the Spirit and works done under the power of our flesh (1 Cor. 3:1-17). The works done under the power of the Spirit are considered gold, silver and precious stones, while those done when we are out of fellowship and under the power of the flesh are considered wood, hay and straw. Of course, Jesus Christ is the foundation whereby we stand saved and it is on this foundation that we build on.

Only the works done under the power of the Spirit will stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ and will receive rewards. Therefore, it is imperative that we are filled with the Spirit before anything we do for God is counted as gold, silver, and precious stones! All genuine production by a believer is a result of spirituality and spiritual growth as well. By no means is spirituality the result of our works, but it is spirituality that is the means of achieving legitimate Christian production. Spirituality is not achieved through any good works that we might do or any sacrifice we might make, nor any type of system of giving we might adhere to. Spirituality, as is salvation, is a work of God alone! Through His provision of confession we obtain spirituality by being put under the filling of the Holy Spirit and under His control.

At the moment of salvation when we accepted our Lord Jesus Christ as our personal Savior, God the Holy Spirit indwelt our body in order to create, not only a temple, but also a place of residence for the indwelling of Christ as the Shekinah Glory (1 Cor. 6:19). Yet, at the same time the Holy Spirit indwells our body, we also continue to be indwelt by our sin nature that we inherited from Adam. Thus, the issue for every born-again believer in Jesus Christ is what power is each of us going to be controlled by, that of the Spirit or that of the sin nature. We will always make the choice in this matter because we always have the freewill to make that conscience decision for one or the other. When we exercise our freewill to give into temptation and sin, then the Holy Spirit will be either grieved or quenched and no longer in control of our soul (1 Thess. 5:19; Eph. 4:30). As a result, the sin nature will then be in control of our soul and sin nature control is very destructive to our spiritual life.

The filling of the Spirit is also an absolute state of being filled with the Spirit whereby the omnipotence or divine power of the Holy Spirit enables us along with the momentum we get from learning and applying God's Word. So, although the manifestation of the filling of the Spirit is expressed through our stages of spiritual growth, the sphere of the Spirit's control is in itself an absolute status quo. In other words, we are filled with the power of the Spirit or we are not, since there are no degrees when it comes to spirituality. We are either 100% spiritual when we are filled with the Spirit or we are 0% spiritual and 100% carnal when we commit any kind of sin, whether known or unknown. Therefore, it is imperative that we make the distinction between the relative concept of spiritual growth, which is a gradual process and the absolute concept of spirituality. It is unfortunate that there are many Christians who are confused in these areas and cannot make the distinction between these two concepts. We simply have to divide these two concepts into separate categories. The first category is the concept that we are either spiritual or carnal. The second category would be that we are either growing spiritually or we are digressing spiritually. These two categories are certainly related, but they are not the same. Again, spirituality is an absolute, whereby we are either filled with the Spirit and in fellowship with God, or we are grieving and/or quenching the Spirit and out of fellowship with God. This is the concept that the word spirituality encompasses.

It is only through the filling of the Spirit that we have the divine power available to execute the plan of God for our life. We do not have the potential to even learn God's Word under a qualified pastor/teacher unless we are filled with the Spirit, and of course, it is only through the filling of the Spirit that the remaining problem-solving methods are learned and utilized. It is the filling of the Spirit in conjunction with the power of learning and applying God's Word that are the power sources we are mandated to maximize in our lives in order to reach the high-ground of maturity (Eph. 5:18; Gal 5:16; 2 Tim. 2:15).

And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; (KJV Eph. 5:18)

*This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. (KJV Gal 5:16)

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (KJV 2 Tim. 2:15)

In conclusion, you're not spiritual because of the way you are dressed or because you follow certain taboos, which are not Biblical at all, but are simply based on some cultural influence. Having seen what is meant to be filled with the Spirit, it is also

imperative to understand exactly what the filling of the Spirit is not. There are several false systems of spirituality that are confused as legitimate spirituality, but in fact arise from some form of legalism self-righteousness.

Legalism actually has our sin nature as its source and is simply referring to having a strict conformation to a code of deeds, observances, and dead works that we try to use as a means of self-justifying or promoting ourselves. The origin of legalism is based on self-righteous arrogance and being subjected with a self-justifying mindset.

### *False systems of spirituality*

- True spirituality, by no means, is imitating the personality of some individual who you have designated a role model. According to Scripture, the only role model the born-again believer is mandated to imitate is the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ (Eph.5:1-2). We're to avoid associating with the superficial mannerisms of some believer you have designated spiritual. The superficialities involved in such imitations would include such things as wearing certain types of dress or colors. Women not wearing make-up or using some particular stereotypical way of speaking that is associated as spiritual actually has nothing to do with being spiritual. Having a sweet pious personality and using words like 'thou' or 'thee' also does not mean someone is spiritual.
- Another form of false spirituality is the assumption that a believer is somehow spiritual by yielding themselves to God through some open act of dedication as in the case of coming forward at the end of a church service. Legitimate spirituality is the filling of the Holy Spirit as we place ourselves at the disposal of the Lord every day through the function of our spiritual skills. Of course, we have to learn our spiritual skills before we can function in them. The accurate application of presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice to God is by being filled with the Spirit and learning and applying Biblical truth on a consistent basis is what constitutes proper yielding.
- Also an erroneous form of spiritualism that is passed as legitimate spirituality is avoiding certain taboos. A taboo is simply something that is considered by society as improper and unacceptable and is forbidden by either culture or tradition. It is unfortunate that these taboos are made into a false system of spirituality by being prohibited by some legalistic self-righteous Christian. Although a taboo may be defined as an activity that is forbidden by a religious group or a Christian who doesn't know any better, it is an activity that is not actually forbidden by God's Word. Yet, it is superimposed on the Christian community as if it was a command from God. In actuality, the majority of taboos are mandated on the basis of human arrogance and prejudice. Thus, taboos are not the real issue when it comes to the method of operation of the Christian life.

