

A photograph of a waterfall cascading over mossy rocks in a lush forest. The waterfall is the central focus, with water flowing from the top right towards the bottom left. The surrounding forest is dense with green foliage and trees. The image is partially obscured by a diagonal gold-colored band that runs from the top left to the bottom right, which serves as a background for the title text.

The Gospel Is the Power

STUDY GUIDE

APPROACH COURSES
COLLECTION

THE GOSPEL IS THE POWER

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Manifest International, LLC
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SCRIPTURE TRANSLATION

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No translation of Scripture is perfect and without slight pollutions of the interpretations of man. The ESV has been selected based upon the fact that it is a word-for-word translation of the original Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts of Scripture using current English language. We value other translations such as the King James (KJV) and New King James (NKJV) versions of Scripture for their accuracy and also New International (NIV) and New Living (NLT) translations for their readability.

All Biblical definitions in this book are from Strong's Hebrew and Greek Lexicon, Gesenius' Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon, and Thayer's Greek Lexicon.

The Gospel is the Power

by Wendy Bowen, Manifest International
www.manifestinternational.com

COURSE DESCRIPTION & INTRODUCTION: 7 UNITS

This course will propel you into a deeper walk with Jesus. By the end of this course, you will fully know what Jesus accomplished for us through the cross and His resurrection so that you can walk in the fullness of God and the freedom of the Gospel!

PRAY FOR REVELATION:

Before taking this course, pray and ask the Lord to give you wisdom and revelation as you grow in your knowledge of Him. We are believing with you that the Lord will illuminate His word to you.

MANIFEST APPROACH COURSES: STATEMENT OF FAITH

The purpose of courses designated as "Approach Courses" is to express the beliefs and way of life God has given to us at Manifest International. As such, this course is an expanded Biblical explanation of our statement of faith in Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

Our Statement of Faith is: For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith." (Romans 1:16-17) We believe that Jesus is sufficient for everything we need, both temporally and eternally. We set our hearts to trust Him, relying on the power of God rather than in the wisdom of man or ways of this world for all that we need.

Note: The historical origin of a Church's Statement of Faith is rooted in the Reformation of the 1500's. In that day, so many new churches and denominations were emerging that governments required each church to publicly declare their statement of faith in order to legitimize their beliefs as Christian. This has continued under non-profit regulations. However, under the guidance of God, Manifest International was not formed as a church or as a non-profit. Instead of professing intellectual faith, we prefer to live it.

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Unit One: The Good News

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 1:1-4

A. The Gospel is GOOD NEWS

1. Luke 2:13-14 NKJV - 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: 14 'Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, **goodwill toward men!**
 - a. The whole world is condemned, oppressed, and under the power of the evil one. The whole world is at war with God as His enemies.
 - b. God sending His Son is glad tidings of God's good will toward men. God has shown mercy by sending a Savior. God made a way for people to be at peace with Him.
 - c. John 3:36 – 36 "**Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life**; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but **the wrath of God remains on him.**"
2. John 3:16-18 - 16 "For **God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.** 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. 18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but **whoever does not believe is condemned already**, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God."
 - a. As enemies of God, the whole world is already condemned to death and eternal torment. Jesus did not come to condemn but to save and to give eternal life with God.
 - b. Isaiah 52:7-10 - 7 "**How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."** 8 The voice of your watchmen--they lift up their voice; together they sing for joy; for eye to eye they see **the return of the LORD to Zion.** 9 Break forth together into singing, you waste places of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people; he has redeemed Jerusalem. 10 **The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.**"
 - i. It is GOOD NEWS! News of peace, happiness, and salvation!
 - ii. It is GOOD NEWS! God is vindicating the people called by His name!

- iii. It is GOOD NEWS! God's people had been exiled and oppressed by foreign nations for centuries, but the God of Israel reigns sovereign over ALL and is more powerful than any other god. The Lord is returning to His people to comfort and redeem them.
 - iv. It is GOOD NEWS! God is showing His power (His holy arm) in the sight of all nations and sharing His salvation to all the people of the world. Salvation is not just for Israel anymore; God is making Himself available to everyone who believes!
- c. Romans 5:6-11 - 6 "For **while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly**. 7 For one will scarcely die for a righteous person--though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die-- 8 but **God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us**. 9 Since, therefore, we have now **been justified by his blood**, much more shall we be **saved by him from the wrath of God**. 10 For if **while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son**, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. 11 More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom **we have now received reconciliation**."
- i. Jesus died for us while we were weak, ungodly, unrighteous, and enemies of God.
 - ii. Through our faith in the death and atoning blood of Jesus, we have peace with God and are no longer counted as His enemies.
 - iii. Through faith in the Gospel, we are reconciled to God, in right relationship with Him.
- d. Colossians 1:21-22 NLT - 21 "This includes **you who were once far away from God. You were his enemies**, separated from him by your evil thoughts and actions. 22 Yet **now he has reconciled you to himself through the death of Christ** in his physical body. As a result, he has brought you into his own presence, and **you are holy and blameless as you stand before him without a single fault**."
- i. All of humanity, Jews and Gentiles, were God's enemies through sin and wickedness. But God has reconciled us to Himself through the sacrifice of Jesus so that we can be holy and stand before Him as if we had never sinned.
- e. 2 Timothy 1:8-10 - 8 "Therefore **do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord**, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, 9 **who saved us and called us to a holy calling**, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, 10 and which now has been **manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel**."
- i. Jesus came to save us, not based on what we have done but because of God's mercy.
 - ii. Jesus conquered death and is the way to eternal life.

B. The Gospel of Jesus Christ

1. In the Gospel, we enter into a story already in progress. It is God's story with His covenant people, Israel, who were anticipating the arrival of a Messiah who would redeem them from every enemy, judge the world and all unrighteousness, vindicate their faith in the Most High God, and bring them into eternal life in the world to come. All of this is in fulfillment of God's promises to them through their Scriptures and the testimony of their prophets through the ages.
 - a. Mark 1:1-4 - 1 "**The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ**, the Son of God. 2 As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, "Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your

way, 3 the voice of one crying in the wilderness: **'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,'** 4 John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and **proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.**" (Quoting Isaiah 40:3.)

- i. John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus' arrival by commanding people to repent of their sins to make themselves ready for the day of the Lord.
 - b. Mark 1:14-15 - 14 "Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming **the gospel of God,** 15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and **the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.**"
 - i. Once Jesus began ministry, He proclaimed the Kingdom of God, while continuing John's message of repentance in preparation for the final day of the Lord.
 - c. Luke 4:17-21 - 17 "And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, 18 **"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed,** 19 **to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."** 20 And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. 21 And he began to say to them, **"Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."**
 - i. Jesus identified Himself as the One appointed and anointed by God to bring the good news of salvation to God's people. (Quoting Isaiah 61:1-3.)
 - ii. He came to set people free from oppressive powers in this world, from sin, from sickness, and from hostility with God.
2. The Eternal Gospel to all people everywhere.
- a. Revelation 14:6-7 - 6 "Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people. 7 And he said with a loud voice, **"Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come, and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water."**
 - i. There is only one God, Creator of heaven and earth. He is worthy of all glory and worship. He will judge the world with fire (as He judged the world with the flood in the days of Noah.) Therefore, all people everywhere should worship Him.
 - b. Acts 10:42 - 42 "And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that **he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead.**"
 - i. Jesus is the One appointed by God to carry out the day of Judgment against all who have not put their faith in Him. Therefore, all people should repent and believe Him.
 - c. Acts 17:30-31 - 30 "The times of ignorance God overlooked, **but now he commands all people everywhere to repent,** 31 **because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world** in righteousness by **a man whom he has appointed;** and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."
 - i. Jesus is the One appointed by God to judge the world. We have assurance that this is true because God raised Him from the dead.
 - d. Romans 2:16 - 16 "On that day when, **according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.**"
3. Jesus is the Son of God and the Son of Man, descended of David to be the Messiah of Israel.

- a. Matthew 16:16 – 16 “Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, **the Son of the living God.**”
- b. Luke 1:31-35 - 31 “And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. 32 **He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High.** And **the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David,** 33 and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” 34 And Mary said to the angel, **“How will this be, since I am a virgin?”** 35 And the angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and **the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy--the Son of God.**
- i. Jesus was born to a virgin by the power of the Holy Spirit. He is the seed or offspring of God. He was totally holy from conception.
 - ii. Jesus is Jewish, born to the covenant people of God in order to fulfill God's promises to them and to the patriarchs, and to be the Messiah of Israel.
- c. 2 Timothy 2:8 - 8 Remember **Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David,** as preached in my gospel,
- d. NOTE: If Jesus is not the Son of God, then He did not live a perfect, sinless life and could not be an unblemished sacrifice for atonement for our sins.
- i. John 3:31 - 31 **He who comes from above is above all.** He who is of the earth belongs to the earth and speaks in an earthly way. **He who comes from heaven is above all.**
 - ii. John 1:29 - 29 The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, **“Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”**
 - iii. 1 Peter 1:18-19 - 18 “Knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, 19 but with **the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.**”
 - iv. Hebrews 9:14 - 14 “How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit **offered himself without blemish to God,** purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.”
- e. NOTE: If Jesus is not the Son of Man, then He is not the offspring/seed of the woman who crushes the head of the serpent.
- i. Genesis 3:15 – 15 I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and **her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.**
- f. NOTE: If Jesus is not the Son of David, then He is not the One promised by God to be the King of Israel and the whole world, and He is not the seed of Abraham.
- i. 2 Samuel 7:12-13 - 12 “When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, **I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom.** 13 He shall build a house for my name, and **I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.**”
 - ii. Galatians 3:16 - 16 “Now the **promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring [seed].** It does not say, “And to offsprings,” referring to many, but referring to one, **“And to your offspring [seed],” who is Christ.**”
- g. NOTE: If Jesus was not born in Bethlehem (the city of David,) then He is not the eternal ruler promised by God.
- i. Micah 5:2 - 2 “But you, **O Bethlehem Ephrathah,** who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, **from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.**”

- ii. John 1:30, 34 - 30 "This is he of whom I said, '**After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.**' ... 34 And I have seen and have borne witness that **this is the Son of God.**"
4. Jesus is the Prophet of God promised by Moses, to whom everyone will give account.
- a. John 12:47-50 - 47 "If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. 48 The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; **the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day.** 49 **For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment--what to say and what to speak.** 50 And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me."
 - b. NOTE: If Jesus is not the prophet promised by Moses, we will not give account for having listened to Him or having applied His teachings.
 - i. Deuteronomy 18:15-19 - 15 "The LORD your God will raise up for you **a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen—**16 just as you desired of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God or see this great fire any more, lest I die.' 17 And the LORD said to me, 'They are right in what they have spoken. 18 **I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.** 19 **And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him.**"
 - ii. Acts 3:22-26 - 22 "**Moses said, 'The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers. You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you. 23 And it shall be that every soul who does not listen to that prophet shall be destroyed from the people.'** 24 And all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and those who came after him, also proclaimed these days. 25 You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, 'And in your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.' 26 **God, having raised up his servant, sent him to you first, to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness.**"
 - iii. NOTE: If Jesus were not Jewish, He would not qualify as one of the brothers of God's covenant people, Israel.
5. Jesus was crucified, He died, and was raised on the third day.
- a. Acts 2:22-24, 32-33 - 22 "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know-- 23 **this Jesus**, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, **you crucified and killed** by the hands of lawless men. 24 **God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it.** ... 32 **This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses.** 33 **Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God**, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing."
 - i. Jesus lived a perfectly righteous life, but He was crucified and killed by His own people and the whole world.
 - ii. God raised Him from the dead. He attained eternal life with God.

- b. NOTE: If Jesus did not shed His blood, then we are still in our sins because it is blood that makes atonement.
- i. Leviticus 17:11 - 11 For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, **for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life.**
 - ii. Matthew 26:28 - 28 for **this is my blood of the covenant**, which is poured out for many **for the forgiveness of sins.**
 - iii. 1 John 1:7 - 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and **the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.**
- c. NOTE: If Jesus did not die, then we are still in our sins because no sacrifice was offered for atonement. (See Leviticus 3 & 4 pertaining to peace offerings and sin offerings.)
- i. Romans 4:25 - 25 [Jesus] who was **delivered up for our trespasses** and raised for our justification.
- d. NOTE: If Jesus was not raised from the dead, then we are still in our sins because God did not accept his offering because He did not live a righteous life whereby death could have no power over Him.
- i. 1 Corinthians 15:17 - 17 And **if Christ has not been raised**, your faith is futile and **you are still in your sins.**
 - ii. Hebrews 7:15-16 - 15 This becomes even more evident when another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek, 16 who has become a priest, not on the basis of a legal requirement concerning bodily descent, but **by the power of an indestructible life.**
6. Jesus ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of God with all power and authority.
- a. Mark 16:19 - 19 So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, **was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God.**
 - i. The right hand is the position of delegated authority and power.
 - b. Ephesians 1:20-21 - 20 "... that he worked in Christ **when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places**, 21 **far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.**"
 - c. Philippians 2:8-11 - 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 **Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name**, 10 **so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth**, 11 **and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord**, to the glory of God the Father.
 - d. NOTE: If Jesus is not seated at the right hand of God, then He has not been given authority to judge the world.
7. Jesus is making intercession for us before God. By His blood, we can receive mercy.
- a. Romans 8:34 - 34 Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died--more than that, who was raised--**who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.**
 - i. No one has the right to condemn what Jesus has saved by His blood and redeemed through His resurrection.

- b. Hebrews 7:23-25 - 23 The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office, 24 but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. 25 **Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.**
 - i. Because Jesus has conquered death, He holds the office of High Priest forevermore. He is alive continually to present us before the Father to receive mercy.

C. The Gospel Proclamation

1. Matthew 4:17 - 17 From that time **Jesus began to preach**, saying, "**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**"
 - a. The Kingdom of God and the day of judgment is coming soon!
 - i. Daniel 2:44-45a - 44 **And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed**, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. **It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever**, 45 just as you saw that a stone was cut from a mountain by no human hand, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. A great God has made known to the king what shall be after this."
 01. All enemies of God, including nations and empires will be destroyed.
 - ii. Daniel 7:13-14 - 13 I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. 14 **And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.**
 01. Jesus will sit as Judge over all. Jesus is the One appointed by God to receive dominion over all peoples, so that all nations should serve Him.
 - iii. Daniel 7:26-27 - 26 But the court shall sit in judgment, and **his [the antichrist's] dominion shall be taken away, to be consumed and destroyed to the end.** 27 And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the **kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; his kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.'**
 01. All enemies of God will be consumed and destroyed.
 02. The holy people of God will be victorious in God's Kingdom.
 - iv. Example: Like Jonah proclaiming to Nineveh that God would overthrow Nineveh in judgment if they did not repent.
 - v. Note: If you are the arrogant or oppressor, this is bad news for you.
 - b. The day of the Lord's favor is NOW!
 - i. Luke 4:18-19 - 18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim **good news to the poor**. He has sent me to proclaim **liberty to the captives** and recovering of **sight to the blind**, to **set at liberty those who are oppressed**, 19 **to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.**"
 - ii. 2 Corinthians 6:2 - 2 For he says, "In a favorable time I listened to you, and in a day of salvation I have helped you." (Quoting Isaiah 49:8.) Behold, **now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.**
 - iii. Note: If you are the oppressed, humble, or poor, this is good news for you! God has sent salvation in Jesus!

2. Luke 24:46-47 - 46 ...and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, 47 and that **repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations**, beginning from Jerusalem."
 - a. Repent: Stop being an enemy of God.
 - i. Acts 26:18 - 18 ...to open their eyes, so that they may **turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God**, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'
 - ii. Acts 2:40 - 40 And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, "**Save yourselves from this crooked generation.**"
 - iii. Acts 3:19-20 - 19 **Repent therefore, and turn back**, that your sins may be blotted out, 20 **that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord**, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus...
 - iv. Acts 3:26 - 26 "God, having raised up his servant, sent him to you first, **to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness.**"
 - b. Receive mercy from God, forgiveness of sin and everything that made us His enemy.
 - i. Acts 2:38 - 38 And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ **for the forgiveness of your sins**, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."
 - ii. Acts 10:43 - 43 To him all the prophets bear witness that **everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.**
 - iii. Acts 13:38-39 - 38 "Let it be known to you therefore, brothers, that through this man [Jesus] **forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you**, 39 and by him everyone who believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses."
 - iv. Ephesians 1:7 - 7 In him we have **redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses**, according to the riches of his grace....
 - v. Colossians 1:13-14 - 13 He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, 14 **in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.**
 - vi. Hebrews 10:17-18 - 17 ...then he adds, "**I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more.**" 18 Where there is **forgiveness of these**, there is no longer any offering for sin.
 - c. To Israel and ALL nations
 - i. Isaiah 49:5-6 - 5 And now the LORD says, he who formed me from the womb to be his servant, **to bring Jacob back to him; and that Israel might be gathered to him**-- for I am honored in the eyes of the LORD, and my God has become my strength-- 6 he says: "**It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.**"
 - ii. Romans 10:12-13 - 12 For there is **no distinction between Jew and Greek**; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. 13 For "**everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.**"
 - iii. Revelation 5:9-10 - 9 And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and **by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation**, 10 and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth."

Unit Two: The Gospel is the Power of God

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed--a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

Romans 1:16-17 NIV

A. Power of God for Salvation

1. The power of God.

Power: Greek-G1411: *dynamis*: 1. Power, strength, ability. 2. Inherent power, power residing in a thing by virtue of its nature, or which a person or thing exerts or puts forth. 3. Moral power or excellence of soul. 4. The power and influence which belongs to riches and wealth. 5. Power and resources arising from numbers. 6. Power consisting in or resting upon armies.

Root Word: Able: Greek-G1410: *dynamai*: 1. To be able, to have power by virtue of one's own ability and resources, or of a state of mind, or through favorable circumstances, or by permission of law or custom. 2. To be able to do something. 3. To be capable, strong, and powerful.

- a. God is all powerful and all sufficient. He has inherent power as the self-existent One. He has the power of the One who spoke light into darkness and made all things out of nothing.
 - i. Genesis 17:1 - 1 When Abram was ninety-nine years old the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "**I am God Almighty**; walk before me, and be blameless..."
 - ii. Genesis 1:1 - 1 In the beginning, **God created the heavens and the earth**.
- b. God owns all things and is sovereign over all the resources of the earth.
 - i. Psalm 24:1-2 - 1 **The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein**, 2 for he has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers.
 - ii. Deuteronomy 10:14 - 14 Behold, **to the LORD your God belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it**.
 - iii. Psalm 50:10-12 - 10 For **every beast of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills**. 11 I know all the birds of the hills, and all that moves in the field is mine. 12 "If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for **the world and its fullness are mine**.
 - iv. Haggai 2:8 - 8 **The silver is mine, and the gold is mine**, declares the LORD of hosts.
- c. God is more powerful than the cumulative force of the most powerful armies in the world and reigns supreme over all the kingdoms of the world.
 - i. 1 Corinthians 1:25 - 25 For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the **weakness of God is stronger than men**.
 - ii. Daniel 2:20-22 - 20 Daniel answered and said: "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, **to whom belong wisdom and might**. 21 He changes times and seasons; **he removes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding**; 22 he reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with him.

- d. God is morally perfect and totally just in all His ways.
 - i. Deuteronomy 32:4 - 4 "**The Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are justice.** A God of faithfulness and **without iniquity, just and upright is he.**
 - ii. Revelation 15:3 - 3 And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty! **Just and true are your ways,** O King of the nations!
- e. ALL power belongs to God. God can do whatever He wants, whenever He wants, however He wants, and to or through whomever He wants.
 - i. Psalm 62:11 - 11 Once God has spoken; twice have I heard this: that **power belongs to God...**"
 - ii. Revelation 19:1 - 1 After this I heard what seemed to be the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, crying out, "Hallelujah! **Salvation and glory and power belong to our God...**

2. The Gospel is the Power of God for Salvation & to Save.

a. Salvation

Salvation: Greek-G4991: *soteria*: 1. Deliverance, preservation, safety, salvation. 2. Deliverance from the molestation of enemies. 3. That which concludes to the salvation of the soul. 4. Future salvation and the sum of the benefits which Christians, redeemed from all earthly ills will enjoy after the visible return of Christ from heaven.

b. Example: Noah's Ark. Safety/salvation from the flood.

- i. Like Noah's Ark, through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, God made a way for preservation and safety from present enemies and from the wrath to come.

Salvation: Hebrew-H3444: *yeshua*: 1. Salvation, deliverance. 2. Welfare, prosperity, health. 3. Victory. 4. That which is delivered.

c. Example: Israel's exodus from Egypt. When God delivered Israel from Egyptian slavery and being chased by the Egyptian army, they sang a song about the Lord has their salvation.

- i. Exodus 15:2 - 2 The LORD is my strength and my song, and **he has become my salvation**; this is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him.
- ii. Note: Jesus' name in Hebrew is **Yeshua** - salvation.

d. To Save

Save: Greek-G4982: *sozo*: 1. To keep safe and sound, rescue from danger or destruction. 2. To save a suffering one from perishing, i.e. one suffering from disease, to make well, heal, restore to health. 3. To deliver from the penalties of Messianic judgment and to save from the evils which obstruct the reception of Messianic deliverance.

e. Example: Jesus went about forgiving sin, healing the sick, delivering people from demonic oppression, and raising the dead.

f. Acts 4:12 - 12 And there is salvation [soteria] in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved [sozo]."

- i. God made a way. One way. The Gospel is God's way. Jesus is the way. There is no other way.

B. The Righteousness of God by Faith

1. Righteousness = no sin and right standing with God.

Righteousness: Hebrew-H6666: *tsedaqa*: 1. Justice, rightness. 2. Moral virtue and ethical rightness. 3. Right acts. Truthfulness. 3. Justification and salvation.

Righteousness: Greek-G1343: *dikaiosyne*: 1. The state of him who is as he ought to be. The condition acceptable to God. 2. Integrity, virtue, purity of life, correctness of thinking, feeling, and acting. 3. Justice which gives each his or her due.

2. God is JUST and the JUSTIFIER
 - a. Romans 3:23-26 - 23 "For **all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God**, 24 and are **justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus**, 25 whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was **to show God's righteousness**, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. 26 It was to show **his righteousness** at the present time, **so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.**"
 - i. All have sinned and deserve the temporal punishments and ultimate wrath of God.
 - ii. God is totally just in His judgments.
 - iii. God did not compromise, lessen, or weaken His standard of justice in order to forgive our sins and show mercy to us.
 - iv. Through the perfect life of Jesus, God's righteous standard has been fulfilled. Jesus did not come to abolish the Law but to fulfill it.
 - v. Therefore, through faith in Jesus, we are justified as if we had never sinned.
 - b. Romans 5:1 - 1 Therefore, since **we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God** through our Lord Jesus Christ.
3. Not by works, but by FAITH; a free gift of righteousness.
 - a. Romans 6:23 - 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the **free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**
 - b. Romans 3:27 - 27 Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? **By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith.**
 - c. Ephesians 2:8-9 - 8 For **by grace you have been saved through faith**. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 **not a result of works**, so that no one may boast.
 - d. Romans 4:3-8 - 3 For what does the Scripture say? "**Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.**" 4 Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. 5 And **to the one who does not work but believes** in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, 6 just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works: 7 "**Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; 8 blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin.**"
 - i. Example: Abraham's faith counted as righteous acts and right standing with God, even though he was an imperfect person like all of us. His faith was.
 - ii. Example: David had committed horrible sins but was confident in God's righteousness by faith because He trusted that his sins had been forgiven.

C. Power for Salvation, Deliverance, Healing, & Sustenance

1. The Gospel is the power for salvation from the wrath of God on the day of judgment.
 - a. Romans 5:9 - 9 Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be **saved by him from the wrath of God.**
 - b. 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 - 9 For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, 10 and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, **Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.**
 - c. 1 John 4:17 - 17 By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have **confidence for the day of judgment**, because as he is so also are we in this world.
 - d. 1 John 2:28 - 28 And now, little children, abide in him, so that **when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming.**
2. The Gospel is the power for salvation in life NOW through the forgiveness of sins to live a new life, freed from the power of sin and its destructive effects in our lives.
 - a. Matthew 1:21 - 21 She will bear a son, and you shall **call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.**
 - b. Matthew 26:28 - 28 ...for **this is my blood of the covenant**, which is poured out for many **for the forgiveness of sins.**
 - c. Hebrews 9:22 - 22 Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and **without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.**
 - d. 1 John 2:2 - 2 **He is the propitiation for our sins**, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.
 - e. Colossians 2:13-15 - 13 And you, who were **dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh**, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, 14 **by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.** 15 He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.
 - f. 1 John 1:9 - 9 If we confess our sins, **he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**
 - g. 2 Corinthians 5:21 - 21 **For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin**, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
3. The Gospel is the power for redemption from the curse of the Law.
 - a. Galatians 3:13 - 13 **Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law** by becoming a curse for us-- for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree"
 - i. Jesus hung on a tree (the cross) to become a curse for us, receiving the full penalty of the curse of the Law upon Himself on our behalf.

- b. The curse of the Law is given in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28: It includes every kind of malady, oppression, sickness, disease, torment, enemy oppression, provisional lack, deficit, debt, and scattering away from the presence and inheritance of God. It even includes every sickness and affliction not mentioned by name.
4. The Gospel is the power for healing from disease and freedom from demonic oppression.
- a. Jesus proclaimed the Gospel and healed the sick. He sent His disciples out to do the same.
 - i. Matthew 4:23 - 23 And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and **proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people.**
 - ii. Matthew 9:35 - 35 And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and **proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction.**
 - iii. Acts 10:38 - 38 ...how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. **He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil,** for God was with him.
 - iv. Matthew 10:7-8 - 7 And proclaim as you go, saying, '**The kingdom of heaven is at hand.**' 8 **Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons.** You received without paying; give without pay.
 - v. Luke 9:2 - 2 ...and he sent them out to **proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal.**
 - b. Sickness is the consequence of sin. Sickness is part of the penalty/curse of the Law and can also carry generationally to the third, fourth, and tenth generation. Demonic oppression and torment is a consequence of sin.
 - i. Exodus 15:26 - 26 ...saying, "**If you will diligently listen to the voice of the LORD your God, and do that which is right in his eyes,** and give ear to his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you that I put on the Egyptians, for **I am the LORD, your healer.**"
 - 01. Jesus fulfilled this requirement on our behalf.
 - ii. Deuteronomy 7:12, 14-15 - 12 "**And because you listen to these rules and keep and do them,** the LORD your God will keep with you the covenant and the steadfast love that he swore to your fathers. ... 14 You shall be blessed above all peoples. There shall **not be male or female barren among you** or among your livestock. 15 And the **LORD will take away from you all sickness,** and none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which you knew, will he inflict on you, but he will lay them on all who hate you."
 - 01. Jesus fulfilled this requirement on our behalf.
 - iii. Because Jesus fulfilled the righteous requirement of the Law, we can now receive healing as a free gift as a part of righteousness and right standing with God. Righteous people are not afflicted with sickness. We are righteous by FAITH in Jesus.
 - c. God condemned sin in the flesh. He judged sin at the cross of Jesus.
 - i. Romans 8:3 - 3 For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, **he condemned sin in the flesh**
 - ii. Because sin has been judged and the penalty for sin has been paid, our sins can be forgiven. Through faith in the Gospel, we receive this forgiveness because of Jesus' sacrifice.
 - d. Where sin has been forgiven, sickness has no right to afflict a person in right standing with God. We can receive healing through the forgiveness of sins.

- i. Mark 2:5-12 - 5 And when **Jesus saw their faith**, he said to the paralytic, "**Son, your sins are forgiven.**" 6 Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, 7 "Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! **Who can forgive sins but God alone?**" 8 And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, "Why do you question these things in your hearts? 9 Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your bed and walk'? 10 **But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins**"--he said to the paralytic-- 11 "I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home." 12 And he rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out before them all, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"
 - 01. The man was healed through Jesus' forgiveness of his sins.
 - ii. Luke 13:11-13, 16 - 11 And behold, there was a woman who had had a disabling spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not fully straighten herself. 12 When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said to her, "**Woman, you are freed [loosed] from your disability.**" 13 And he laid his hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and she glorified God. ... 16 And ought not this woman, **a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond** on the Sabbath day?"
 - 01. Loosed is a legal term for what is permitted/free.
 - 02. Jesus loosed her from her legal bond/obligation to the Law and therefore from Satan's legal right to bind her in torment.
- e. Authority in Jesus' name to heal the sick and cast out demons. NOTE: The Gospel is the power. Authority is the delegated legal right to use the power of God to bring about God's purposes.

Example of Power & Authority:

Power: A Mack truck against a man standing in the road with his hand up telling the truck to stop. Without contest, the truck has more power than the man.

Authority: If the man has a police badge, he has authority over the truck. His authority is backed by a power more powerful than the power of the truck.

- i. Mark 6:7, 12-13 - 7 And he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them **authority over the unclean spirits.** ... 12 So they went out and proclaimed that people should repent. 13 And they **cast out many demons and anointed with oil many who were sick and healed them.**
- ii. Luke 9:1-2, 6 - 1 And he called the twelve together and **gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases,** 2 and he **sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal.** ... 6 And they departed and went through the villages, **preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.**
- iii. Mark 16:17-18 - 17 And these signs will accompany those who believe: **in my name they will cast out demons;** they will speak in new tongues; 18 they will pick up serpents with their hands; and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; **they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover."**
- iv. Acts 3:6, 16 - 6 But Peter said, "I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you. **In the name of Jesus Christ** of Nazareth, rise up and walk!" ... 16 And **his name--by faith in his name--has made this man strong** whom you see and know, and the faith that is through Jesus has given the man this perfect health in the presence of you all.

5. The Gospel is the power for sustenance and material provision for God's will and purposes.
 - a. God's design of the world was for self-multiplying abundance in Eden for all mankind. Lack is the penalty for sin. Lack is part of the curse of the Law and can be a generational curse.
 - i. Jesus conquered ALL of the causes of lack through the cross. Therefore, we can now receive all we need as a free gift as a part of righteousness and right standing with God. Righteous people have no lack. We are righteous by FAITH in Jesus.
 - b. Matthew 6:25-34 - 25 "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, **what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?** 26 Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? 27 And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? 28 And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, 29 yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, **will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?** 31 **Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'** 32 For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and **your heavenly Father knows that you need them all.** 33 But **seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.** 34 "Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."
 - c. 2 Corinthians 9:8-11 - 8 And **God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.** 9 As it is written, "He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." 10 He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. 11 **You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way,** which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.
 - d. Philippians 4:19 - 19 And **my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.**
 - e. Note: This does not include provision for self-indulgent luxurious living. This means that God will amply supply all that is needed for His Kingdom purposes at all times, without fail.

D. Power for Godliness

1. The Gospel gives us the strength of God in our inner man to repent and turn from wickedness and sinful indulgence so that we may be the people of God.
 - a. 2 Peter 1:3-4 - 3 **His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness,** through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, 4 by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them **you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.**
 - i. Because Jesus cleansed us from sin through faith, the Holy Spirit has come to dwell in us. We participate with divine nature which helps us to turn from sinful desire to the things which are pleasing to God.

- b. Titus 2:11-14 - 11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, 12 **training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age**, 13 waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, 14 **who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.**
 - i. The indwelling Holy Spirit trains convicts us of sin and trains us to say no to things that are not of God so that we might instead be zealous for the things that are pleasing to God.

Unit Three: The Word of the Cross is the Power

For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

1 Corinthians 1:18

A. His Cross: The Suffering Servant

1. Isaiah 52:13-15 - 13 Behold, my servant shall act wisely; he shall be high and lifted up, and shall be exalted. 14 As many were astonished at you-- his appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of the children of mankind-- 15 so shall he sprinkle many nations. Kings shall shut their mouths because of him, for that which has not been told them they see, and that which they have not heard they understand.
 - a. Jesus acted wisely, even though it seemed nonsensical in the world's view.
 - i. Wisdom is proved right by the outcome. (See Matthew 11:19.)
 - b. Jesus was lifted up on the cross.
 - i. John 3:14-15 - 14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, **so must the Son of Man be lifted up**, 15 that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.
 - c. His appearance was beyond that of recognition. He no longer looked like a human being.
 - d. Through His blood shed on the cross, He sprinkles even Gentiles to cleanse them from sin.
 - e. His glory, power, and sovereignty is greater than any king of this world.
2. Isaiah 53:1-4 - 1 Who has believed what he has heard from us? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? 2 For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him. 3 He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. 4 Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.
 - a. Not everyone believes because God has not revealed it to everyone.
 - i. Only those to whom the Father reveals Himself will believe. (See John 6:44.)
 - b. Jesus was born in a manger and grew up humbly submitted to His parents. There was nothing especially notable or majestic about Him to cause anyone from a natural perspective to see Him as God in the flesh or King of all the earth.
 - c. Jesus fully understands the sorrows and griefs of mankind. Instead of being received and glorified by men, He was despised, rejected, and belittled. Instead of recognizing God in the flesh, mankind considered Him to be foolish, weak, and cursed by God.

3. Isaiah 53:5-6 - 5 But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned--every one--to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.
- a. Jesus was not crucified for His own errors or sin. He was crucified for our sins, transgressions, and iniquities.
 - i. Sin: An archery term for missing the mark. To err or be mistaken. To wander from the path of uprightness and honor. To do or go wrong. To violate God's divine Law. To fall short of the standard of God.
 - ii. Transgression: Acts of sin and rebellion against God. Like a trespasser who crosses the line where they are not supposed to go.
 - iii. Iniquities: Sin in the heart, mind, emotions, and will, even if they are not acted upon. Perversity, depravity, mischief, bentness.
 - b. He was pierced, crushed, and wounded for our faults and failures.
 - i. Pierced: To break, pierce through, perforate, lay open. To be slain. To have one's honor violated. To be fatally wounded.
 - ii. Crushed: To be broken or beaten into pieces. To be bruised or destroyed. To be humiliated or oppressed. To be smited or trampled.
 - iii. Wounds: Bruises. Stripes. Blows. Hurts. Marks of strokes on the skin.
 - c. We are the ones who have gone astray like lost sheep. God laid on Jesus the punishment for all of our wanderings from Him and errors against Him.
 - i. Jesus is the eternal peace offering for us before God. (See Leviticus 3.)
4. Isaiah 53:7-9 - 7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth. 8 By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people? 9 And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.
- a. Jesus was oppressed, afflicted, cut off, stricken, and slaughtered.
 - i. Oppressed: To press. To drive. To oppress. To exerting demanding pressure. To be hard pressed by a ruler or tyrant.
 - ii. Afflicted: To be oppressed, humbled, afflicted, bowed down. To be put down or become low. To become depressed or downcast. To be humiliated or brow beaten.
 - iii. Cut off: To cut, divide, or cut down. To cut in two. To destroy or exterminate. To be destroyed. To be excluded.
 - iv. Stricken: Stroke or plague (i.e. spot of plague.) Disease. Mark (i.e. mark of leprosy.)
 - v. Slaughtered: Slain as the slaying of cattle. Root word: To butcher, slay, or kill ruthlessly.
 - b. Like a sacrificial lamb led to slaughter, Jesus did not open His mouth.
 - i. When Jesus stood before Pilate and Herod, He gave no reply.
 - ii. Jesus is the sin offering to atone for our sin before God. (See Leviticus 4.)
 - c. He was judged as a sinner, a criminal, and a wicked person even though He had done no wrong and was completely without sin.

5. Isaiah 53:10-12 -10 Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt [sin], he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. 11 Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. 12 Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.
 - a. It was God's will that this should happen. It was the only way to make atonement for the sins of all mankind: through the perfect sacrifice of God's only Son, the spotless Lamb of God.
 - i. Jesus' soul was a guilt offering to cleanse us of sin. (See Leviticus 5.)
 - b. Through His righteousness and obedience, including His anguish and pouring out His soul unto death, Jesus attained eternal life – prolonging His days. The will of God to bring eternal life to mankind prospered in the life and death of Jesus. Therefore, God raised Him from the dead because death could not hold Him.
 - c. Through Jesus' atoning sacrifice, we have been made righteous before God. By knowledge of Jesus, we attain His righteousness as a free gift.
 - i. Jesus is the whole burnt offering to give us right standing with God. (See Leviticus 1.)
 - d. Jesus was numbered with transgressors but now divides the spoils of righteousness with transgressors who have repented and put their faith in Him. He bore our sins so that we can share in His blessing.
 - e. Jesus is ALIVE! He is now seated at the right hand of God making intercession for us.
 - i. Hebrews 7:22-25 - 22 This makes **Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant**. 23 **The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office,** 24 **but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever.** 25 Consequently, **he is able to save to the uttermost** those who draw near to God through him, **since he always lives to make intercession for them.**
6. The sacrificial death and resurrection of Jesus was predicted and fulfilled by the Scriptures.
 - a. Acts 3:14-15, 17-18 - 14 But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, 15 **and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead.** To this we are witnesses. ... 17 "And now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. 18 **But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled.**
 - b. 1 Corinthians 15:1-8 - 1 Now I would remind you, brothers, of **the gospel I preached to you,** which you received, in which you stand, 2 and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you--unless you believed in vain. 3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: **that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures,** 4 **that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,**
7. Jesus knew that all of this must happen to Him. He submitted Himself to it fully in order for the will of God to be completed in His life. He told His disciples numerous times that He must suffer and be crucified. But they did not understand the ways of God.

- a. Matthew 16:21-23 - 21 From that time **Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things** from the elders and chief priests and scribes, **and be killed, and on the third day be raised.** 22 And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you." 23 But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."
 - b. Matthew 17:22-23 - 22 As they were gathering in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "**The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men,** 23 and **they will kill him, and he will be raised on the third day.**" And they were greatly distressed.
 - c. Luke 18:31-34 - 31 And taking the twelve, he said to them, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and **everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished.** 32 For **he will be delivered over to the Gentiles and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon.** 33 And **after flogging him, they will kill him, and on the third day he will rise.**" 34 But they understood none of these things. This saying was hidden from them, and they did not grasp what was said.
8. Jesus offered Himself willingly to fulfill God's purpose of redemption.
- a. John 10:17-18 - 17 For this reason the Father loves me, **because I lay down my life that I may take it up again.** 18 **No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord.** I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father."
 - b. Hebrews 10:5-7 - 5 Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "**Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me;** 6 in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. 7 Then I said, 'Behold, **I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.**'"

B. The Mystery Hidden for Ages

1. 1 Corinthians 2:7-12 NIV - No, we declare **God's wisdom, a mystery that has been hidden** and that God destined for our glory before time began. 8 **None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.** 9 However, as it is written: "What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived"--the things God has prepared for those who love him-- 10 **these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit.** The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. 11 For who knows a person's thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. 12 **What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us.**
 - a. The mystery is that God sent His own Son to fulfill the righteous requirement for blessing. God worked righteousness on our behalf and gave us His Spirit.
 - b. The work of Christ is revealed by the Spirit. We have received the Spirit of the Lord dwelling inside of us to teach us the ways of God and to lead us in paths of righteousness.
 - c. We have access to God and all the blessings of righteousness through faith in Jesus.

2. Colossians 1:26-27 - 26 ...**the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints.** 27 To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of **the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.**
 - a. The mystery is that God had to cleanse us from sin through the sacrifice of His Son in order for us to be holy vessels which could house the Spirit of God.
 - b. Man in the flesh is completely incapable of fulfilling God's righteous requirement. The only way to produce a righteous people was for God to attain righteousness for us and then put His Spirit inside us to guide us from within in the ways of righteousness and against the desires of our flesh.
3. Romans 16:25-26 - 25 Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, **according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages 26 but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations,** according to the command of the eternal God, **to bring about the obedience of faith—**
 - a. God's purpose for mankind was always willing obedience to Him. Now, through faith and by His Spirit, people from all nations can obey Him from the heart.
4. Ephesians 3:4-6 - 4 When you read this, you can perceive **my insight into the mystery of Christ,** 5 **which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed** to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. 6 **This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.**
 - a. The mystery is that God's salvation is not only for the Jewish people, but for people from all nations and every tribe and tongue.