Self-righteous legalistic taboos would include such things as observing the Sabbath, which involved that you could not do anything that was fun on Sunday. Such taboos as this one originated from professing Christians failing to distinguish between God's plan as it pertains to Israel and God's plan as it pertains to the Church Age. Other legalistic taboos would also include such prohibitions as not drinking or smoking, not going to movies or dancing, not wearing makeup for women, to not gambling. Indeed, some of these actions may cause eventual health risks or maybe socially unacceptable, however these actions do not indicate that a believer is not filled with the Spirit. In regard to taboos, a believer must exercise a certain amount of self-restraint when filled with the Spirit and consider certain principles of Christian behavior, which would include:

1. We must not violate our liberty by causing the weaker brother to stumble because of our actions. According to 1 Corinthians 8:4, 9, we have the right to do certain things which will not cause us to sin or enter into carnality, but we have to be cautious of being around someone who might be corrupted by our actions.

As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. (KJV 1 Cor. 8:4)

But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to them that are weak. (KJV 1 Cor. 8:9)

2. We must also be cautious of offending the weaker believer and causing them to be distracted from the objective of growing to spiritual maturity (1 Cor. 8:13).

Wherefore, if meat makes my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend. (KJV 1 Cor. 8:13)

3. The believer has to be considerate of the unbeliever in regards to avoiding or doing certain things that may prevent an unbeliever from seeing that accepting Christ as their personal Savior is the issue for their salvation.

What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel. (KJV 1 Cor. 9:18)

Sometimes the self-righteous unbeliever may superimpose his or her own legalistic standards on believers and expect believers to comply with those standards. Thus, maintaining their interest in witnessing for Christ, a believer should refrain from doing anything that might prevent the unbeliever from seeing that the real issue is to believe in Christ for their salvation.

In conclusion, the problem of taboos is that they reject the enabling power of the Holy Spirit as well as the fact that the Christian way of life is supernatural and demands the supernatural means of executing it. Following certain taboos does not require learning the spiritual skills of God's power system and can be accomplished even by an unbeliever through self-determination. Taboos do nothing more than produce legalistic bullying, which hinders a believer from ever developing any of the spiritual skills that are required to advance in the Christian life because they are distracted from accurately leaning God's Word. Responding to this type of self-righteous legalism only converts other weak believers into the same self-righteous legalistic practices. Getting involved in taboos only weakens our volition and causes believers to judge and invade the privacy of others. Adhering to taboos is simply trying to legislate our sin nature and only glorifies legalism and the function of human power to do something about the problem. This type of arrogant behavior hinders our spiritual growth and blurs the uniqueness of the Church age as well as what the baptism of the Holy Spirit is and all of the spiritual assets that we have in Christ's, such as God's completed Word and the indwelling of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

- Yet another form of false spirituality that deceives many is that of being spiritual through respectability. Thinking we are spiritual because of respectability is the erroneous conclusion that a believer is spiritual because his or her sins are more respectable than the sins of another individual. This type of arrogance involves self-vindicating or self-justifying our own sins while at the same time condemning the sins of others. This false superficial spirituality usually establishes a system of overt morality and can be very subtle and legalistic. The false conclusion that comes as a result of being involved in this type of arrogant mindset is concluding that a person cannot do certain things and be saved. Believers involved in this arrogance can be involved in excessive ambition and competition. The problem with such excessiveness is that such believers have no human self-esteem and therefore strive to find something to make themselves important in their own eyes and do not believe that one category of sin makes you just as carnal as another category of sin. In actuality, the fact is that any sin that we commit, regardless of how extreme or insignificant, destroys our fellowship with God and requires us to use the confession technique of 1 John 1:9. Such a believer ends up developing a false sense of self-esteem instead of the spiritual self-esteem required by God. It is unfortunate that the lack of understanding of the subject of sin causes a believer to fail to ever address his or her own problems in their lives. Such a believer has a tendency to rationalize that divine discipline from God is suffering for blessing instead of the actual discipline that it is. They also always have a tendency to bully, judge and meddle in others' business. Thinking you are spiritual through respectability has its base in self-righteous arrogances. Although spirituality makes us respectable, respectability in itself does not make us spiritual since moral respectability is not spirituality at all. An unbeliever can be just as morally respectable as a believer through self-determination.

- False spirituality can also include the belief that you are spiritual by observing certain rituals such as observing 'holy days', as well as such rituals of the keeping of the Sabbath, observing Lent, or going through water baptism as a condition of salvation. Misinterpreting such rituals only results in professing believers thinking that they are spiritual because of the ritual itself, such as thinking they are spiritual because they keep the Sabbath, or have been baptized by water. Yet, the merit is not in the ritual itself but in the doctrinal principles that they teach. The problems that this false spirituality causes is that it prevents believers from ever understanding that the protocol plan of God for the Church Age has replaced the ritual plan of God in the Old Testament. Believers involved in this false spirituality never understand what constitutes the filling of the Spirit and how it is related to our present Church Age. Ritual spirituality only ends up emphasizing the rituals themselves to the point that they are given meritorious connotation and the doctrinal teaching that they reflect is missed entirely.