Unit Four: Power for Life & Godliness

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

2 Peter 1:3-4

A. Crucified with Christ

1. John 12:32-34, 37-38 - 32 **And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.** 33 He said this **to show by what kind of death he was going to die.** 34 So the crowd answered him, "We have heard from the Law that the Christ remains forever. How can you say that **the Son of Man must be lifted up?** Who is this Son of Man?" ... 37 Though he had done so many signs before them, they still did not believe in him, 38 **so that the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: "Lord, who has believed what he heard from us, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?"**
 - a. Jesus is the Son of Man (i.e. the son of Adam, which means "man.") Jesus was lifted up on the cross in crucifixion, which He is explicitly referring to here.
 - b. When Jesus was on the cross, He drew all of mankind – all the descendants of Adam – to Himself as the representative of all mankind before God.
 - i. We were on the cross with Jesus.

Bible Geek Note: The word "people," "men," "everyone," or "all people" has been inserted by translators. On the cross, Jesus drew all of creation to Himself, including all people. God's purpose was and is to redeem all of creation and ultimately to unite heaven and earth according to His original design.
For further study, see Ephesians 1:10; Colossians 1:20; Romans 8:22.
 - c. Isaiah prophesied that not everyone would believe, but only those to whom the arm of the Lord is revealed.
2. 2 Corinthians 5:14-15 - 14 For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that **one has died for all, therefore all have died;** 15 and **he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him** who for their sake died and was raised.
 - a. All descendants of Adam are already dead.
 - b. Unbelievers are dead in sin and destined for eternal separation from God.
 - i. Ephesians 2:1-3 - 1 **And you were dead in the trespasses and sins** 2 in which you once walked, **following the course of this world,** following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience-- 3 among whom **we all**

once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

- ii. Unbelievers were included in Christ's death, it just hasn't been revealed to them yet.
- c. Believers are dead to their old nature in Christ's death
 - i. By faith, we are alive to God by the indwelling Holy Spirit.
 - ii. His death frees us to live no longer for the passions of our flesh but for God.

B. Your Cross: Dead to Sin, the Law, the Flesh, & the World

- 1. We must reckon ourselves dead to sin and freed from slavery to sin through our death with Jesus.
 - a. John 8:34-36 - 34 Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, **everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin.** 35 The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. 36 So **if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.**
 - i. Without Jesus, we are all slaves to sin. As descendants of Adam, we are sinners by nature. We are further enslaved by sinful actions and the cursed existence they perpetuate which we cannot free ourselves from.
 - b. Romans 6:3-11 - 3 Do you not know that all of us who have been **baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?** 4 **We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death,** in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. 5 For if **we have been united with him in a death like his,** we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. 6 We know that **our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.** 7 **For one who has died has been set free from sin.** 8 Now if **we have died with Christ,** we believe that we will also live with him. 9 We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. 10 **For the death he died he died to sin, once for all,** but the life he lives he lives to God. 11 So **you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.**
 - i. We were baptized into Christ's death on the cross. When we passed under the waters, we were united with Him in His death on the cross. Our old self was buried in a watery grave.
 - ii. Our old self has been put to death so that we are no longer slaves to sin. The nature of Adam in us has been put to death through the cross of Christ.
 - iii. By faith, we must consider ourselves dead to the desires and impulses of our bodies and our sinful nature.
 - c. Romans 6:12-14 - 12 **Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body,** to make you obey its passions. 13 **Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life,** and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. 14 For **sin will have no dominion over you,** since you are not under law but under grace.
 - i. By faith, we must live in our bodies as if sin has been put to death in us. We must not permit sin to have dominion over us, causing us to serve its sinful desires.
 - d. Romans 6:16-19 - 16 Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, **you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of**

obedience, which leads to righteousness? 17 But thanks be to God, that **you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart** to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, 18 and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. 19 I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as **you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.**

- i. We can still choose to live by our old nature by indulging our flesh as slaves of sin OR we can choose to be slaves of God and righteousness.
 - ii. We must choose to present ourselves to God as His slaves because by faith, we have died to sin.
- e. Romans 6:20-23 - 20 For **when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.** 21 But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. 22 **But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life.** 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- i. As slaves of sin, we doomed to wrath and condemnation. Righteousness could not be expected of us because we were completely incapable of it.
 - ii. As slaves of God through faith that our old nature as been put to death, we are able to bear the fruit of righteousness.

Example: One living under the laws of France is not obligated to adhere to the laws of the United States. They are under two different jurisdictions of law. But if they move from France to the US, they are free from the laws of France and required to keep the laws of the US.

Therefore: Unbelievers cannot be expected to produce righteous fruit. They are slaves of sin, producing fruit which leads to death and incapable of producing anything else. Even if they do good/kind things, they are still in bondage to sin.

Therefore: Believers are expected to produce righteous fruit because they have died to sin to make themselves subjects of another jurisdiction: righteousness.

2. Dead to the Law

- a. Luke 16:16-18 - 16 **The Law and the Prophets were until John; since then the good news of the kingdom of God is preached,** and everyone forces his way into it. 17 But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one dot of the Law to become void. 18 **Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and he who marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery.**
- i. The Law is like a marriage covenant. The Law is not changed. Therefore, people living under the Law, are obligated to keep the requirement of the Law.
 - ii. Divorce from the Law is not sufficient to enter the Kingdom of God. We must die to it.
- b. Romans 7:1-6 - 1 Or do you not know, brothers--for I am speaking to those who know the law--**that the law is binding on a person only as long as he lives?** 2 For a married woman is bound by law to her husband while he lives, but if her husband dies she is released from the law of marriage. 3 Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law, and if she marries another man she is not an adulteress. 4 Likewise, my brothers, **you also have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God.** 5 For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. 6

But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.

- i. This is particularly for Jewish people who have lived their lives under the Law of God and for Gentiles who might want to reinstate or enforce the Law and its requirements upon New Covenant believers.
 - ii. The law is binding only while a person lives. The death penalty can only be imposed on a person who is alive. Jesus took the death penalty and we died with Him.
 - iii. The Law is the Old Covenant. Like a marriage covenant to which one is bound as long as the spouse is alive. Through death, the covenant requirement is nullified, and the spouse is free to marry another.
 - iv. Jesus instituted the New Covenant. A new marriage contract. We have died to the Old Covenant so that we are free to join ourselves with Jesus in the New Covenant.
 - v. To be in the Old Covenant and the New Covenant simultaneously is spiritual adultery.
- c. Galatians 2:19-21 - 19 For **through the law I died to the law**, so that I might live to God. 20 **I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God**, who loved me and gave himself for me. 21 I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.
- i. We have died to the Law through faith in Christ. We were crucified with Him so that we no longer try to attain righteousness through adherence to the Law and its requirements. We live by faith.
 - ii. To require adherence to the Law nullifies the grace of God. If we are still under Law, then Christ's death is worthless.

3. Dead to the flesh

- a. Galatians 5:24 - 24 And **those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh** with its passions and desires.
- i. We must reckon our flesh dead through the cross of Christ by not indulging its desires.

4. Dead To world

- a. Galatians 6:14-15 - 14 But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, **by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world**. 15 For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.
- i. We have been crucified to valuing the things of this world so that we can value the things that God values.
- b. Colossians 3:2-3 - 2 **Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth**. 3 **For you have died**, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.
- c. 1 John 2:15-17 - 15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 **For all that is in the world--the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life--is not from the Father but is from the world**. 17 And **the world is passing away along with its desires**, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.
- i. The world and everything in it is doomed for destruction by fire.

C. Born Again by the Spirit as Children of God

1. Born again through the Spirit.

- a. John 3:3-8 - 3 Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.**" 4 Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" 5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.** 6 **That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.** 7 Do not marvel that I said to you, '**You must be born again.**' 8 The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."
 - i. We must be born again through the power of God and the working of His Spirit.
- b. John 14:15-18, 23 - 15 "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. 16 And I will ask the Father, and **he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever,** 17 **even the Spirit of truth,** whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for **he dwells with you and will be in you.** 18 "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ... 23 Jesus answered him, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and **my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.**"
 - i. The Holy Spirit is our helper to live our lives for God and keep the commands of Jesus.
 - ii. When we believe Jesus, the Holy Spirit comes to dwell inside of us. Christ is in us.
- c. John 10:10 - 10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. **I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.**

Life: Greek-G2222: zoe; 1. The life of God. 2. The state of one who is possessed of vitality and animate. 3. The absolute fullness of life, both essential and ethical, which belongs to God. 4. Everlasting life.

- i. Jesus came to give us new life with the life of the nature of God within us. This is the way mankind was always supposed to be but could never attain.
- ### 2. Born again to a living hope through Christ's resurrection and the word of the gospel.
- a. 1 Peter 1:3-5, 23-25 - 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, **he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,** 4 to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, 5 who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. ... 23 since **you have been born again,** not of perishable seed but of imperishable, **through the living and abiding word of God;** 24 for "All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, 25 but the word of the Lord remains forever." And **this word is the good news [gospel] that was preached to you.**
 - i. When Jesus was raised from the dead, we were raised with Him. We were born again out of death into new life in Christ through His resurrection.
 - ii. The inheritance we wait for is eternal life with God in the world to come which will be perfect according to God's divine design. This is kept in perfectly in heaven as we await Christ's return.

- b. Colossians 2:11-12 - 11 In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12 having been buried with him in baptism, in which **you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.**
 - c. Ephesians 2:4-6 - 4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ-- by grace you have been saved-- 6 and **raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,**
 - d. Colossians 3:1 - 1 If then **you have been raised with Christ,** seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.
3. Born again as children of God.
- a. John 1:12-13 - 12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave **the right to become children of God,** 13 **who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.**
 - b. Romans 8:13-15 - 13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14 For **all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.** 15 For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but **you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!"**
 - c. Galatians 4:4-7 - 4 But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might **receive adoption as sons.** 6 And **because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"** 7 So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

D. A New Creation, A Chosen Generation, A New Humanity

- 1. 2 Corinthians 5:16-17 - 16 From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. 17 Therefore, **if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.**
 - a. We no longer regard people by the standards of this world. If we judged Jesus by the standards of this world, He would appear to be a failure.
 - b. Anyone who believes Jesus has been made into a new creation, cleansed by the blood of Jesus, dead to their former way of life, and made new through resurrection.
- 2. 1 Peter 2:9-10 NKJV - 9 But **you are a chosen generation,** a royal priesthood, a holy nation, **His own special people,** that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 who once were not a people **but are now the people of God,** who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.
 - a. We are a new kind of people, born of God as God's children, set apart to Him as holy.

Generation: Greek-G1085: *genos*: 1. Kindred. 2. Offspring or family. 3. Tribe or nation, nationality or descent from a particular people. 4. The aggregate of individuals of the same nature, kind, or sort.

- b. Those who do not believe Jesus are the generation/offspring of Adam. Those who believe Jesus are the generation/offspring of God.
3. Ephesians 2:11-19 - 11 Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands-- 12 **remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.** 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility 15 by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that **he might create in himself one new man** in place of the two, so making peace, 16 and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. 17 **And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near.** 18 **For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.** 19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are **fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,**
- a. Before Christ and the New Covenant, if a Gentile wanted to join themselves to the One True God, the God of Israel, they had to go through a conversion process to become Jewish. This would include adult circumcision for males and a mikveh, or ritual cleansing bath, for both men and women.
 - i. Gentiles were "far off" removed from God with no hope of eternal life or redemption.
 - ii. Jews were "near" to God but failed to attain to His righteous standard by the Law.
 - b. Through resurrection a whole new type of humanity was created. A New Adam/Man.
 - i. Before Jesus, there were two types of people in the world: Jews and Gentiles; covenant people of God and heathen sinners.
 - ii. Post-resurrection, there are again two different types of people in the world: First Adam's and Second Adam's. (See Romans 5:12-15; 1 Corinthians 15:45.)
 - iii. Anyone who does not believe Jesus is still doomed to death like the first Adam who rebelled against God.
 - iv. Those who believe that God raised Jesus from the dead are part of the second Adam, Jesus, who obeyed God perfectly and attained eternal life.
 - v. We are children of the resurrection, even while we live in un-resurrected bodies.

E. Partakers of Divine Nature, Led by the Spirit

- 1. 2 Peter 1:3-4 - 3 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, 4 by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them **you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.**

- a. With the Holy Spirit dwelling inside of us, we participate in divine nature. As God's children, we have His seed, the seed of His Spirit dwelling within us.
 - b. 1 John 3:9-10 - 9 **No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him; and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God.** 10 By this it is **evident who are the children of God**, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.
2. Romans 8:6-9, 12-13 - 6 For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but **to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.** 7 For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. 8 Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. 9 **You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you.** Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ... 12 So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. 13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die, **but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.**
- a. Through the Holy Spirit, we set our minds on the things which are pleasing to God.
3. Galatians 5:17-25 - 17 For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and **the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.** 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. 19 Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, 21 envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 **But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,** 23 **gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.** 24 And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 **If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.**
- a. If we walk by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we will not indulge the passions of our flesh.

F. Persecuted for Godliness & Taking Up Cross

1. John 15:18-20 - 18 **"If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you.** 19 If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, **but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.** 20 Remember the word that I said to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' **If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you.** If they kept my word, they will also keep yours.
- a. 2 Timothy 3:12-14 - 12 Indeed, **all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,** 13 while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. 14 **But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed,** knowing from whom you learned it
 - b. Matthew 10:21-22 - 21 Brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death, 22 and **you will be hated by all for my name's sake.** But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

- c. Mark 10:28-30 - 28 Peter began to say to him, "See, we have left everything and followed you." 29 Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, 30 who will not **receive a hundredfold now in this time**, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, **with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life**.
2. Walking in the ways of God and not the ways of man. Taking up our cross to follow Jesus.
- a. Matthew 16:23-26 - 23 But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. **For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.**" 24 Then Jesus told his disciples, "**If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.**" 25 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. 26 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?
- b. Luke 14:26-27, 33 - 26 "**If anyone comes to me and does not hate** his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and **even his own life**, he cannot be my disciple. 27 **Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple...** 33 So therefore, **any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.**

Unit Five: Power Against the Powers

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

Ephesians 6:12

A. Satan's Rebellion Before the Creation of the World

1. Satan was originally a spiritual being, appointed as a worshipper at the throne of God. Seraphim surround the throne of God, worshipping His holiness.
 - a. Isaiah 6:2-3 - 2 Above him stood the **seraphim**. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. 3 And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!"

Seraphim: Hebrew-H8314: *sarap*: 1. Serpent, fiery serpent, poisonous serpent (fiery from the burning effect of poison.) 2. Seraph, seraphim, majestic beings with six wings, human hands, and voices in attendance to God.

Other uses of this word:

Numbers 21:6, 8 - 6 Then the LORD sent **fiery serpents [seraphim]** among the people, and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. ... 8 And the LORD said to Moses, "Make a **fiery serpent** and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live."

Deuteronomy 8:15 - 15 who led you through the great and **terrifying wilderness, with its fiery serpents [seraphim]** and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water, who brought you water out of the flinty rock,

2. Satan rebelled against God. He was cast down to the earth in total chaos and darkness.
 - a. Ezekiel 28:13-17 - 13 You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle; and crafted in gold were your **settings and your engravings**. On the day that you were created they were prepared. 14 **You were an anointed guardian cherub**. I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked. 15 You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, till unrighteousness was found in you. 16 In the abundance of your trade **you were filled with violence in your midst, and you sinned; so I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God**, and I destroyed you, O guardian cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. 17 Your heart was proud because of your beauty; you **corrupted your wisdom** for the sake of your splendor. **I cast you to the ground**; I exposed you before kings, to feast their eyes on you.
 - i. Settings and engravings translate as timbrels/tambourines and flutes.
 - ii. Cherubs are spiritual/angelic beings appointed to God's service.
 - iii. Due to pride, rebellion, wickedness, and violence, the adversary was cast down.
 - b. Isaiah 14:12-15 - 12 "How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! **How you are cut down to the ground**, you who laid the nations low! 13 You said in your heart, 'I will ascend

to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.' 15 **But you are brought down to Sheol, to the far reaches of the pit.**

- i. Due to arrogant self-exaltation, the adversary was cast down to the place of the dead.
- c. Genesis 1:2 - 2 The earth was **without form and void**, and **darkness** was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of **the waters**.
- i. There was no order on the earth. It was chaos and darkness.
 - ii. "Waters" represent chaos, danger, violence, and transitory things.
 - iii. "Waters" is the word for wastewater, urine, water of the feet, etc.
 - iv. Note: Comparable language is used to describe the ruined city of Jerusalem when it has been overrun by enemies. (Jeremiah 4:23-27.)

B. Background of the Powers

1. When God created order out of chaos in the world, He appointed powers to rule over creation. God retains all sovereign authority but deputizes His authority over creation as He sees fit.
 - a. God appointed the sun, moon, stars to govern the day, night, and seasons.
 - i. Genesis 1:14-19 - 14 And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens **to separate the day from the night**. And let them be **for signs and for seasons, and for days and years**, 15 and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth." And it was so. 16 And God made the two great lights--**the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night--and the stars**. 17 And **God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, 18 to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness**. And God saw that it was good. 19 And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.
 01. Note: In Genesis 1, days one through three, God separated light from darkness, land from sea, etc. On day four, the lights in the sky were appointed to do the work of separating light from darkness, day from night, month from month, and season from season. They are God's deputies, delegated to do God's work in God's design.
 - ii. See also Psalm 136: 7-9. The sun to rule the day, the moon to rule the night...

Rule: Hebrew-H4910: *mamsala*: 1. Rule, have dominion over, reign, give order.

- b. God created mankind for the purpose of delegating authority to them to rule the earth.
 - i. Genesis 1:26-28 - 26 Then God said, "**Let us make man in our image**, after our likeness. **And let them have dominion** over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. 28 And God blessed them. And God said to them, "**Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion** over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

Have Dominion: Hebrew-H7287: *rada*: 1. Rule over, have dominion, dominate, tread down. 2. Rule or subjugate. 3. Prevail against. 4. Take possession of. 5. Tread upon.

Subdue: Hebrew-H3533: *kabas*: 1. Subject, subdue, force, keep under, bring into bondage, make subservient. 2. Tread with the feet.

- ii. This would subjugate the serpent under a delegated authority lower than God.
 - iii. God's design was one human family, ruling the earth together with Him in love/unity.
2. After the world was created, the serpent, Satan, enticed mankind into rebellion against God.
- a. Genesis 3:13b - 13b The woman said, "**The serpent deceived me, and I ate.**"
 - i. The very powers that mankind was supposed to subdue and tread upon (crush with the feet) they instead submitted themselves to and obeyed.
 - b. As a result of his deception, the serpent was cursed to crawl on its belly.
 - i. Genesis 3:14 - 14 The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; **on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life.**
 - c. From this point forward, there are clear distinctions between male and female.
 - i. Before this, male and female were naked and unashamed but now, they knew they were naked and became ashamed of their nakedness.
 - ii. Before this, they were two united as one humanity with one purpose, but now, they were divided into male and female with different roles, pains, and toils.
 - d. From this point forward, mankind is subjected to the serpent, Satan, a power lower than God. Satan succeeded in usurping mankind's God-delegated authority to rule the world.
 - i. 1 John 5:19 - 19 We know that we are from God, and **the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.**
 - e. From this point forward, mankind is subjected to the power/reign of death and slavery to the fear of death.
 - i. Hebrews 2:14-15 - 14 Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might **destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil**, 15 and deliver **all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.**
 - ii. Romans 5:14 - 14 Yet **death reigned** from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.
 - iii. Romans 5:21 - 21 ...so that, as **sin reigned in death**, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.
- Reign: Greek-G936: *basileuo*: 1. To be king, exercise kingly power, to reign. 2. To exercise the highest influence or control.
- f. As a result of man's deception, all of creation was placed under a curse.
 - i. Genesis 3:17-18 - 17 And to Adam he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' **cursed is the ground because of you**; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; 18 **thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you**; and you shall eat the plants of the field.
 - ii. Romans 8:20-22 - 20 For the **creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it**, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be set free from **its bondage to corruption** and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of

God. 22 For we know that **the whole creation has been groaning** together in the pains of childbirth until now.