- Program spirituality takes place in a great many local churches and denominations whereby thinking that getting involved in church programs emphasizes loyalty to a particular church or denomination by means of works. Such systems of work imply that spirituality is through doing some productive work for God, as in being active in Christian or community service. Program spirituality is done through the energy of the flesh instead of the enabling power of God the Holy Spirit and would include such things as attending church, giving, attending prayer meetings, bringing visitors, teaching Sunday school or being part of the choir. Spirituality through such programs ends up substituting all these activities for the filling of the Spirit and sound doctrinal teaching is demoted to a very minimal role. Unfortunately such a false system of spirituality ignores the protocol plan of God for the Church Age and generates ignorance of Biblical Truth. Program spirituality causes involvement in Satan's world system and only causes believers to suffer from a self-righteous degenerated condition that caters to lust for approval and lusting for power. Before we can produce any legitimate divine good we must first develop our spiritual skills and never allow our actions to be a substitute for doctrinal Truth. Our production should always be the result of our spiritual advancement and never the means of our advancement.

- There is also a false spirituality that is associated with emotions. This type of false spirituality is an attempt to duplicate the temporary spiritual gifts, which only legitimately functioned during the time period before our New Testament canon of Scripture was completed in approximately 95 A.D. with the book of Revelation. False emotional spirituality is emphasized by

those involved in such temporary gifts as tongues, healing, miracles and such.<sup>3</sup> Emotional spirituality is detrimental because emotion is not the criterion for the filling of the Spirit. You can be extremely emotional or have a complete lack of emotion and neither have anything to do with spirituality. Emotions actually have no ability to reason, and as a matter of fact, when we go on emotions we lose our common sense, and emotions have no vocabulary as a tool for mental function or ability to think. Therefore, emotions can function normally as responders to the values of the mentality of our soul. Yet, abnormal function of our emotions is simply a reaction in the realm of sinfulness or carnality. When abnormal emotion controls the mentality of our soul it ends up blotting out any Biblical truth by overpowering the right lobe of our soul where Biblical truth is located. Emotional spirituality is abnormal and as such it builds up a barrier in our soul that prohibits the application of God's Word and develops an emotional rebellion of our soul. The barrier consists of various categories of emotional sins such as being fearful, being hateful, having self-pity, guilt and jealousy. Such emotional sins cause our personality to malfunction and it is God's doctrinal truth that, does not change it, but actually refines our personality. Let us examine some categories of emotional sins that will malfunction our personality by beginning with what could be the most prevalent one, that of fear.

1. The emotional sin of fear would include worrying and have anxiety in the mentality of our soul, which does nothing but hinder us from being able to think under pressure. The antithesis to being fearful and having the inability to think under pressure is being courageous and being able to use our thinking skills properly under pressure.
2. Operating under the emotional sin of hatred will cause us to live angry, violent and, in extreme case, committing murders.
3. Being in a state of guilt is also an emotional sin that will cause us to become an irrational individual. We end up condemning ourselves by our emotional sins instead of the standards of our mentality of our soul. Guilt causes us to operate under wrong motivations and causes us to make bad decisions in regards to marriage, going to church, how to serve God to trying to change our personality, among other things, simply because we feel guilty.
4. Jealousy is another emotional sin that is actually part of a complex of sins that come as a result of it, such as being bitter, vindictive, being callous, having excessive ambitions and completion, as well as being revengeful. Jealousy only results in the resentment and hatred of other individuals.

Emotions have nothing to do with divine power at all, nor the legitimate function of the spiritual life of the believer. Emotions are related to human power and influence, not only to believers but to unbelievers as well. Therefore, emotional ecstasies should not be characterized as spirituality. In our present Church Age, the filling of the Holy Spirit has no emotion associated with it; although, in the Millennial reign of Christ the filling of the Holy Spirit will be associated with emotion (Rom. 16:17-18; 2 Cor. 6:11-12). In the Millennium the believer who is filled with the Spirit will appreciate the Lord being present and will have ecstasies (Joel 2:28-29; Isa. 29:19, 32:15, 44:3; Ezek. 39:29; Zech 12:10).

The problem of false emotional spirituality is that it often creates a false identity so that believers are distracted from ever developing any spiritual skills. It is impossible to ever advance in our Christian life if we lack our spiritual skills. As a result, believers who do not have normal self-esteem often seek some spiritual superiority in this type of false system of spirituality. Peer pressure volatility also produces a fear caused by the arrogance of having excessive ambition and competition. This is the type of emotional fear that is related to the self-identity problem, which becomes involved in the lust for power or the lust for approval in an attempt to overcome the peer pressure volatility.<sup>4</sup> The arrogance of peer pressure results in an irrational self-deception, which fragments our spiritual life through the complexity of all the sins of arrogance and emotion. Spirituality through emotions causes some detrimental misfortunes.

An emphasis of emotions will hinder the learning and applying of God's Word in our minds or what Paul calls the 'transformation' of the mind in Romans 12:2. It was this type of emotional emphasis that was hindering the Corinthian believers (2 Cor. 6:11-12)

O ye Corinthians our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged. Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in our own bowels. (KJV 2 Cor. 6:11-12)

The word 'straitened' has a reference to being restricted and the word 'bowels' refers to the inward parts or emotions. In other words, Paul is telling the Corinthian believers that they were not hindered because of the teaching they got since they not only got Bible teaching from Paul, but also from Timothy, Apollos and Titus. The Corinthians were being hindered by their emotional patterns. Believers who make emotions the criteria for the spiritual life do so because they do not understand what constitutes the Christian way of life and are very disoriented and reversionistic individuals. The increase of this false emotional spirituality is a result of neglecting or rejecting the learning and applying of God's Word correctly and consistently. The Christian way of life is always based on the Word of God and not on some subjective emotional experience based on a

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<sup>3</sup> For a further study on all the temporary gifts, please refer to my book entitled, *The Road of Distractions to the Christian Race*, pp. 15-41.

<sup>4</sup> Please study my book on *Following God in Virtue Love* for a more substantial explanation of peer pressure.

humanistic viewpoint. Believers are designed to maximize the use of the spiritual life by means of the combination of the filling of the Holy Spirit and God's Word. Unfortunately, when God's power is not maximized there will exist in its place the power of humanism and emotions.

Emotional spirituality is a big distraction to executing what constitute the plan of God for the Church Age and the reason Paul teaches against it (Rom. 16:17-18)

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. (KJV Rom. 16:17-18)

Paul gives a word of warning in Romans 16:17 to believers to avoid those in the local church who commit sins of the tongue through 'divisions and offences' that are not in line with what the Bible teaches. The word for 'belly' is again a reference to the emotions. The third chapter of the Epistle of James teaches us that the tongue is a means of committing verbal sins. Believers can very often be guilty of verbal sinning although it may be casual or without thought. Yet, the majority of the time it is simply deliberately or because they are vindictive. We often think that it is only those shocking immoral sins that bring punishment from God to the believer, but we can certainly find ourselves under divine discipline for continually committing such verbal sins as judging and maligning other believers (Matt. 7:1-2).

Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. (KJV Matt. 7:1-2)

Therefore, emotional spirituality is detrimental to our spiritual life because it causes us to be enemies of the cross due to believers making emotions their god (Phil. 3:18-19).

For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end *is* destruction, whose God *is their* belly, and *whose* glory *is* in their shame, who mind earthly things. (KJV Phil. 3:18-19)

The emphasis of ecstatic emotional experiences and claiming it as spirituality serves no other purpose than to cloud the truth of God's Word and is an insult to the power system that God has designed for every believer. The Christian's spiritual life is a system of thinking God's biblical truth through the power of God the Holy Spirit. It should not come as a surprise that Satan has neutralized the effectiveness of God's power system by distorting the doctrinal teaching that pertains to the Holy Spirit by counterfeiting legitimate functions of the past and connecting them to emotions and arrogance of some kind. There are professing Christians rivaling one another for spiritual status by claiming to speak in tongues, performing miracles, hearing voices and seeing visions in a flurry of emotional ecstasies. Such emotional ecstasies is an overpowering exaltation of feeling of a blissful delight that gives a false sense of power. Individuals involved in this type of practice get a false sense of spiritual maturity, but in reality, it is an emotional revolt that occurs in the soul. Although emotions are appreciators they are not related to the filling of the Holy Spirit or executing the plan of God for the Church Age. Emotional ecstasies only lead to the emphasis of our experience over doctrinal Truth.

Tension as a negative emotion can be expressed in dread, being dissatisfied or being restless and is not conducive to spiritual growth. A lack of spiritual advancement can result in having anxiety as an emotional state that has no understanding of Biblical Truth and is an emotional sin. Panicking is also an emotional function of fear, which is based on prolonged tension. Therefore, emotions in their right place can be wonderful appreciators, but can be destructive when emphasized over thinking.

- In conclusion, another form of false spirituality is that of self-crucifixion, which do nothing but confuses retroactive positional truth with our Christian experience. For instance, the sixth chapter of Romans is talking about a spiritual baptism and not water baptism. Water baptism was actually a ritual that taught the reality of spiritual baptism during the transitional stage of the Church Age until our New Testament Scriptures were completed. This is why Luke makes the contrast between water baptism and the baptism of the Spirit in Acts 1:5 and Acts 11:16. Paul also taught the reality of the baptism of the Holy Spirit when he states that there is only, 'one Lord, one Faith' and 'one Baptism' in Ephesians 4:5.

For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. (KJV Acts 1:5)

Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. (KJV Acts 11:16)

One Lord, one faith, one baptism, (KJV Eph. 4:5)

Thus, the point is that water baptism is an example of taking a retroactive positional truth and making it a necessity of our Christian experience, while the reality of the baptism of the Spirit is missed.

Therefore, striving for spirituality through some form of extreme self-crucifixion is asceticism<sup>5</sup> and causes a failure to understand such things as the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Spirituality by asceticism and extreme self-denial is called monasticism and is a result of arrogant subjectivity instead of what is truly the enabling power of the Spirit. Another thing to note is that you are also not spiritual by changing your personality. God's Word may refine you personality, but you do not become spiritual because you change your personality.

### ***Resting on the Promises of God***

Resting on the promises of God simply refers to claiming the promises of God and applying them to our Christian experiences. The promises that we stand on would include both the Old and the New Testament promises. The application of the entire realm of Biblical truth would also be part of this problem-solving method. Yet, the one major distinction of this method that is unique to our present Church Age is that, for the first time in the history of humanity, God the Holy Spirit can fill every Church Age believer. The filling of the Spirit gives our present problem-solving method incredible power since this was not the case in the Old Testament.

We have to understand that God the Holy Spirit had a limited ministry to those in the Old Testament time period, which was referred to as enduement. An illustration of enduement is seen in the example of Elijah and David. Elijah had the enduement of the Holy Spirit and he prayed for a double portion of it. King David had the power of the Holy Spirit. Yet, when he committed adultery with Bathsheba and murdered her husband, Uriah the Hittite, he prayed to God, 'take not Your Holy Spirit from me'. Such prayers would not be applicable today because in the Old Testament you could lose the Holy Spirit by stepping out of line in particular ways. Today, Church Age believers are now the temple of God and are always indwelt by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19)

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which *temple* ye are. (KJV 1 Cor. 3:16)

What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? (KJV 1 Cor. 6:19)

As we have studied in our previous two problem-solving methods, the Church Age believer is only required to use the confession method of 1 John 1:9 to recover the filling of the Spirit when we sin. Keep in mind that the Christian way of life during our present Church Age emphasizes the ordinary believer. Although all Church Age believers may begin ordinary, any believer can become extraordinary by exercising their freewill to use the greatest assets ever made available to a believer. Therefore, all Church Age believers have greater assets than the greatest Old Testament believers ever had. Yet, it is unfortunate that so many Church Age believers never tap into such great assets because they neglect to or are simply ignorant of all the phenomenal assets that they have at their disposal.