- g. The nature of the serpent (Satan, the adversary of God,) was now a spiritual power of rebellion against God at work in the world and in the hearts of mankind.
 - i. Ephesians 2:2b - 2 ...following the course of this world, **following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience**
 - 01. The prince [archon] is the highest ruler.
 - 02. The power [exousia] is authority over it to do as one pleases.
 - 03. The air includes the whole atmospheric region of the earth (i.e. anything covered by air.)
 - ii. Romans 7:11, 13 - 11 For **sin, seizing an opportunity** through the commandment, **deceived me and through it killed me.** ... 13 Did that which is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! **It was sin, producing death in me** through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure.
 - 01. Sin is not an external/physical serpent but a spiritual power at work in all descendants of Adam to deceive unto death. Sin always leads to destruction and death.
 - iii. 1 John 3:8 - 8 **Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning.** The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.
 - 01. Anyone continuing in sin demonstrates that they are still under the power of sin and the evil one.
- 3. In the generations that followed, mankind descended into depravity under subjection to the powers at work in the world and in them. Some cried out to God. Most did not.
 - a. Cain killed his brother, Abel, and therefore, the ground would no longer produce for Cain. He built the first city and named it after his son. This was to ensure that his descendants would be rulers over their resources/assets which they had to steal from other people for whom the ground was still producing. (See Genesis 4:1-24.) (See God's Economics.)
 - i. The descendants of Cain became increasingly violent and vengeful.
 - ii. They were the first to forge weapons, making violence and conquest easier.
 - iii. They were the first to turn to polygamy: one man providing for multiple women.
 - iv. They were the first to make musical instruments. (Remember Satan was originally a worshipper at the throne of God.)
 - b. From this point forward, mankind's survival became about assets and people had to choose between calling out to God or worshipping/serving Mammon.
 - i. Matthew 6:24 KJV - 24 **No man can serve two masters:** for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. **Ye cannot serve God and mammon.**
 - ii. Note: Mammon is a word/term of Chaldean (Babylonian) origin and is money or wealth personified as a god.
 - c. Seth, Abel's "replacement," also had a son. (See Genesis 4:25-26.)
 - i. At that time, people began to call upon the Lord.
 - ii. Enoch, the 7th generation from Seth, walked with God without subjecting himself to the powers. He was so "not of this world" that God took him out of it. (Genesis 5:24.)

4. Rebellious spiritual beings/powers increased their depraved perversion by reproducing through sexual union with women, creating a super-human race.

- a. Genesis 6:4 - 4 The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the **sons of God came in to the daughters of man** and they bore children to them. **These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown.**

Sons of God: The Biblical term used to describe spiritual beings. In every instance where this phrase is used, it always describes spiritual beings. For example, in the Book of Job, the term "sons of god" is used to describe the heavenly court assembling around the throne of God, including Satan himself.

"Sons of" or "daughters of" is an expression that does not explicitly mean biological descendants but a group sharing certain characteristics, attributes, or activities. (i.e. daughters of Jerusalem, sons of disobedience, sons of the prophets, etc.)

Elohim is the word for God but can also be used to mean: rulers, judges, divine ones, angels, gods, goddesses, godlike ones.

- b. Note: From a human perspective, when survival is based on violence and dominance, having a super-human-spiritual being in your family, tribe, or nation becomes appealing.

c. Note: This is the evil one's counterfeit of filling humans with spiritual power so that they can take over the world from God, under Satan's influence.

- i. Humans filled with the Spirit of the Lord have superhuman abilities. (Wisdom, skills, strength, power of God, etc.) Adam was breathed into life by the spirit of the Lord but through the fall and passing generations, had lost the vigor of God's life/power.

5. Chaos, violence, and wickedness escalated on earth to the level that God brought judgment through a flood. The earth was again covered with wastewater.

- a. Genesis 6:11-12 - 11 Now **the earth was corrupt** in God's sight, and **the earth was filled with violence**. 12 And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for **all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth**.

b. In all the world, only Noah walked with God as a righteous man and was spared from the judgment of the world. Noah built an Ark, brought a remnant of all creation into the Ark with him and floated above the waters of the flood. (See Genesis 6-9.)

- i. Genesis 7:18 - 18 The waters prevailed and increased greatly on the earth, and **the ark floated on the face of the waters**.

6. When Noah's sons' descendants developed into nations, the nations rebelled against God at the tower of Babel. Under the rule of Nimrod, all of mankind united to build a tower designed to ascend to the powers of heaven by human ingenuity instead of by worshipping God. (Genesis 10:8-14; 11:1-9.) It was the self-exalting nature/power of the serpent displayed by man's actions.

a. Therefore, God separated and scattered the nations, knowing in advance the boundaries of their lands and the times of their rise and fall.

- i. Acts 17:26 - 26 And he made **from one man every nation** of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, **having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place...**

- b. God appointed the lands of the nations according to the spiritual powers and rulers in the heavenly realms. He also changed their languages.
 - i. Deuteronomy 32:8 - 8 When the Most High **gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind**, he fixed the borders of the peoples **according to the number of the sons of God**.
 - 01. Spiritual beings were appointed over the nations and territories.
 - ii. Example: An angel appeared to Daniel to explain to him what was to come in world events. Battles were going on in the spirit realm, determining and instituting the outcomes in the nations of the world according to God's design and plan.
 - 01. Daniel 10:13-14, 20-21 - 13 The **prince of the kingdom of Persia** withstood me twenty-one days, but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I was left there with the kings of Persia, 14 and came to make you understand what is to happen to your people in the latter days. For the vision is for days yet to come." ... 20 Then he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? But now **I will return to fight against the prince of Persia**; and when I go out, behold, **the prince of Greece will come**. 21 But I will tell you what is inscribed in the book of truth: there is none who contends by my side against these except **Michael, your prince**.
 - 02. Persians were the world empire in control at that time. Their prince/angel ruled over their territory in the spirit realm.
 - 001. The spiritual powers of Persia resisted the angel trying to bring revelation to Daniel about what was to come in the latter days.
 - 03. Greece was the empire that was next to come and would conquer Persia swiftly (Alexander the Great.) The prince/powers of Greece were already contending for authority over the world in the spirit realm.
 - 04. Michael is the prince/angel/power appointed by God to Israel.
7. As the nations began to dwell and live in their new territories with their new languages, cultural differences developed under the influence of the spiritual powers.
- a. Cultural customs were in part defined by language, terrain, and climate.
 - i. Language shapes culture through expression. What people say and how they can say it in their language shapes what they do and how they do it.
 - 01. Note: Men and angels have languages. (1 Corinthians 13:1.)
 - ii. Climate impacts daily life, work/rest rhythms, how the dead are handled, etc.
 - b. Each nation developed its own concepts of good and evil. Cultural distinctions were devised by the spiritual powers in the heavenlies based on what evils and immoralities the people could be deceived into accepting into the cultural boundaries/definitions.
 - i. Morality: The society's concepts of what is deemed to be right/wrong, good/evil.
 - ii. Religious beliefs and practices: God, gods, the spiritual realm and how to keep the spiritual powers happy.
 - iii. Justice: What the consequences and penalties are for those who do not adhere to the cultural norms. (i.e. honor/shame, banishment, death, etc.)
 - iv. Authority structures of society: King/subjects, tribal leaders, matriarchal/patriarchal, political systems (democracy, socialist, communist, etc.)
 - 01. Most societies appointed Kings, Chiefs, or Rulers to rule over them.
 - 02. Some societies regarded their kings as gods. In Egypt, Pharaoh is god.
 - 03. This was a further subjugation

- c. Nations and societies appointed Kings, chiefs, or rulers to rule over them. Some even regarded their kings as divine beings or gods. (i.e. In Egypt, Pharaoh is god.)
 - i. Authority was typically derived from violence/conquest or resources/assets creating societal structures of subjugation and dependency.
 - ii. From this point forward, peoples of the nations are subjected under human authority of their nation, region, or territory. (This had already begun with Cain.)
 - d. All nations were subjected to the wisdom of man with its vain philosophies and imaginations.
 - i. Colossians 2:8 - 8 See to it that no one takes you captive by **philosophy and empty deceit**, according to **human tradition**, according to the **elemental spirits of the world**, and not according to Christ.
 - 01. Human observations of how things work. Cause and effect in the earth.
 - ii. Romans 1:21 - 21 For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they **became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened**.
 - 01. Their way of thinking became distorted, self-exalting, chaotic, and dark.
 - e. All nations were subjected to elemental powers of this world.
 - i. Galatians 4:3b, 8-9 NIV – 3b We were in slavery under the **elemental spiritual forces of the world**. ... 8 Formerly, when you did not know God, **you were slaves to those who by nature are not gods**. 9 But now that you know God--or rather are known by God--how is it that you are turning back to those **weak and miserable forces**? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again?
 - 01. Natural laws of the world, cause/effect, sowing/reaping, karma, the Law and its blessings/curses.
 - 02. Beings that are not gods, whether created beings, idols, or spiritual forces exalting themselves as gods.
 - f. All nations were subjected to worshipping demons, false gods, counterfeiting God's abilities and power.
 - i. 1 Corinthians 10:20 - 20 No, I imply that **what pagans sacrifice they offer to demons** and not to God. I do not want you to be participants with demons.
 - 01. Pagan "gods" are actually demons, deputies of Satan, seeking and obtaining worship for themselves while oppressing their subjects.
 - ii. Deuteronomy 32:17 - 17 They **sacrificed to demons that were no gods**, to gods they had never known, to **new gods that had come recently**, whom your fathers had never dreaded.
 - 01. Satan "reinvents" or "represents" himself in "new gods" even though his tactics of deception to incite wickedness and depravity are never new.
 - g. From this point forward, there are distinctions between nations, peoples, tribes, and tongues.
 - i. Each nation adopted its own "worldview" or concept of the world from their vantage point, as influenced by the spiritual authorities over them.
 - ii. Contrasting worldviews create conflict and division.
8. All nations turned from God and began to worship the sun, moon, and stars.
- a. Deuteronomy 4:19 - 19 And beware lest you raise your eyes to heaven, and **when you see the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of heaven**, you be drawn away and bow down to them and serve them, **things that the LORD your God has allotted to all the peoples [nations] under the whole heaven**.

- i. Note: Note: Worship of the sun, moon, and stars is forbidden for God's people. (Deuteronomy 17:3.)
 - b. From this point forward, God turned all nations over to being governed by the sun, moon, and stars with no direct access to God.
 - i. This means that they are subjected under a lower, delegated, authority.
 - ii. People chose to worship creation rather than the Creator. (Romans 1:25.)
 - c. Note: Almost all ancient civilizations revolve their worship around the sun, moon, and stars. Astrology remains an active force in various cultures to this day.
 - i. People's lives are believed to be "determined" by their stars – the month, day, year, and time of their birth predicts the course of their life.
 - ii. People live in willing subjection to the rule of the sun, moon, and stars.
 - 01. This includes their concept of their own temperament, aptitudes/skills, vocations, relationships, compatibility, who to marry, health issues, etc.
9. Out of all the nations in all the world, worshipping false gods and the sun, moon, and stars, God called Abram out of Ur of the Chaldeans (near Babel) to worship Him. Note: Chaldeans were astronomers who worshipped of the sun, moon, and stars in addition to false gods/demons.
- a. Genesis 17:7-8 - 7 And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, **to be God to you** and to your offspring after you. 8 And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and **I will be their God.**"
 - i. Abraham was now the only person on earth with the Most High God as their God.
 - b. Abraham's call separated him from the rest of the world. He was called out of bondage to the powers to worship God. Even Abraham needed redemption. (Isaiah 29:22.)
 - i. The rest of humanity had no direct access to God and was still subject to the deputy governance of the sun, moon, and stars in addition to the angelic and demonic powers at work in the heavenly realms.
 - c. From this point forward, there was a distinction between Hebrews and Gentiles - between those who worshipped the one true God vs. false gods/demons, powers, created things.
 - i. This ultimately became a hostility between Jews and Gentiles.
 - ii. Jews regard(ed) Gentiles as delusional worshippers of false gods and wicked godless heathens. Jews would not even eat in Gentiles' homes.
 - iii. For a Gentile to worship the one true God, the God of Israel, they must demonstrate their fear of, faith in, and allegiance to the God of Israel. They must give up their old way of life, get circumcised, and become adherent to the Law of Moses.
 - d. Note: At Sinai, God's desire was for Israel as a nation to have direct access to Him and to hear His voice. (See Exodus 19:13, 20:1-17; Jeremiah 7:22-23.) But they feared God too much to ascend the mountain. Instead of direct access to God, they wanted Moses to be their representative. God put them under the Law.
 - i. Exodus 20:18-19 - 18 Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off 19 and said to Moses, "**You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die.**"
 - ii. Galatians 3:19, 23-24 - 19 Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions, until the offspring should come to whom the promise had been made, and it was **put**

in place through angels by an intermediary. ... 23 Now before faith came, we were **held captive under the law, imprisoned** until the coming faith would be revealed. 24 So then, the **law was our guardian** until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith.

01. Guardian, captive, and imprisoned are all terms of subjugation and bondage.
 02. 1 Corinthians 15:56 - 56 The sting of death is sin, and the **power of sin is the law.**
 - iii. *From this point forward*, Israel was under the power/rule of the Law which was given by powers lower than God until direct relationship with God could be restored.
- e. Note: In the days of Samuel, Israel demanded a human king to rule them to be like all the other nations. In this, they rejected God's authority as their King. (See 1 Samuel 8.)
- i. 1 Samuel 8:7 - 7 And the LORD said to Samuel, "Obey the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but **they have rejected me from being king over them.**
 - ii. 1 Samuel 12:17b, 19 - 17b And you shall know and see that **your wickedness is great**, which you have done in the sight of the LORD, in **asking for yourselves a king.**" ... 19 And all the people said to Samuel, "Pray for your servants to the LORD your God, that we may not die, for **we have added to all our sins this evil, to ask for ourselves a king.**"
 - iii. *From this point forward*, until exile, Israel was under the authority of a human king, an authority lower than direct access to God.

Powers Background Recap:

- ✓ God gave mankind power/authority to rule the world.
- ✓ Mankind forfeited the right to be ruled by God and their God-given authority to rule the world.
- ✓ All mankind is under the power of the evil one.
- ✓ All mankind is under the power of sin and death.
- ✓ The powers brought division between male and female.
- ✓ The powers brought division between nations, cultures, social classes, religions, etc.
- ✓ The powers subjugated humans to authorities lower than having direct access to God.

C. God's Sovereignty Over the Powers

1. Small tutorial on the heavens. There are three levels or realms of the heavens.
 - a. In Hebrew, the heavens is a plural word.
 - i. Genesis 1:1 - 1 In the beginning, God created **the heavens** and the earth.
 - b. The 1st heaven is the natural atmosphere in the earth, where birds dwell.
 - i. Genesis 1:7-8 - 7 And God made the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so. 8 And **God called the expanse Heaven.** And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.
 01. The "expanse" is the firmament, hemisphere, or dome encasing the earth.
 02. This refers to the sky, the natural atmosphere of the earth.

- ii. Genesis 6:7 - 7 So the LORD said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and **birds of the heavens**, for I am sorry that I have made them."
 - iii. Matthew 6:26 - 26 Look at the **birds of the air**: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?
- c. The 2nd heaven is the celestial heaven, where the sun, moon, and stars dwell. This is also the realm of spiritual activity lower than God's dwelling.
- i. Deuteronomy 4:19 - 19 And beware lest you **raise your eyes to heaven**, and when you see the **sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of heaven**, you be drawn away and bow down to them and serve them, things that the LORD your God has allotted to **all the peoples under the whole heaven**.
 - 01. Reminder: All pagan peoples are under the power of the 2nd heaven.
 - ii. Note: When God created the world, He separated the waters of chaos into those on the earth (where the sea monster dwells) and the waters of the heavens.
 - 01. God created a dome to hold the waters of the heavens in place.
 - 02. The 1st heaven is under the protective dome of the earth. The 2nd heaven is above the protective dome of the earth.
 - 03. The 2nd heaven consists of the waters of chaos. (See Genesis 1:7-8.)
 - 04. Example: In the days of the flood, the wastewaters of the deep and the wastewaters of the heavens were unleashed upon the earth and broke through the firmament or dome of the earth. (See Genesis 7:11-12.)
 - iii. Note: God rules from a place higher than these heavens and when He executes judgments, the heavens are shaken.
 - 01. Matthew 24:29 - 29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days the **sun** will be darkened, and the **moon** will not give its light, and the **stars** will fall from heaven, and **the powers of the heavens will be shaken**.
 - 02. Haggai 2:21 - 21 "Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying, **I am about to shake the heavens** and the earth,
 - 03. Joel 2:10 - 10 The earth quakes before them; **the heavens tremble**. The sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining.
- d. The 3rd heaven is where God is seated on the throne. The third heaven is never shaken.
- i. Deuteronomy 10:14 - 14 Behold, to the LORD your God belong heaven and **the heaven of heavens**, the earth with all that is in it.
 - ii. Psalm 8:1 - 1 O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! **You have set your glory above the heavens**.
 - iii. Psalm 148:4 - 4 Praise him, you **highest heavens**, and you waters above the heavens!
 - iv. Psalm 29:3 - 3 The voice of the LORD is **over the waters**; the God of glory thunders, the LORD, **over many waters**.
 - 01. God is over the waters separated below and above the earth.
 - v. 2 Corinthians 12:2-3 - 2 I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was **caught up to the third heaven**--whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. 3 And I know that this man was **caught up into paradise**--whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows--
 - 01. Paul was taken up into the third heaven, the dwelling place of God.
2. All things in heaven and earth were created by God and for Him to carry out His will.

- a. Colossians 1:15-16 - 15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 16 For by him all things were created, **in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible**, whether **thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities**--all things were created through him and for him.
 - i. Heaven and earth: spiritual beings and earthly beings.
 - ii. Thrones, dominions: positions and territories of power and authority (in the heavens and on the earth.)
 - iii. Rulers, authorities: those in the positions of authority over territories (in the heavens and on the earth.)
3. The powers are spiritual forces which have natural counterparts of effects in the earth. Spiritual forces are impacted by human obedience/disobedience on the earth.
- a. Example: The Commander of the Lord's Army does the work of the Lord, based on the behavior of the people. Victory or defeat is dependent on human behavior.
 - i. Joshua 5:13-14 - 13 When Joshua was by Jericho, he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing before him with his drawn sword in his hand. And Joshua went to him and said to him, "**Are you for us, or for our adversaries?**" 14 And he said, "**No; but I am the commander of the army of the LORD.** Now I have come." And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped and said to him, "What does my lord say to his servant?"
 01. He is not for a people or against a people. He is for the Lord.
 02. If a people are for the Lord, He is with them.
 03. If a people is against the Lord, He is against them.
 04. This was vibrantly displayed in Joshua's battles against Jericho and Ai.
 - b. Example: God appoints destruction or blessing for a nation based on their evil/repentance. When there is extended and cumulative sin and wickedness, God removes His protection and peace and turns the nation over to total destruction.
 - i. Jeremiah 18:7-10 - 7 If at any time I declare **concerning a nation or a kingdom**, that I will pluck up and break down and destroy it, 8 and if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, **turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster** that I intended to do to it. 9 And if at any time I declare **concerning a nation or a kingdom** that I will build and plant it, 10 and if **it does evil in my sight, not listening to my voice, then I will relent of the good** that I had intended to do to it.
 01. A nation determines its own level of destruction through their own sin or repentance from wickedness.
 - ii. Genesis 15:16b – 16b For the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete."
 01. God waited four hundred years to bring judgment on the Amorites' sin.
 - iii. Numbers 14:9b - 9 **Their protection is removed from them**, and the LORD is with us; do not fear them."
 01. Once the Amorites' sin reached full measure, God removed their spiritual protection and dominion in their land and gave it to Israel.
 - c. Example: Battles for power took place in heaven and on earth between territorial rulers and their armies.
 - i. The *prince of Persia* who resisted the angel sent to Daniel was a spiritual being in the heavenly realm.
 - ii. The *prince of Persia* in the world was Cyrus, the Emperor who had been named by God hundreds of years earlier in a prophecy by Isaiah and was called God's "anointed one." (Isaiah 45:1.)

- d. All authority is appointed by God for carrying out His purposes. God takes a long view on justice and His ways are not our ways.
- i. Romans 13:1, 4b - 1 Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For **there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God...** 4b For he is the servant of God, an avenger **who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer.**
 - ii. Example: God appointed Nebuchadnezzar and gave him dominion over the whole world, including His own people, when they were in rebellion against Him.
 - iii. God's wrath is more about turning people over to their own evil desires so that they destroy themselves rather than destroying them or opposing the thing causing the conduct. (See Romans 1:18-32.)
- e. Rulers of this age are under God's sovereign control, even if they are in rebellion against Him.
- i. Psalm 2:2-3 - 2 The **kings of the earth** set themselves, and the **rulers** take counsel together, **against the LORD and against his Anointed**, saying, 3 "Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us."
 01. Kings and rulers in the world reject God's authority and gather together to establish their own. (Like the tower of Babel all over again.)
 - ii. 1 Corinthians 2:8 - 8 None of the **rulers of this age** understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.
 01. Caiaphas was the High Priest (ruler) of the people of Israel.
 02. Herod and Pilate were the ruling representatives of Rome/Caesar.
4. God, in His time, sovereignly brings punishment upon the powers/gods in the heavenly realm as He brings judgment upon the nations and kings/rulers in the earth.
- a. Example: God executed judgment on Egypt by killing all the firstborn males, and on the gods of Egypt by proving them powerless.
 - i. Exodus 12:12 - 12 For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and **on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD.**
 - b. Example: In the end, God will punish all who went rogue against Him, including the kings of the earth, the nations, and host of heaven, the sun, moon, and stars who received worship.
 - i. Isaiah 24:21-23 - 21 On that day **the LORD will punish the host of heaven, in heaven, and the kings of the earth, on the earth.** 22 They will be gathered together as prisoners in a pit; they will be shut up in a prison, and after many days they will be punished. 23 Then the **moon will be confounded and the sun ashamed**, for the LORD of hosts reigns on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and his glory will be before his elders.
 01. Judgment is not limited to humans on the earth but the spiritual forces of wickedness which have turned humans away from God to evil.
 - ii. Isaiah 34:2, 4 - 2 For the LORD is **enraged against all the nations**, and **furious against all their host**; he has devoted them to destruction, has given them over for slaughter. ... 4 **All the host of heaven shall rot away**, and **the skies roll up like a scroll. All their host shall fall**, as leaves fall from the vine, like leaves falling from the fig tree.
 01. The whole host of heaven in rebellion against God will be rolled up. There will be a new heaven with the new earth.
 - iii. The new heavens and earth have no sun, moon, and stars. Only God is worshipped.
 01. Revelation 6:12-14 - 12 When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake, and the **sun** became black as sackcloth, the full **moon** became like blood, 13 and the **stars** of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale. 14

- The **sky vanished like a scroll** that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place.
02. Isaiah 60:19 - 19 The **sun shall be no more your light by day, nor for brightness shall the moon give you light**; but the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory.
 03. Revelation 21:23 - 23 And the city has **no need of sun or moon** to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb.
- c. God will ultimately bring final judgment upon the serpent.
- i. Isaiah 27:1 - 1 In that day the LORD with his hard and great and strong sword will **punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, Leviathan the twisting serpent**, and he will slay the **dragon that is in the sea**.
 - ii. Revelation 20:2-3, 7, 10 - 2 And he **seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan**, and bound him for a thousand years, 3 and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while. ... 7 And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison ... 10 **and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur** where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

D. Jesus & the Powers

1. Jesus triumphed over the powers by obeying God, even unto death. Through His death and resurrection, He disarmed the powers and triumphed over them for us.
 - a. Colossians 2:14-15 NKJV - 14 ...having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. 15 **Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it [the cross]**.
 - i. The word for disarm means to "wholly put off from oneself and separate oneself, to divest oneself wholly, to disarm or despoil."
 - ii. Jesus completely separated Himself from the powers of the evil one and this world. Through this, they were disarmed against Him. They had no hold on Him.
 - iii. Jesus proved that the powers have no power or authority over a person with the nature of God dwelling in them. He was without sin, without selfishness, and was unmoved by the schemes of the evil one. He resisted ALL the forces of evil.
 - iv. Jesus put on a public display for all to see that the forces of this world and the evil one had no hold on Him, including death.
 01. Joseph wanted to divorce Mary without public spectacle upon discovery that she was pregnant. Joseph wanted to do it quietly. Jesus did not.
 - b. For Jews under the power of the Law, Jesus fulfilled the Law, satisfied its requirements, and set them free from the rule/power of the Law to bring death.
 - i. Galatians 3:24-26 - 24 So then, **the law was our guardian until Christ came**, in order that we might be justified by faith. 25 But now that faith has come, we are **no longer under a guardian**, 26 for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.
 - ii. Note: God was also restoring Himself to His position as Israel's rightful King.

2. Now, Jesus Christ is seated at the right hand of God in the 3rd heaven at the right hand of God with all authority in heaven and on earth and under the earth.
 - a. Matthew 28:18 - 18 And Jesus came and said to them, "**All authority in heaven and on earth** has been given to me."
 - b. Ephesians 1:20-21 - 20 ...that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and **seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places,** 21 **far above all rule and authority and power and dominion,** and **above every name that is named,** not only in this age but also in the one to come.
 - c. Hebrews 8:1 - 1 Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, **one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven,**
 - i. Jesus is in the 3rd heaven, at the right hand of God.
 - d. Hebrews 9:24 - 24 For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, **but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.**
3. Through faith in the Gospel, we are seated with Him in the 3rd heaven with Christ. We receive forgiveness of our sins through the blood of Jesus so that through faith, we participate in His position of victory.
 - a. Ephesians 2:6 - 6 ...and raised us up with him and **seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,**
 - b. Ephesians 1:3 - 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has **blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,**
 - c. Philippians 3:20 - 20 But **our citizenship is in heaven,** and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,
 - i. This is given in contrast to those whose god is their belly, focused on earthly things.
 - d. Colossians 3:1-3 - 1 If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, **where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.** 2 Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. 3 For you have died, and **your life is hidden with Christ in God.**
4. Through faith in the Gospel, we have been restored to having direct access to God without being subjected to any other power. Jesus (who is God in the flesh) is our mediator.
 - a. Romans 5:1-2 - 1 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, **we have peace with God** through our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Through him **we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand,** and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.
 - b. Hebrews 4:16 - 16 Let us then **with confidence draw near to the throne of grace,** that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.
 - c. Hebrews 10:19 - 19 Therefore, brothers, since **we have confidence to enter the holy places** by the blood of Jesus,

- d. John 16:26-27 - 26 In that day **you will ask in my name**, and **I do not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf**; 27 for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God.
5. Through faith in the Gospel, we are saved from the powers of this present evil age and corrupt generation of humanity to be a part of God's Kingdom people.
- a. Galatians 1:3-4 - 3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, 4 who gave himself for our sins **to deliver us from the present evil age**, according to the will of our God and Father,
 - b. Colossians 1:13 - 13 He has **delivered us from the domain of darkness** and **transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son**,
 - c. Colossians 2:20 - 20 If **with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world**, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations--
 - d. Acts 2:40 - 40 And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, "**Save yourselves from this crooked generation.**"
6. Through faith in Jesus, we are a redeemed people from every nation, tribe, and tongue. Because Jesus conquered the powers dividing us, we can be united as one new humanity, regardless of our social, economic, racial, national, or ethnic heritage.
- a. Revelation 5:9-10 - 9 And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God **from every tribe and language and people and nation**, 10 and you have **made them a kingdom and priests to our God**, and they shall reign on the earth."
 - i. All national, tribal, cultural, ethnic barriers have been demolished through the cross.
 - ii. We are a kingdom, a people, of God.
 - b. 1 Corinthians 12:13 - 13 For in one Spirit we were all **baptized into one body**--Jews or Greeks, slaves or free--and all were made to drink of one Spirit.
 - i. Regardless of ethnic or social background, we have been made into one body.
 - c. 2 Corinthians 5:16-17 - 16 From now on, therefore, **we regard no one according to the flesh**. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. 17 Therefore, **if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation**. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.
 - i. We no longer regard people based on their natural attributes. We no longer boast about outward appearances.
 - ii. If anyone is a believer, they are a new creation in Christ.
 - d. All separations and powers of division between Jew and Gentile, between social classes, between genders, and between cultures were demolished at the cross.
 - i. Ephesians 2:14-15 - 14 For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has **broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility** 15 by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might **create in himself one new man** in place of the two, so making peace,
 - 01. Through the cross, Jesus fulfilled the Law and made it obsolete, thereby demolishing the separation between Jew and Gentile before God.

- ii. Galatians 3:28 - 28 There is **neither Jew nor Greek [Gentile]**, there is neither **slave nor free**, there is **no male and female**, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.
 - 01. Jew and Gentile, social class (slave/free), gender (male/female)
- iii. Colossians 3:11 - 11 Here there is **not Greek [Gentile] and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free**; but Christ is all, and in all.
 - 01. Low class people without culture (barbarian, Scythian) and high-class people with culture.
 - 02. Positions of authority (slaves/owners) – all are now brothers in the Lord.
 - 03. Reminder: Jesus instructed his disciples not to be called teacher, father, master because we are all equal as brothers. (Matthew 23:8-10.)

Jesus & the Powers Recap:

- ✓ *God gave mankind power/authority to rule the world.*
- ✓ *Mankind forfeited the right to be ruled by God and their God-given authority to rule the world.*
- ✓ *All mankind is enslaved to powers lower than God, without direct access to God.*
- ✓ *The powers of evil are ruling in rebellion against God in this present age.*

- ✓ *The death and resurrection of Jesus triumphed over all the powers.*
- ✓ *Jesus is seated at the throne of God, higher than any power/authority in the heavens or on earth.*
- ✓ *Through faith in Jesus, we are seated over the powers/authorities in the heavens and on earth.*
- ✓ *Through faith in Jesus, we have been restored to direct access to God.*
- ✓ *Through faith in Jesus, we are no longer subjected to the powers of this age or generation.*

- ✓ *Through faith in Jesus, we are a new humanity, created in Christ Jesus to bear God's image in the earth and demonstrate unity as a new people, regardless of our cultural, ethnic, national, and social backgrounds by not submitting to the influence of the powers that divide us.*

- ✓ *God's purpose is for us is to live as Jesus demonstrated: Free from the influence of the powers.*

E. The Powers' Objective

1. Satan, the adversary of God has an agenda to slander God, usurp God's throne, and incite rebellion against God on individual human, tribal, national, and global levels.
 - a. His aim is to deceive all people away from seeking and worshipping God to garner their worship for himself in a hostile takeover of the world.
 - b. His aim is to destroy unity by inciting divisions through wickedness, violence, and destruction among mankind leading to murder, war, and death.
 - c. His aim is to destroy God's order and rule the world amid darkness and chaos.
2. Against unbelievers, the spiritual powers' agenda is to prevent them from attaining revelation of the truth of salvation in Christ.

- a. This is done by feeding their own self-absorption and luring them into self-exaltation against God and by creating chaos, conflict, pain, and hardship to harden their hearts to God.
 - i. Genesis 6:5 - 5 The LORD saw that **the wickedness of man was great** in the earth, and that **every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually**.
 - b. It is also done by blinding their minds and deafening their ears to the Gospel.
 - i. Matthew 13:19 - 19 When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, **the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart**. This is what was sown along the path.
 - ii. 2 Corinthians 4:3-4 - 3 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is **veiled to those who are perishing**. 4 In their case **the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers**, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.
3. Against believers, the spiritual forces of wickedness have a singular objective to draw us down from the victory attained for us through the Gospel.
- a. The objective of the powers is to draw us down from the 3rd heaven to 2nd heaven and earthly and fleshly levels of focus and functionality.
 - i. Their ultimate objective is to discourage and deceive us into hardening our hearts, renouncing our faith in Christ, reject Jesus, and lose our eternal salvation.
 - b. The power of sin tries to draw us down to the lowest levels of depraved/ungodly conduct.
 - i. Denying the nature of Christ in us in order to work iniquity and error.
 - ii. Demonstrating the conduct of a son of disobedience.
 - c. The powers of this world and the current age try to draw us down to lower levels of this world, circumstances, and cultural expectations, with our minds set on things of the flesh.
 - i. Through distraction and situations, pushing us into labors in this world, seeking remedies for sickness or bodily ailments, neglecting faith in the finished work of Jesus, and wearing ourselves out with earthly labors and objectives.
 - ii. Through laborious sweat and toil of "working for a living" rather than trusting God to provide with no sorrow added to it.
 - iii. Through ministry service or labors which was not initiated by the Holy Spirit.
 - iv. Through husbands and wives living to please one another rather than undivided attention on pleasing the Lord. (See 1 Corinthians 7.)
 - d. The powers try to draw us back under the Law, out of the New Covenant back into the Old Covenant, down from grace to legalism and religious requirements for earning God's favor.
 - i. Starting in spirit but finishing in flesh through works. (See Galatians 3.)
 - ii. Forgetting that Jesus said, "It is finished."
 - iii. Adding requirements to faith in Jesus and love for one another.
 - e. The powers try to draw us down from the 3rd heaven to lower levels of the 2nd heaven to "do spiritual warfare" that Christ already completed for us on the cross.
 - i. Through doubt and unbelief, as if the work of Christ is not finished.
 - ii. Through temptation to spiritual labors and striving in prayer and faith, spiritual techniques, and wearing ourselves out with spiritual activity.

F. The Powers Defined

Ephesians 6:12 - 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the **rulers**, against the **authorities**, against the **cosmic powers over this present darkness**, against the **spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places**.

1. Rulers/Principalities

Rulers/Principalities: Greek-G746: *arche*: 1. Beginning, origin. 2. The first person or thing that commences a series, the leader. **3. The first place, principality, rule or majesty (of angels and demons.)**

- a. The highest spiritual territorial authorities over regions of the world and empires.
 - i. Each nation or global region has its own concepts of good and evil which have been established and enforced by the principalities over that region.
 01. Example: Daniel and the prince of Persia/Greece.
 - ii. Example: The spiritual principalities over the USA are different than the principalities in China. Therefore, the culturally accepted influences and workings of evil are different in these places. What is acceptable/rejected is largely determined by the spiritual authorities over a region which have spiritually blinded the inhabitants of the place.
- b. The kings, emperors, or rulers over the same territory in the earth.
 - i. These leaders heavily influence culture, morality, national focus and direction, etc. for the people under their rule.

2. Authorities/Powers

Authorities/Powers: Greek-G1849: *exousia*: 1. Power of choice, liberty of doing as one pleases. 2. Physical or mental power. 3. Power, authority, and right of privilege. 4. Power of rule or government (the power of him whose will and demands must be submitted to by others and obeyed) 5. Jurisdiction over the power of judicial decisions and authority to manage domestic affairs. **6. One who possesses authority, a ruler or magistrate, including the leading and more powerful among created beings superior to man.**

- a. The spiritual and natural rulers over delegated jurisdictions which are lower than the principalities. Example: states, regions, counties, cities, neighborhoods, etc.
 - i. The rulers over New York City are different than the rulers over Charlotte, NC.
 01. NYC is open greed, wealth, self-exaltation, lust, sex, entertainment, pleasure, violence, wickedness, depravity, etc.
 02. Charlotte is religion, hypocrisy, spiritual complacency, self-righteousness, double-mindedness, vanity, anger, hidden lust, sex, sin, depravity, etc.
- b. The rulers over cultural, social, political, or religious activities in a certain area.

3. Cosmic powers over the present darkness/Rulers of the darkness of this world

World Forces: Greek-G2888: *kosmokrator*: 1. The lord of the world, prince of this age. 2. The devil and his demons.

Root word 1: *krateo*: In essence, to have power or be powerful over or to be chief or master of.

Root word 2: kosmos: 1. An apt or harmonious arrangement, or constitution, order or government. 2. The arrangement of the stars and the heavenly host. 3. The world, the universe. 4. The ungodly multitude, the whole mass of men alienated from God. etc.

Darkness: Greek-G4655: *skotos*: 1. Darkness, of night or blindness. 2. Metaphor for ignorance regarding divine things and human duties, and their accompanying ungodliness and immorality, together with their consequent misery in hell. 3. Persons in whom darkness holds sway.

- a. Note: Included in the definition of *kosmos* are the cultural norms, practices, beliefs, and traditions which deceive people away from God.
 - i. "The whole aggregate of earthly things including endowment, riches, advantages, pleasures, etc. which although hollow and frail and fleeting, stir desire, seduce from God, and put obstacles in the cause of Christ."
 - b. The whole world order (without Jesus) as it exists today is still functioning under the authority of the serpent and his delegates who usurped it from mankind through deception in the Garden of Eden.
 - i. 1 John 5:19 - 19 We know that we are from God, and **the whole world lies in the power of the evil one**.
 - ii. Galatians 4:3 - 3 In the same way we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the **elementary principles of the world**.
 - iii. Ephesians 2:2 - 2 ...in which you once walked, **following the course of this world**, following the **prince of the power of the air**, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience--
 - iv. Colossians 2:8 - 8 See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the **elemental spirits of the world**, and not according to Christ.
 - v. Ephesians 5:8, 11 - 8 ...for **at one time you were darkness**, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light ... 11 Take no part in the **unfruitful works of darkness**, but instead expose them.
 - c. We have been crucified with Christ to the kosmos and the kosmos to us.
 - i. Galatians 6:14 - 14 But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which **the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world**.
4. Spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places/spiritual wickedness in high places.

Spiritual forces: Greek-G4152: *pneumatikos*: 1. Relating to human spirit or rational soul. 2. Belonging to a spirit, being higher than man but lower than God.

Heavenly Places: Greek-G2032: *epouranios*: 1. Existing in heaven. Things that take place in heaven. 2. The heavenly regions. a) The 3rd heaven, heaven itself, where God resides. b) The 2nd heaven, the lower heavens of the stars and angels. c) The 1st heaven, of the clouds. 3. Of heavenly nature or origin.

Wickedness: Greek-G4189: *poneria*: 1. Depravity, iniquity, wickedness. 2. Evil purposes and desires.

Note: Based on root word for evil: 1. Full of labors, annoyances, hardships. Pressed and harassed by labors. Bringing toils and perils. 2. Of a bad nature or condition. In a physical sense, diseased or blind. In an ethical sense, evil or bad. 3. Derelict, malicious, mischief, malice, grievous, lewd."

- a. The forces/powers are spiritual. They function in the heavenly realms over empires, nations, tribes, etc., and they also function in or over individuals.