Although when we rest on God's promises, we should do it while we are filled with the Holy Spirit. Yet, when we are out of fellowship because of sin in our life, we can stand on the confession method of 1 John 1:9, being assured that God will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness, thus putting us back in fellowship.

There are three stages to the method of resting on the promises of God. The first of these stages would include the mixing of those promises of God with faith (Heb. 4:2):

For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard *it*. (KJV Heb. 4:2)

The Exodus generation received phenomenal doctrinal truths. Yet, although they heard the doctrinal truths that were related to their particular time period, they did not mix that truth with faith. Therefore, stage one is resting on the promises of God, which means claiming promises that are relevant to our specific situations. God's promises are spectacular and when they are mixed with faith will result in the believer entering the rest of God that the book of Hebrews teaches about (Heb. 4:1-13). The rest of God is the most relaxing and stabilizing thing that we can have in this world.

Stage two of resting on God's promises through faith is claiming actual Biblical doctrines that pertain to such things as the essence of God, His logistical grace towards us, and His plan for the born-again believer. None of these things are accomplished unless we advance in all aspects of God's Biblical truth. The last stage of resting in faith involves making doctrinal conclusions to our Christian experiences so that our faith is in control of every situation we may be involved in.

We use our stance in faith to handle the small everyday pressures of life, which eventually prepare us for the more major pressures that we will face as we advance in our spiritual life. Remember that the filling of the Spirit mixed with our stance on faith is a combination that has not been made available until our present Church Age.

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<sup>5</sup> This is the teaching that a person can attain a high spiritual and moral state by practicing self-denial, self-mortification, and such.

## ***Biblical Promises***

Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left *us* of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard *it*. For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. (KJV Heb. 4:1-3)

The 'rest' for the Jews that is spoken of here was to get into the land promised by the Lord to them. Unfortunately, the Exodus generation never entered the rest of their promised land flowing with milk and honey because of unbelief. The men of Israel did not have the confidence that the Lord would give them victory. Instead, they were afraid to fight against the people of the land because they feared their strength and great stature (Num. 13:31-33).

For the born-again believers, the 'rest' taught in Hebrews is a spiritual rest that is achieved when we use God's power system to conquer the giants in our spiritual promise land, such as fear, worry, anxiety and other emotional sins of arrogance. Although these Jews were believers, their failure to enter their promise land was a testimony of their failure in their spiritual life, as is the case for many believers today. Many believers today fail because so many do not understand the answer to the question as to what comes next after salvation, which is to grow up spiritually in Christ and learn and master God's power system. To 'enter the rest' in verse 3 means to claim the promises of God, as well as believing the particular doctrinal truths that pertain to each one. If we do not learn, retain and apply God's problem solving methods in our life, we will be like the Exodus generation. Our problems will be more real than the Lord and the system He has designed to solve all those problems.

Another example of standing in faith can be found in Psalms 37:4-5, which states, 'Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring *it* to pass' (KJV). Being occupied with the person of Jesus Christ will result in getting the correct desires in our mentality of our mind. The delight that is spoken of here is that of the advancing believer who is filled with a tremendous amount of Biblical truth and has their norms and standards and desires aligning with what God's Word teaches. However, unless you love God you cannot claim such verses as Romans 8:28, which states that 'all things work together for good'. Let us note that the verse states that He works all things together for good to those who love Him. Love for God the Father and having an occupation with the Lord Jesus Christ are the highest problem solving methods to the born again believer. Thus, this particular verse would include the filling of the Spirit, resting on this promise, but also would require advancement towards spiritual adulthood.

Therefore, resting on the promises of God would require that we have confidence or belief in those promises. As we progress through the problem solving methods we will advance past, not only in having confidence in these promises, but instead we will begin to have confidence in the God who makes these promises through the love we develop as we grow in knowing who He is.

### ***Being Oriented to God's Grace***

God first extended His grace to us as unbelievers by the Gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ, which could be considered as God's saving grace. Upon becoming newly born-again believers through God's salvation grace, He also extends His grace to us as believers through the Christian spiritual life for the time period of the Church Age. It is the grace we receive as believers that we use as our next problem-solving method. Yet, we only maximize this problem-solving method by becoming oriented to what this grace embodies because it is related to us understanding what exactly God's policy is on all matters, and then relating this grace to our Christian life and to others.

### ***God's Saving Grace***

God's saving grace is described as all that God is free to do for all humanity strictly on the basis of the sacrificial saving work of Jesus Christ on the cross. Saving grace is the complete work of God and there is absolutely nothing that we as sinners can possibly add to faith in Jesus Christ for salvation. The Lord Jesus Christ testified to His finished work when He stated on the cross, 'It is finished' (John 19:30).

When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, it is finished: and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost. (KJV John 19:30)

The Lord's words that it was finished meant just that. Saving grace is the complete work of God, which would include all three members of the Trinity. God the Father had to first author the plan of salvation and He is also the judge since He also had to judge every one of our sins and place them upon our Lord Jesus Christ on the cross (John 3:16)

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (KJV John 3:16)

God the Son executed our salvation as our Savior and He is the object of faith for that salvation. Through His sacrificial work of salvation He provides for us eternal salvation through the judgment He endured for our past, present, and future sins. It was after

this substitutionary spiritual death that He then died physically. It was after He said that His saving work was finished that He 'bowed His head, and gave up the ghost' (John 19:30).