G. NOT Power for Rebellion in the Earth or Commanding the Spirit Realm

1. Power over the powers does NOT free us from obligation to submit to the governing authorities. Jesus submitted Himself to the earthly authorities while He was on earth in the flesh.
 - a. Jesus paid taxes to Caesar. He was not a rebel against governing authorities in the earth.
 - i. Mark 12:17 - 17 Jesus said to them, "**Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.**" And they marveled at him.
 - b. Jesus paid the Temple Tax so as not to give unnecessary offense to the religious authorities or distract from His message of the Gospel.
 - i. Matthew 17:27 - 27 However, **not to give offense to them**, go to the sea and cast a hook and take the first fish that comes up, and when you open its mouth you will find a shekel. Take that and give it to them for me and for yourself."
 - c. Jesus allowed the power of darkness to rule over Him when it was time for His crucifixion.
 - i. Luke 22:53 NIV - 53 Every day I was with you in the temple courts, and you did not lay a hand on me. **But this is your hour--when darkness reigns [has authority.]**"
 - d. He acknowledged that Pilate's authority to crucify Him was from God.
 - i. John 19:10-11 - 10 So Pilate said to him, "You will not speak to me? Do you not know that **I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?**" 11 Jesus answered him, "**You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above.** Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin."
2. Power over the powers is NOT for commanding the spirit realm for our lives or the lives of others in ways that Jesus did not demonstrate.
 - a. Jesus demonstrated His power over the power of sin through a sinless life. He obeyed the will of God through every temptation including death, in faith for resurrection.
 - i. We are called to be led and strengthened by the Holy Spirit into righteous living in our day-to-day lives and management of our own households and responsibilities.
 - ii. We are called to demonstrate the love of Christ by laying down our lives for one another and for the lost world to come to know Him.
 - b. Jesus proclaimed repentance and good news of salvation. He used spiritual power and authority to forgive sin and show mercy to the sick and demon possessed.
 - i. Jesus' ministry and message demanded repentance in the heart of each individual.
 - ii. Jesus' ministry and message demanded genuine faith in the heart of each individual.
 - iii. Jesus did not repent on other people's behalf. He laid down His life as a sacrifice.
 - c. Jesus did not pray against or command principalities, angels, strongholds, or spiritual powers.
 - i. Jesus did not command principalities in the spirit realm to bring change in the lives of people or to cities, regions, or nations.
 - 01. If He had, Jerusalem, Israel and the whole world would have believed Him.

- ii. Jesus did not command strongholds to come down. (See Unit Seven.)
 - 01. Through truth, He proved all worldly dependencies to be false.
 - iii. Jesus did not command angels.
 - 01. Instead, He submitted Himself to the will of God to be crucified at the hands of sinful men. (Matthew 26:53.)
 - d. Jesus did not pronounce blessings upon cities or the world.
 - i. He pronounced curses (woe) on places that did not repent. (Luke 10:13.)
 - ii. He pronounced a curse (woe) on the world for causes of sin. (Matthew 18:7.)
 - iii. He wept over Jerusalem for their inability to recognize Him. (Luke 19:41-44.)
3. Example: Early church believers did not pray against principalities. They did not pray for nations or governments of this world. They saw the events of the world as God's sovereign will and ASKED for BOLDNESS to STAND and proclaim the Gospel to the world.
- a. Acts 4:24-30 - 24 And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, "Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, 25 **who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit, "Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain? 26 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed'**-- 27 for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, 28 **to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place. 29 And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness,** 30 while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus."
 - i. Jesus never set up a meeting with Caesar, Herod, Pilate, or any other world leader or political group to effectuate change through government or world politics.
 - ii. The early believers did not pray for a new Ceasar to make the Roman Empire better.
 - iii. Cities, regions, nations, and the world are changed when individual people believe the Gospel and are transformed by the power of Jesus to no longer live in subjection to the spiritual powers of wickedness of this world or their region, nation, or culture.
4. Example: Jude and Peter both spoke of false teachers "blaspheming the glorious ones."
- a. This could mean speaking ill of the appointed authorities in the world but more likely, it means trying to use the name of Jesus to take authority over the principalities and rulers in the spirit realm to denounce and displace the spiritual authorities.
 - i. JESUS DID NOT DO THIS.
 - b. 2 Peter 2:10-12 - 10 ...and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority. Bold and willful, **they do not tremble as they blaspheme the glorious ones,** 11 whereas angels, though greater in might and power, **do not pronounce a blasphemous judgment against them before the Lord.** 12 But these, like irrational animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and destroyed, **blaspheming about matters of which they are ignorant,** will also be destroyed in their destruction,
 - i. In the heavenly battles, angels contend for the will of God without pronouncing their own judgment upon spiritual powers in rebellion against God.
 - ii. False teachers presume to do what even angels do not do.
 - iii. People doing this are functioning in ignorant human concepts of God's will.

- c. Jude 1:8-10 - 8 Yet in like manner these people also, relying on their dreams, defile the flesh, reject authority, and **blaspheme the glorious ones**. 9 But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, **he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, "The Lord rebuke you."** 10 But these people **blaspheme all that they do not understand**, and they are destroyed by all that they, like unreasoning animals, understand instinctively.
 - i. Even the archangel Michael did not presume to rebuke the devil.
- 5. We are given power to STAND against the spiritual powers and resist their influence in our lives because we have been set free from them through the Gospel. We are given power over the powers to live like Jesus.
 - a. Note: A freed slave does not need to command their former master. Simply live free.

Unit Six: Power to Stand

Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.

Ephesians 6:13

A. Stand and Resist

Ephesians 6:10-13 - 10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and **in the strength of his might**. 11 **Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil**. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore **take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day**, and having done all, **to stand firm**.

1. Strong in the Lord and His strength.
 - a. We must not stand in our own strength but in the strength of God on our behalf.
 - b. The Gospel is the Power of God. The Gospel is the mightiness of God. Stand in the Gospel.
 - c. We must be found in Christ. In Him are all blessings. Outside of Him is nothing good.
2. Whole armor of God.
 - a. Put on. We have to put the armor on, it does not put itself on us.
 - b. We are in a battle against spiritual forces of wickedness, darkness, and evil. We need armor.

Armor: Greek-G3833: *panoplia*: 1. Full armor, complete armor. Including shield, sword, lance, helmet, greaves, and breastplate.

Root word: Any tool or implement for preparing a thing. Arms used in warfare. An implement, utensil, or tool, literally or figuratively used offensive for warfare.

Armor: 1. Any covering worn as a defense against weapons. 2. A metallic sheathing or protective covering, especially metal plates, used on warships, armored vehicles, airplanes, and fortifications. 3. Mechanized units of military forces, as in armored divisions. 4. Also called armament: any protective covering, as on certain animals, insects, or plants. (Dictionary.com)

- c. The whole armor. We need every piece of the armor, or our protection is incomplete.

3. Stand and withstand.

Stand/Stand Firm: Greek-G2476: *histemi*: 1. To cause or to make stand (i.e. in the presence of others or before judges.) 2. To make firm, fix, or establish. 3. To cause a

person to keep his place. To be kept in tact and escape in safety. 4. To stand immovable (i.e. the foundation of a building.) 5. To continue safe and sound, unharmed. To stand ready or prepared. To be of a steadfast mind. The quality of one who does not hesitate and does not waver.

Verses 11, 13b - stand against the schemes of the devil

Resist/Withstand: Greek-G436: *anthistemi*: 1. Set oneself against; withstand, resist, oppose. 2. To set against.

Verse 13a - withstand the evil day

- a. Jesus did the hard work for us. He finished the work of redemption and salvation. Through the Gospel, Jesus provided for everything we will ever need in every trial we will ever face from now until He returns.
 - b. Our job is to stand in what Jesus has already done.
 - i. Philippians 3:16 - 16 Only **let us hold true to what we have attained**.
 - c. We must actively resist the influences of the evil one. (See Units Five and Seven.)
 - i. James 1:27 - 27 Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to **keep oneself unstained from the world**.
4. Stand by saying, "NO."
- a. Say "no" to sin and ungodliness.
 - i. Titus 2:11-12 NIV - 11 For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. 12 **It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions**, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age,
 01. When the evil one tempts us to sin, say "no."
 02. When our flesh makes demands for lusty satisfaction, say "no."
 - b. Say "no" to temptations of the evil one and the powers.
 - i. When the evil one offers temptations against God by saying, "Did God really say...?" say "no" to the alternatives he is offering.
 - ii. Consider Jesus in the wilderness, not bowing to the temptations of the evil one because He was under the authority of a higher power.
 01. He quoted the word of God (the higher power) as the reason why He could not submit to Satan (the lower power.)
 - iii. When the evil one tests our faith in the finished work of Jesus by saying, "Did God really say...?" say "no" to the alternatives he is offering.
 - c. Say "no" to the slanderer and the offense of unforgiveness and anger.
 - i. 2 Corinthians 2:10-11 - 10 Anyone whom you forgive, I also forgive. Indeed, what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for your sake in the presence of Christ, 11 **so that we would not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs**.
 01. Unforgiveness gives place to the evil one to bring division.
 02. Mercy says "yes" to the Gospel and "no" to the evil one.
 - ii. Ephesians 4:26-27 - 26 Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, 27 and **give no opportunity to the devil**.
 01. Anger gives the devil an opportunity to bring division.
 - d. Say "no" to the powers bringing divisions between believers based on cultural, ethnic, social class, or religious backgrounds.

- i. Ephesians 4:4 - 4 **There is one body and one Spirit**--just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call--
- ii. John 17:23 - 23 I in them and you in me, **that they may become perfectly one**, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.

B. Schemes of the Devil, Not Flesh & Blood

1. In the Garden of Eden, the serpent was more cunning/subtle than any other creature. The evil one's first scheme against mankind was to say, "Did God really say...?"

Schemes: Greek-G3180: *methodeia*: 1. Cunning arts, deceit, craft or trickery. 2. To follow up and investigate by method and settled plan. 3. To follow craftily, frame devices, deceive.

Devil: Greek-G1228: *diabolos*: 1. Devil, false accuser, slanderer. 2. Prone to slander or false accusation. 3. Applied to a man who by opposing the cause of God is said to act the part of the devil or to side with him.

Note: Slandering God and God's people (painting Him/them in a bad light.)

Evil One: Greek-G4190: *poneros*: 1. Full of labors, annoyances, hardships. 2. Pressed and harassed by hardships. 3. Bringing toils, annoyances, perils. 4. Of a bad nature or condition (i.e. physical sickness/disease; ethical wickedness.)

Satan: Hebrew-H7854: *satan*: 1. Adversary, one who withstands. (Can be in general, personal or national.) 2. The arch enemy of God.

- a. 2 Corinthians 11:3-4 - 3 But I am afraid that **as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ**. 4 For if someone comes and proclaims **another Jesus** than the one we proclaimed, or if you receive a **different spirit** from the one you received, or if you accept **a different gospel** from the one you accepted, you put up with it readily enough.
 - i. Another Jesus: Psychology Jesus, non-speaking Jesus, intoxicated lover Jesus, etc.
 - ii. A different spirit: counterfeit demonic spirits creating an atmosphere or result that appeals to man but is not of God
 - iii. A different gospel: one which is not based on Christ alone or which proposes objectives of God different than the ones demonstrated through the life and ministry of Jesus.
 - b. Luke 4:13 - 13 And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him **until an opportune time**.
 - i. The evil one will continue to test and try us in a certain area until he sees that he can gain no ground there. But he will return again in a different way to test the same area or a new area.
2. The battle is not against flesh and blood or against people but against the spiritual powers and forces that rule people and their beliefs, thoughts, and actions.
 - a. This includes when people are attacking us because of the spirit that they are operating in.
 - i. People are, for the most part, completely unaware of the powers at work in their worldview or culture which have caused them through normalcy to have their view of right/wrong, good/evil, the goal of life, etc.

- ii. They have “drunk the Kool-Aid” of their culture or belief system. They are deceived and do not know it, so they attack those who are not drunk on their “Kool-Aid.”
 - iii. This also applies to false doctrine, denominational differences, cults, etc.
- b. This includes when the spiritual forces are directly attacking us, trying to force us to bow through pressure to their demands and way of doing things.
- i. The pressures of the powers against us attack us in our own minds and expectations of ourselves to measure up to the cultural norms defining what is good/evil, what success looks like, etc.
- c. Matthew 5:38-41 - 38 You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' 39 But I say to you, **Do not resist the one who is evil.** But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. 40 And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. 41 And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles.
- i. Do not *anthistemi* – resist or set yourself against a human opponent.
 - ii. Show Christ-like resistance the powers by NOT retaliating with equal evil.

C. Biblical Background of the Armor & the Messiah

1. From Paul's standpoint, the Armor of God is rooted in Scripture and the work Jesus as the Messiah, not Roman battle accoutrement.
2. Job described righteousness as his clothing and justice as his turban in his life of doing good works for others.
 - a. Job 29:11-17 - 11 When the ear heard, it called me blessed, and when the eye saw, it approved, 12 because **I delivered the poor who cried for help, and the fatherless who had none to help him.** 13 The blessing of him who was about to perish came upon me, and I **caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.** 14 **I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; my justice was like a robe and a turban.** 15 I was **eyes to the blind** and **feet to the lame.** 16 I was **a father to the needy,** and I **searched out the cause** of him whom I did not know. 17 I **broke the fangs of the unrighteous** and made him drop his prey from his teeth.
 - i. Doing the things that are right in God's sight are the best defense against evil
 - ii. Helping the poor, fatherless, widow; eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, etc.
3. Isaiah said that God saw that there was no one doing righteousness. So, He was going to have to do it Himself.
 - a. Isaiah 59:14-17 - 14 Justice is turned back, and righteousness stands far away; for truth has stumbled in the public squares, and uprightness cannot enter. 15 Truth is lacking, and he who departs from evil makes himself a prey. The LORD saw it, and it displeased him that there was no justice. 16 He saw that **there was no man,** and wondered that **there was no one to intercede;** then **his own arm brought him salvation,** and his righteousness upheld him. 17 **He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on his head; he put on garments of vengeance for clothing, and wrapped himself in zeal as a cloak.**
 - i. God saw that righteousness and truth were non-existent in the world.
 01. Those who departed from evil were terrorized rather than exalted.
 02. The world was broken and without justice.
 03. There was no one to stand in the gap on behalf of mankind.

- b. Jesus is God in the flesh. He put on the armor of God to come to the world to work salvation.
 - i. Jesus put on righteousness as a breastplate.
 - 01. His heart was to do righteousness and work justice.
 - ii. Jesus put a helmet of salvation on His head.
 - 01. His mind was to bring salvation to people.
 - iii. Jesus put on garments of vengeance.
 - 01. His purpose was to avenge all deception and wrongdoing.
 - iv. Jesus put on a cloak of zeal.
 - 01. He was covered in God's passionate love for mankind and creation.
4. Isaiah saw that the Messiah would wear the righteousness of God like garments.
- a. Isaiah 11:5 - 5 **Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist**, and **faithfulness the belt of his loins**.
 - i. Jesus put on a belt of righteousness and faithfulness.
 - 01. He demonstrated the reality of righteousness lived out in a human life.
 - 02. He was entirely faithful in all He did.
5. Isaiah saw that the Messiah would be a messenger whose feet spread salvation.
- a. Isaiah 52:7 - 7 How beautiful upon the mountains are the **feet of him who brings good news**, who **publishes peace**, who **brings good news** of happiness, who **publishes salvation**, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."
 - i. Jesus put on shoes of the good news of peace with Him, salvation, and God's reign.
 - 01. His message was "Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand."
6. Isaiah saw that the Messiah would have a mouth like a weapon.
- a. Isaiah 49:2 - 2 He made **my mouth like a sharp sword**; in the shadow of his hand he hid me; he made me a polished arrow; in his quiver he hid me away.
 - i. Jesus' words are that sword by which we will be divided and judged.
7. When we put on the armor of God, we put on the Messiah and His work on our behalf and also His commission for us to continue His work of righteousness and salvation for the world.
- a. Romans 13:12, 14 - 12 The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and **put on the armor of light**... 14 But **put on the Lord Jesus Christ**, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.
 - b. 1 Thessalonians 5:8 - 8 But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the **breastplate of faith and love**, and for a **helmet the hope of salvation**.
 - c. 2 Corinthians 6:7 - 7 ...by truthful speech, and the power of God; **with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left**;

D. Taking Up the Armor of God

Ephesians 6:14-17 - 13 14 Stand therefore, having fastened on the **belt of truth**, and having put on the **breastplate of righteousness**, 15 and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the **gospel of peace**. 16 In all circumstances take up the **shield of faith**, with which you can extinguish all the

flaming darts of the evil one; 17 and take the **helmet of salvation**, and the **sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God**,

1. Gird your Loins with the Belt of Truth.

a. Gird: You must gird yourself. You must do your part to seek out, know, and live the truth for yourself in your own life.

Gird: Greek-G4024: *perizonnyimi*: 1. To fasten garments with a girdle or belt. 2. To fasten one's belt. 3. **Metaphorically: to equip oneself with knowledge of the truth.**

01. Matthew 7:7 - 7 **Ask**, and it will be given to you; **seek**, and you will find; **knock**, and it will be opened to you.
02. James 1:5 - 5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him **ask God**, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.
03. 2 Timothy 2:15 NKJV - 15 **Be diligent** to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, **rightly dividing the word of truth.**
04. Joshua 1:8 - 8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but **you shall meditate on it day and night**, so that you may **be careful to do according to all that is written in it.** For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

b. Loins: Your loins are the most sensitive parts of the body. Loins are where the regenerative power of life resides.

- i. With uncovered loins, our nakedness is exposed. Our human frailty, failings, and tender weaknesses are on display.
- ii. With uncovered loins, our ability to reproduce life is put at risk of danger, damage, or destruction.

c. Belt: What holds your pants or garments up from falling down.

d. Truth: Truth pertains to the actual reality of a thing.

- i. Example: God is looking for worshippers in spirit and in truth (John 4:23-24.) This means worship that it is *genuine and real* from our hearts and shows in our actions.
- ii. A belt of truth includes that we are actually LIVING what we say we believe.

Truth: Greek-G225: *aletheia*: 1. What is true in any matter under consideration. 2. Truth, in truth, according to truth, the reality of a matter with certainty. 3. What is true pertaining to God in the duties of man, moral and religious truth. 4. Truth as personal excellence: the candor of mind which is free from affection, pretense, simulation, falsehood, and deceit.

iii. The Word of God is truth.

01. John 17:17 - 17 Sanctify them in the truth; **your word is truth.**

iv. Jesus is the truth.

01. John 14:6 - 6 Jesus said to him, "**I am the way, and the truth, and the life.** No one comes to the Father except through me.

02. Jesus is the plumbline of God's perfect will. The reality of God's life lived out in human form.

001. Colossians 1:15 - 15 **He is the image of the invisible God**, the firstborn of all creation.

- v. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth.
 - 01. John 14:16-17 - 16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, 17 **even the Spirit of truth**, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.
 - 02. John 16:13 - 13 **When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth**, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.
 - e. Without a belt, or a properly fastened belt, pants fall down, nakedness is exposed, and life force may be cut off. On the battlefield, this is a problem.
 - i. See definition #4. Battles prove what is TRUE or REAL in our life, whether our faith is genuine or not, and whether we are living the reality of what we say we believe.
 - ii. Jesus was put under greater testing and duress than we will ever know, and yet He lived the reality of One full of grace and truth, and without hypocrisy.
2. Put on the Breastplate of Righteousness.
- a. Put on, clothe yourself.
 - i. You have to put it on. You have to believe it and live it in your own life.
 - b. Breastplate: The breastplate protects the heart and all vital organs. The heart, lungs, kidneys, stomach, bowels, etc.

Breastplate: Greek-G2382: *thorax*: 1. The breast, the part of the body from the neck to the navel. 2. A breastplate or corset consisting of two parts and protecting the body on both sides from the neck to the middle.

- i. 1 Thessalonians 5:8 - 8 But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on **the breastplate of faith and love**, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.
 - 01. Faith is in the heart.
 - 02. Love flows from the heart.
 - ii. Proverbs 4:23 - 23 **Keep your heart with all vigilance**, for from it flow the springs of life.
 - iii. Hebrews 3:7-14 - 7 Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, "Today, if you hear his voice, 8 **do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion**, on the day of testing in the wilderness, 9 where your fathers put me to the test and saw my works for forty years. 10 Therefore I was provoked with that generation, and said, 'They always **go astray in their heart; they have not known my ways.**' 11 As I swore in my wrath, 'They shall not enter my rest.'" 12 Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. 13 But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," **that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.** 14 For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.
 - iv. 1 John 3:17 KJV - 17 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his **bowels of compassion** from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?
 - v. Colossians 3:12 KJV - 12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, **bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;**
- c. Righteousness: What is right, what is just.
 - i. The righteousness of God in Christ. A free gift for us through our faith in the Gospel.