God the Holy Spirit is the member of the Trinity that reveals the work of salvation. In actuality, the convicting work of the Holy Spirit is not of our personal sins, but of the sin of not accepting Jesus Christ as Savior (John 16:8-9).

And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin because they believe not on Me. (KJV John 16:8-9)

Therefore, the only means of salvation is to accept by faith the saving work of Jesus Christ on the cross and nothing else. Any type of addition to God's perfect work of salvation such as human works, talent, ability, self-righteousness, or commitment of any kind only serve to cancel God's grace provision of salvation, which is what Paul is teaching in the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians (Rom. 4:4-5, 14; 11:6; Gal. 5:4).

Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. (KJV Rom. 4:4-5)

For if they which are of the law *be* heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: (KJV Rom. 4:14)

And if by grace, then *is it* no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if *it be* of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. (KJV Rom. 11:6)

Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. (KJV 5:4)

### ***God's Grace after Salvation***

The next category of God's grace is that unmerited favor that He is free to bestow on born-again saved believers through the code of behavior designed in His power system. God's grace is completely devoid from any system of human works, merit, ability, talent, behavior, emotion or any other form of human power, since it is dependent on His divine power and not ours. Yet, it is unfortunate that God's power system has never been adequately taught throughout the Church Age. The question as to what exactly does it mean to live the Christian life has never been truly answered whether in theological academic circles or in the local church. A prevalent concept that most teach is that the Christian life is morality, but morality is system for the entire human race. We can see this in the fact that even an unbeliever can be a very moral individual; therefore, we can conclude that if unbelievers are able to do this, then morality is not a part of the Christian way of life. Morality is a system by which individuals live under the laws of the divine establishments of individuals, marriage, family and government. These four divine establishments have been ordained by God for both believer and unbeliever alike.<sup>6</sup>

God's grace is the function of His attributes<sup>7</sup> on behalf of each Church Age believer and is always a work of the Lord and not us. Since this is a work of God would mean that it is perfect and, by no means, does God need our help in providing His phenomenal grace. We are actually the ones that need His help because under God's grace policy, everything will depend on who and what He is and never on who and what we are. Through God's grace we have access to an ability that is beyond our own. Through His grace God is able to bless the worst of believers, as well as the best without compromising His attributes. The beauty in God's grace is that none of God's attributes can be compromised or jeopardized in Him providing blessing for the born-again believer. Thus, God's divine blessing comes from grace, which again, is devoid from any human merit, work, feeling, emotion, or any activity on our part. Under God's grace policy, it is only His ability and power that can meet all our needs in our helpless state and provide answers, as well as solutions to the problems in life.

Grace is simply the genius of God being directed towards all mankind, and it is through the pages of Scripture that His genius is manifested to us. We glorify God's genius when we are positive to what the Bible teaches through our non-meritorious response. We first glorify God's genius as unbelievers when we first accept His saving grace by our response in personal faith to the saving work of Jesus Christ on the cross. We then continue to glorify God's genius when we learn God's grace plan, such as understanding that we have a spiritual life through God's grace provision of confession and the filling of the Spirit. Executing God's power system of virtue in our life to its maximum will result in spiritual maturity, and that is the ultimate glorification of God's genius. God's invisible provision of invisible assets in the life of a mature believer is what transforms that believer into an invisible hero, and it is all the work of God through what He has so graciously provided to each one of us as believers. The problem-solving methods that we are studying are a good example of some invisible assets that we have available in Christ. Although we cannot see our problem-solving methods, we can understand and utilize these assets because they are revealed in the pages of God's Word and are explained through the gift of Pastor/Teacher.

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<sup>6</sup> An explanation of God's four divine institutions can be found in my book entitled, *The Road of Distractions to the Christian Race*, under the section, *Logistical Grace Defined*, p. 5.

<sup>7</sup> God's attributes make up His essence and are explained in my book, *A Study on the Doctrine of Salvation*, under the section, *The Reason Christ is the Only Way*, p. 5, See also Appendix 1, p. 38.

Therefore, God's grace is everything that He is able to freely do for each one of us and still be consistent with His divine attributes. Let us examine God's logistical grace in order to illustrate this point further.<sup>8</sup>

- God's logistical grace is the support that He bestows on every believer in Jesus Christ regardless of whether they are successful in their spiritual race or not, since it is dependent on the perfect righteousness that we received when we accepted Christ as our personal savior (Rom. 3:22).

Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference. (KJV Rom. 3:22)

- Believers in every period of time receive the imputation of God's very own divine righteousness at salvation (Gen 15:6).

And he [Abraham] believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness. (KJV Gen.15:6)

- In the time period of the Church Age, God's justice imputes our life support and blessing down through a grace channel that is directed to His own righteousness indwelling in each one of us as believers. Again, God's life support and blessing to us is not based on any of our human merit of our own but on His perfect righteousness residing in us. Therefore, the principle of the matter is that God's divine justice can only bless His divine righteousness, which illustrates the pattern of His grace to us.

God's perfect justice and righteousness are the two merging attributes that form what is considered His holiness or His integrity. It is God's divine justice that is the guardian of the other attributes of God and it is God's justice that is the point of contract for us as believers. When it comes to the function of God's holiness, His perfect righteousness always demands perfect righteousness, and His perfect justice always demands perfect justice. In order to avoid any compromise to His divine attributes God can only accept perfect righteousness and He cannot bless anything that is less than that perfect righteousness. It is God's perfect justice that is the source of all direct blessing to His perfect righteousness. Therefore, it is that perfect righteousness that we now possess through Christ our Lord that God's justice is free to bless. God remains compatible with His attributes by making available His perfect righteousness to anybody who accepts this gift as part of their salvation through faith in the saving work of Jesus Christ on the cross (Eph. 2:8-9). This is a work from God's grace because it excludes any merit or excellence from us.

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. (KJV Eph. 2:8-9)

God's expression of His logistical grace is found in such passages as Matthew 6:33 where the Lord exhorted His listeners to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things would be added unto them. Of course, the righteousness mentioned in this verse is the imputed perfect righteousness that only comes through faith in Jesus Christ, and all the things that would be added is a reference to all the blessings that are listed in the Sermon that the Lord was teaching on the Mount (Matt. 5-7). It should be noted that this Sermon on the Mount would not be operational until the Millennial reign of Christ. It was in this sermon that the Lord presented Himself as Israel's Messiah and the lifestyle that will be in effect in Israel during the Millennium.

We are all products of God's grace and are blessed undeservedly because of the righteousness of God that was imputed to each one of us when we exercise personal faith in the sacrificial work of Jesus Christ. God's imputed righteousness provides us with the justification that God's holiness demands and the grace mechanics for blessing to every believer by means of His logistical grace. God's righteousness also provides us with God's personal love to us because through it we are as righteous as He is. God's grace pattern is established with salvation grace and continues to retain the same pattern in the Christian spiritual life after we become believers.

We should never lose the prospective that, whether in salvation or logistical grace, any kind of human works such as penance or any other acts that we deem meritorious are excluded from God's grace. Even our faith is void of any human merit because God does all the work and provides His grace as a free gift to anyone who will accept it.

Being saved by adding any kind of works is an evil<sup>9</sup> that is taught by self-righteous individuals who add prohibitions that would include such sins that they may find shocking and of the nature that they think are incompatible with God's plan. To determine whether we are saved or not, we should determine if the first time we believed in Jesus Christ, we simply believed in the saving work of Christ on the cross and did not add anything else. Although an individual may have believed in Christ at another time and added some sort of meritorious action on their part such as making a commitment, they are still saved yet very confused about what constitutes the Christian life. Although, if our initial belief in Jesus Christ was accompanied by some sort of commitment or making

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<sup>8</sup> My book on, *The Road of Distractions to the Christian Race*, explains God's logistical grace more in depth, pp. 4-8.

<sup>9</sup> Evil is every distortion to God's Word or His four divine establishments. It is the function and innovation of a person who is consistently involved in Satan's world system of arrogance and is basically humanistic viewpoint, as appose to divine viewpoint. Recovering from sin is instantaneous through the confession technique of 1 John 1:9, but recovering from evil takes time because it involves the renovation of our thinking from human viewpoint to divine viewpoint, which is what Paul teaches in Romans 12:1-2.

Christ Lord of all, then we were not saved, as we will discover in the next section dealing with the various distortions of God's grace. Christ is Lord of all the moment we believe in Him, due to the fact that the baptism of the Spirit signifies that we are now in union with Christ forever.

### *Distortions of God's Grace*

There is an incorrect belief that teaches that salvation is through being moral or keeping the Mosaic Law and the apostle Paul addressed this issue in his time (Gal. 2:16; Rom. 3:20).

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. (KJV Gal. 2:16)

Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin. (KJV Rom. 3:20)

Another incorrect teaching that seems to be prevalent is that of "repenting and believing", and this simply means that those teaching this viewpoint want an individual to feel sorry for their sins and believe in order to obtain salvation. When the Greek word *metanoeo* is used in connection with salvation it simply means to change your mind. The changing of the mind is directed to Christ before we believe, since it is the convicting work of the Holy Spirit to do so as John teaches in his Gospel (John 16:8-9).

And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on Me; (KJV John 16:8-9)

Notice that in John 16:8 the word 'sin' is singular, signifying that the 'reprove' or conviction of the unbelieving world by the Holy Spirit is one sin only, which is not believing in Christ, as seen in John 16:9.

Therefore, the convicting work of God the Holy Spirit is part of God's grace and prepares an individual for salvation by giving right information so that they can change their mind about Jesus Christ. No person has ever believed in Jesus Christ without repenting or changing their mind about Him when the Holy Spirit gives them the understanding of why He is the only way unto salvation. By no means is repentance a reference to feeling sorry for your sins, since one of the most insignificant things in this life is how you feel about your sins. What is truly significant is what God thinks about our sins and He showed how He felt about them by judging them on the cross.

Salvation is also not through some emotional experience. Although an individual may have a great experience at the time he or she accepts Jesus Christ for their salvation, it still has nothing to do with what actually constitutes salvation. An individual is saved by accepting the sacrificial work of Jesus Christ on the cross by faith. You may be on one end of the spectrum and feel awful and sick and believe in Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and be saved. On that same basis, you may feel euphoric and if you believe in Jesus Christ as Savior, you are saved. Therefore, how we feel has absolutely nothing to do with the saving work of Christ that only comes through faith in Him and nothing else.

Making water baptism a condition of being saved is yet another distorted teaching that is prevailing today. Being submerged under water does not affect a person's salvation nor does it change an individual's life. Indeed, water baptism did have a legitimate purpose during the time before the Canon of Scripture came into completion and it was to teach the reality of spiritual baptism. With our completed New Testament Scriptures and the ministry of God the Holy Spirit we can now learn the reality of our spiritual baptism first hand and no longer need the ritual of water baptism. It was for this reason that Paul later wrote in Ephesians that there was only one baptism, not two (Eph. 4:5)!