- 01. Right standing relationship with God, attained and secured for us through Jesus, received and lived out by faith.
 - ii. Integrity, virtue, purity of life, rightness, correctness in thinking, feeling, and acting.
 - 01. Doing the right thing for the right reason with the right motive.
 - d. Without a secure breastplate, the vital organs are exposed and vulnerable to attack. On the battlefield, this could be instantly fatal.
- 3. Shod your feet with the preparation of the Gospel, good news.
 - a. Shod your feet: Bind on, put on shoes or sandals.
 - i. You have to put them on. You have to get ready.
 - b. Feet: What you stand on, what you walk on. How you walk.
 - i. Micah 4:5 - 5 For all the peoples walk each in the name of its god, but **we will walk in the name of the LORD our God forever and ever.**
 - ii. Isaiah 2:5 - 5 O house of Jacob, come, let us **walk in the light of the LORD.**
 - iii. 1 John 1:7 - 7 But if we **walk in the light, as he is in the light**, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.
 - c. Preparation: Readiness, the condition of one who is ready or prepared.
 - i. 2 Timothy 4:2 - 2 ...preach the word; **be ready in season and out of season**; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.
 - ii. 1 Peter 3:15 - 15 ...but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, **always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you**; yet do it with gentleness and respect,
 - d. Gospel of Peace
 - i. All of mankind are God's enemies. Jesus made the way to have peace with God through the forgiveness of sins. We proclaim peace with God through faith in Him to all people everywhere until He returns.
 - ii. We personally walk in the benefits of the Gospel.
 - iii. We extend the blessings of the Gospel to those we share Jesus with.
 - e. Without shoes, you are not going very far. If shoes are damaged or not fastened properly, blisters and discomfort will hinder your journey.
 - i. Without knowledge of the Gospel, you will not be able to lead anyone to the Lord through your words or your walk of life.
 - ii. False Gospels in your life and thinking will cause you to lead others astray.
- 4. Take Up the shield of faith to extinguish the fiery darts of the evil one.
 - a. Take up or raise.
 - i. You have to lift up the shield. If it is not lifted up, you are not protected.
 - b. Shield: What you protect yourself with.

Shield: A broad piece of metal or another suitable material, held by straps or a handle attached on one side, used as protection against blows and missiles. (Dictionary.com)

- i. Genesis 15:1 - 1 After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: "Fear not, Abram, **I am your shield**; your reward shall be very great."
- ii. Psalm 3:3 - 3 But **you, O LORD, are a shield about me**, my glory, and the lifter of my head.
- iii. Psalm 28:7 - 7 **The LORD is my strength and my shield**; in him my heart trusts, and I am helped; my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to him.
- iv. Psalm 18:2 - 2 The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, **my shield**, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.
- v. Psalm 33:20 - 20 Our soul waits for **the LORD; he is our help and our shield**.
- vi. Psalm 84:11 - 11 For **the LORD God is a sun and shield**; the LORD bestows favor and honor. No good thing does he withhold from those who walk uprightly.
- vii. Proverbs 30:5 - 5 Every word of God proves true; **he is a shield to those who take refuge in him**.

c. Faith: What you truly believe in the depths of your heart.

Faith: Greek-G4102: *pistis*: 1. Conviction of the truth of anything, generally with the included idea of trust and holy fervor joined with it. 2. Belief with the predominant idea of trust or confidence. 3. Fidelity, faithfulness.

Root word for Believe: To think to be true, be persuaded of, or place confidence in.

Believe: Hebrew-H539: *aman*: 1. To stay, sustain, or support. To confirm, or be faithful. 2. To be established, be faithful, be established or made firm, to be verified or confirmed as reliable, faithful, trusty. 3. To stand firm and unshaken, to trust, to be certain, to believe in.

- i. Romans 10:9-11 - 9 ...because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and **believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead**, you will be saved. 10 For **with the heart one believes and is justified**, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. 11 For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame."
 - 01. Faith is what you actually believe to be true in the depths of your heart, regardless of what you say with your mouth.
 - 02. If you truly believe that God raised Jesus from the dead, then in the light of faith, every other trial of your life should seem small and insignificant thing by comparison to life from death.
 - ii. James 1:22, 2:14, 17-18 - 22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. ... 2:14 What good is it, my brothers, **if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him?** ... 17 So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. 18 But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and **I will show you my faith by my works**.
 - 01. What you do demonstrates what you actually believe to be true.
- d. Extinguish the fiery darts of the evil one through faith in the finished work of Jesus and God's promise of resurrection and eternal life.
- i. John 16:1, 33 - 1 "I have said all these things to you **to keep you from falling away**. ... 33 I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. **In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world**."
 - 01. Jesus warned us that we will have tribulation and attacks from the evil one and those doing his bidding.
 - 02. Jesus overcame the world through the Gospel: His death and resurrection conquered death and the evil one's schemes which lead to death.
 - ii. Isaiah 54:14-17 - 14 **In righteousness you shall be established**; you shall be far from oppression, for you shall not fear; and from terror, for it shall not come near you. 15 **If**

anyone stirs up strife, it is not from me; whoever stirs up strife with you shall fall because of you. 16 Behold, I have created the smith who blows the fire of coals and produces a weapon for its purpose. I have also created the ravager to destroy; 17 **no weapon that is fashioned against you shall succeed, and you shall refute every tongue that rises against you in judgment.** This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD and their vindication from me, declares the LORD."

01. The Gospel establishes us in righteousness through faith.
 02. Because we have been cleansed by the blood of Jesus, no record of sin remains and no weapon of the enemy has a right to harm us and any voice accusing or condemning us is not from God. God remembers our sins no more. We are forgiven.
- iii. 2 Corinthians 1:8-9 - 8 For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For **we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength** that we despaired of life itself. 9 Indeed, we felt that we had **received the sentence of death**. But **that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead**.
01. Even in the face of bodily torture and death, our faith is in God who raises the dead and grants us eternal life through Christ Jesus.
- e. Without a shield, you are likely to be hit and possibly, fatally wounded. A damaged or weak shield may not offer full protection or be vulnerable to enemy penetration. A beautiful and solid shield that is in a closet or not lifted up on the battlefield will not protect you.
- i. The battlefield proves what we really believe by how we respond to attacks launched against us by the evil one.
 01. Are we able to stand in faith, no matter what comes against us?
 02. Do we put into practice what we tell others we believe is right?
 03. Do we put our total confidence in Jesus or look quickly to alternatives and other remedies to solve our problems or bring relief?
 - ii. If you know the truth in theory but it fails you in battle, you are not in faith. Intellectual ascent is not faith.
 01. Faith is in the heart, not in the mind.
 - iii. If you are hit with a fiery dart of the evil one, it is because you are either standing in your own righteousness and strength (pride), or you are in unbelief.

5. Take the helmet of salvation

- a. Take hold of, take with you, take by the hand.
 - i. You must take the helmet with you and put it on through the renewal of your mind.
- b. Helmet: A helmet guards your head and brain from irreparable damage which could impact the vitality and usefulness of the rest of the body. A blow to the head/brain can be fatal or paralyzing.

Helmet: A hard or padded protective hat, various types of which are worn by soldiers, police officers, firefighters, motorcyclists, athletes, and others. (Dictionary.com)

- i. Romans 12:2 - 2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be **transformed by the renewal of your mind**, that **by testing you may discern what is the will of God**, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Mind: Greek-G3563; *nous*: 1. Comprising the faculties of perceiving and understanding and those of feeling, judging, and determining. 2. The power of considering and judging

soberly, calmly, and impartially. 3. A particular mode of thinking and judging, i.e. thoughts, feelings, purposes, desires.

- ii. We must align with God's mind and will rather than the will of the world (principalities, rulers over our region and area) and rather than our own desires, tastes, and opinions.
 - 01. Ephesians 5:10 - 10 ...and **try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.**
 - 02. 1 Corinthians 2:16b – 16b But **we have the mind of Christ.**
 - c. Salvation
 - i. Same/neuter version of *soteria* (Unit Two)

Salvation: Greek-G4991: *soteria*: 1. Deliverance, preservation, safety, salvation. 2. Deliverance from the molestation of enemies. 3. That which concludes to the salvation of the soul. 4. Future salvation and the sum of the benefits which Christians, redeemed from all earthly ills will enjoy after the visible return of Christ from heaven.
 - ii. Present salvation from enemy attacks and earthly tribulations.
 - 01. Believing the Jesus provided for your salvation, deliverance, healing, and sustenance in your present trial.
 - iii. Future salvation upon the return of Christ.
 - 01. Believing that Jesus is returning to usher in total and final salvation from this age and to usher in the age to come.
 - d. Without a helmet, the head is exposed to injury. On the battlefield, this is insanity.
6. Take the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God
- a. Take hold of, take with you, take by the hand.
 - i. You must take the sword with you. The Word of God must be your constant companion.
 - b. Sword: A *machaira* sword is like a dagger for hand-to-hand close-knit combat. It would be incapable of striking an enemy at a distance unless thrown.

Sword: Greek-G3162: *machaira*: 1. A large knife used for killing animals and cutting up flesh. 2. A small sword, as distinguished from a large sword. A curved sword for a cutting stroke or a straight sword for thrusting.
 - i. Psalm 118:10-12 - 10 All nations surrounded me; **in the name of the LORD I cut them off!** 11 They surrounded me, surrounded me on every side; **in the name of the LORD I cut them off!** 12 They surrounded me like bees; they went out like a fire among thorns; **in the name of the LORD I cut them off!**
 - ii. Matthew 10:34 - 34 "Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, **but a sword.**
 - 01. Being transformed to the will of God commands us to cut off the things of this world and all the principalities, rulers, and influences that those we love may still be operating under.
- c. Of the Spirit: The battle is not against flesh and blood but against the powers and spiritual forces of wickedness.
- i. The battle is not against other people.
 - ii. The battle is not against your own flesh. The battle is against sin dwelling in your flesh.

- d. Which is the Word [rhema] of God.
 - i. The logos word of God is the whole counsel of the Holy Scriptures and the only tool by which we can be unshakably certain of God's will.
 - ii. A rhema word of God is the word of God spoken forth by a human voice.
 - iii. Even Jesus used the rhema word of God as His machaira sword against the evil one. He spoke forth the word of God as His hand-to-hand combat defense.
 - 01. Matthew 4:4, 7, 10 - 4 But he answered, "**It is written**," "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God." ... 7 Jesus said to him, "**Again it is written**," "You shall not put the Lord your God to the test." ... 10 Then Jesus said to him, "**Be gone, Satan! For it is written**," "You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve."
- e. We use the sword of the word of God to chop to pieces the arguments brought against us by the powers at work and the schemes of the evil one against us.

E. Prayer, Petition, Perseverance

Ephesians 6:18 - 18 praying at all times in the Spirit, with **all prayer and supplication**. To that end, keep alert with **all perseverance**, making supplication for all the saints

1. Prayer & Petition

Prayer: 1. A solemn request for help or expression of thanks expressed to God. 2. An earnest hope or wish. (Dictionary.com)

Example: "God, please help me with... I would like..." "Thank you for..."

Petition/Supplication: Greek-G1162: *deesis*: 1. Need, want, request, from a state of extreme poverty or destitution. 2. Asking, seeking, entreating.

Example: "HELP!"

- a. Prayer is a form of humbling ourselves before God to seek His help, aid, and deliverance in our trials and situations.
 - i. We ask for things from our Heavenly Father, knowing that He hears us.
 - ii. We do not command God or demand things from God.
- b. Matthew 6:5-8 - 5 "And **when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites**. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. 6 But **when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret**. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. 7 "And **when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words**. 8 Do not be like them, for **your Father knows what you need before you ask him**."
- c. Luke 11:11-13 - 11 What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; 12 or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? 13 **If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!**"

- d. 1 John 5:14-15 - 14 And this is the confidence that we have toward him, **that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.** 15 And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, **we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.**
- e. Luke 18:7-8 - 7 And **will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night?** Will he delay long over them? 8 I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, **when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"**

2. Perseverance

- a. Hebrews 10:23, 35-39 - 23 Let us **hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering**, for he who promised is faithful. ... 35 Therefore **do not throw away your confidence**, which has a great reward. 36 For **you have need of endurance**, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised. 37 For, "Yet a little while, and the coming one will come and will not delay; 38 but **my righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him.**" 39 But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.
- b. 2 Timothy 4:7 - 7 **I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.**
 - i. Paul wrote this while in prison awaiting his own execution for the name of Jesus.
 - ii. His victory in the fight of faith was keeping the faith in spite of all of his earthly trials, persecutions, and tribulations.
- c. Matthew 24:13 - 13 But **the one who endures to the end will be saved.**
- d. 1 Peter 1:9 - 9 ...obtaining **the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.**
 - i. Our ultimate salvation is dependent on our keeping the faith in Jesus by standing firm through whatever trials we face.

F. STAND: A Triumphant Body of Christ

- 1. Romans 8:31-39 - 31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? 33 **Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.** 34 **Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died--more than that, who was raised--**who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? **Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?** 36 As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." 37 **No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.** 38 For **I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.**
 - a. Since we have been justified through the sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus, the adversary has no right to bring any charge against us. The slanderer has lost his right to slander.
 - b. No earthly authority/power can separate us from what Christ attained for us.
 - i. Tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, sword.

- c. No heavenly authority/power can separate us from what Christ attained for us.
 - i. Death/life, angels/demons/rulers, present/future things, powers high and low, all creation.
 - d. NO! We are not being killed as sheep led to slaughter – we are more than conquerors over this world through Christ.
 - i. Even if we are given over to martyrdom or death, we are still in Christ, awaiting resurrection and glory in the age to come.
 - ii. Just as Jesus was like a lamb led to slaughter, only to be resurrected and receive His eternal inheritance.
2. 1 John 5:4-5 - 4 For everyone who has been born of God **overcomes the world**. And this is **the victory that has overcome the world--our faith**. 5 Who is it that **overcomes the world** except the **one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?**
- a. By faith, we overcome the world and show the world to be powerless over us because we believe in the work of Jesus on our behalf to destroy the powers of this world.
3. Ephesians 3:9-10 - 9 ...and to bring to light for everyone **what is the plan of the mystery** hidden for ages in God, who created all things, 10 **so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places**.
- a. By NOT bowing to the evil one and all of his schemes which have worked on mankind since the garden of Eden, we make known to all creation that we belong to Christ.
 - b. Jesus triumphed over the powers and authorities of the world through His death on the cross, remaining obedient to God, even unto death. (Colossians 2:15.)
 - c. Jesus resisted the evil one in the wilderness after forty days of fasting. The Body of Christ resists the evil one in the wilderness of this world.
 - d. In the beginning, the woman lived in Paradise but was tempted by the serpent and fell into deception and evil. In the end, we will live in a world of darkness, evil, and deception, but the true Bride of Christ will not bow to any of these devices. Through faith, obedience, and perseverance in Christ, we will attain Paradise.

Unit Seven: Divine Power to Destroy

For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ.

2 Corinthians 10:4-5

A. Destroying Everything Not of God

2 Corinthians 10:4-5 KJV - 4 (For the weapons of our warfare [are] not carnal, but mighty through God to the **pulling down of strong holds**;) 5 **Casting down imaginations**, and **every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God**, and bringing into captivity **every thought** to the obedience of Christ.

1. Strongholds

- a. A stronghold was a fortified tower or castle in the center of a city. If an enemy attacked that city, a watchman would sound the alarm and everyone in the city would run to the city's stronghold for safety.

Stronghold: Greek-G3794: *ochyroma*: 1. A castle, stronghold, or fortress. 2. Anything on which one relies. 3. The arguments and reasonings by which a disputant endeavors to fortify his opinion and defend it against his opponent.

- b. In the New Covenant context, strongholds become a metaphor for anything we run to for safety other than the Gospel of Jesus Christ and what He has done for us.
 - i. Knowledge of God through the Gospel puts to shame every other confidence of mankind.
- c. Strongholds include anything we place our confidence in other than the finished work of Jesus. These are mostly deceptions of the powers at work in our culture and society.
 - i. What we believe to be the marks of security or success.
 - ii. Anything we put confidence in or rely upon to save us.
 - iii. Anything we believe will gain us temporal blessing or eternal life for us.
- d. Examples of common strongholds (i.e. erroneous confidence/trust/reliance.)
 - i. Money
 01. Proverbs 18:11 - 11 A **rich man's wealth is his strong city**, and like a high wall in his imagination.
 02. Proverbs 11:4 - 4 **Riches do not profit in the day of wrath**, but righteousness delivers from death.
 - ii. Personal goodness/righteousness - being a "good person"
 01. Isaiah 64:6 - 6 **We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment**. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.
 02. Romans 3:23 - 23 ...for **all have sinned and fall short** of the glory of God,
 - iii. Spiritual ascension or knowledge – being a spiritual person or faith of mental ascent

- 01. John 6:45-46 - 45 It is written in the Prophets, 'And they will all be taught by God.' **Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me** - 46 not that anyone has seen the Father except he who is from God; he has seen the Father.
- 02. John 5:39-40 - 39 You **search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life**; and it is they that bear witness about me, 40 yet you **refuse to come to me** that you may have life.
- iv. Natural abilities, intelligence, physical strength or fortitude
 - 01. 1 Corinthians 1:25 - 25 For the **foolishness of God is wiser than men**, and **the weakness of God is stronger than men**.
 - 02. Deuteronomy 8:17-18 - 17 Beware lest you say in your heart, '**My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth**.' 18 You shall remember the LORD your God, for it is **he who gives you power** to get wealth, that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your fathers, as it is this day.
- v. Influence, connection to powerful people, masses/numbers of people
 - 01. Psalm 118:8-9 - 8 It is better to take refuge in the LORD **than to trust in man**. 9 It is better to take refuge in the LORD **than to trust in princes**.
 - 02. Psalm 108:12 - 12 Oh grant us help against the foe, for **vain is the salvation of man!**
 - 03. Psalm 146:3-4 - 3 **Put not your trust in princes, in a son of man, in whom there is no salvation**. 4 When his breath departs, he returns to the earth; on that very day his plans perish.
- e. Only the Lord is our true confidence and protection from every earthly foe and from the wrath of God. When an enemy attacks us, we must run by faith to the security we have in the finished work of Jesus. We must demolish every other false confidence in our lives until our trust is totally in Christ alone.
 - i. Proverbs 18:10 - 10 **The name of the LORD is a strong tower**; the righteous man runs into it and is safe.
 - ii. Psalm 37:39-40 - 39 The salvation of the righteous is from the LORD; **he is their stronghold in the time of trouble**. 40 The LORD helps them and delivers them; he delivers them from the wicked and saves them, **because they take refuge in him**.
 - iii. Psalm 9:9 - 9 The **LORD is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble**.
 - iv. Nahum 1:7 - 7 The LORD is good, **a stronghold in the day of trouble**; he knows those who **take refuge in him**.
 - v. 2 Samuel 22:2-4 - 2 He said, "The LORD is my rock and **my fortress** and my deliverer, 3 my God, my rock, **in whom I take refuge**, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, **my stronghold and my refuge**, my savior; you save me from violence. 4 I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised, and **I am saved from my enemies**."
- f. Through the proclamation of the Gospel, we persuade others that their strongholds are false and futile and that they will fail in the day of judgment. We demolish the confidence of those who think they are strong, wise, or secure in this world.
 - i. Proverbs 21:22 - 22 A wise man scales the city of the mighty and **brings down the stronghold in which they trust**.
 - 01. Proverbs 21:22 KJV - 22 A wise man scaleteth the city of the mighty, and casteth down **the strength of the confidence thereof**.

2. Arguments/Vain Imaginations

- a. Opinions, thoughts, beliefs, biases, philosophies, etc., which contradict God, His Word, and what He has done through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Arguments/Imaginations/Speculations: Greek-G3503: *logismos*: 1. Thought or imagination. 2 Reckoning or computation. 3. Reasoning, judgment, or decision. 4. Things which pass through the conscience. 5. Reasonings hostile to the Christian faith.

- b. Personal assessments of right and wrong, good and evil, which are largely the result of the deceptions of the powers at work in our culture or society.

- i. Judges 21:25 - 25 In those days there was no king in Israel. **Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.**

Imagination/Reasoning: Greek-G1261: *dialogismos*: 1. Thinking of man deliberating with himself. 2. Thought, inward reasoning, purpose or design. 3. Deliberating, questioning what is true. 4. Hesitating, doubting, disputing, arguing.

- c. All of the unbelieving pagan world lives under the influence of vain imaginations

- i. Romans 1:21 KJV - 21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified [him] not as God, neither were thankful; but **became vain in their imaginations**, and their **foolish heart was darkened**.
 - ii. Vain: empty, foolish, producing no results.
 - iii. Vain: selfish, self-exalting, excessive view of oneself, appearance, abilities, or worth.
 - iv. Foolish: without understanding, without perspective of God or fear of the Lord.
 - v. Darkened: to become obscure, contorted, covered, or chaotic.

- d. Vain imaginations:

- i. Fantasizing about your own exaltation. Vanity. Heroics. Ego. Self-glory.
 - ii. Doing things your own way and thinking you will prosper. Root of bitterness.
 - iii. Trying to control things in your own way of thinking. Manipulation. Witchcraft.
 - iv. Worrying about your life, food and clothing.
 - v. Worrying about what you will say.

3. Lofty Opinions/High Things

- a. Literally: Things which contribute to the building of strongholds.

High Things: Greek-G3513: *hypsoma*: 1. Thing elevated, height. 2. Elevated structure, rampart, bulwark.

- b. Spiritually: Anything we think exalts us over anyone else, which are largely the result of the deceptions of the powers at work in our culture or society.

- c. Spiritually: Any deception of the powers at work to persuade us away from humbling ourselves before God or lure us into exalting ourselves.

- i. Example: The temptation of Adam & Eve in the Garden to be made wise/prosperous so that they could be like God.
 - ii. Example: The temptation of Jesus to receive all power over all nations in exchange for worshipping the evil one.
 - iii. Example: Selfish ambition. (See James 3:14-16.)

4. Exalting Itself

- a. Anything which raised itself up, promoted itself, advanced itself in its own strength, capacity, intelligence, or scheming.

Exalting Itself: Greek-G1869: *epairo*: 1. Lift up, raise up, or raise on high. 2. To exalt oneself. 3. To be lifted up with pride.

Note: Same word used for hoisting up the sails on the ship that Paul sailed on.

- b. The nature of Satan being exalted in us.
 - i. Isaiah 14:13-14 - 13 You said in your heart, '**I will ascend** to heaven; above the stars of God **I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly** in the far reaches of the north; 14 **I will ascend** above the heights of the clouds; **I will make myself like the Most High.**'
- c. Anything man-made, man contrived, man attained.
 - i. Human cunning, philosophy, and schemes. (See Ephesians 4:14; Colossians 2:8.)
 - ii. 2 Corinthians 4:2 - 2 But we have **renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways**. We **refuse to practice cunning** or to tamper with God's word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God.
- d. Anything self-protecting, self-delivering, self-soothing, including any self-authored escape from God-ordained suffering (i.e. "Get behind me Satan.")
 - i. Mark 8:33 - 33 But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "**Get behind me, Satan!** For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."

5. Against the knowledge of God

- a. The knowledge of God through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
 - i. John 14:6 - 6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. **No one comes to the Father except through me.**"
 - ii. John 17:3 - 3 And this is eternal life, **that they know you, the only true God**, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.
- b. Anything hindering or inhibiting our ability to know God.
- c. Anything competing against the truth of the Gospel and the finished work of Jesus in our thoughts, beliefs, desires, affections, and methods, etc.

6. Thoughts captive to the obedience of Christ

Thought: Greek-G3540: *noema*: 1. Mental perception or thought. 2. Evil purpose. 3. That which the mind thinks including thoughts and purposes.

- a. Taking our thoughts captive Christ's obedience.
 - i. His obedience on our behalf: Attaining for us what we could not attain for ourselves.
 - 01. 2 Corinthians 5:21 - 21 For our sake he **made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.**
 - ii. His example of obedience: He was perfect in all His ways and without sin.
 - 01. Hebrews 4:15 - 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but **one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.**

- 02. 1 John 3:5 - 5 You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and **in him there is no sin.**
- b. Treating our thoughts, purposes, and intentions like prisoners/captives of Christ, not moving to the right or the left without His guidance and approval. Submitting our every thought, every purpose, and every intention to the will of God and not acting upon it if it is not God's will.
 - i. Good intentions is not evidence of the will of God.
 - 01. Proverbs 14:12 - 12 There is **a way that seems right to a man**, but its end is the way to death.
 - ii. Our own perceptions, perspectives, biases, likes, dislikes, and way of doing things is not evidence of the will of God.
 - 01. Ephesians 5:17 - 17 Therefore do not be foolish, but **understand what the will of the Lord is.**
 - 02. Proverbs 3:5-6 - 5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and **do not lean on your own understanding.** 6 **In all your ways acknowledge him**, and he will make straight your paths.
 - iii. The way of the world or our culture is not evidence of the will of God.
 - 01. Romans 12:2 - 2 Do not be conformed to this world, but **be transformed by the renewal of your mind**, that **by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.**
- c. Only the Holy Spirit knows the will of God. He shares it with us as we listen to Him.
 - i. John 16:13-14 - 13 **When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth**, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. 14 He will glorify me, for **he will take what is mine and declare it to you.**
 - ii. 1 Corinthians 2:11, 16 - 11 For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also **no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.** ... 16 "For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But **we have the mind of Christ.**

B. Know Nothing Except Christ Crucified

- 1. 1 Corinthians 2:2-5 - 2 For **I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.** 3 And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, 4 and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 5 **so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.**
 - a. Believe.
 - i. John 6:28-29 - 28 Then they said to him, "What must we do, to be doing the works of God?" 29 Jesus answered them, "**This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.**"
 - ii. Romans 4:4-5 - 4 Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. 5 And **to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness,**
 - b. Become like a child.
 - i. Mark 10:15 - 15 Truly, I say to you, **whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.**

01. Deuteronomy 1:39 - 39 And as for your little ones, who you said would become a prey, and **your children, who today have no knowledge of good or evil**, they shall go in there. And to them I will give it, and they shall possess it.
 - ii. Reject complex teachings. If a child cannot understand it, it is not the simple Gospel.
2. Not religion, legalism, or spiritual zeal.
- a. Galatians 3:1-3, 5-6 - 1 O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that **Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified**. 2 Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? 3 Are you so foolish? **Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?** ... 5 **Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith--** 6 just as Abraham "believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness"?
 - i. The work of the Gospel is by faith from start to finish.
 - ii. God supplies the Spirit by faith, not because of anything righteous that we do or do not do (i.e. apply or abstain.)
 - b. Galatians 5:1-4 - 1 **For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery**. 2 Look: I, Paul, say to you that if you accept circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you. 3 I testify again to every man who accepts circumcision that he is obligated to keep the whole law. 4 **You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace**.
 - i. Jesus set us free from the requirements of the Law for righteousness, not for us to be subject to its regulations again.
 - ii. If we try to attain righteousness through observing the Law, we sever ourselves from Christ and have fallen from the righteousness of Christ in the New Covenant back to our own righteousness from the Old Covenant.
 - c. Colossians 2:16-23 - 16 Therefore **let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath**. 17 These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ. 18 **Let no one disqualify you, insisting on asceticism and worship of angels, going on in detail about visions**, puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind, 19 and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God. 20 **If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations--** 21 "Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch" 22 (referring to things that all perish as they are used)--according to human precepts and teachings? 23 These **have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh**.
 - i. Jesus declared all foods clean. Peter received a vision from the Lord that all things are made clean through the sacrifice of Jesus. False teachers forbid foods but God gave food to be enjoyed.
 01. Mark 7:18-19 - 18 And he said to them, "Then are you also without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him, 19 since it enters not his heart but his stomach, and is expelled?" (**Thus he declared all foods clean.**)
 02. Acts 10:12-15 - 12 In it were all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air. 13 And there came a voice to him: "**Rise, Peter; kill and eat.**" 14 But Peter said, "By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is

common or unclean." 15 And the voice came to him again a second time, "**What God has made clean, do not call common.**"

03. 1 Timothy 4:3-5 - 3 ...who forbid marriage and **require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving** by those who believe and know the truth. 4 For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, 5 **for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer.**
 04. Romans 14:17 - 17 For **the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking** but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.
 - ii. Jesus is the fulfillment of the Law and all its Feasts through His life, death, resurrection, and return. He is the Passover Lamb, He is the sacrifice of atonement, etc.
 - iii. Forced observance of the Law through asceticism (severe bodily discipline) has an outward appearance of devotion but is of no value in the truth of the Spirit.
- d. Romans 10:2-4, 6-10 - 2 For I bear them witness that **they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.** 3 For, being **ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own**, they did not submit to God's righteousness. 4 For **Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.** 5 For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them. 6 **But the righteousness based on faith says, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'"** (that is, to bring Christ down) 7 "or **'Who will descend into the abyss?'"** (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). 8 But what does it say? **"The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart"** (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); 9 because, **if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.** 10 For **with the heart one believes and is justified**, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.
 - i. Zeal for God without knowing Him or His ways will not produce righteousness.
 - ii. No one except Jesus is able to produce righteousness by their own works.
 - iii. Christ fulfilled the Law and released everyone who believes from its requirements.
 - iv. The Law of Moses requires adherence to its rules in order to attain righteousness and eternal life.
 - v. Spiritual ascension to know God will not succeed in attaining righteousness.
 - vi. Asceticism or self-degradation to know God will not produce righteousness.
 - vii. Worldwide quests to find God are unnecessary for attaining righteousness.
 - viii. The righteousness of faith is in the heart.
 01. God knows the heart. No outward activity can fool God about what you truly believe in your heart.
3. Not the philosophies of man or culturally syncretized spirituality.
- a. Colossians 2:6-8 - 6 Therefore, **as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him**, 7 rooted and built up in him and established **in the faith**, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving. 8 See to it that no one **takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world**, and not according to Christ.
 - i. Philosophies of men, human precepts and teachings
 01. Psychology, positive thinking, yoga, astrology, mindfulness, the latest spirituality trend in the world, etc.
 02. Evolution, big bang theory, etc.
 03. Capitalism, socialism, communism, tribal/cultural influences, etc.
 - ii. Human traditions, church traditions, doctrines of man

01. Mark 7:13 - 13 ...thus making void the word of God **by your tradition that you have handed down**. And many such things you do.
 02. Titus 1:13b-14 - 13 Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, 14 **not devoting themselves to Jewish myths and the commands of people** who turn away from the truth.
 - iii. Things which foster speculations rather than faith, including prophecies, predictions, Scriptural arguments, "special" knowledge
 01. 1 Timothy 1:4 - 4 nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies, which **promote speculations** rather than the stewardship from God that is by faith.
 02. 2 Timothy 2:23 - 23 Have nothing to do with **foolish, ignorant controversies**; you know that they breed quarrels.
 03. 1 Timothy 6:4 NKJV - 4 ...he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with **disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions**,
 - iv. Drawing spiritual conclusions from natural observations, which is superstition, omens, and is divination.
- b. Not eloquent speech or oratory.
- i. In the days of the early church, philosophy and oratory was revered. Charismatic speakers drew large crowds and followings through their persuasive speech.
 - ii. 1 Corinthians 1:17 - 17 For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and **not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power**.
 - iii. 1 Corinthians 2:1-5 - 1 And I, when I came to you, brothers, **did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom**. 2 For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. 3 And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, 4 and **my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power**, 5 so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.
4. Not the wisdom of this world which is influenced by the powers at work in the schemes of man.
- a. 1 Corinthians 3:18-20 - 18 Let no one deceive himself. **If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise**. 19 For **the wisdom of this world is folly with God**. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their craftiness," 20 and again, "The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile."
 - b. James 3:14-16 - 14 But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. 15 **This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic**. 16 For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice.
 - i. Earthly wisdom is based on the principles of this world. (i.e. sowing and reaping.)
 - ii. Unspiritual wisdom is sensual, based on the desires and impulses of the flesh and sensual experience. (i.e. how to attain comfort, ease, what you desire.)
 - iii. Demonic wisdom is from the evil one, in opposition to God, and usually includes thoughts and plans for self-exaltation, self-preservation, self-advancement, etc.
 - c. Teachers promising earthly or worldly benefits speak from the world's point of view and the world listens to them. They may draw large crowds, just like the orators, but this is not an indication that they are proclaiming the real Gospel or the truth of Christ.

- i. 2 Corinthians 1:12 - 12 For our boast is this, the testimony of our conscience, that we behaved in the world with simplicity and godly sincerity, **not by earthly wisdom but by the grace of God**, and supremely so toward you.
 - ii. 1 John 4:5-6 - 5 **They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world, and the world listens to them.** 6 We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. **By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.**
- 5. Not following man or teachers and not swayed by the opinions of man.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 3:4-5, 21-23 - 4 For when one says, "**I follow Paul,**" and another, "**I follow Apollos,**" **are you not being merely human?** 5 What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. ... 21 **So let no one boast in men.** For all things are yours, 22 whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future--all are yours, 23 and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.
 - b. 1 Corinthians 4:3-4 - 3 But with me **it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court.** In fact, **I do not even judge myself.** 4 For I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. **It is the Lord who judges me.**
- 6. Not tossed about by unbelief or winds of doctrines or human schemes.
 - a. James 1:6-8 - 6 But let him **ask [for wisdom] in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind.** 7 For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; 8 **he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.**
 - b. Ephesians 4:14 - 14 ...so that we may no longer be children, **tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.**
 - c. 1 Timothy 6:11-12 - 11 But as for you, O man of God, **flee these things.** Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. 12 **Fight the good fight of the faith.** Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.
 - i. The preceding passage included the love of money, and a list of things mentioned above which stir up division and deception. Flee these things.
 - ii. The fight of faith is to resist the lure of the many and various alternative propositions and objections against the Gospel which may offer temporary satisfaction but have no eternal hope or value.

C. Resisting the Devil

- 1. The best warfare strategy: submit to God.
 - a. James 4:7-10 - 7 **Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.** 8 **Draw near to God,** and he will draw near to you. **Cleanse your hands,** you sinners, and **purify your hearts,** you double-minded. 9 **Be wretched and mourn and weep.** Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. 10 **Humble yourselves before the Lord,** and he will exalt you.
 - i. When we live in alignment and faith in the simple Gospel, the enemy must flee.

- ii. We must draw near to God, repent from sin with genuine contrition and mourning, and humble ourselves before Him. We must purify our hearts to eternal hope rather than double-minded worldliness and desire for earthly or sensual satisfaction.
 - b. 1 Peter 5:6-10 - **6 Humble yourselves**, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, **7 casting all your anxieties on him**, because he cares for you. **8 Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. 9 Resist him, firm in your faith**, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. **10 And after you have suffered a little while**, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.
 - c. James 1:13-15 - **13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God,"** for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. **14 But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.** **15** Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.
2. Radical repentance.
- a. Matthew 11:12 - **12** From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and **the violent take it by force.**
 - i. People thronged to the preaching of John the Baptist, eager to repent of their sin and forsake all lusts in order to be cleansed for the coming Messiah.
 - b. Matthew 5:29-30 - **29 If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away.** For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. **30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away.** For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.
 - i. We must hold ourselves to a high standard of holiness and purity in our hearts and lives, by not giving into temptations laid before us by the evil one or subscribing to false teachings to soothe our flesh and perpetuate our sin.

D. Binding and Loosing in the Church

1. Jesus has given authority to the Church to determine and demonstrate what is acceptable in the household of God and what is not. We are called to use this authority to establish a heaven-like place on earth, where what is permitted in heaven is permitted in the church and what is forbidden in heaven is forbidden on earth.
 - a. Bind and loose are legal terms for what is forbidden and what is permitted.
 - b. Binding is to make something forbidden. Example: Speed limit.
 - c. Loosing is freeing from obligation. Example: No speed limit.
2. The Church holds the keys to the kingdom of heaven with authority to authorize on earth what is authorized in heaven and to forbid on earth what is forbidden in heaven.

- a. Matthew 16:16, 18-19 - 16 Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." ... 18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. 19 **I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.**
 - i. The Church is built by JESUS on the rock of the Gospel, that He is the Messiah of Israel and the Son of God.
 - ii. Heaven will agree with the Church's decision on earth.
3. The Church has authority from Jesus to forgive sin or withhold forgiveness. To withhold forgiveness is to leave someone in their sin and doomed for destruction.
- a. John 20:23 - 23 **If you forgive the sins** of any, they are forgiven them; **if you withhold forgiveness** from any, it is withheld."
4. People in perpetual sin who have refused to listen to rebukes from their friends, witnesses, and church discipline must be expelled from the Church.
- a. Matthew 18:17-19 - 17 If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. **And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.** 18 Truly, I say to you, **whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.** 19 Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, **it will be done for them by my Father in heaven.**
 - b. Expulsion from the church is equivalent to being cut off from God and from His salvation.
 - i. Example: To be cut off from Israel was to become like a Gentile/heathen and subject to the wrath of God with no covenantal hope, no sacrifice of atonement, and no relationship with God.
5. People demonstrating through their actions that they are still enslaved to sin and to the powers of darkness must be purged from the Church and turned over to Satan in hope that they might genuinely repent and be saved.
- a. 1 Corinthians 5:11-13 - 11 But now I am writing to you **not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother** if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler--not even to eat with such a one. 12 For what have I to do with judging outsiders? **Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge?** 13 God judges those outside. **"Purge the evil person from among you."**
 - b. Example: A Corinthian man sleeping with his father's wife was expelled from the Corinthian church by Paul's authority.
 - i. 1 Corinthians 5:5 - 5 ...you are to **deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh**, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.
 - 01. The hope is that the experience of life cut off from the Lord will create genuine repentance and ultimate restoration and salvation.
 - c. Example: False teachers, spreading a false gospel, shipwrecking their faith, the faith of others, and opposing the work of true laborers.
 - i. 1 Timothy 1:19-20 - 19 ...holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting this, some have made shipwreck of their faith, 20 among whom are Hymenaeus and

Alexander, **whom I have handed over to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.**

6. Sin and false doctrine will spread like yeast throughout the Church if it is not purged.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 5:6 - 6 Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that **a little leaven leavens the whole lump?**
 - i. Permitting egregious sin and error in the church discourages the righteous and encourages the wicked. (See Ezekiel 13:22.)
 - ii. Permitting egregious sin and error in the church confuses and ruins the faith of those sincerely seeking to follow Jesus.
 - b. Matthew 16:6 - 6 Jesus said to them, "Watch and **beware of the leaven** of the Pharisees and Sadducees."
 - i. Pharisees: Religion, hypocrisy.
 - ii. Sadducees: Unbelief, worldly compromise.
 - c. Mark 8:15 - 15 And he cautioned them, saying, "Watch out; **beware of the leaven** of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod."
 - i. Herod: Worldliness, luxury, indulgence, self-exaltation.

Reminder: God's Purpose for the Church

- ✓ *Jesus Christ triumphed over the power of sin and the powers at work in this world.*
- ✓ *The Gospel is the Good News of what Jesus has done for all who believe in Him.*
- ✓ *As Jesus' called out ones, the Church, God's purpose for us is to live like Jesus to display openly that the powers of this dark age have no power over us.*
- ✓ *The Gospel is the power of God. It must be the only power that has power over us.*



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