One Lord, one faith, one baptism. (KJV Eph. 4:5)

Rituals were designed by God to teach a particular Biblical truth, although human nature tends to emphasis the ritual over what it teaches. Salvation has never been through some ritual that is administered by any individual; salvation is a work that has been accomplished by God and we can obtain it the moment that we believe in the saving work of Jesus Christ on the cross. Our acceptance of Christ as Savior does not required us to walk an aisle or be in a particular posture with our hands raised, nor inviting Him into our heart. In salvation we come to Jesus for salvation, through the cross He draws all to Him (John 12:32). Of course, drawing all men to Him does not imply a universal salvation for all, but that God's saving work is available to all without distinction to race, gender, both Jew and Gentile alike have it available for the taking. Inviting Christ into your heart is a misleading violation of God's Word because the verse used to justify this teaching in Revelation 3:20 is referring to confessing and being restored to fellowship with God for those that are already believers. The appeal in Revelation 3:20 is not for the unbeliever to come to Christ, but for the believer to be restore to fellowship with Christ, specifically the Laodicean Christians (Rev. 3:14). The Lord knocks through the confession method of First John 1:9 and when we confess we are restored to fellowship with God, as we have previously studied.

No individual has or ever will be saved through their good behavior; therefore, there is no validity before God in such things as Lordship or commitment salvation, nor inviting Christ into your heart. Such denominations as the Roman Catholics do believe in Jesus Christ as Savior and that He did in fact died on the cross for their sins. The problem is that they add to that faith various forms of

good works as a condition for their salvation; thus canceling faith in Christ alone (Rom. 4:4-5, 14; 11:6; Gal. 5:4). In such cases an individual is not saved unless they believed in the saving work of Christ and nothing else at another point of their lives. The only condition for our eternal salvation is absent of any merit on our part and this is the only thing that is compatible with God's grace policy because He is the one who has all the merit and it is He who is the object of our faith. This is why it is imperative that it be clear that we cannot add anything to faith in Jesus Christ and still have salvation, because we place merit on ourselves when we add anything to the work of God. It is a divorcement from God's grace policy when we brag about how we invited Christ into our hearts, or committed our life to Christ, or were baptized. It is a self-righteous mind that attempts these things in order to somehow help God. Our non-meritorious faith in the substitutionary spiritual death on the cross of Jesus Christ is the only condition for salvation, and nothing else! Eternal salvation is a free gift from God's grace that is obtained through faith and not any works on our part (Eph. 2:8-9). Most professing believers cannot understand the concept of salvation by grace and this is also the reason they have also failed to understand what constitutes the Christian spiritual way of life.

Self-righteous legalism is divorcement from God's grace because it is an intrusion on God's grace policy through some sort of works, good behavior, emotionalism or some ritual of some kind. Adhering to certain rituals is an easy way of adding works especially when it is provided in an attractive setting and requires no thinking. Ritual keeping is a way for individuals to worship without having to think. Unfortunately, ritual keeping is not worshipping at all. The only ritual for the Church Age believer is the Eucharist and is an opportunity to remember and concentrate on our Lord's saving work on the cross.

Adding anything to faith in Christ is going against God's divine policy of His grace. Self-righteous individuals always try to obtain salvation by some sort of works or they try to achieve spirituality by works as well. Self-righteous legalism also tries to crusade for some cause that will improve Satan's world and always substitute human plans in place of God divine plans.

The legalistic mind also wants to invite Christ somewhere as a condition for salvation and then goes on the assumption that Christ is in their life, which makes an individual self-righteous. We obtain salvation by believing the saving work of Jesus Christ and not by inviting Him anywhere. God's grace and legalistic arrogance cannot mix, whether for salvation or for executing the born-again spiritual life after salvation. Legalism in salvation is when an individual seeks to gain God's approval through some humanistic work or production, as in the case of Cain (Gen. 4:1-8). Legalism tries to execute the born-again spiritual life after salvation by seeking to gain God's approval through his or her own works. Whether in salvation or the spiritual life after salvation, both are a work of God alone.

The ten exceptional problem-solving methods that we are in the midst of studying are provided by God's grace and they function on the basis of that same grace. Any legalistic arrogance on the part of the born-again Christian cancels the proper function of any of these problem-solving methods. Legalistic arrogance creates problems and attempts to solve those problems through humanistic solution instead of the divine solutions that God's grace has provided.

Therefore, God's grace policy blesses humanity completely apart from any merit whatsoever on our part. God through His grace policy sustains and regulates our lives under the prescribed spiritual life He has designed for us as Church Age believers and His royal family. As such, we are to prevent superimposing our personal desires on God and making irresponsible requests in the name of grace. God's grace should not be an excuse to fulfill our wants in life by rationalizing God's grace to fit our superficial humanistic wants because this would be an insult to God's wisdom. The Lord in His grace has provided for each one of us abundantly above all that we could ever ask or think, and we can maximize that grace by learning and applying the power system that He has so graciously provided (Eph. 3:20).

Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, (KJV Eph. 3:20)

Under God's grace policy every one of us has an equal privilege and opportunity to execute His plan for our lives and become invisible spiritual heroes. Through His grace He has created a new spiritual species in the church and has provided for each Church Age believer the most incredible divine power system to overcome any problem in life. We maximize God's grace provisions in its vastness of the thinking of God by means of perceiving, retaining and applying Biblical truth as found in the pages of scripture. We hinder this process when we limit God's grace through our own humanistic thinking and end up distorting grace to comply with our petty lusts or our desires. On the other hand, we can expand our horizons through the perception, retention of God Biblical truth for the Church Age, and exercising the function of the ten problem-solving methods that we are studying.

God's grace does not give us what we want, but instead it gives us something vastly superior, which is what God wants, and that is something that is tremendously more beneficial to anything that we could ever think or imagine. Grace orientation is depending of God's wisdom instead of our own insignificant desires and deficiency of wisdom on our part. God's grace policy is the only policy in this world that is worth knowing and then practicing, and it is then when being oriented to God's grace becomes problem-solving method in our lives.

**TO BE CONTINUED**

***Being Oriented to God's Word***

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